

Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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www.fnps.org • info@fnps.org • President: Steve Woodmansee, email: president@fnps.org

Message from the Executive Director

Dear FNPS members,

I have long admired the Florida Native Plant Society and am thrilled to join this team of volunteers and professionals committed to the preservation, conservation and restoration of our native plants and natural communities. I look forward to working with each and every one of you to help sustain and grow this vibrant community of native plant supporters.

I first learned of the Society while directing the Cape Florida Project on Key Biscayne. The project was a volunteer-driven restoration of Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park in the wake of Hurricane Andrew's destruction. The storm provided a unique opportunity to replace the Australian pine monoculture with the native plant communities that had existed there historically. Many of you volunteered countless hours removing exotic species, working in the park's nursery, and planting native species. Members were also trusted vendors, collecting seed and growing plants for the project, while others still were knowledgeable consultants, lending their expertise to the ambitious effort. I know first-hand of your dedication to the protection of our natural heritage.

Working within the conservation community for the past 20 years, I've been fortunate to serve many worthy organizations: Program Specialist with the Florida Park Service, Project Director with the American Littoral Society, Habitat Director with the Delaware Estuary Program, and Development Director with the Wildlands Network. Whether working on the ground or at the nonprofit management level, I have pursued nature protection throughout my career, and I am honored by the opportunity before me now with the Florida Native Plant Society.

As I begin my tenure, I'd like to reflect on some of the strengths of the Society. In 2012, the organization will have been active 32 years. In that time, 37 chapters have been established and 31 conferences have been held. The Society's many programs have educated a generation of Floridians, developed landscape ordinances and legal protections, provided funding to conservationists, and added publications to the general literature on native plants. This is but a fraction of the group's many accomplishments and it is you, the member, who has made this organization strong. We will continue to rely on you to build from this solid foundation. Working together, we will grow our membership, expand our reach, and generate the support needed to protect Florida's full array of native plants and diverse natural communities.

Sincerely,

Kellie A. Westervelt



Chapter Happenings

- **Dade Chapter** The Dade chapter, along with Miami Dade College–Kendall Campus, will host **Native Plant Day** on March 10. This FREE program will include speakers, activities and walks, all at a new venue! For more information, visit <http://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/nativeplantday.php>.
Saturday, March 10
Miami Dade College's Landscape Technology Center
11011 SW 104 Street, Miami, 33176
- **Mangrove Chapter** The Mangrove chapter is holding their **10th Annual Plant Native Day** on February 25. This outreach program includes guest speakers, guided walks and plant sales and offers an opportunity to learn more about native plants and their benefit both in nature and in your landscape. For more information, visit <http://mangrove.fnpschapters.org/index.php>.
Saturday, February 25, 9:30am
Cedar Point Environmental Park
2300 Placida Rd, Englewood, 34224
- **Nature Coast Chapter** The Nature Coast chapter will host its **Annual Spring Plant Sale** on March 31. They will have a variety of native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, vines, grasses and groundcover plants for sale as well as books. There will also be a Pasco Master Gardener information table. For more information, visit the Nature Coast chapter website at www.pasconativeplants.org or contact Peggy Gretchen at herculesmpg@hotmail.com or 813-991-4812.
Saturday, March 31, 10am–2pm
Land O'Lakes Community Center
5401 Land O'Lakes Blvd/US 41,
Pasco County, 34639

Tell us what **YOUR** chapter is up to. Send your Chapter Happenings to stacey@impactpress.com.

FNPS 2012 Endowment Grant Research Awards & Conservation Grant Awards

The Florida Native Plant Society maintains an Endowment Research Grant program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. These are grants of \$1500 or less, awarded for a 1-year period and intended to support research that forwards the FNPS mission “to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.”

FNPS Conservation Grants support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida. These are grants of \$1500 or less, awarded for a 1-year period. Examples of projects that this grant supports are on-the-ground native plant community restoration, land acquisition and habitat enhancement. To qualify for a Conservation Grant, the proposed project must be sponsored by an FNPS Chapter.

Application guidelines and details are on the FNPS website (www.fnps.org) under ‘Awards and Grants.’ Application deadline for the 2012 Awards is March 2, 2012. Awards will be announced at the May 2012 Annual Conference in Plant City. Awardees do not have to be present at the Conference to receive award. Questions regarding grant programs should be sent to info@fnps.org.

Call for Research Papers & Poster Presentations for 2012 Conference

The FNPS annual conference will be held at the John R. Trinkle Center, Hillsborough Community College Plant City Campus, Plant City, Florida on May 17-20, 2012. The Research Track will include presented papers on Friday, May 18 and Saturday, May 19. Posters will be on display on Friday and Saturday and the poster session will be on Saturday afternoon.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida including preservation, conservation and restoration. Presentations are 20 minutes in total length (15 min. presentation, 5 min. questions).

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as a Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer (paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov) by February 1, 2011. Include title, affiliation and address and indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

Upcoming Events

True Wealth Conference—Feb. 10

Please note the new date. The Center for Earth Jurisprudence will sponsor its third annual **Future Generations Conference** on Friday, February 10 in Orlando. The theme is “**True Wealth in a Green World**” and topics will explore legal, economic and personal models for honoring “a sense of place” with sustainable businesses, micro-lending, “green” economy/energy jobs, slow food, and other initiatives that support creating true wealth and transformed ways of living in today’s world. Speakers will include:



- Bill Belleville, award-winning environmental writer and documentary filmmaker, Sanford, FL
- Janelle Orsi, Esq., pioneer in the field of sharing law, “legal services for a sustainable, equitable, and sharing world,” Berkeley, CA
- Janie Barrera, President and CEO of AccionTexas, the largest non-profit microlender in the U.S., San Antonio, TX

Friday, February 10, 2012
Barry University School of Law
6441 E. Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL

The mission of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence is to advance laws and governance that reflect humans’ interdependent relationship with the natural world. The Center is located at the Barry University School of Law in Orlando. For more information and to register, visit www.earthjuris.org.

Request for Proposals for FLEPPC’s Kathy Craddock Burks Education Grant

The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) is soliciting grant proposals for non-native invasive plant education and outreach projects. The intent of these grants is to provide funding to organizations or individuals who will educate Floridians about non-native invasive plants and their influences on the environment and economy of Florida. Proposals will be accepted from individuals, public or private nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions. Application instructions and further information may be found at www.fleppc.org/edgrants.html. The deadline for submission is 5pm on March 1, 2012.

American Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*) by Linda Cooper

American Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*) is a butterfly closely associated with spring when its host plants, *Gamochaeta* and *Pseudognaphalium*, begin to emerge as common yard weeds. American Lady is a ‘generalist,’ meaning it is found in any habitat.

American Lady is easily recognized by its two large blue-centered eyespots on the ventral hindwings as well as extensive ‘cobwebbing’ in front of the eyespots. The dorsal wings are mostly orange and brownish-black with scattered white bars and spots. The forewing tips are squared-off.

Over most of its range, it is one of the earliest spring butterflies seen. It ranges over the entire US, although it is rare in the Florida Keys. Much is known of its natural history; however, there are still questions about its seasonal behavior. It does winter farther north than other members

of its genus and it does have a small migration both northward in spring and southward in fall.

American Lady has at least three broods in Florida. The caterpillar has a black head with short spines and hairs. The body has narrow and broad black bands interspersed with narrow yellow bands. Two rows of white spots dot the length of the body. The body also has long black-branched spines with round reddish bases. It builds a nest in the flowering tip of its host plants. When you find cudweeds or everlastings in your yard with a ‘fluffy’ top, it is more than likely that a female American Lady laid its pale green egg there; and when it hatched, the caterpillar built its shelter nest. It will continue to add to the nest as it grows. The chrysalis is cryptic and resembles a pale folded leaf or other plant material.

Welcome the weeds and the butterflies they bring!



Our New Website Is Getting Closer to Reality!

by Shirley Denton, Website Committee Chair

For several months, we have been working to replace our current website. We very much want to modernize it both to improve the user experience and to bring it into the present in terms of technology. In this process, we are updating both content and functionality.

Shortly after we started, I got an e-mail (via Administrative Services) from someone who was hoping to get us to pay him to upgrade our site. He said he could not figure out who we (FNPS) are or what we do. I sent him a link to a very early version of the new site, and his response was “Ahh, I now understand.” Hopefully, our members and others interested in native plants will also find the new site an improvement.

The website goals are:

- 1. Clearly explain what FNPS is and does.** We want to do this in a way that encourages people to participate and join.
- 2. Make information findable.** Our existing website was created with the idea that our committees would provide most of the content. This was perhaps wishful thinking, as many parts of the site were rarely, if ever, updated, and everyone who did update it had different ideas on how to organize their parts of the site. Basic information such as pamphlets, the model landscape ordinance, and various other publications are very hard to find on our current site. These types of information will be easy to find as they will come directly off of the main menu and the site will have a strong search capability. The new site will still have places for committees to post information, but the focus for the committee pages will be explaining what the committees do and how to participate. The news (i.e. announcements), calendar and alerts features have all been updated. While the news and calendar pages will be similar (they are on most sites), the alert system will allow for periodic updates on how issues are progressing (somewhat like a blog).
- 3. Modernize navigation** and make the site work better, not only on desktop and laptop computers, but also on mobile devices, including smart phones and tablet computers.
- 4. Add new information.** Stemming from an initiative started by our Education Committee Chair, Kari Ruder, we have interactive maps of interpretive trails that provide signs about native plants and gardens that either feature native plants or that have areas set-aside for natives. An additional feature was to have an interactive map that shows the major hot spots and big natural areas where there are good examples of native plants and their habitats. These are all functional and we are looking for someone to proofread the entries. There will also be opportunities to suggest additional areas and to post comments and rank the areas listed. Another new feature will be a page about FNPS history that includes several small slide shows featuring key people over the decades. These slide shows clearly demonstrate how photography has advanced over the last 30 years! If you are a former officer, or especially a former president, please let us know what you are most proud of accomplishing during your tenure (webteam@fnps.org). We will also have slideshows and other interactive features for some of our awards, most particularly the landscape awards. Matt King is working on this. If you have photographs from past winners, he would love to have scanned copies (he has the last couple of years, but we lack photographs of most older winners). If you have digital photographs of these projects, please send them to us at webteam@fnps.org.
- 5. Improve existing features.** Tracking of pages showed that the “Plants for your area” feature on our current site is heavily used. It provides lists of plants appropriate to landscaping in each county. We also know

it didn't provide much pizzazz or much information. This feature is being revamped to offer improved search capabilities and provide more information on landscape uses and requirements. Several people, including Mark Hutchinson of the Hernando chapter, have been working diligently to add photographs of natives in landscape settings and to enter plant cultural information. If you are in north or south Florida and would be interested in participating in this, your help is wanted!

- 6. Improve chapter features.** About a third of our chapters have websites. The other two thirds do not. About half of them use the Chapter Pages on our current site. The other half ignore them.

For all chapters, we will use Google Maps to provide an interactive map that points directly to the chapter's meeting location and that provides basic information on meeting dates and times.

For chapters using the chapter pages or chapters who want a simple way to maintain a site, we will have a major upgrade—a small, very basic site already setup for simple selection of “theme” or appearance and easy entry of chapter information including newsletters, the chapter's events that are listed on the FNPS calendar, and photo slideshows. These sites allow for both basic editing (for those with limited time or desire to delve into the details of web design), and increasing levels of advanced use ranging from adding pages to designing new templates. We are looking for a web designer who would like to tailor the existing templates to make them more appropriate to FNPS. It is easy! If you

would like to volunteer, please contact us at webteam@fnps.org.


- 7. Show an RSS feed from the blog** (and maybe do one for Facebook). The latest blog entry and links to the previous 10 show on the home page.
- 8. Modernize the background functionality—site administration.** We have moved to a very modern content management system (CMS) that allows the programmer to either use the CMS exclusively, or to develop new features easily. It provides for modern site security and modern site management. About half of the site is automated using the CMS (especially committee pages) to make them easily editable for people who are not web designers. The other half is custom, providing features that are new and not found in the typical CMS. This site is based on newer versions of html and uses modern versions of php (the programming language driving the site), css (cascading style sheets) and javascript (mostly for slide shows, sliders and other interactive features). Even though cutting-edge modern has meant finding some unintended “features” (a.k.a. “bugs”) in the CMS, it also means that we should have a solid window of being current during a period when many web programming and design features are changing rapidly. Anyone who is familiar with object-oriented php programming is encouraged to volunteer! I've learned a lot, and have been well entertained by this process.

The goal is to have this site be our site by late March. If you'd like to track our progress, you can check it out at <http://www.fnpsdev.org>. At this point, we'd like to discourage having it found by search engines, so features such as site maps and the search feature are waiting to be implemented until we move the site to www.fnps.org. The major (and likely only) news item (home page of the site) is a to-do list. When this goes to 0 items, we go live!

We still need volunteers—proofreaders (no web experience needed), web designers (you'd have free reign on those chapter templates), people to post content, and someone with the experience to better implement credit card processing (using the API of a major credit card processor).

And don't forget our blog, Facebook and Twitter. We ongoingly need people to provide content for these. Check each site for contact information.





SAVE THE DATE!
 FNPS 32nd Annual Conference
Preserving the Heart of Florida
 May 17–20, 2012
 at the John R. Trinkle Center in Plant City
 with keynote speaker Doug Tallamy
www.fnps.org/conference

The FNPS Online Store has moved!

Check our new and easy to remember location:
www.thefnpsshop.com

Be sure to visit often as new goods are added on nearly a weekly basis!

Want to sell your wares and help support the Florida Native Plant Society? Call Greg at 888-480-1881 or email him at The.FNPS.Shop@gmail.com and he'll be happy to help you get set up.



Pictured: Stained Glass Garden Stake by Angelika Traylor, Conradina Chapter

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Visit www.goodsearch.com to find out how you can support FNPS financially just by surfing or shopping on the web.

Want your publications in digital form?

We hear you! Each year a few more members request the option to go green and get their publications in digital form. So far, FNPS has responded to this desire by encouraging chapters to go green with their newsletters (and many do) and by providing our *Sabal minor* in digital form. By default, if we have an email address for you, the *Sabal minor* is emailed unless you specify that you wish to have it mailed.

We would eventually like to offer a digital option for the *Palmetto* as well, and we are exploring ways to provide the *Palmetto* in print and online in a quality format valued by members. While we're not ready to implement any options today, we're interested in hearing from members who would be interested in a digital option.

FNPS is now actively collecting responses from members who wish to receive any of their publications in digital form via email, rather than mailed paper. You can now specify whether you want to receive your chapter newsletter, your *Sabal minor* and/or your *Palmetto* in digital form. Just let us know by sending an email to info@fnps.org, or if you prefer, call FNPS Administrative Services at 321-271-6702. Remember to clarify which publications you wish to receive by email (chapter newsletter, *Sabal minor* and/or *Palmetto*). **Thank you for helping us serve you better.**

Next Board of Directors Meeting
 2-Day Retreat and Planning Session
February 10-12, 2012
 Canterbury Retreat
 and Conference Center
 Oviedo, FL

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