

Sabal minor

A bimonthly newsletter for the members of

THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 2

April - May 2007

April

Wood storks in north Florida begin courtship and nesting; they need flooded, woody vegetation.

Long-tailed weasels, minks, and river otters birthing now through May. Bobcat kittens born this month and next.

Carolina anoles breed. Florida softshell turtles lay eggs now through July. Loggerhead sea turtles begin to nest on Florida sandy beaches along the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida.

The wet savannahs of the Panhandle are blooming; watch for pitcher plants! This is a good month to watch for monocots: crinum, iris, sisyrinchium, hypoxis, cyperus... But this is Spring in Florida, with a plethora of plants in bloom!

May

Bald eagles begin migrating north. Red-cockaded woodpeckers are breeding.

Bluegill are bedding during the full moon. Redbreast sunfish and spotted sunfish begin spawning in rivers.

Most bats give birth May through mid-June, as do coyotes.

A few plants to watch for:

Simpson stopper, *Myrcianthes fragrans*; coral honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*; goldenrod, *Solidago fistulosa*; blue mistflower, *Conoclinium coelestinum*; manyflower marsh pennywort, *Hydrocotyle umbellatum*; savannah false pimpernel, *Lindernia grandiflora*.

President's Message

We're rapidly approaching the time for the conference, and I'm really looking forward to a great experience. I hope you have already registered since the time is getting short and hotel rooms may be scarce (there is a ball game competing with us for room space).

For the first time in FNPS history, you can register online. Go to www.fnps.org and use the menu to bring up the conference page. You'll find a link to a secure site that will accept a credit card.

We're going high tech in other ways. We'd like to distribute the Sabal minor by email. This will let us have a free-form number of pages, color illustrations, and more. We'll also save money by not printing as many copies and not needing as much postage. This will be money we can put toward the Palmetto or FNPS projects. But we need your help. We have a very long history of not collecting email addresses. Many of you have given us addresses anyway, but we need to get them all — we have about half, and many of those are old. Please assist us by helping your chapter update its membership information or by e-mailing us at info@fnps.org. FNPS does not sell or share its email list with anyone, and we intend to use the email for very important messages only (maybe 6-8 per year including the **Sabal minor** distribution and a conference announcement).

We're also going high tech on membership. By the time you read this, it should be possible to join or renew your membership online. Many of us have been looking forward to this convenience for a long time.

At the last board meeting, your chapter representatives and state officers approved distribution of the FNPS model ordinance guidelines. These guidelines are intended to provide guidance to local governments who are designing landscape ordinances. If these guidelines are used, they will assist in maintaining native species in our developed communities both through conservation of existing vegetation and encouragement to plant natives, save water, reduce turf grasses, and discourage use of invasive exotics. The ordinance is online at www.fnps.org. A link for it is on the home page. Its permanent home is on the Conservation Page. If you know a government working to update their landscape ordinance, encourage them to download the model ordinance guidelines (or print a copy and give it to them).

FNPS is sponsoring another trip to a faraway place. The details are coming together. Keep your eyes on the web site for the registration announcement. We anticipate that it will be the Upper Amazon basin in Peru.

Earth Day is Saturday, April 21, during the FNPS Conference. The conference program honors Earth Day. Whether you spend it with FNPS in Gainesville, participate in a local Earth Day event, or just get out and enjoy the nature of Florida, I hope you remember the importance of looking after Mother Earth on this day and every day.

Shirley Denton
FNPS President

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

321-272-6702 ● Fax: 815-361-9166 ● www.fnps.org ● info@fnps.org

President: Shirley Denton, email: EcotypeS@myrapidsys.com Editor: Rosalind Rowe, email: rosrowe@comcast.net

Deadlines for Sabal minor submissions are:

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

SAND LIVE OAK

Quercus geminata
FAGACEAE

Peggy A. Gretchen

This is a native, medium-large, hardy, long-lived, broad-crowned, evergreen oak tree. Its usual height is 20 – 30 feet, but it can get to 40 feet. Its usual width is 20 – 30 feet or more. Note that the form is highly variable, and is sometimes confused with Live Oak in the horticultural trade. But Sand Live Oak is generally a smaller, slower growing version of Live Oak, with similar landscape and wildlife value. Some forms are more or less tree-like and rarely sucker. Others, however, are shrubby, sucker freely, and over time form extensive thickets. Select a growth form appropriate to your landscape needs. Field grown plants provide a better idea of the plant's mature form than those grown in pots.

Here is how to identify this plant:

Bark: Dark gray when older, lighter gray when young. Deeply divided into narrow furrows, becoming blocky with age.

Leaves: Alternate, leathery, dark green above with deeply impressed veins, paler and generally hairy below, margins strongly rolled under (revolute).

Flowers: Borne in yellow-green catkins in the spring.

Fruit: Small acorns about 1 inch long; produced in large numbers in the fall.

The habitat for this tree is usually sandhills, scrub, dry coastal hammocks, and coastal dunes. It is common nearly throughout Florida, except the Keys. Its Hardiness Zones range from 8 to 10A.

For landscaping purposes, this attractive, smaller-growing live oak is excellent for use as a shade or specimen tree, especially in the home landscape. It is also useful as a street or parking lot tree.

It benefits wildlife by providing good cover and nesting for birds and squirrels in its small, stiff branches. Large crops of acorns are a major and dependable food source for a variety of wildlife. This oak is also a larval plant for common Florida butterflies, such as the Dusky Wing Skipper and White-M Hairstreak.

Here are some cultivation notes:

Propagation: By seed – sow ASAP after acorns mature in the fall.

Soil: Deep, well-drained, sandy (may have some organic matter), acidic to slightly alkaline.

Light: Full sun to part (light) shade.

Water: Dry to moist. Needs well-drained site. High drought tolerance, once it is established.

Miscellaneous: This oak has a high salt tolerance and high wind resistance. It has a moderately fast growth rate when young. Tannin in leaves and acorns will stain sidewalks and driveways. Some forms will sucker from the roots. Select form appropriate to landscape needs -- no maintenance required if properly sited.



Ed's Note: The last Species Spotlight, Rivina humilus, was actually by Dick Workman, not Paul Wills. Dick Workman copyrights his articles and granted one-time use to FNPS for the Sabal minor. Please verify that your full name is in the content of any and all articles before you submit them. Thanks.

Hairstreaks

Linda Cooper

Spring in Florida brings out many hairstreak butterflies especially attracted to white blossoms of prunus, vaccinium and salix. In north Florida, Common Sweetleaf/Horse Sugar (*Symplocos tinctoria*) is highly favored for nectar as well as being the host plant for King's Hairstreak (*Satyrium kingi*). More commonly seen hairstreaks include White M (*Parrhasius m-album*), Gray (*Strymon melinus*) and Red-banded (*Calycopis cecrops*). Take time to search the blossoms of the above mentioned plants and you may be rewarded with small butterflies with tail projections - one of the hairstreaks. Shown here is White-M.



Lake Beautyberry Completes

FNPS Chapter Grant

Ron Plakke

Lake Beautyberry Chapter completed its Chapter Grant project and formally transferred a Native Plant Garden to the Discovery Gardens of the Lake County Horticultural Learning Center.

The roles of these gardens are to educate, lend assistance to the horticultural industry, stimulate public interest in gardening, create an outstanding visitor attraction and promote conservation by demonstrating environmentally friendly practices for gardening and landscaping.

Under the leadership of Barbara Grigg, Project Coordinator, the Chapter developed a 45 x 75 foot garden of native plants suitable for yard and landscaping purposes. An information container with plant and FNPS information was erected. Fifty plants were established with signs and stepping stones through the garden.

The chapter will continue to expand the plant numbers and help the staff of Discovery Gardens maintain the site. An open house will be held for the public when the plants are at their best this summer.

National Phenology Network

George Kish

The U.S. Geological Survey, University of Arizona, the University of Wisconsin and several other federal agencies and universities have established a network of locations to develop a long-term database of changes in plants in response to global change. Part of the database will be developed from records maintained by individuals and scientists.

Changes in bloom dates and “green-up” for selected groups of plants may indicate ecological shifts in response to global change.

FNPS members could provide important contributions to this network by suggesting appropriate species of plants for Florida and by providing information from notes and journals maintained by FNPS members. If you would like to contribute information or would like additional information regarding the National Phenology Network, contact George Kish at gkish@tampabay.rr.com.

Tree Festival in North Port

Alice White

The 9th Annual North Port Tree Festival is happening April 28th, from 10-2pm, at Dallas White Park, Greenwood Ave., North Port. The first 100 people to attend will receive a free 3-gallon native tree! There will be tree and plant sales, exhibits, vendors, food, music, and a special “Pine Cone Zone” for children. Call (941) 426-9752 for more info.

Chapter Tips & Tricks

The Dade County chapter has established an FNPS award for students entering and qualifying in their district’s high school science fair. This year’s winner was Nia Brisbane, whose experiment and presentation “examines the effects of environmental stressors such as nutrient availability and hydrologic stress in sawgrass, the dominant macrophyte found in the Everglades.”

FNPS Cutting Back on Tree Waste

FNPS is working to reduce the use of paper for its state and local publications. This applies especially to the Sabal minor and to various chapter newsletters.

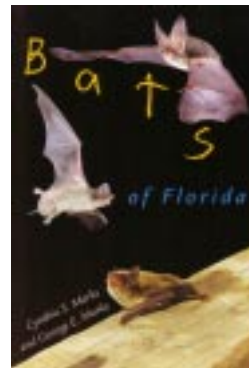
Please be sure to get your correct email address to your Chapter “chiefs.”

We will not be sharing your email address with anyone, and you still will have the option to receive paper copies if that is what you prefer.

This change will greatly reduce our paper and postage requirements.

Book Review

Rosalind Rowe



Bats of Florida

Cynthia S. Marks and George E. Marks, drawings by Tom McOwat. University Press of Florida (c)2006

Although our Florida native plants aren’t directly dependent on bats, consider that we can be outside more to enjoy our plants because our bats are out eating those pesky mosquitos and other insects!

Bats of Florida is the best single reference on Florida bats that you will find. In very readable terms, this book explains the biology and behaviors of these little creatures in general, and gives pictures and specific characteristics of 20 different bats.

You’ll learn which ones are solitary, which ones like groups, where they like to roost -- and how to get one out of your house!

The authors provide a detailed explanation of echolocation and what tools to consider should you want to get in on the “conversation.” Conservation issues and projects in Florida are discussed, along with instructions for how to build and place a bat house. There is a good discussion on the rabies question. And last but not least, a guide on the when-where-and-how of bat watching.

FNPS Members Retreat October 2007 Watch for the Date and Place!!

The Florida Native Plant Society is organizing a Members Retreat for mid-October 2007. The details are still in the works.

This informal retreat will give members from around the state an opportunity to mingle and enjoy the beautiful ecosystems of Central Florida.

Activities will include hiking, paddling, horseback riding, workshops, guest speakers, nature crafts, family programs, and much more.

Members' workshops will include an Advocacy Workshop hosted by the Policy Committee and a Chapter Workshop offering countless ideas for recruiting and retaining members at the chapter level.

Look for additional details in the coming months, and please contact Karina Veaudry (executivedirector@fnps.org or 407.895.8446) if you would like to assist before or during the retreat.



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

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

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