

# Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2

April - May 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](mailto:info@fnps.org) or call 321-271-6702.

## April

Indigo buntings, Mississippi kites, eastern kingbirds, grosbeaks, warblers, tanagers, orioles and thrushes begin returning to North America. Wood storks in north Florida begin courtship and nesting. Florida sandhill crane chicks become old enough to begin foraging in open habitat.

Watch your speed! - Manatees are dispersing around Florida's coastal waterways. Seasonal manatees speed zones change in Florida's waterways.

Pitcher plant (*Sarracenia* spp.) bloom in wet savannahs of the Panhandle. A good month to key out all those blue-purple flowers!

## May

Courtship ritual of adult alligators begins: loud, resounding bellows and water slapping. Lights Out! - sea turtles nesting, some nests hatching already.

Bobcat kittens born. Coyote denning season peaks. Most bats give birth May through mid-June.

Bluegill are bedding at the full moon. Redbreast sunfish and spotted sunfish begin spawning in rivers. Pompano are running in north Florida surf.

*Clematis baldwinii*, pine hyacinth, is one of many, many blooms.

## Register Now!

### FNPS Annual Conference May 14-18, 2008

*Estuaries to Uplands: Celebrating Florida's Native Plant Heritage*

Manatee Convention Center, Palmetto, FL

The purpose of this 29th annual conference is to provide educational programs to FNPS members and the general public about the planting, preservation, conservation and restoration of Florida native plants and their associated plant communities. This conference is one of the best opportunities to learn what is happening with native plants and conservation in Florida today.

NOTE: The **FNPS General Meeting** is **Saturday, May 17, 2008 at 8:00am**

Here is an overview of the schedule:

*Throughout the event:*

- **Native plant sales** providing locally grown trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Hundreds of new native plants for home landscapes!
- **Silent auction** (ends Saturday 1:30pm)
- Tables and booths with Society Chapter information, **educational exhibits** and **vendors**

*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening socials*

*Thursday and Sunday:*

- **Field trips**, with over 20 options to locations highlighting native plant communities and species, each trip guided by botanists or local plant specialists
- **Workshops** for landscape design, making plant specimens, nature photography, scientific information regarding the "Real Florida"

*Friday and Saturday:*

- **Kickoff speeches** in the mornings, by leaders in Florida conservation
- Over **50 sessions and presentations** to choose from, covering the latest news in conservation, preservation and restoration of Florida native plant communities. During one of these, Dr. Walter Taylor will "be" botanist Andre' Michaux! The sessions are sorted by Community, Ecology and Science "tracts." The speakers are not only engaging, they are *the* people of Florida today working in the field of the topics they discuss.
- **Lunch time activities** - film screenings and also discussion groups on various topics, including climate change, plant rescues, outreach projects and conservation projects

The conference is hosted by the Mangrove, Pinellas, Serenoa and Suncoast Chapters of the Society. To register, go to [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org), click *Conference*, then choose the box that suits you: click *Register Online* if you want to make your payment online, or click *Download Registration Form* if you want to use regular mail.

Florida Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

321-271-6702 ● Fax: 815-361-9166 ● [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org) ● [info@fnps.org](mailto:info@fnps.org)

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*Sabal minor* is on-line at <http://www.fnps.org/sabalminor>. 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

*Cornus foemina*  
CORNACEAE

## SWAMP DOGWOOD

from Peggy A. Gretchen

Also known as stiff dogwood and stiff cornel, swamp dogwood is a native, deciduous, multi-trunked, small tree or large shrub. It grows ten to 25 feet high, but is usually 15 feet or less. Its open branches can give this attractive plant a spread of 10 to 15 feet wide.

**Leaves:** Opposite, 2–4 inches long, variable but mostly lance-shaped to elliptic; little change of color in autumn.

**Flowers:** Spring. Many, small, bright white, four petalled; borne in showy, dense, flat-topped, 2 inch wide branching clusters at the ends of branches.

**Fruit:** Showy branched clusters of blue, ¼ inch diameter drupes (fleshy, with one seed), appearing late summer to fall, but usually short-lived, as they are eaten quickly by birds!

**Habitat:** Frequent in wet hammocks and floodplain forests. Also, stream and marsh banks, cypress swamps, and other low, wet habitats. Usually found as an understory plant or at the edge of woods.

**Distribution:** Nearly throughout Florida; west to Texas, north to Missouri and Virginia.

**Wildlife Benefit:** An excellent wildlife food source with its spring flowers for pollinators and fall fruits, especially attractive to the birds. Relatively weak branches and open, spreading habitat provide only moderate cover.

### Cultivation information

**Landscape Use:** An attractive small tree or large shrub, useful in wet areas or along rivers, streams, canal banks, drainage swales, and retention ponds to beautify and to stabilize banks. Useful as an accent tree, small understory tree, or shrub border. May be used as a street tree.

**Hardiness Zones:** 6 – 10A.

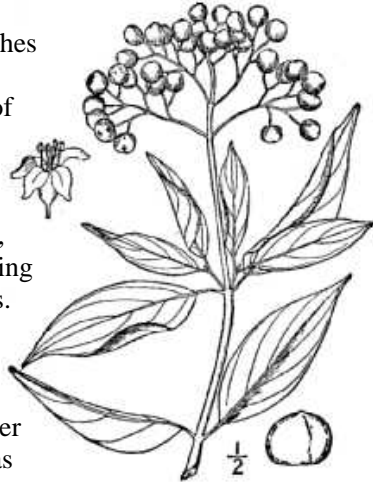
**Soil:** Moist to wet, fertile, moderately to slightly acidic preferred. Tolerates neutral to slightly alkaline.

**Light:** Full sun – shade, nearly full.

**Water:** Prefers wet conditions, but will adapt to moist sites. Tolerates shallow standing water. May require irrigation during drought.

**Miscellaneous:** Does best if established while dormant in winter. Life span less than 50 years. Medium growth rate. Low salt tolerance. No maintenance required.

**Propagation:** By seed (difficult to germinate), cuttings, suckers.



Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British possessions*. Vol. 2: 663. USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

## Annual Elections for Board of Directors

Annual elections for Board of Directors positions take place during the FNPS Annual Conference, at the **General Meeting 8 a.m., Saturday May 17, 2008**. (Note: this date was erroneously published as May 8 in the last issue of the *Sabal minor*! Saturday the 17th is the correct date.)

As listed in the last issue of this newsletter, these 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.

At that time, we didn't have autobiographical comments from Steve Woodmansee. Now we do, and here they are:

**Steve Woodmansee, Biologist, Conservationist, Botanist; Research Associate, IRC.** A Miami-Dade native, I explored the vast wilds of our state since I was knee high to a milkwort. In 1996, I earned a B.S. in Biology from the University of Miami. My specialties include plant identification, rare plant and exotic plant research, vegetation monitoring, restoration design, project management, and education and outreach. I have 19 years of experience working in Florida's natural areas, the last eleven of which culminated with my work at the nonprofit organization, The Institute for Regional Conservation (IRC), where I remain a Research Associate. While at IRC, I collaborated on the book *Rare Plants of South Florida: Their History, Conservation, and Restoration* (Gann, Bradley & Woodmansee 2002). In addition to numerous floristic inventories and vegetation/rare plant monitoring of conservation areas across south and central Florida, I have deposited over 2000 herbarium specimens at Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, including additions to the United States flora, and 100s of new county records. I have served as co-chair of the Dade Native Plant Workshop (a free public resource for 50+ years), and I helped initiate additional Native Plant Workshops in Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties. In 1998, I joined the Native Plant Society, and have been actively serving the Dade Chapter board since 2002.

## Board of Directors' Annual Retreat

February 16-17 was the annual two-day Board retreat.

On Saturday, items included: updating the language in the FNPS Handbook for the Publication Committee; incorporating new and lawyer-approved FNPS contract template language in current contracts; assigning FNPS Executive Director to administer newly awarded Urban Forestry Grant, with portion of the grant budgeted as payment for the administrative work.

On Sunday, Shirley Denton and Gene Kelly led a discussion to provide direction to the facilitator for a strategic planning session. Topics included the need for new goals and milestones for committees and FNPS as a whole.

### Silent Auction – 2008 Conference

Keep those items coming!

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

Thank you !

## Chapter Tips & Tricks

Congratulations to the **Ixia Chapter** for completing their 2007 Chapter Grant program and producing a beautiful and informative poster and brochure on “AlterNative” plants to grow instead of invasive exotics in Northeast Florida! Let this be a model for all of our chapters! For information, please contact Ixia Chapter member Trish Gramajo at [tgramajo@TNC.ORG](mailto:tgramajo@TNC.ORG)

Tiffany Shroeder of the **Lyonia Chapter** heard that the City of Deland, where she lives, was planning a streetscape and other urban plantings. She inquired with city personnel as to what plants were being specified and they passed along the consultant’s plant list to her. There were no native plants listed and she went to City Hall to talk to the planning department and the mayor regarding the benefits of native plants. The mayor is now behind the idea and has asked Tiffany and her husband Dave (President of the Lyonia chapter) to assist in choosing the right native trees, shrubs and groundcovers to plant.

## New Chapter!

Welcome our new **ST. JOHNS COUNTY Chapter**, serving St. Johns County and the St. Augustine area. This new chapter will help amplify our efforts in Northeast Florida. Thanks to Jill Ziebell, Beverly Fleming, Jill Goranson, Karen White, Cynthia Maguire, Karina Veaudry and all the Ixia Chapter members who helped get this new chapter off the ground!

## FNPS Presentation to Hernando County Commissioners

*Karina Veaudry*

Hernando Conservation Committee Chair, Mark Hutchinson, regularly follows the county commission meeting agendas and knows what is happening throughout the county in terms of conservation initiatives and developments which may need attention and comments. He has a great relationship with the commissioners and they have accepted his invitation to attend chapter meetings on occasion.

In March, Mark requested an audience with the commissioners and I gave a presentation regarding the importance of native plants in the urban and suburban communities, preservation of ecosystems, Hernando’s unique ecosystems, and showed images of native plants and native plants in residential applications.

As a result of the meeting, we have been asked to provide more information, the presentation was videotaped and will be aired on the public television station for six months, and they are requesting for information regarding our FNPS landscape ordinance guidelines.

If your Chapter does not have a Conservation Chair, solicit individuals in your chapter and in your community to fulfill this important role.

If your Chapter would like a copy of the PowerPoint presentation to modify for your own county or city commissioners, please contact me at [executivedirector@fnps.org](mailto:executivedirector@fnps.org)

*Ed. Note: Last issue, the Hernando Chapter reported that their Commissioners approved key amendments to the county’s landscape ordinance that open the way for better conservation policies. Kudos to FNPS for the follow-up!*

## Chapter Native Plant Sales

**Tampa.** April 8-9, Suncoast Chapter, Saturday 10am-4pm and Sunday 10am-3pm. University of South Florida Botanical Garden, within the Garden’s annual spring plant sale. Admission is \$3.00 (free to Garden members). Contact Harriett Wright, [harriett@ix.netcom.com](mailto:harriett@ix.netcom.com).

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

**Coral Gable.** April 19, 2008. Coccoloba Chapter, 9am-2pm, Rotary Park. Contact Rachel Singletary, [Singl2630@aol.com](mailto:Singl2630@aol.com), for information.

The  
Florida Native Plant Society  
Travels!

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[CESXplor@aol.com](mailto:CESXplor@aol.com)

## Florida Forever State Land Acquisition Program – Letter Writing Needed

*Karina Veaudry*

As a member of the Florida Forever Coalition, the Florida Native Plant Society is coordinating with other organizations to work toward reauthorization and revitalization of the Florida Forever state land acquisition program (FF). The FF program will end in 2010. **We must act now to ensure a successor program.**

It is important to have a visible presence and to send letters of support in the next couple of months during the Legislative Session, March 4<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>. We seek to highlight and focus our support for Florida Forever and a successor program; distribute information regarding Florida's land conservation program; and educate lawmakers and the public on the importance of Florida's natural resources and land conservation programs.

The FF coalition is seeking a successor program that would receive double the existing annual funding starting in Fiscal Year 2009: \$600 million/year. The budget has been \$300 million dollars for the past 18 years and has never increased.

For talking points and FF history and other resources go to the FF Coalition website at [www.supportfloridaforever.org](http://www.supportfloridaforever.org).

### What you can do to make a difference:

1) Write a letter to your House Representative, your Senate Representative, and to Governor Crist.

\* To find your legislators name and contact information, type your zip code at this website: [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org).

\* A sample letter is located on the FNPS website at [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org) under **Programs** in the **Policy & Legislative** section.

2) Form a consensus in your chapter and send a resolution of support to the FF Coalition (see attached organization resolution form) **and** send a letter of support from your Chapter to Governor Crist at:

Office of the Governor

The Capitol

400 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

3) Many counties in Florida have passed a resolution to support FF and the remaining counties have been assigned to FF coalition members to seek support from them.

Right now we need more individual cities to send a resolution of support for FF to the Governor's office as soon as possible and before June, 2008. If you or your chapter would like to pursue coordinating with the city municipalities in your area, for them to send a resolution of support, contact Karina Veaudry at [executivedirector@fnps.org](mailto:executivedirector@fnps.org) to obtain a sample resolution to pass along.

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