

Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 3

June-July 2007

June

Nesting, nesting, nesting: black skimmers, oystercatchers, laughing gulls, least terns, red-cockaded woodpeckers... alligators, gopher tortoise... southern flying squirrels, red bats, seminole bats... And if they're not nesting, they're laying eggs: indigo snakes, green sea turtles, loggerhead turtles, whelks, sea urchins.

Expect more wildfires; this is technically peak month. Buy your complaining neighbor some dust masks, and over a beer purvey the specialness of Florida's fire-based ecology.

Look for tarflower, *Bejaria racemosa*; beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*; tread-softly, *Cnidocolus stimulosus*; rose-of-Plymouth, *Sabatia stellaris*, and Bartram's rosegentian, *Sabatia bartramii*; white indigoberry, *Randia aculeata*.

July

Ready to leave the nests or crack those eggs: gray squirrels, foxes, bobcats, crocodiles, sea turtles...

Migratory birds gather and leave us: swallow tailed kites, purple martins, tree swallows. Watch for magnificent frigatebirds overhead in our southern areas. Make sure to leave patches of soil exposed in your yard for birds "dusting."

Now that it's raining, listen for eastern narrowmouth toad calls ("baaa").

A few of the many blooms to watch for include sea oats, *Uniola paniculata*; pitted stripeseed, *Priquetta cistoides*; camphorweed, *Heterotheca subaxillaris*; rosy camphorweed, *Pluchea rosea*; roserush, *Lygodesmia aphylla*; Florida milkweed, *Asclepias feayi*; whitetassels, *Dalea carnea*.

Message from the Executive Director

Attending our annual conference is always rewarding and fascinating. I personally enjoy the many conversations regarding varied issues. It is truly inspiring to have so many concerned and knowledgeable people discussing issues facing Florida Native Plant Communities. Many issues were discussed and solutions to problems on all levels were explored.

One way that we can all continue the dialog, informational exchanges and contributions to solving issues is to utilize our own FNPS Discussion Forum. We have an excellent system of communication for our members but it is rarely used. Any FNPS member with internet access can participate in on-line discussions on many topics (or can start a topic of their own!) and read the progress reports from our Communications, Conservation, Education, Membership and Policy & Legislation Committee Chairs.

I encourage you to become familiar with the discussion forum and utilize it. If the level of dialog experienced at the conference can be continued all year long, it can be a great tool for our organization.

Some of the issues that I am currently representing for you are:

1. Pursuing a seat on the task force dealing with the new state fertilizer laws;
2. Attending meetings of the state board of education to participate in the new science standards being written and reviewed and
3. Giving a talk to the Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association regarding the benefits of native plants.

The Education Committee, Policy & Legislation Committee and others are planning wonderful educational workshops, family outings, and field trips for the FNPS Membership Weekend on October 6 & 7, 2007. There will be something for everyone. (Contact me at 407.895.8446 if you are interested in participating.) Plan on attending this social and informational weekend at Pine Lake Resort <http://www.pinelakeretreat.com/> near Clermont.

I look forward to assisting our organization grow and prosper. Please call on me with issues and concerns.

-Karina Veaudry



Save the Date!!!

FNPS Membership Weekend

October 6 & 7, 2007

Photo from Pine Lake
Retreat Website

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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

Celtis laevigata
ULMACEAE

SUGARBERRY OR HACKBERRY

Rosalind Rowe

Of the four hackberries that are native to Florida, the most widespread is *Celtis laevigata*. Some botanists place *Celtis* in its own family, the Celtidaceae.

This deciduous tree can grow to nearly 30 yards high and is generally found in floodplain forest habitat. The gray “blistered” or bumpy and corky bark sets it apart from its neighbors.

The leaves are yellowish-green, about twice as long as wide, with pointed tips. The edges are smooth and ciliate or sometimes with a few long teeth. The surface is generally smooth. The base can be rounded or slightly tapering, and often slightly oblique.

The male flowers are in small clusters near the base of the twigs of the season. The female flowers are solitary, or sometimes paired, in the upper axils of the same twigs. The fruit is about a half-inch long.



The color ranges from pinkish orange to dark orange-red. The pulp is thin around a hard stone, but can be sweet.

Hackberry Emperor



Linda Cooper

Linda Cooper

Florida has two emperor butterflies - Hackberry and Tawny Emperors (shown here is the Hackberry Emperor). They are closely tied to their host plants in the genus *Celtis*. They are infrequently found at flower blossoms,

preferring sap and rotting fruit. They can also be found at mud. Males are faithful to a favored perch site and will frequently make forays out to check for mates or anything coming into their “territory” including humans. Both species alight on humans to sip salts and minerals.

The next time you are in an area of hackberry trees and a butterfly swirls around you it is more than likely one of these species. They usually perch head down on the trunk on their host plant and are cryptically marked on their underwing.

Summary and Actions: April 16 Board of Directors Meeting

Each year, the Board of Directors meeting at the FNPS conference is brief, well attended, and spirited, and this was no exception.

We are pleased to announce that the board approved the motion to negotiate a two year contract with Karina Veaudry to serve as the Society’s Executive Director. Although the position was advertised, Karina ran “unopposed.” The board thanks Karina for her tireless work as Interim Executive Director since June 2006, which includes bringing four new Chapters into the fold, representing FNPS on several important committees, and helping support Chapters throughout the state. The profile of the Society is already enhanced, and growth guaranteed.

This meeting also featured board approval for several Society-funded initiatives related to the mission of FNPS. The Society voted to award \$2000 to Gil Nelson to support research for a book on native plants of the southeast, which will highlight FNPS and the native plant movement.

The Society’s annual grant awards are approved by the board at this meeting. Gene Kelly, co-chair for the Conservation Committee, reviewed the recommendations for Conservation Grants, stressing that the quality of the 12 applications was such that it was difficult to award only three. The board voted to accept the Committee’s recommendation. Similarly, several good applications came in this year for Endowment Research Awards, and the board approved the Science Committee’s recommendations, funding three projects. The programs can award up to three grants of \$2500 each. Details on the winning projects, as well as the recipients of the Landscape and Palmetto awards will appear in a special section of the next *Sabal Minor*. For more information about all of the grants and award programs, visit www.fnps.org; from the menu, choose Programs —> Grants & Awards.

Chapters Represented: Coccoloba, Cocoplum, Dade, Eugenia, Heartland, Hernando, Ixia, Lake Beauty Berry, Lakela’s Mint, Magnolia, Mangrove, Naples, Nature Coast, Palm Beach, Paw Paw, Paynes Prairie, Pinellas, Saracenia, and Serenoa, **Chapters NOT Represented:** Broward, Citrus, Conradina, Live Oak, Long Leaf, Lyonia, Sea Rocket, South Ridge, Sumter, Tarflower and Suncoast.

Check page 6 for the Board Meeting Schedule for the next year. In the past year, attendance has been increasing, and the discussions about topics of Chapter interest have been thought-provoking and enjoyable. Mark your calendars, and let your Chapter voice be heard.

Report From the Conference

Sue Dingwell
Palm Beach Chapter

Eight fifteen Saturday morning, Gainesville. Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference. The audience is unruly, laughing at announcements made humorous by the ribald delivery of Co-Conference Chair Charlie Pedersen. Behind Charlie, a quiet and unassuming figure mounts the speakers' podium. How in the world, I wonder, is that poor lady ever going to take control now?

But within ten seconds a transfiguration has taken place. The audience is frozen in rapt attention, the only sound in the hall the quiet voice of keynote speaker, Janisse Ray, as she recounts her experience of a Kingfisher striking a plate-glass window and falling at her feet in a city. Exquisite use of language made her ideas and facts shimmer with life and become embedded in the mind of listeners.

Ms. Ray, award-winning author and environmental activist, gave us plenty to reflect on as she spoke about both clear-cutting practices and about conservation successes in the southeast today. She ended her talk with some thoughts on the contributions we all make with our everyday decisions about life on our planet today. Two of her statements that stuck in my mind and repeated themselves to me were these:

- Are you more of a consumer or a citizen?
- Environmental destruction is deficit spending.

Saturdays' keynote speaker, William Cullina, was equally interesting. Mr. Cullina, President of the New England Wildflower Society is a brilliant photographer as well, which made his address a feast for the eyes as well as the brain. "Plants define the place," said Mr. Cullina. The Wildflower Society has done fantastic work with educating their public about the need to support native plants. He spoke about unique features in native plant communities, including their ability to communicate with one another. His assessment is that native plants may be more important as conservation of resources than even as wildlife habitat. Visit the websites newfs.org and Williamcullina.com for great info and gorgeous photos.

In addition to the keynote speeches, the four-day conference was packed with options for workshops, discussions, talks and field trips. Opportunities for learning abounded whether you were a new convert or a PhD in Native Plants.

Ed Gilman, famous author and tree-pruner gave a workshop right across the street from the conference at his lab on the UF campus. He has a fantastic and comprehensive website; just Google "Ed Gilman." Easier to Google it than to type the IFAS address! Among other tips, Mr. Gilman shared his recent research showing that bare ground is more beneficial than mulch directly over the root ball of newly transplanted trees. New research also shows that it is important to plant trees slightly above grade. Go to the website for specifics!

In a fascinating talk on Edible and Medicinal Natives, Winnie Said reported that she learned loads about eating and using plants we all have in our yards right now. And the

Chapter Tips & Tricks

The **Lakela's Mint** chapter received a donation of land for a native plant demonstration garden. The annual insurance cost for the property was too expensive (sound familiar?) for them to maintain this gift. The chapter coordinated with the donor and the St. Lucie County Conservation Trust, and now The Conservation Trust will own the property and the Lakela's Mint chapter will have specific use rights.

Amazon Jungle Safari

The Florida Native Plant Society will be sponsoring a trip to the Peruvian Amazon. This is a fund raising trip for the FNPS.

We will stay in several different jungle lodges located deep in forest reserves where great flora and fauna viewing is the most abundant during this rainforest adventure. These areas contain the highest diversity of tree and bird species in the world and we will have the opportunity to view the rainforest from 115 feet up on the world's longest Treetop Canopy Walkway!

The trip will leave from Miami on October 19th and return on the 28th.

An optional 4 day extension is available which includes the Paracas National Reserve with its "Little Galapagos Islands" and a tour of the incredible Nazca Lines.

The cost for this nature trip is \$2,795.00. The extension cost is \$575.00.

Talk to folks who have gone on these trips before and you'll discover that they are fun, friendly, and educational. This trip will be hosted by Jo Anne Trebatoski, fellow FNPS member.

For more details and to register for the trip, please view the information and links on the FNPS website or e-mail Jo Anne at plantnative@earthlink.net or call 800-466-9660.

Silent Auction – 2008 Conference

Christine Holyland

It is not too early to think about contributing to the 2008 Conference Silent Auction in May of next year.

Ask your self, friends, family, your chapter, a favorite store or gift shop, and so forth, to support our efforts and contribute an item for our Silent Auction.

Items should preferably be in some way related to nature, plants, natural history... They can be gift certificates, books, jewelry, T-shirts, pictures, plants, a vacation at a condo or anything else you can think of will be very much appreciated.

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

Report from Conference, continued

good news is that natives are chock full of digestible minerals and vitamins, to an extent far beyond farm-grown foods. One tip we tested out right away as we took a self-guided tour of a longleaf pine restoration area on the UF campus, was that the first inch of the new smilax shoots tastes like asparagus. Yes!

The Landscape Awards portion of the conference provided another kind of practical and educational experience. Excellent photographs and accompanying text describing the projects were presented in several categories, including commercial, public and residential settings.

The FNPS Board Meeting, open to all members just our own chapters' is, revealed the topics currently of concern to our society as a whole. We now have a full-time salaried Executive Director, Karina Veaudry, who did an outstanding job as the Interim Director last year. Some of you may remember meeting her when she attended a meeting with us last fall.

It is of course impossible to report completely on the information presented in Gainesville, but I hope just a little of my enthusiasm has been conveyed here. The thrill of connecting with people who love plants and the places they come from, the chance to upgrade your own understanding of issues and techniques, these are made possible by the Conference. And it will be the Palm Beach Chapter's turn to make it all happen in 2009! Let's get ready!

A Note about FNPS Chapter Newsletters

Peggy Lantz, former editor of the *Sabal minor* and of **The Palmetto**, is requesting that FNPS chapters not continue mailing her their newsletters. She enjoys reading them, but would prefer that you send them by email to peglantz@bellsouth.net. Thanks.



Leave a conservation legacy.
Help contribute to the stability and
long-term growth of the FNPS:
remember us in your will.

For further discussion, contact:
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FNPS Board of Directors Meeting Schedule 2007-2008

All meetings are on Saturdays, with the exception of the conference BOD meeting. Visit the website at www.fnps.org / Member Services/ Society Coordination / Society Calendar close to the meeting dates for details.

July 14, 2007: Tibet Butler Preserve, Orlando area

November 2007 (1st Saturday probably): Joint meeting with AFNN, Sweetbay Nursery in Parish near Sarasota

February 16-17, 2008: BOD Meeting and Two Day Retreat, Haines City, FFA Leadership Center in Catfish Creek area

May 15, 2008 (*Thursday*): Conference Site in Palmetto, FL (near Bradenton) Manatee Convention Center (also called the Manatee Civic Center)

August 16, 2008: Lake County, Leesburg area, Dr. Plakke's Preservation/Restoration Project Location area

November 2008: Joint meeting with AFNN, date and place to be determined

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