

Sabal minor

A bi-monthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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Message from the President by Anne Cox, FNPS President, 2014-2016

Dear fellow FNPS members:

As you read this column, please keep in mind that there are many opportunities to get involved with the FNPS Board of Directors, Council of Chapters, and within your chapter. This column is a summary of the meetings and activities that the board and council have been working on since the last issue of the *Sabal minor*. For more detailed information, please go to the Forum, the link for which can be found at the bottom of every FNPS web page under "Society Resources." We want our members to be informed of all that is happening in FNPS. Please join us to promote the FNPS mission at the leadership level.

The FNPS Board and Council of Chapters have been extremely busy this summer. A small working group consisting of board and council members met in early July to brainstorm how the board and the council could work together for the mission of FNPS. A number of ideas came from working group conversations, including promoting October as Florida Native Plant Month throughout the state. The chapters already have their meetings and activities scheduled, so this event would help promote current field trips, plant sales, and special events that are scheduled. In addition, a special page on the FNPS website (fnps.org) will be available for all chapters to advertise their events. Andy Taylor, FNPS Director of Development, is currently contacting local governments and asking that they proclaim October as Florida Native Plant Month. This is our first Florida Native Plant Month and is a great opportunity to promote our mission and serve as a membership campaign. For more information see page 2 of this issue.

Others ideas flowing from the working group included:

- Encouraging existing chapters to post their events on the FNPS calendar (fnps.org/events/eventlist) so all visitors to the FNPS website can learn about the many activities around the state.
- Compiling plant lists for local and state lands and posting them on the "Hot Spots" page of the FNPS website (fnps.org/natives/hotspots). Many chapters and the Land Management Partners committee already work with county and state lands and can add more native plant species to those lists.
- Creating an FNPS team to work with small chapters to improve leadership and membership, assist with outreach activities, and grow the chapters.
- Continuing these small working groups and drawing from local chapters, the board and council, to generate ideas, address local concerns, strengthen FNPS, boost membership, and reach outside our organization.
- Producing field trip kits for kids who may show up on field trips, including a backpack with loupe, field guide, identification cards, maps, and more.
- Producing videos for the chapters on how to use the website. These short videos will explain how to login to the FNPS website, download their membership list, update the FNPS calendar, obtain a Forum membership and login, and many other topics to help members traverse the website.

For more information on ideas for FNPS, setting up working groups, or assisting with any of the above ideas, please contact President Anne Cox.

The schedule of upcoming board meetings is posted on page 4 of this issue and on the Society calendar. Below are summaries from board committees and members; board meeting reports for June, July and August

are available on the Forum for all members at www.forum.fnps.org/index.php/board_3.0.html.

FNPS Bylaws Ad Hoc. The committee has completed a preliminary reorganization of the bylaws paragraphs to make them more compact and to eliminate redundancy. Revisions for 2016 will be reviewed and the revised bylaws will be available by the November 7 meeting in Brooksville. See the Society calendar for details on the meeting.

Communications Committee (Chair: Shirley Denton, Suncoast Chapter).

- **Branding.** Business cards templates are available. Please contact Donna Bollenbach and take it to your preferred printer to have your cards made.
- **Logo.** The new logos are on the website (under "Society Resources") along with a statement of what is and is not "appropriate use."
- **Membership database.** CiviCRM has been configured and will replace DPO in November.

Conference Committee (Chair: Marlene Rodak, Coccoloba Chapter). The 2016 conference will be in Daytona Beach, May 18-22, 2016.

Conservation Committee (Chair: Juliet Rynear, Heartland Chapter). An ad hoc committee is working on the Dan Austin scholarship fund in addition to the conservation and science awards.

Council of Chapters (Council Director: Dave Feagles, Serenoa Chapter). A grant application to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust was submitted in August by FNPS Director of Development Andy Taylor and Council of Chapters representative Richard Brownscombe. The grant application was submitted for the printing of 60,000 copies of the FNPS native landscaping brochure, organized for six Florida regions. We should know in November whether or not we'll receive the funding.

Director of Development Andy Taylor (Suncoast Chapter). Andy gave a powerpoint presentation on civic and community outreach at the August board meeting. The presentation has been posted to the Forum. Andy has also been working with the Florida Native Plant Month team, securing proclamations all over the state for chapter participation. Let's all get involved with the first FNPS Native Plant Month! See page 2 of this issue for details.

Director at Large Peter Rogers (Conradina Chapter). At the August 15 meeting, new Director at Large, Peter Rogers, proposed a project to partner with a university and have business students take on the assignment as part of their coursework. Having done a similar project for a nonprofit as a graduate business student himself, this is a real "win-win": FNPS obtains valuable information and students obtain valuable experience doing market research. Please read his amazing report and contact Peter to help with this project.

Education Committee (Chair: Debra Klein, Cocoplum Chapter). The film, *Walk in the Florida Dry Prairie*, is posted on the FNPS website.

Finance Committee (Chair: Devon Higginbotham, Suncoast Chapter). An ad hoc committee is working on a corporate donor policy. The board

(continued on page 2)

Celebrate FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT MONTH October 2015

submitted by Donna Bollenbach, Jonnie Spitzer and Jan Allyn, FNPS Florida Native Plant Month Committee

In an effort to increase the recognition of FNPS at the state and local levels, and to solidify the organization as one body rather than a loose connection of chapters, a handful of members got together to brainstorm ideas. One of these ideas was moved forward to the FNPS board and approved in August: **The month of October will be officially declared “Florida Native Plant Month.”** We will also designate a “Florida Native Plant of the Year.” FNPS Director of Development Andy Taylor has already started promoting the event to local and state governments — and some have already put the resolutions in motion.

Not only is the idea of a Florida Native Plant Month and Native Plant of the Year a great way to introduce the public to the benefits of native plants, it will provide a strong framework to promote the FNPS mission to preserve, conserve and restore native plant communities to our local and state elected officials. It will also allow us to reach more people, boost membership, and increase donations to the society.

What does this mean to you? Many FNPS chapters already have a lot of activities planned for October as it is a popular month for plant sales, plant walks and other outdoor events. Chapters are encouraged to promote their events as part of the FNPS Florida Native Plant Month.



For example, Suncoast Chapter has a plant sale, a meeting and a camping trip planned for October. Those events will be promoted locally and by FNPS as part of Florida Native Plant Month. If any local, county or state government makes a proclamation to declare October Florida Native Plant Month, FNPS will send a small delegation of members to the meeting to accept the proclamation.

This is an exciting movement for FNPS, and to get the full benefit, we need you to spread the word, promote your events and join us in celebrating Florida Native Plant Month. If you would like to be part of the statewide committee to promote this event, please contact Donna Bollenbach at donna.bollenbach@gmail.com.

2016 FNPS Conference Silent Auction

One of the biggest fundraisers to support FNPS’ annual conference is the silent auction. Items included in the auction consist of technical/field books on plants and Florida natural history, artwork, gift certificates from local businesses, and gardening supplies. We are currently accepting donations for the upcoming conference to be held in Daytona Beach in 2016. **If you are interested in contributing an item or soliciting items for the auction, please contact Ray Jarrett at rayjarrett1@gmail.com or 386-295-0481.** Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

(President’s message, continued from page 1)

will be posted on the Forum under the Finance Committee, and FNPS members are encouraged to respond to Devon with input.

Land Management Partners Committee (Chair: Danny Young, Pawpaw Chapter). LMP has posted the 2015–2016 FDEP Land Management Reviews schedule at fnps.org/committee/partners. **Please contact Kevin Love for scheduling.**

Membership Committee (Chair: Jonnie Spitzer, Nature Coast Chapter). Membership brochures were available at the August 15 meeting. A new order will be made soon. Please contact **Jonnie Spitzer** for membership brochures.

Policy and Legislation (Chair: Eugene Kelly, Hernando Chapter). The committee has begun discussions with our lobbyist about preparation for the 2016 session, which will begin earlier than usual in (January 12). Committee meetings will begin in September and run through November. We expect Amendment 1 spending and water issues to again be of primary concern in 2016. See the full report on the Forum.

Science Advisory (Chair: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D, Sea Rocket Chapter). See page 2 of this issue for details on the call for research track papers and posters for the 2016 annual conference. Chapters are encouraged to announce this in their newsletters or by other appropriate means.

The **FNPS botanical trip to Cuba** scheduled for November 15–22, 2015 is full with a waiting list. A second trip in April has been suggested. Please let **Devon Higginbotham** know if you are interested.

Society Happenings

FNPS President Anne Cox will be visiting all chapters in the coming year. Chapters visited so far include Palm Beach, Cocoplum, Pawpaw, Sparkleberry, Paynes Prairie, Suncoast, and The Villages. Chapters scheduled include Ixia Chapter, Naure Coast and Tarflower, and Mangrove Chapters. **Please contact Anne Cox to schedule a visit and give a powerpoint presentation about the Society.**

FNPS Board and Council of Chapters are updating the Handbook Wiki, our policy handbook, on the FNPS website at fnpshandbook.wikispaces.com/. All policies and updates will need board approval before posting. All members can access the Handbook Wiki for review. Please note that the policies on the FNPS website under “Downloadable Resources” are white paper/organizational stands, not operational policy and are available to all FNPS members and guests who surf the FNPS website.

Call for Research Track Papers and Poster Presentations for 2016 FNPS Conference

The 2016 Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference will be held in Daytona Beach, Florida, May 18-22, 2016. The Research Track of the conference will include presented papers and a poster session on Friday May 20 and Saturday May 21.

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

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as a MS Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer at paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov by February 1, 2016. Include title, affiliation, and address. Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

Chapter Happenings

Coccoloba Chapter members, along with Florida Forest Service employees, installed hundreds of native plants at Fort Myers Middle Academy to the surprise of teachers and students. They transformed an outdoor corridor into a bird and butterfly habitat, demonstrating how natural, native landscaping functions to provide food and shelter for wildlife. The planting was designed by FNPS member **Dick Workman** to mimic nature and includes a variety of native shrubs, small trees and wildflowers. The area will serve as an outdoor classroom. Fort Myers Academy is located in one of the most economically challenged areas of the city.

Cocoplum Chapter announces its theme for their new season: “Native Plant Connections.” They will host talks on the ecology of fire; water and soil in relation to plants; habitat associations of birds, bees, butterflies, and sea life with Treasure Coast natives. An interesting aspect of their planning was the search for a local expert on soil microbes. The initial topic was mycorrhizal associations, and the search took the chapter far and wide, revealing glimpses into a fascinating area of research new to the program planners. One member likened soil microbes and what they do for plants to the good bacteria in the human gut and what science is learning about their vital role in human digestion. The chapter encourages FNPS to share knowledge about the spectrum of soil microbes and how they support the plants we love.

Cocoplum Chapter is thrilled by their new partnership with the Martin County Public Library that will help them promote and present a workshop on Saturday, October 10, featuring **Ginny Stibolt**. Geared to recruiting new members and native plant friends, Stibolt’s free public workshop and book-signing will be enhanced by a complimentary lunch provided by Cocoplum members.

Conradina Chapter’s Native Yard Certification program has been ongoing since April 2014 when **Karen Magrath**, **Beth Blackford** and **Sharon Dolan** began the laborious paperwork process. Sharon, Beth and **John Boltz** worked to simplify the process and the certification was launched early in 2015. The chapter now has five yards that have been certified, and the last two joined FNPS when they certified! The application can be found on the chapter’s website at conradina.fnpschapters.org.

On May 25, the chapter agreed to update the plant inventory at the Malabar Scrub Sanctuary (part of Brevard’s Environmentally Endangered Lands program). **Wayne Matchett** has been the lead on this ongoing project, logging hundreds of photos and IDs. Occasional help was provided by **Martha Steuart**, **Carol Hebert** and **Suzanne Valencia**.

On July 1, **Jesus Pernaz-Giz**, **Carol Hebert** and **Suzanne Valencia** met to assess and discuss plans to rejuvenate a Melbourne city park. The energetic mowers and weed whackers had decimated the plot of native plants. **Jesus and Leslie Pernax-Giz** are taking the lead on this project. The city of Melbourne has agreed to furnish large boulders to mark the boundary and the mulch once new plants are put in. Hopefully, that will stop the destruction!

On July 3, **Martha Steuart** assisted in a plant inventory at the Ais Lookout Point Park in Palm Bay.

The chapter would like to congratulate **Peter Rogers**, one of their newest members, on his election as FNPS director at large.

Hernando Chapter will host their **2015 Fall Native Plant Sale at Chinsegut Hill in Brooksville on September 19**. Local native plant growers will be on hand to supply species for your west central Florida landscape. Fall is an excellent time to plant native perennials, shrubs, trees in this area. September’s ample rainfall helps roots establish before we dry off for the winter, while cooler temperatures reduce stress on plants. Come early for the best selection! Sale runs from 9a.m. until 2p.m. Plant and garden experts will be on hand with exhibits. Tours of the grounds will run from 10a.m. to 11a.m. and the newly restored Manor House will be open.

Hernando Chapter will participate in the 2015 Brooksville bellflower survey. Hernando County is home to the Brooksville bellflower (*Campanula robinsiae*), a tiny flowering annual with blue petals that is one of the rarest

plants on earth. It appears briefly in late March to early April at the edge of a very few seasonally wet pasture ponds; it blooms, goes to seed, and is not seen again until the following year. Its habitat was historically maintained in part by cattle as they browsed on competing plants, and their hooves broke up leaf litter, allowing the seedlings to poke through. In January, volunteers from FWC and Hernando Chapter helped Cheryl Peterson, Bok Tower Gardens conservation manager, do the job no longer performed by cattle on a site near Chinsegut Hill, where the plant was first discovered. Funding for rare plant conservation is limited, and Ms. Peterson was concerned that there would not be enough for a second trip to conduct a 2015 survey. The Hernando Chapter board stepped up to help with travel expenses so scientists and volunteers can perform a 2015 plant count.

Mangrove Chapter’s first meeting of the season will be held at Lemon Bay Park in Englewood at 6:30 on October 13. A complete list of 2015–2016 meeting programs and plant walks can be found on the chapter’s website at mangrove.fnpschapters.org. Plant walks are held the last Saturday of each month except December.

Nature Coast Chapter is hosting a **Florida native plant sale on Saturday, October 17 at the Land O’Lakes Community Center**. There will be hundreds of quality nursery-grown plants and books for sale, as well as a Pasco County Master Gardener information table. In celebration of Florida Native Plant Month, author and FNPS member **Ginny Stibolt** will offer a free workshop from her latest book, *The Art of Maintaining a Florida Native Landscape*, in which she will provide ideas and tools to help people who want to be more successful when they use more native plants.

Pawpaw Chapter continues to be busy despite the summer heat. Chapter meetings have been well attended. **Dr. David Hall** spoke on forensic botany, and **Kevin Bagwell** gave a program on natural and safe solutions for your yard and garden. Chapter President **Sande Habali** recruited several Pawpaw members to participate in a pollinator event at Tomoka State Park in June. In August, the chapter held a native plant swap at Shell Bluff Park in Flagler County. Chapter members continue to weed the native garden at South Daytona’s Park of Honor (in exchange for meeting space). **Marvette Bagwell**, chair of the 2016 conference committee, is holding monthly planning meetings as the chapter prepares for a great conference next year.

Many of the chapter field trips have been “dry-runs” of trips that will be offered at the conference. The June field trip was a huge success with 33 people boarding two pontoon boats to explore the Indian River Lagoon at Canaveral National Seashore in search of the elusive prickly apple (*Harrisia fragrans*). In July, 14 people identified plants as they paddled up the shady headwaters of Spruce Creek. The Cracker Creek Canoe outpost owner then gave a tour of historic Gamble Place.

Suncoast Chapter is planning another **camping trip to Kissimmee Prairie Preserve for October 23–25**, and all FNPS members are invited to join. Two years ago, the chapter camped (sorry, no cabins) at KPP and it was spectacular. The Preserve in the fall is cool, dry and ablaze with wildflowers for as far as the eye can see. Throw your tent and sleeping bag in your car and plan to join Suncoast members for the weekend, or just a day hike if you live nearby.

Next spring, April 1–2, Suncoast is traveling to Cayo Costa State Park for two nights of camping in primitive cabins (no electricity) and the only way to get there is by boat. There is a ferry service that will carry you and your gear, round trip, for a fee. Experience island life, if only for a weekend!

Contact **Devon Higginbotham** at archiveproperties@gmail.com or 813-478-1183 if you’d like to come along!

**Tell us what YOUR chapter is up to!
Send your “Chapter Happenings” to
fnps.sabalminor@gmail.com.**

The deadline for the November–December, 2015 issue is October 1, 2015.

2015 Florida Wildflower Symposium, September 25–26

Join our partner, the Florida Wildflower Foundation, at their annual Florida Wildflower Symposium, to be held at Leu Gardens in Orlando on September 25–26. This is the only educational gathering of its kind, focusing exclusively on Florida's native wildflowers, their landscape uses, and their natural habitats.

The theme of the seventh annual symposium is "Pollinators: Connecting the Dots," and features 30 presentations, walks, workshops and field trips, many of which will be lead by FNPS members. A plant sale will offer a wide variety of native beauties from Green Isle Gardens.

Dinner on September 25 will feature keynote speaker **J.C. Cahill**, an experimental plant ecologist best known as lead scientist on the PBS *Nature* series documentary "What Plants Talk About." (If you missed him at the 2014 FNPS conference, you missed a real treat. This is your chance to see his interesting and entertaining presentation on plant behavior.)

Visit flawildflowers.org/events/2015-wildflower-symposium.html to register.



2015 BOD and ExCom Meetings

- SEP 24 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- OCT 22 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- NOV 7 FNPS board and council meeting, 10 a.m.–5p.m., Florida Forestry Training Center, Brooksville

2016 BOD and ExCom Meetings

- JAN 21 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- FEB 13–14 FNPS board and council 2-day retreat, Camp Weed & Cerveny Conference Center, Live Oak
- MAR 17 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference
- APR 21 FNPS board meeting, 7 p.m., teleconference

All dates subject to change. Check the Society Calendar at fnps.org/events/eventlist for details and updates.

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"Plant Roots With Us" membership campaign *submitted by Membership Committee (Devon Higginbotham, Gail Taylor, Jean Roche, Kathryn Merry, Neta Villalobos-Bell, Patty Phares, Regina Wood, Cammie Donaldson and Jonnie Spittler)*

FNPS' membership campaign, "Plant Roots With Us," is well under way. We have designed and printed a new membership brochure and encourage all chapters to call the office at 321-271-6702 or send an email to info@fnps.org to request brochures. Ten thousand were printed and we would love to use them all to recruit new members. Our busy event season is coming up and every chapter needs to have plenty on hand to distribute. The goal is to build FNPS to 6,000 members by the 2017 conference; we now have about 3500 members. Every member can help in recruitment by following a few tips:

- **Invite a friend.** If everyone invited a friend or neighbor who joined next month, we would double our membership next month!
- **Just ask.** Have brochures available and in hand at all events and meetings and ask visitors and attendees personally if they would like to be part of our organization.
- **Recognize visitors.** At every meeting, make a special effort to make friendly contact with every visitor. If people feel welcome, they will come back again.
- **Announce the "Plant Roots With Us" campaign at meetings.** Let everyone know that we want new members to help support the FNPS mission.
- **Have an incentive to join.** Some chapters establish a period of time when they will give away a book or some other incentive to those who join during that time. A plant, t-shirt, book or the possibility of a free membership drawing are just a few creative ways to encourage new membership.