

Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1

Feb - Mar 2007

February

Nesting season begins for ospreys in north Florida. Nesting season also for snowy plovers. Watch for manatees in spring runs. American crocodiles begin mating and Leatherback sea turtles begin nesting on sandy beaches along the southeast coast. Watch for fireflies!

Here are just a few of many plants blooming now: Black Eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Bloodberry (*Cordia globosa*), Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium rosulatum*), Buttonweed (*Spermacoce verticillata*), Carolina jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), Hat pins (*Eriocaulon* sp.), Jacquemontia (*Jacquemontia pentanthos*), Marlberry (*Ardisia escallonioides*), Marsh Fleabane (*Pluchea rosea*), Yellow-eyed Grass (*Xyris* sp.).

March

Swallow-tailed kites return to Florida, as do many migrating songbirds. Scrub-jays begin to mate and build nests in scrub oaks. Frogs and toads are on the move to ponds and other water bodies to breed. Horseshoe crabs lay eggs on coastal beaches on the full moon at high tide. Endangered gray bats return to Florida caves to raise young.

Our bromeliads (*Tillandsia* sp.) begin flowering. Also look for Peppergrass (*Lepidium virginicum*), Scorpion's tail (*Heliotropium angiospermum*), Savannah false pimpernel (*Lindernia grandiflora*), Slenderfruit nutrush (*Scleria georgiana*), Pink sundew (*Drosera capillaris*), Smallhead doll's daisy (*Boltonia diffusa*), Plumed beaksedge (*Rhynchospora plumosa*), Sand cordgrass (*Spartina bakerii*).

Message from the Executive Director

I want to share with you an overview of a couple of projects that I have been involved with:

Florida Forever Coalition. The \$300 million dollar, annually funded, Florida Forever land acquisition program created in 1998 as a successor to the Preservation 2000 Program, itself a ten-year land acquisition program enacted in 1990, will sunset in a couple of years. With Florida experiencing approximately 1,100 new residents each day it will be critical to continue the Florida Forever program with a successor program.

Florida Forever has acquired over one million acres since 2000 through numerous success public and private partnerships. This has immeasurably contributed the conservation of native communities throughout Florida.

FNPS has joined the Florida Forever Coalition (FFC), a collaborative effort with 15 other state and national organizations, to support the integrity and expansion of Florida Forever program with a proposed successor program. Our participation in the FCC, and my attendance at the meetings, will be one of the most important endeavors of our organization during the next couple of years to pursue the conservation of functioning native communities and to protect our unique biodiversity.

Multiple-county conservation planning prototype. On behalf of FNPS, I have pursued communication regarding conservation strategy with conservation planners with The Nature Conservancy, 1,000 Friends of Florida and the Audubon Society. I recently initiated a meeting to discuss large landscape conservation planning. One result of this meeting was the agreement that we will all participate in a multiple county planning analysis.

This study will be in the area of the state where the "Heartland Highway" is proposed. This endeavor will be a blueprint of how the area should develop by looking at the large scale, critical conservation needs FIRST before infrastructure and sector planning. Transfer of development rights and other 'big picture' planning strategies will be utilized. This will be done without municipal boundaries looking at the multiple county area as a whole. The main goal of this exercise will be that the strategies and concepts utilized will be a model for future large landscape planning efforts in Florida.

Another piece of news is that through the assistance of Cammie Donaldson, FNPS now has an (unpaid) intern. Ms. Patsy Wilcher is an adamant conservationist and has already accomplished a large amount of assistance. We hope to provide a diversity of experience for Patsy in exchange for her excellent and appreciated contributions to our organization.

If any chapter needs assistance in any matter large or small, please contact me.

- Karina Veaudry

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Deadlines for Sabal minor submissions are: 1/15, 3/15, 5/15, 7/15, 9/15, 11/15

Species Spotlight

Rivina humilis
PHYTOLACCACEAE
(Petiveriaceae)

Paul Wills



High on the list of supermarket impulse purchases, somewhere behind chocolate candies, are flowering house plants in brightly colored plastic pots near the front of the supermarket. The plants offered there generally meet the requirements of being colorful, tolerant of neglect and easily propagated. Among these hardy eye-catching plants is our local rouge-plant or blood-berry or pigeonberry, or sometimes called baby-pepper. This attractive plant, known scientifically as *Rivina humilis*, meets all the criteria needed to ensnare the impulse buyer. Its leaves are pointed, one to five inches long and broadest near the base. The plants will grow in full sun or deep shade and flower all year. The small white flowers occur in drooping racemes. The primary attraction, however, is the display of bright red berries, each about an eighth of an inch in diameter.

Florida's Institute for Systematic Botany puts this plant in the family Petiveriaceae, but many botanists still place it in Phytolaccaceae, along with Guinea hen weed, which grows on coastal shell middens, pokeberry, and the very rare basket vine. A common characteristic of these plants is their chemical composition, often used in folk medicine. The leaves of rouge plant are used in teas taken to "make blood," according some friends from Haiti; it is one of their "Geritol" analogs.

The generic name *Rivina* honors the German botanist and physiologist August Q. Rivinus who lived until the early part of the eighteenth century. The specific name *humilis* is Latin for small, dwarfish or growing on the ground. The red berries when crushed leave an orange-red stain on the skin, thus the common name "rouge plant."

The plants are easily propagated from seed and can be used in full sun or shade to keep a touch of color in the native landscape. Mature plants can get a little straggly, but they can be cut back to the ground to force new growth if your maintenance preference leans to the neat side.

It occurs naturally from Florida to Texas and Oklahoma and is grown in greenhouses further north for sale. It is also found throughout the Caribbean and ranges south through Central America to South America.

In Memoriam: Carl W. Campbell

Mary Ann Bolla

Dr. Carl W. Campbell passed away at his home on November 25, 2006. He was a Professor of Horticulture, Emeritus, and Consultant on Tropical Fruit Production. He was best known his research on the introduction of new tropical fruits to Florida.

Additionally, he was a local expert on native plants and joined Native Plant Workshop shortly after coming to South Florida in 1957. He led field trips and mentored many newcomers on native plant identification. He and his wife, Becky, were staunch supporters of environmental causes and worked tirelessly with The Nature Conservancy to preserve Fuchs Hammock, which is now a Dade County Park. His home garden was a showcase for both native plants and tropical fruits.

Carl was an early member of Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and one of his last programs given to the society in 2002 was "Combining Fruit Trees and Natives in the Home Landscape."

Not Just Another Pretty Berry

Scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture-Agriculture Research Service (ARS) housed at the National Center for Natural Products Research at the University of Mississippi have isolated compounds in the American beautyberry plant, *Callicarpa americana*, that may keep chomping insects away.

Charles T. Bryson, an ARS botanist in Stoneville, Miss., told his supervisor about his grandfather's use of the plant as a repellent, and research began. Charles Cantrell, an ARS chemist in Oxford, and Jerry Klun, an ARS entomologist in Beltsville, Md., confirmed that the natural remedy wards off biting insects, such as ticks, ants and mosquitoes:

"I've rubbed the leaves on my arms, and it works," Cantrell said. "We actually identified naturally occurring chemicals in the plant responsible for this activity."



Drawing by
Rosaling Rowe

FNPS Accepting Applications for Executive Director Position

Shirley Denton

The Executive Director is an Independent Contractor who supplies the following services to FNPS:

1. Guides and coordinates event and program planning, including but not limited to the Annual Conference.
2. Oversees operations of the Society, including administration, and development activities.
3. Supports, facilitates and integrates projects of the Society's committees to maximize their impacts.
4. Articulates the Society's vision to the public and membership, and promotes appropriate linkages with partner organizations, advocacy entities, and governmental officials at all levels.
5. Prioritizes activities in accordance with the Society's strategic plan and mission, and facilitates revision and refinement of the strategic plan over time.
6. Plans for and coordinates programs that implement the Society's strategic plan in a manner that optimizes results in relation to the resources of the Society.

Additional detail, including a draft contract, can be found on the FNPS web site.

Proposals from interested contractors must be received by **March 31, 2007**. Proposals should include the qualifications of the candidate, a brief statement on how the candidate would work with the officers and members of FNPS to achieve the desired goals, and a proposed cost for implementing the contracted services.

Submit proposals in a **sealed** enveloped that states **clearly** on the outside that it contains a qualifications statement and bid. Mail proposals to:

Florida Native Plant Society
PO Box 278
Melbourne FL 32902-0278

Kudos...

Congratulations to Don Spence of the Paw Paw Chapter. He is now on the Volusia County Soil & Water Conservation Council. He won the election with an overwhelming majority of the vote!



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:
Travis MacClendon
Vice President of Finance, FNPS
850.674.4408, travismac@wfeca.net

Chapter Tips & Tricks

The **Dade Chapter** has an annual *Native Plant Day*. This public event offers a full day of learning about native plants. There are programs, nature walks, displays, children's activities, plant and book sales, and all-around good times. Programs and walks cover a variety of landscaping and plant care topics, and plants in natural areas. The Chapter solicits vendors, volunteers, and native plant donations for this event. (This year it is March 17 at Bill Sadowski Park, Old Cutler Hammock, South Dade.)

Indian River Lagoon Project Addresses Invasive Exotics

Dana Moller

The many islands dotting the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) in Indian River Lagoon on the east coast of Florida are man-made "spoil islands," the results of an extensive effort led by the Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950s to channelize the Lagoon. These islands now host several invasive exotic species of plants. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas has been working, though the Spoil Island Project, to replace invasive exotics with native vegetation since 1998.

Once a month during the winter season, volunteers are organized to remove debris, exotic plant species, and build recreational structures on IR36, which is a small recreational/educational designated spoil island in southern Indian River County. Lately, volunteers, including members of FNPS' **Lakelas Mint Chapter**, have planted 38 sea grape, donated to the state by Coral Gardens Nursery. There are more sea grape, buttonwood, and several gumbo limbo trees to be planted, and SEFAP is currently working on a Florida Inland Navigation District grant to purchase additional coastal species and supplies. The IR36 project is the first concerted attempt within the IRL to turn an exotic invasive dominated spoil island into a "natural" ecosystem based solely on hands-on volunteer work.

Persons interested in volunteering for the Spoil Island Project are encouraged to visit spoilislandproject.org.

Ed. Note: Dana Moller is secretary for Lakela's Mint Chapter in St. Lucie County (Ft. Pierce) and is the Estuarine Ecologist for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Bureau of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA).

FNPS 2007 Endowment Grant Research Awards

Deadline is **March 2** for application for our grants, up to \$2500 for a 1-year period. Funds must be for the purpose of funding research on native plants. Grant awards are announced at the 2007 Conference. For additional information, go to FNPS.org or contact Paul A. Schmalzer, paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov.

2007 FNPS Conference

“Conservation Cures: By the Yard and Mile”

April 19-21, 2007
Gainesville, FL

Update from Gainesville's Paynes Prairie Chapter

The 2007 Conference emphasis is on conservation and sustainable landscaping. We also are highlighting our local land trusts in special panel discussions.

The speaker and workshop programs look great! Speakers include Paul Martin Brown, Marc Minno, Ray and Pat Ashton, Gil Nelson, Chuck McCartney, Steve Woodmansee, and Reed Noss. Field trips are planned to wonderful locations such as Goethe State Forest, Ocala National Forest, O'Leno State Park, Cross Creek, Morningside Nature Center, McGuire Butterfly Center, and -of course- Paynes Prairie.

There are still opportunities for anyone who would like to be an inside vendor at the Hilton Hotel on Friday and Saturday. Please contact Brian Quinn at BQuinn@ufl.edu for information.

Silent Auction donations can be arranged with Laura Nesmith, email blu_glas@hotmail.com or 352-378-5712.

The conference will be at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center, 1714 SW 34th Street, Gainesville, Florida. For more information about the hotel, visit <http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/hotels/index.jhtml?ctyhocn=GVNCCHH>

WANTED

Articles for *The Palmetto*
the quarterly publication of the FNPS.

Among the items published are papers on native plants, rare plants, native plant communities, restoration and conservation. *The Palmetto* reaches an audience of 2800 to 3000 members. Contact the editor, Marjorie Shropshire (pucpuppy@bellsouth.net), for details on submittal guidelines and other information.

Palmetto Magazine Deadlines

February 1, 2007
June 1, 2007
August 15, 2007
November 1, 2007

Gifts Aren't Just for Holidays

No matter the occasion -- perhaps it's someone's Unbirthday? -- here is an opportunity to give a great gift!

FNPS membership includes the Palmetto magazine, discounts on selected books, notifications about great events including the FNPS conference and great native plant sales, and serves as a personal invitation to all those good programs at chapter meetings.

It's an easy gift to give, too. Simply print a membership application form from the FNPS website

fill it out, check the box for Gift Membership, include your check to FNPS, and send all to:

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