

Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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February - March 2008

The *Sabal minor* is now distributed electronically by email. All members without an email address will receive a paper copy. If a member with an email address wants to receive a paper copy, notify us at info@fnps.org or call 321-271-6702.

February

Trilliums and dogtooth violets bloom in Panhandle ravines. Bald cypress trees leaf out in Big Cypress Swamp. Also look for: Black Eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Bloodberry (*Cordia globosa*), Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium rosulatum*), Buttonweed (*Spermacoce verticillata*), Carolina jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), Hat pins (*Eriocaulon* sp.), Jacquemontia (*Jacquemontia pentanthos*), Marlberry (*Ardisia escallonioides*), Marsh Fleabane (*Pluchea rosea*), Yellow-eyed Grass (*Xyris* sp.).

March

Watch for flowering bromeliads, especially in south Florida swamps. Our bromeliads (*Tillandsia* sp.) begin flowering, and if you pay attention you'll see the tiny lovely flowers on the Spanish moss! Also look for Peppergrass (*Lepidium virginicum*), Scorpion's tail (*Heliotropium angiospermum*), Savannah false pimpernel (*Lindernia grandiflora*), Slenderfruit nutrush (*Scleria georgiana*), Pink sundew (*Drosera capillaris*), Smallhead doll's daisy (*Boltonia diffusa*), Plumed beaksedge (*Rhynchospora plumosa*), Sand cordgrass (*Spartina bakerii*).

Notice of Election and Slate of Nominees for 2008 Board of Directors

Bob Egolf

Annual elections for Board of Directors positions take place during the FNPS Annual Conference, at the General Meeting 8 a.m., May 8, 2008. This year's Nominating Committee included Nia Wellendorf (Magnolia), Kim Zarrillo (Conradina), Ray Miller (Palm Beach), and Bob Egolf (Serenoa). Although the Nominating Committee is still at work, here are the positions and the candidates to date:

- President - Eugene Kelly
- Secretary - Christina M. Uranowski
- Vice President of Finance - Steve Woodmansee
- At Large Director, 2008 to 2010 - Rick Joyce
- At Large Director, 2008 to 2010 - Lynne Flannery
- At Large Director, 2008 to 2010 - Fritz Wettstein.

Here are some autobiographical comments from the candidates:

Eugene Kelly, *Conservation Planner, Florida Chapter, The Nature Conservancy*: I've been a Florida resident since my family settled in the Orlando area in 1970. That was basically pre-Disney, so I've seen the Florida population grow from seven million to about 19 million. I discovered a passion for plants early while exploring my father's orchid greenhouse, where I learned that all those plants were either "hybrids" or had come from somewhere else. An important distinction! After earning a BS degree in biology and a Master's that focused on plant ecology, I began working to help preserve natural Florida as an intern with the Florida Chapter of The Nature Conservancy; we were just then starting to learn about a huge number of rare species, plants in particular, that occurred only on Florida's Lake Wales Ridge. After working as an environmental planner for Charlotte County, helping them develop the Conservation Element of this new-fangled thing called a Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, I moved to Brooksville where I worked 16 years for the Southwest Florida Water Management District in that agency's Save Our Rivers and Florida Forever land protection program. Two years ago, I returned to The Nature Conservancy. I've enjoyed being a member of the Hernando County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society since its formative stages, and have served as the chapter's Conservation Chair, two terms as a Member-At-Large of the FNPS Board of Directors, and most recently as Co-Chair of the Conservation Committee.

Christina M. Uranowski, *Professional Wetland Scientist and Plant Identification Instructor*: I have an MS in Botany and over 18 years experience working in Florida's diverse ecosystems, especially in coastal and freshwater wetlands. I have worked on wetland regulation, exotic mapping and removal, permitting and restoration, wetland delineation, functional assessment, listed species permitting and assessment, plant identification, and plant physiology. I have been a researcher,

Nominations continued page 4

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Sabal minor is on-line at <http://www.fnps.org/sabalmminor>. The on-line version has color photographs and other benefits. Enjoy!

Deadlines for *Sabal minor* submissions are: 1/15 for Feb-Mar issue; 3/15 for Apr-May; 5/15 for June-July; 7/15 for Aug-Sept; 9/15 for Oct-Nov; 11/15 for Dec-Jan

Species Spotlight

Persea borbonia
LAURACEAE

Red Bay - Another Treasure Threatened

Rosalind Rowe

Persea borbonia, or red bay, is an evergreen tree found from southern Delaware to east Texas and south Florida. It is most common on rich, moist sites along streams and swamp borders, but it's been known to grow on upland longleaf pine savannas and on poorly drained sites in xeric landscapes, forming localized patches. It's a common tree in Big Cypress Swamp, and dominates many Everglades tree islands and cypress dome understories. Natural stands of red bay are patchy and diffuse, but southern Florida low hammocks can have a red bay-dominated "tail" which extends downstream in the direction of the everglade's flow.

Red bay can grow to 70 feet high with a pyramidal crown and with a trunk to three feet in diameter, but in many natural areas it can be somewhat shrubby. It has slender twigs and reddish-brown scaly bark.

The leaves are simple, oblong to lance-shaped, 7-10cm inches long, very aromatic, and arranged alternately on the stems. The lower leaf surface can appear somewhat bluish and the hairs closely flattened or appressed (seen under lens). Just as with its related bay laurel leaf (*Laurus nobilis*), red bay leaves can be used as a spice.



The flowers are insect- and wind-pollinated and the seeds are dispersed by animals. The flowers bloom in the spring, in short panicles, with six small greenish-yellow perianth segments 3-6 mm long, and nine stamens. The fruit ripens in summer and early fall, and is a small bright blue to shiny black drupe less than 3cm long.

A variety of wildlife is dependent on red bay. Wild turkeys and many songbirds eat the fruit. The northern bobwhite eats red bay seeds. White-tailed deer and black bears eat the fruit and the foliage. Red bay can sustain browsing of up to 40% of its annual growth.

Red bay historically has been very resistant to insects and fungal disease, but this has changed tragically in the last five years with the arrival of an Asian ambrosia beetle, *Xyleborus glabratus*. The beetle burrows into the tree but does not actually feed on wood; instead, adults and larvae feed on a fungus that is inoculated into galleries in the sapwood by the adult females. It is this fungus (*Ophiostoma* sp.) that causes red bay to wilt and die, its leaves turning

Two Butterflies Dependent on Red Bay

Linda Cooper

Last issue focused on Palamedes Swallowtail and its dependence on trees in the Laurel family (*Lauraceae*) as host plants for its caterpillars. Spicebush Swallowtail (*Papilio troilus*) also will be affected by the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle



(*Xyleborus glabratus*) Though not as dependent as Palamedes Swallowtail on Red Bay (*Persea borbonia*) and Swamp Bay (*P. palustris*), this large swallowtail may disappear from freshwater swamp areas in the southeast.

The Palamedes and Spicebush swallowtails typically have three generations a year. While Palamedes is restricted to the southeast, ranging west only to eastern Texas, Spicebush ranges northward all the way to southern Maine.

Note: Go to ButterfliesandMoths.org and then find the map of Florida. From there you can scroll the list and select a butterfly or moth; it brings up a map of where it is found in Florida, its natural history, and additional photos.

purple to red to brown within a few weeks or month. Red bay mortality has been increasing at an alarming rate. In some areas there is nearly complete mortality of red bay populations.

First detected in the U.S. in 2002 near Port Wentworth, Georgia, the red bay ambrosia beetle has since spread north and south, and is at least into central Florida. At this time there are no tested or proven treatments for prevention or control of this insect and its associated pathogen.

Silent Auction – 2008 Conference

Keep those items coming!

Contact Christine Holyland, Silent Auction Committee Chair
christineholyland@comcast.net or (941) 964 -2491
if you have any items to donate, or questions.

Thank you !

Board of Directors' Annual Retreat

The meeting of February 16-17 is the annual two-day Board retreat. This year it is at Catfish Creek Preserve State Park. During the Saturday meeting, we will preview the FNPS County Resources presentation. Sunday morning we'll work on updating our strategic plan.

Registration is required. All registration and agenda information for this event is posted on the FNPS Discussion Forum (www.fnps.org/smf/index.php) under the **Board of Directors** topic.

Conservation Grants Deadline March 7, 2008

The FNPS Conservation Grant cycle is now open and will award up to three individual grants a maximum amount of \$2,500 each. The deadline for proposals has been extended from March 6 to March 28. Conservation Grants are awarded to support native plant conservation projects and target nonprofit organizations that need funding to implement such projects, consistent with the FNPS mission. Although award recipients are not required to be FNPS members, their application must identify an FNPS member or chapter that has agreed to sponsor the project. Please submit your completed application via email, to Eugene Kelly at ekelly@tnc.org. Grant recipients will be announced in May at the annual conference.

Chapter Native Plant Sales

Cape Coral. Coccoloba Chapter, April 19, 2008. Native Plant Sale at Rotary Park. 9 am. until 2 pm. Contact Rachel Singletary, Singl2630@aol.com, for information.

Gainesville. Paynes Prairie Chapter Spring Native Plant Sale, April 11 (4:30pm-6:30pm, for FNPS members only) and 12 (8:30am-12:30pm) at [Morningside Nature Center](#) 3540 E. University Ave. For questions call Morningside Nature Center at 352-334-2170, or go to www.natureoperations.org

Earth Jurisprudence Enters Law School Curriculum

By Joe DuRocher

Barry University School of Law, located in Orlando, began this year offering a course in Earth Jurisprudence. The course is presented as a cooperative effort of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence (CEJ). Sister Patricia Seimen, a Dominican nun and a lawyer, is director of the Center and a moving force behind this new area of legal study. While the course is related to the study of environmental law, it makes a major departure from existing regulation to envision a recognition and respect for the rights of nature. (For more information on the Center's mission, see www.earthjuris.org)

Consider this possibility: the training of a generation of lawyers dedicated to saving and restoring the earth, rather than representing interests seeking to commodify and privatize nature. And then picture a skillful and trained legal advocate arguing in a court of law that a river has a higher "right to flow" than man has "a right to dam?" As Sister Pat would say, "First we train the lawyers."

CEJ will sponsor and present the first-ever national Symposium on Earth Jurisprudence, February 28-29, 2008, on the Barry Law School campus, Orlando, FL. The best legal minds in this field will gather here to discuss, literally, how to save the world.

Joe DuRocher is an ECO-Action member and Adjunct Instructor, Barry School of Law

Chapter Tips & Tricks

Get your Chapter engaged in your city or county Landscape Ordinance Amendments. Several Chapters are doing this, including Serenoa, Beautyberry and Hernando, among others. Here is a write up from the FNPS Hernando Chapter on its latest related efforts:

Landscape Ordinance Amendments Protect Water Resources and Native Flora in Hernando County

On Feb 14, the Hernando County Commissioners unanimously approved key amendments to the county's landscape ordinance. These provisions strengthen regulations originally introduced with consultation and support of the Hernando Chapter FNPS in June 2001. New provisions reduce the maximum allowable percentage of turf grass from 75% to 50%, require a 5-7% set-aside for commercial sites, and a performance bond linked to compliance with regulations for new landscaping. Properties zoned Agricultural will observe a five-year waiting period prior to consideration for re-zoning for other purposes.

During formulation of the new amendments, Hernando Audubon provided leadership for the conservation community, establishing clear recommendations for new provisions. While the enacted provisions fall short of recommendations, they represent both a large step in the right direction, and meaningful collaboration among the county's conservation advocacy organizations.

"This unanimous decision opens the door for further conversation with the Commissioners focused on policies that protect the rich natural resources of Hernando County," said Cindy Liberton, VP for the Hernando Chapter, "the Brooksville Ridge hosts astonishing biodiversity—especially in plant communities—and this action gives us hope for holding the line on further fragmentation of critical habitats."

Call for Scientific Papers and Poster Presentations Florida Native Plant Society 2008 Conference

Deadline for abstracts is **March 1, 2008.**

The Science Track of the Conference will have its presentations Friday, May 16 and Saturday, May 17.

The poster session is on Friday.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida; topics can include preservation, conservation, and restoration. Presentations are to be 15 minutes and allow an additional 5 minutes for questions. Abstracts should be kept to 200 words or less. Send submissions as a Microsoft Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov.

Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster. Make sure to include title, affiliation, and address.

Nominations, continued

consultant, scientist and trainer -- for academia, private industry and government agencies. Much of my research is published in several peer reviewed scientific journals. I was principal investigator and first author of the Florida Riverine Hydrogeomorphic methodology for measuring wetland functions, published as a national technical document by the US Army Engineers, Waterways Experiment Station. I currently work as an instructor for Richard Chinn Environmental Training, Inc., and as a private consultant, mainly providing Grass and Sedge Identification courses, Wetland Plant identification courses and Native Grasses in the Landscape courses. I am President of the Pine Lily Chapter of FNPS, and was instrumental in the Chapter's formation and organization.

Rick Joyce, Director, Ecosystem Sciences, Kitson Babcock, LLC: I just completed a two year term as President, Florida Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, which is the organization that certifies arborists; I will remain on that board for one more year as the Immediate Past President. Work wise, after over 19 years with Lee County Environmental Sciences, I went to work a year ago with a company called Kitson and Partners. They are the firm that purchased the 91,000 acre Babcock Ranch in Charlotte and Lee Counties, then sold 74,000 acres to the State of Florida . We are building a green, sustainable community of nearly 18,000 acres. I am involved with a wide range of environmental and native landscape design work for the Babcock Ranch Community, including the design and operation of a large-scale, onsite native plant nursery, the community native landscape program, native landscape standards and community agriculture. As I work more directly with native plants in ecological restoration and ornamental landscaping, I find it would be good to get more active with FNPS again. In the various organizations I have been active in over the years, FNPS members have always been the most passionate and motivated for the right reasons, accomplishing good things for the residents and visitors of Florida. I have enjoyed my previous experiences on the board and would be an engaged board member for the good of Florida native plants and FNPS.

Lynne Flannery, Ridge Rangers Volunteer Coordinator, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission: Growing up in the suburbs of Rochester, New York, I always dreamed I would join the likes of Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall and spend my days watching critters in the jungles of Africa. After completing a bachelor's in zoology, the only thing I was sure of was that I wanted to travel. My next few years were spent as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras. I learned to love beans and rice and dance the meringue, but most importantly I discovered my perfect career – education. After returning to the United States I completed a master's degree in environmental interpretation from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. I then worked as an educator at a nature center and as the education curator at a zoo, both in Northern New York. I moved down to Florida in January 2005 to escape the cold and accept my current position as the Ridge Rangers Volunteer Coordinator. I have always loved exploring the outdoors. My favorite Florida activity is canoe camping in Everglades National Park. My other half and I have canoed hundreds of miles, enjoying the diverse wildlife of the glades and cannot wait to return again this winter. We take pleasure in the challenge of finding our way, battling the tides and weather and seeing something new every time.

Fritz Wettstein, Environmental Manager, Florida Department of Environmental Protection: A Florida native, I have been working over 25 years for the creative conservation of natural resources. In my current role as an Environmental Manager with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, where I have worked for 19 years, I am responsible for protecting beach and dune systems from improperly sited or designed coastal development. Also, now in my 5th year as an adjunct professor with the FAMU School of Architecture, Master's of Landscape Architecture Program, I teach and conduct field studies for natural communities and resource management courses and serve on thesis committees. I have served as the City of Ormond Beach Landscape Architect, designing community gardens and streetscapes, and as a Landscape Architect for the Florida Park Service, planning and designing public recreation areas. I received my B.S. in environmental studies from Rollins College and a Master's of Landscape Architecture from North Carolina State University School of Design. My involvement with the Florida Native Plant Society has included working in the Maclay Native Arboretum sponsored by the Magnolia Chapter and serving as a chapter director and conference co-chair.

Ed. Note: Steve Woodmansee's notes were not received in time for printing.

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