

Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1
February - March 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 or call 321-271-6702.

February

Greater sandhill cranes migrate from Florida northward. Nesting season begins for ospreys in north Florida. Wild turkeys and quail mate in south Florida.

Eastern moles and pocket gophers begin breeding, while gray squirrels are delivering their first litters and bear cubs are being born. American crocodiles begin mating and Leather-back sea turtles begin nesting on sandy beaches along the southeast coast.

Watch for fireflies!

Trilliums and dogtooth violets bloom in Panhandle ravines. Bald cypress trees leaf out in Big Cypress Swamp.

March

Swallow-tailed kites return to Florida. Migrating songbirds, in full breeding plumage, arrive in waves each week. Scrub-jays begin to mate and build nests in scrub oaks.

Largemouth bass start to bed in north Florida, as do redear sunfish in central Florida. Horseshoe crabs lay eggs on coastal beaches on the full moon at high tide.

Endangered gray bats return to Florida caves to raise young.

Watch for flowering bromeliads, especially in south Florida swamps.

Message from the Executive Director

Take Action to Support Conservation through Land Use Policies

With large areas of private land with important natural resource value, it makes sense to come up with conservation strategies that are linked to land use. Florida's current growth management processes do not offer large landowners many options, other than breaking up their land for sale. Public land acquisition has been an effective tool for conservation but it is severely limited now by lack of funds for purchase and management. We need to keep looking for new ways to achieve our long-term conservation goals.

Florida cities and counties make approximately 9,000 amendments per year to their Future Land Use plans. Rarely does a land use change incorporate the identification and conservation or preservation of critical native plant communities.

FNPS Chapters can play an important role in promoting native plants and the preservation, conservation and restoration of native plant communities at landscape ordinance workshops and more importantly by sitting down with individual commissioners with ideas and comments BEFORE any issue goes to the public hearing stage. We can promote the language to insert into land use plans and rules that would provide for defining and protecting these areas before development occurs. We can encourage municipalities to hold their Urban Service Boundaries where they are and promote "infill" development, thereby maximizing the use of infrastructure that is already in place and preventing further fragmentation of ecosystems. When land owners want to swap conservation areas for increased density on other parts of their property or to transfer development rights to infill projects within the Urban Service Boundary, we can encourage such ideas and incentives as components of Conservation Planning.

Find out: Are there Comprehensive Plan/Future Land Use changes being proposed in your county or municipality? Are the implications of the proposed changes to native plants and native plant communities discussed? Are the critical areas of conservation defined? Is the new CLIP process being used? Are there ways to provide more incentives for conservation/preservation? Are there incentives for water conservation? Is the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council mentioned?

If there is a workshop for public input, it is imperative that FNPS chapter members attend, as those who advocate for the status quo and perpetuate landscaping with wall-to-wall sod will be there, and sometimes it takes just *one* person with a perspective of protecting the environment and promoting native plants to make a difference.

If you create the language and present it to your city and county commissioners before changes occur, you can reiterate your proposed changes when the time comes instead of only reacting when the news of change is announced. FNPS can be a think tank for these types of proposals, and our website Forum is an excellent communication tool to start these discussions and ideas.

Karina Veaudry

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

321-271-6702 ● Fax: 815-361-9166 ● www.fnps.org ● info@fnps.org

President: Eugene Kelly, email: ekelly@tnc.org Editor: Rosalind Rowe, email: 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

Chamaecrista fasciculata
FABIACEAE

Partridge Pea

By Eleanor K. Sommer

Partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) is an annual in the pea family that blankets open fields and pinelands throughout Florida during the late summer and early fall. The showy, yellow blossoms attract bees, butterflies, and other insects. The cloudless sulphurs especially seem to love these plants, and they flit in and out of making it seem as if the yellow flowers themselves are airborne! The leaves of *C. fasciculata*, like its cousin *C. nictitans*, are sensitive to touch, light, and temperature. The plants provide food for birds, mice, and deer, but can be toxic to livestock. Both have traditional medicinal uses among indigenous people and early pioneers.

The Cherokee and Seminole people used partridge pea root as a tonic for athletes, to keep them from tiring. Seminole people treated nausea and stomachaches with an infusion; although there is no indication of what part, it was presumably the aerial

parts such as the leaves, as they are most often used in infusions. A decoction, or long simmering, of the entire plant also was used by Seminole people to treat urinary tract infections. Syrups made from decoctions and honey were also given to treat nausea. The moistened, bruised leaves were used to for topical sores, and a cold infusion of the pea pods were used to ease sore throats as the pods become mucilaginous when soaked.

Although no culinary uses are found in the literature, the plants were used by Mikasuki and Creek people to assist in the ripening of persimmons by layering the plants between the persimmons. Partridge pea leaves and seeds are high in phosphorus and protein, but low in fiber.

Note that some researchers indicate the leaves and seeds are a purgative and that consumption may cause gastrointestinal cramping in the same manner as senna. As always, properly identify any plants before sampling.

For more details and references for *C. fasciculata*, please go to my website, www.myherbalnotebook.com



Cloudless Sulphur

Linda Cooper



Cloudless Sulphur, *Phoebis sennae*, is the most commonly seen butterfly in Florida. It is a large yellow butterfly that ranges widely, moving north in small numbers in spring and then back south in huge numbers in the fall. You will rarely see

it with its wings spread, except when flying.

Males are paler and plainer than females, and their underwings are mostly unmarked. Females vary in color from lemon-yellow to orange-yellow to off-white, and their underwings have extensive markings. They have three or more broods each year and are found in all habitats. Caterpillars can be either green with a yellow stripe and blue patches on its side, or yellow with black bands.



Cloudless Sulphur is easy to attract to your garden by planting plants in the Pea family, such Senna or *Chamaecrista* species such as Partridge Pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*), Sensitive Plant (*C. nictitans*), Privet Wild Sensitive Plant (*Senna ligustrina*), Maryland Wild Sensitive Plant (*S. marilandica*) and a number of other natives in this family.

Lake County Park Teaches About Restoration

Wendy Poag, Lake Beautyberry Chapter

The North Lake Community Park in Umatilla is almost completed. The walkway around this Lake County park will have interpretive signs depicting each of the native plant species planted. The park is designed to be a model for environmental education, where one can view native species that they might wish to use in their landscape. The site has naturally dry soils, so the plant species are selected for this, and hopefully irrigation will only be needed for the plants' establishment.

Several acres of this 96-acre park are being used for a pilot program working with school children of all ages, to teach them about the restoration of the native scrub and sandhill ecosystems that were once present on the site. Park staff are currently working with several local teachers and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to obtain educational information. In addition, a butterfly garden is planned near the playgrounds.

This is a very strong program. If any other chapter would like to receive information or to promote this idea to their local city and county government, please call for information at (352) 253-4957.

Publications Committee Action

Bob Eggolf, Chair

The Publications committee is organizing a list of publications for FNPS usage. If your chapter has any publications to contribute, please email it to beggolf2@verizon.net.

FNPS Conference Call for Scientific Papers and Poster Presentations

Paul Schmalzer

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 200 words or less should be submitted as an MS Word file to Paul A. Schmalzer paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov by February 15, 2009. Include title, affiliation, and address, and indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster. Selected presentations will be part of the Science Track offerings on Friday, May 22nd and Saturday, May 23rd.

It's FNPS Awards Nomination Time

Karina Veaudry

This is the time of year that we seek nominations for the FNPS Palmetto Awards. FNPS awards are a great honor. If you know of someone that is deserving of recognition, please email executivedirector@fnps.org with a synopsis of the person and their work.

Green Palmetto Awards. Any FNPS member is eligible except for those serving on the Board of Directors. This award typically is for recognition regional or statewide contributions. The categories are: Science, Education & Outreach, Information, Service and Administration. Nominations can be made by any FNPS member. Selection of award winners is by the FNPS Board of Directors.

Silver Palmetto Awards. FNPS members who serve on the Board of Directors are eligible. The FNPS President nominates and selects these.

FNPS Public Service Award. Individuals working in the public sector who contribute to the FNPS mission are eligible (does not have to be a FNPS member). Nominations can be made by any FNPS member. Selection of award is by the FNPS Board of Directors.

FNPS Chapter Achievement Award. Chapters which excelled in an area that promotes the FNPS mission are eligible. Nominations can be made by any FNPS member. Selection of award is by the FNPS Board of Directors.

FNPS Mentor Award. This award is to recognize distinguished individuals in FNPS who have made outstanding contributions to the science or practice of native plant preservation, conservation and restoration. This is the highest honor that FNPS can bestow. Nominations can be made by any FNPS member. Selection of award is by the FNPS Board of Directors.

Chapter Tips & Tricks

The Tarflower and Lake Beautyberry chapters have been involved in providing comments for their local city and county landscape ordinance updates, ensuring that a minimum percentage of native plants are mandated and that preservation and incentives to minimize irrigation are included.

The Volusia County chapters have written comments to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) regarding the county's comprehensive plan amendment, which addresses Conservation Development. If the DCA agrees with the comments, the FNPS input will be transmitted to the County as recommendations that the County must consider.

The Pinellas chapter has started to track the amount of readership their electronic newsletter receives by tracking the "opening rates." If any other chapter is researching the opening rates of their electronic newsletter, please contact Pinellas Chapter President, Bill Billodeau, at billbillodeau@verizon.net or 727-322-9695.

Proposed Format for Larger Chapters to Participate in FNPS LMP

Anne Cox and Daphne Lambright *The mission of the Land*

Management Partners (LMP), a subcommittee of the FNPS Conservation Committee, is to provide government agencies (including state, water management districts, county, local), non-government organizations, and the general public with support in managing public and private lands "to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of native plants and native plant communities of Florida."

The Land Management Partners (LMP) subcommittee is requesting a liaison or contact person from each FNPS chapter to assist in identifying FNPS volunteers interested in assisting with local LMP support activities.

Here are a few LMP support activities for volunteers:

- participate in Florida Department of Environmental Protection land management reviews of public lands
- assist with plant surveys on public lands
- assist with monitoring and reporting the results of land management activities on public lands

The LMP chapter liaison or contact person would let his or her chapter members know about the LMP, identify chapter members interested in participating in LMP activities, and distribute information about upcoming LMP support activities to the chapter membership.

For more information, please contact the LMP subcommittee chair, Anne Cox (ecologinc@bellsouth.net) or the vice chair, Daphne Lambright (dlambrig@biotechnical-services.com).

Membership Renewal

When renewing your membership, please remember to mark your areas of interest and include your email address.

FNPS Board of Directors Approves Bioenergy Policy

At their January 10, 2009 meeting, the FNPS Board of Directors approved a policy on Bioenergy. FNPS President Gene Kelly stated that the timing of completion of the policy is ideal, coming ahead of the 2009 legislative session. It will be provided to lobbyist Sue Mullins so she can help FNPS promote a proactive approach with the Florida Legislature and ensure that candidate species for bioenergy will not create new invasive species problems or result in other negative environmental trade-offs. The policy statement can be viewed in full or downloaded from the FNPS website home page.

FNPS supports the development and use of bioenergy crops as an important element of a comprehensive energy strategy to reduce the generation of greenhouse gases, provided such crops will maximize carbon savings while producing a minimum of negative ecological impacts. For example, a widely championed biofuel plant, such as jatropha, may prove invasive when cultivated in mass.

FNPS policy statements are designed to support policy and advocacy work for your Chapter and individuals. By quoting and referencing vetted and empirically supported language in correspondence with decision makers, the weight of the Society is brought to bear.

FNPS Conservation and Research Grants Applications Due March 6

FNPS provides up to three conservation grants and up to three research grants annually, awarding up to \$2,500 for each grant. The applicant does not have to be a Society member. At the conclusion of the grant project, the recipient must provide a presentation to either an FNPS chapter or for the FNPS annual conference (either as a poster presenter or a speaker), or provide a written summary for an FNPS publication. Please see the FNPS website, fnps.org, for more details.

Take a Trip to Nicaragua's Ecological Areas!

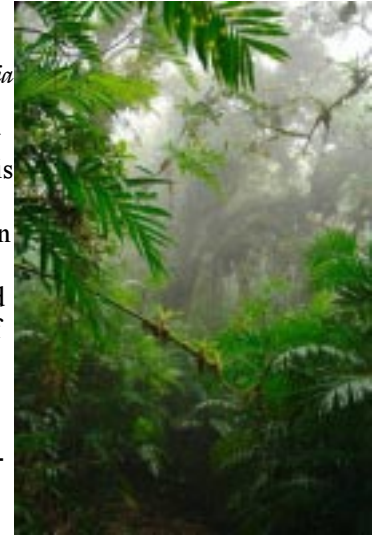
Elston Raimundo Chavarria

A unique trip designed for FNPS and sponsored by Latin American Adventures is an exciting way to join fellow FNPS members on an adventure!

Experience the flora and fauna of the natural areas of Nicaragua. Explore her dry forests, her cloud forests, and even her virgin rainforests. Visit a spectacular, warm crater lake, and tour a historic colonial city.

For a full trip itinerary, pictures of sights and lodging, and the registration form, see the FNPS website. Or you can email me at raimundochavarria@yahoo.com, or call 954-662-1539.

The \$2,995.00 cost includes all meals, lodging, ground transportation, air transportation to Nicaragua, air travel within the country and all activities (entrance fees to parks, reserves, preserves) This trip is Limited to the first 20 people to register! Trip dates are from July 16th to July 28th, 2009.



In Remembrance

Karina Veaudry

For four decades Henry O. "Hank" Whittier inspired many botanists and biologist in his role as professor at the University of Central Florida and as a Florida Native Plant Society founding member. He was an active member of the Tarflower chapter until his passing one month ago. If you would like to contribute a story or thoughts to be compiled in memoria, please send to nativefloridaconsulting@earthlink.net.

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #3311
Tampa, FL

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