

# Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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Dec 2008 - Jan 2009

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.

## December

109th Christmas Bird Count is December 14-January 5th; for local info: [audubon.org/bird/cbc/getinvolved.html](http://audubon.org/bird/cbc/getinvolved.html).

This is a good time to transplant native trees and shrubs and to replenish your mulch (NO cypress! Use your local oak leaves and pine needles or buy Florimulch). If you trim and mow, this may be the last time you'll need to do it for the rest of the winter.

Looking for red berries? Check out christmas-berry (*Lycium carolinianum*), the wild coffees (*Psychotria nervosa* or *P. suzneri*), yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), or dahoon (*Ilex cassine*), to name a few. Also, one of our native poinsettias is in bloom, *Poinsettia cyathophora*.

## January

Time to do some weeding and a little light pruning. Water those newly planted shrubs and trees at least once a week - this tends to be our dry season.

Winter flowers! Carolina yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), gaillardia (*Gaillardia pulchella*), coral bean (*Erythrina herbacea*), dune sunflowers (*Helianthus debilis*), some wild petunia (*Ruellia carolinensis* or *R. ciliosa*) and some lingering climbing aster (*Symphiotrichum carolinianum*).

## Letter from the FNPS President

The Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida recently wrapped up the Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project, otherwise known as CLIP. The ultimate aim of CLIP was to develop a statewide geographic database that could be used by state and regional agencies to identify lands and waters with significant natural resource values. CLIP promises to be a useful tool for identifying lands that should be conserved through either land acquisition or the application of innovative approaches to development. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will be using CLIP to prepare their Cooperative Conservation Blueprint – a top priority in their comprehensive approach to protecting Florida's wildlife.

The CLIP database can also be of tremendous value to an organization like FNPS as we work to advance our own mission. Executive Director Karina Veaudry recently represented FNPS in a process administered by the East-Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC) to determine how the region will identify Natural Resources of Regional Significance across a seven-county area. That, in turn, will help guide the future direction of growth and development across the entire region.

The ECFRPC had proposed using the "Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas" (SHCA) data, which identifies important habitat for only a small handful of vertebrate wildlife species, to distinguish significant habitat for all the region's native flora and fauna. The SHCA were appropriate data to use for such a project, of course, but could do little to ensure that habitat critical for native plants would receive appropriate consideration as the region and its county and municipal governments plotted the future direction of growth.

Karina stressed the importance of using the "Rare Species Habitat Conservation Priorities" (RSHCP) data that was compiled by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory and accepted by the Century Commission as a primary CLIP dataset. The RSHCP data distinguishes habitat for 247 native species – 142 of which are rare plant species! Used in combination with the SHCA data, it provides a much more comprehensive, balanced approach to identifying Natural Resources of Regional Significance. The ECFRPC recently notified Karina they have accepted the FNPS recommendation and will use the RSHCP data.

This encouraging example clearly illustrates how the CLIP database can be used as a tool by FNPS to support our mission. There are similar regional planning efforts now underway in other parts of the state, including Northeast Florida and the "Heartland" region that extends southward from Polk County through Okeechobee and Hendry Counties.

In order for FNPS to make effective use of the CLIP database, our local chapters and membership should become familiar with it and promote its use to guide decision making at the state and regional levels. You can learn more about CLIP by visiting the Century Commission's website at [centurycommission.org](http://centurycommission.org), where you can download the latest CLIP report.

- Gene Kelly

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)

President: Eugene Kelly, email: [ekelly@tnc.org](mailto:ekelly@tnc.org) Editor: Rosalind Rowe, email: [rosrowe@comcast.net](mailto:rosrowe@comcast.net)

*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: 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

*Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*  
RUTACEAE



## Prickly-ash: A Cure for Toothaches and More

By Ellie Sommer

If you have ever inadvertently grabbed onto *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis* while walking in the woods, you are probably clear about

the common names for this small tree: southern prickly-ash or Hercules club (among others, such as toothache tree). Found throughout Florida, *Z. clava-herculis* prefers sandy hammocks, but can be found in dunes and alongside roads.

Hercules club and *Z. americanum* (northern prickly-ash) share similar ethnobotanical uses. Note that Hercules club is also a common name ascribed to *Aralia spinosa* or devil's walking stick, most likely due to the thorns along the trunk.

The sharp thorns on *Z. clava-herculis* emerge from short fat growths on the trunk, branches, twigs, and even the leaves of this deciduous native. Pinnately compound, alternate leaves are subtly serrated, and when crushed two glands emit a citrus-like fragrance – not surprising for a member of the Rutaceae family (Citrus). Small greenish-yellow flowers form on cymes at the leaf axils or terminal ends and appear after the leaves; on *Z. americanum* the flowers appear before the plant leaves out.

Considered a stimulant and restorative, prickly-ash bark was traditionally used for numerous medical conditions including chronic rheumatism, indigestion, dysentery, lung issues, colds and coughs, and skin conditions. The bark is warming and highly astringent, producing large amounts of saliva when chewed. Perhaps the most common and widespread use of *Zanthoxylum* bark is for toothaches. Eclectic practitioners (late 1800s) also used the bark to treat cholera and typhus epidemics.

The berries are considered more potent than the bark, and a berry tea treated sore throats and indigestion. Recent studies show the presence of berberine, which may signal antibacterial properties.

As a circulatory stimulant, prickly-ash is often used in herbal formulas to transport and promote absorption of other herbs. The taste of prickly-ash is not for everyone, but as a minor part of an herbal formula, it is palatable.

Before eating or using plants, remember to carefully identify them and check your sensitivity. If you are not confident in either your self-diagnosis or choice of remedies, consult a person knowledgeable in foraging or herbal medicine.



## Giant Swallowtail

Linda Cooper

Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*) appears to be two different butterflies, depending on whether seen from the top or from underneath. The top wings are dark with a wide yellow band near the wing edges and crossed with a wide yellow band across the forewings. The bottom wings are a buttery yellow with a blue band and red spots.



This is the swallowtail that feeds on plants in the Rutaceae family: cultivated citrus, Wild Lime (*Zanthoxylum fagara*), Wafer Ash (*Ptelea trifoliata*) and Hercules-club (*Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*). Caterpillars are called “orange dogs.” They resemble bird droppings and, like many swallowtails, emit a foul-smelling odor when disturbed. This is a butterfly that is easy to attract to backyard gardens because at least one of its host plants can be found statewide. It flies all year in Florida and ranges west to Texas, north to the Great Lakes and east through Virginia.

*Ed. Note:* Check out Linda's web site at [web.mac.com/lamug1/LaMug/Member\\_Pages.html](http://web.mac.com/lamug1/LaMug/Member_Pages.html); click her name from the members list, and on her page, browse through the menu bar at the top.

## Gardening with Native Plants

Candy Weller

Most of us who are beguiled with Florida eventually plant our favorite, yet suitable, native plants in our yards. Many others of us come to the Native Plant Society to find out what to put in our yards.

Why do we do it? Because the appropriate native plant in the proper place is pest-resistant, disease-resistant, drought-tolerant and dynamic. Gardening is about walking around the yard and admiring our efforts. It is about ambiance. A garden is an ever-changing, seasonal place. We are told the time of year or the time of day by our gardens. The butterflies, birds, flowers and insects tell us it is so.

Gardening with native plants is about knowing. It is knowing what you have, what it does, how it can be used, why it is here. It is about appreciating what this area has to offer. It is learning of the beauty, the use and the necessity of plants that admit life.

Gardening with native plants is not about miles and miles of homogenous landscapes. It is not about hiring people with tractors, mowers, weed-whackers, blowers, edgers and hedge trimmers. It is not about watering just because it is allowed. It is not about monthly services for chemicals. It is not about the money, chemicals and fertilizer going down the drain, or in our area, down the bay.

Gardening with native plants is about this: our part of the world, and that what we do in our yards impacts the entire region.

## FNPS BOD Meeting Notes

Notes taken from the meeting minutes by  
Christina Curanowski, Secretary FNPS

Our President, Gene Kelly, accepted an invitation to become a delegate committee member to represent FNPS on the Century Commission Water Congress (The Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida was established by the Florida Legislature in 2005 to answer questions relating to the impacts from population growth that include problems dealing with water). Our Executive Director has been representing FNPS on the CLIP council; also, she has posted her Quarterly report on the FNPS Forum.

The accounting issue that kept us from participating in EarthShare in 2008 has been corrected and FNPS will be eligible in 2009. In the meantime, FNPS has joined GoodSearch, another sourcepoint for receiving donations. Also, the FNPS website donation feature is up and running. The FNPS Annual Budget is to be posted on the Forum this month

Chapters have choices for tax exemption status; get with Executive Director for information on this.

The Conference committee reported that the schedule is finalized and the web information should be posted by January.

Kari Ruder is the new Education Chair, and she has posted the committee's goals and objectives on the Forum.

Volunteers are still needed to fill positions for Conference Website Manager, Merchandizing, and Membership Vice-Chair.

Native Florida Consulting, Inc., was reimbursed \$6343.75 for completing the Urban & Community Forestry Grant. Also, the Executive Director's contract was amended to more closely reflect her actual time/task allotments.

The board meeting and retreat in January is to focus on strategic planning. The President and Executive Director will compile and organize past visioning session ideas and send them to the BOD to review before the retreat.

There was a discussion of several policy and legislative issues, including how FNPS should be addressing the issues of biofuels, and greater protections for listed plants.

## Next FNPS Board of Directors Meeting

**January 9-11, 2009** - Friday evening through Sunday afternoon retreat; Camp Kulaqua, High Springs. In addition to its regular meeting, the BOD will be analyzing and visioning toward creating a three-year strategic plan for FNPS.

### FNPS Conservation and Research Grant Applications Due March 6, 2009

Annually, the Florida Native Plant Society provides  
up to three conservation grants and  
up to three research grants,  
awarding up to \$2,500 for each grant.  
Please see FNPS website, [fnps.org](http://fnps.org), for more details.

## Chapter Tips & Tricks

To jazz up your Chapter meeting plant raffles, prepare and maintain a stock of small note cards preprinted with various individual plant descriptions and horticultural care notes. Attach the relevant card to the plants at hand while you introduce the raffle selection at the beginning of the meeting. Members then have a "tag" to review the names of the plants later and the plant goes home with someone who has better information for its care.

## FNPS Travels - July 2009

Check out the 10-day trip organized for FNPS members to **Nicaragua**, July 16 through 28, 2009! Jodi Slapinski was our organizer. Go to [FNPS.org](http://FNPS.org) for itinerary and pictures.

Working with Latin American Adventures LLC, four guides with expert knowledge of Nicaragua's flora and fauna are scheduled to lead the group. From rainforests and cloud forests to tropical dry forest, from wetlands to crater lake, you'll be walking, boating, swimming, learning...

The trip is limited to 20 people, on a first come, first served basis. For questions, contact Elston Raimundo Chavarria at (954) 662-1539 or email your questions to [raimundochavarria@yahoo.com](mailto:raimundochavarria@yahoo.com).

## Field Trip Protocol, *or*

## Time for a Little Sole Searching!

from the *Pacific Invasives Learning Network Field Trip Protocol*

Organizing a conference, an international meeting or a local field trip? Make sure you and your participants don't introduce new invasive species, or take any home with them.

Invasive species – whether plants, insects or other critters, or fungi – can spread accidentally by seeds or microorganisms getting stuck to, or caught in, clothes, shoes and equipment. Small invertebrates (especially their eggs) can be caught in mud, folds of clothes, crevices in shoes and equipment. Pathogens, like fungi, can be soil-borne on shoes.

Before and after you visit a site, clean your shoes (soles, laces, velcro); check your clothes for seeds; examine your bag or rucksack and any equipment you carry, particularly fastenings, nets, or fishing gear, where seeds and invertebrates can be easily trapped and transported.

If you are planning to take food into a new site, take nothing with seeds – no tomato, cucumber, apple, citrus, or muesli bars – as any food which falls or is left behind could have seeds which germinate and cause problems in the future. Also, don't drive a vehicle from an infested site to a natural area.

If you are traveling for your field trip, another before and after step is to place all the clothes, shoes and equipment you are planning to take into the field with you in an airtight bag, spray inside with a commercial pyrethroid insecticide, tie the bag up tightly and leave it overnight.

## Support FNPS by Shopping

*Cindy Liberton*

With the holiday season approaching, you can automatically give to FNPS as you buy gifts for loved ones. FNPS is now registered with both GoodSearch and GoodShop. Whenever you use either, money goes to the Society.

Merchants listed with GoodShop ([www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx](http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop.aspx)) donate a variable percentage of each purchase, and each time you use the GoodSearch engine, a penny or two goes into Society coffers.

It's extremely easy to use. Just go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and follow the step-by-step instructions to select your charity (FNPS!).

## FNPS Land Management Partners Needed

FNPS Land Management Partners (LMP) subcommittee is soliciting a representative from each chapter. The LMP chapter representative would serve as the local contact person and distribute information about upcoming public land management reviews in their region to their FNPS chapter. Please contact Anne Cox ([annecox@bellsouth.net](mailto:annecox@bellsouth.net)) or Daphne Lambright ([dlambrig@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dlambrig@tampabay.rr.com)), for more information.

## Restoration Horticulture Degree

The University of Florida now offers a degree in Restoration Horticulture. Coursework includes botany, ecology and management, ecosystem restoration, plant establishment, plant physiology and pathology, plant propagation, soil and water science.

This is a huge step forward to ensure that there are people being trained for future conservation and restoration job positions in Florida.

The Everglades Coalition presents their  
24th Annual Conference  
**Everglades Restoration:  
New Opportunities, New Challenges**  
January 8 - 11, 2009  
Miami, FL  
Hilton Miami Downtown, 1601 Biscayne Blvd  
Information and registration is on-line at  
[www.evergladescoalition.org](http://www.evergladescoalition.org)

## Florida Bird Conservation Initiative

*Elena Sachs*

Several organizations and agencies in Florida are helping to develop a new program called the *Florida Bird Conservation Initiative* (FBCI). We have recently launched our website and welcome you to visit:

[http://www.myfwc.com/FBCI/FBCI\\_index.htm](http://www.myfwc.com/FBCI/FBCI_index.htm)

The FBCI website is meant to serve as a clearinghouse of information on bird conservation in Florida. Please be sure to stop by the "Projects" page on the site and take a few minutes to enter your avian projects into our project database. This database will be a searchable and comprehensive snapshot of avian research going on in Florida. The website will always be a work in progress and we encourage any input to improve it. Please review the site and send in any additional information that you think should be included.

## Selby Gardens Seeks CEO

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, in Sarasota, FL, is taking applications for their Chief Executive Officer position. For more information, contact Steven Chambers at 954-712-1101 or email [schambers@kittleman.net](mailto:schambers@kittleman.net).

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