



Club logo:  
"Beach Sunflower"  
*Helianthus debilis*

# The Suncoast Grapevine

Suncoast Chapter of Florida  
Native Plant Society, Inc.

Volume 22 Number 9

SEPTEMBER 2005

Meeting September 21 7:00 pm

## Do Native Grasses Cause Turf Wars?

By George Kish

So what's all the "hay" about native grasses? There must be 10 zillion species of grasses – just leave a patch of earth bare for a few weeks and you'll see what I mean. Well ..... native grasses fill an important ecological niche in all of Florida's plant communities. They are used in most restoration projects to stabilize soil and to provide a framework for later successional plant species.

In residential landscaping, native grasses are often underutilized – even though they add contrasting textures, unique color, and wildlife value to the landscape. Come see the native grasses that are commonly available in the horticultural trade, learn where to buy them, and add native grasses to your plant palette!

**George Kish** is an exotic transplant who escaped from cultivation and has become naturalized in the former Pine Flatwoods near Citrus Park. While an undergraduate student (20+++ years ago), he spent much time in the New Jersey Pinelands and in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park identifying plants. George earned a B.S. degree in Biology from Drexel University and a M.S. degree in Environmental Science from Rutgers University. He is a hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Tampa where he studies the quality of surface water and ground

water. George is an adjunct professor in the USF Department of Environmental Science and Policy along with being a Ph.D. student. He is also the president of the Suncoast chapter (Hillsborough County) of the Florida Native Plant Society.

George spends an inordinate amount of time in his garden marveling at his backyard ecosystem. Living in a deed-restricted, turf-centric subdivision, he is constantly challenged to blend native plant landscaping with the everything-looks-the-same manicured landscape of the typical Florida subdivision. George is no Edward Scissorhands, so shaping shrubs into lollipops and pampering a thirsty, hungry monoculture (otherwise known as a lawn) is not his idea of fun . . .but deadheading native wildflowers could make him wish for a visit from Johnny Depp's character.

### DIRECTIONS TO:

Hillsborough County Extension Service, 5339 County Road 579, Seffner.

Take I-4 to Exit 10 (just east of I-75); Go South for two blocks. Office is at the corner of Old Hillsborough Road and County Road 579.

## President's Message

I've watched, as you have, the news reports of the horrible devastation in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama caused by hurricane Katrina. I have been shocked by the lawlessness and inspired by the spirit of Americans who carry on with nothing left and who risk all to rescue their brethren. I encourage everyone to help in some way to ease the suffering of our neighbors to the west.

Florida did not escape the fury of hurricane Katrina – opposite ends of our state sustained damage, but central Florida was spared this time. A major reason for the devastation in Louisiana was the storm surge that overwhelmed the coastline. Many articles have placed blame on government agencies, politicians, etc. for not doing enough, for cutting budgets, for putting off infrastructure improvements, and on and on. From a purely science viewpoint, allowing the Mississippi River to naturally build its delta and wetlands would have been the best course of "action." These natural buffers could have dampened the storm surge and lessened the damage.

All of the southern coastal areas are susceptible to the devastating power of hurricanes (wind, rain, flooding, storm surge) and if we continue to fill wetlands and build on them, we will continue to increase the odds for major coastal damage from even less powerful, tropical storms and category 1 hurricanes.

The native plant communities that have evolved in coastal areas have been playing a vital ecological function long before Ponce de Leon ever set foot in the "Land of Flowers."

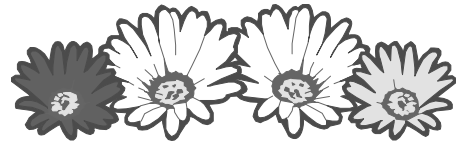
The public has lost sight of these important functions in the incessant quest to live along the coastline. Katrina was a wake up call. Beaches, coastal dunes, and maritime forests are native plant communities that buffer the land from the sea. They should be preserved and maintained as low cost alternatives to sea walls, levees, and other engineered structures. To do less would tip the odds in favor of major coastal damage.

*George Kish*

## USF Plant Sale

The USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale takes place October 8 and 9. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the September monthly chapter meeting. If you are unable to make the meeting and wish to help, please call Sally Sun at 935-1312. We need volunteers for set-up Friday morning, October 7; and to work the sale Saturday, October 8, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday, October 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We hope to have enough volunteers so that no one has to work more than once. We appreciate your participation!

Remember, this is our major source of income.



## NOMINATIONS TIME AGAIN

The BOD needs volunteers to become members of the nominating committee. The job of this committee would be to present 1 or 2 candidates to run for the BOD and to seek nominees for membership chair, field trips chair, and newsletter editor. We need to have nominees names ready by November 1st.

## PLANT PROFILE

- **Common name:** Scarlet Hibiscus, Scarlet Rosemallow
- **Botanical name:** *Hibiscus coccineus* Walter
- **Synonyms:** *H. semilobatus* Chapm.
- **Family:** Malvaceae
- **Zone:** 8-11
- **Plant Habit:** Large, semi-woody, erect perennial
- **Habitat:** Swamps
- **Size:** 5-6 feet; taller under rich conditions
- **Leaves:** alternate, deeply pinnately divided into 3-5 pointed lobes
- **Bloom:** Brilliant red flowers 4-8" in diameter with 5 well-spread petals
- **Flowering time:** Summer
- **Fruit:** Egg-shaped capsule 1-2" long
- **Distribution:** Peninsula, central and western panhandle; native from South Carolina south to Florida and west to Texas
- **Growing conditions:** Moist to wet soils
- **Light:** Full sun to semi-shade
- **Propagation:** Seeds; cuttings
- **Motility:** Slowly spreading by self-sown seeds
- **Maintenance:** Annual pruning to the ground; removal of large seed pods
- **Availability:** Native plant nurseries and sales
- **Comments:** Attractive to hummingbirds; goes dormant in the fall and winter

### References:

- Nelson, G. 2003. **Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants.** University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Osorio, R. 2001. **A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants.** University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Wunderlin, R.P. 2003. **Guide to Vascular Plants of Florida, Second Edition.** University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Wunderlin, R.P. and B.F. Hansen. 2005. **Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants** (<http://plantatlas.usf.edu/>).

Information compiled by Shirley Brown and Dick Wunderlin  
Photos by Betty Wargo and Allen Boatman



The Florida Native Plant Society was organized in 1980 to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. For more information about the Florida Native Plant Society, please visit our web site: [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org).

# Suncoast Calendar

## REGULAR MEETINGS OF SUNCOAST

### NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY 7:00 PM

SEP 21    OCT 19    NOV 16

**FNPS PINELLAS CHAPTER:** (Moccasin Lake Nature Park, 2750 Park Trail, Clearwater; 727-544-7341); First Weds; 7:30 pm

**OCT 10—Fun with Florida Grasses**

**OCT 23—Field trip to Starkey Wilderness Park**

**FNPS HERNANDO CHAPTER:** Meets first Monday of the month at county Extension service, 19490 Oliver St., Brooksville; 6:30 pm. Call 352-583-2384.

**FNPS PASCO CHAPTER:** Meets monthly on second Tuesday; 7:30 pm at St. Marks Fellowship Hall, 7922 State Road 52, Hudson, FL; 727-848-8000.

**SEP 18—Field trip to Brooker Creek Preserve**

**OCT 11—From Eden to Sahara**

**OCT 16—Field trip to Cypress Acres Nursery**

**TAMPA AUDUBON SOCIETY:** Meets second Saturday, at the Audubon Resource Center at Lettuce Lake Park at 3 p.m. Website: smkroh@tecoenergy.com

**OCT 15—A Nature Photographer's View: South Hillsborough Habitats & Wildlife**

**BOK TOWER** [www.boktower.org/whatsnew](http://www.boktower.org/whatsnew)

**Pinewood estate**—now open for a small fee

**OCT 15—Lake Blue Scrub Nature Walk:**  
9 am to 12 p.m. \$\$

**OCT 9—Edward W. Bok Birthday Recital** 1-3.

**OCT 9—Crossing the Moat** 10-11 and 2-3.

## CHINSEGUT NATURE CENTER

Meets 7:00 pm at Chinsegut Nature Center. Call 352-754-6722 or website: [/floridaconservation.org/chinsegut/schedule.html](http://floridaconservation.org/chinsegut/schedule.html)

**SEP 17—Butterfly Workshop** 10:00 am

**SEP 27—Big Pine nature walk** 9:00 am

## LOWRY PARK ZOO

For information, (813) 935-8552, ext. 239. or visit the website: [http://www.lowryparkzoo.com/html/12/12\\_calendar\\_events.html](http://www.lowryparkzoo.com/html/12/12_calendar_events.html)

**NOW—Safari School** offered for a fee. Up close and personal with various animals.

**SEP 24—Zoo Run Run** 7:00 am

Check out 'Zoo Boo' in the month of October.

**MASTER GARDENER PROGRAMS** Call 813-744-5519 for details and locations or website: [www.hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/HomeHort](http://www.hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/HomeHort).

**SEP 15—Vegetable Gardening** 7:00 pm

**SEP 17—Compost Happens, Rain Barrel & Water Wise Workshops** 8:30; Pre-registration required

**SEP 20—Citrus** 7:00 pm

**SEP 21—Salvias** 10:00 am

**SEP 24—Landscape Design workshop** 9:00 am

**OCT 5—Nine Steps to a Florida Yard** 7:00 pm

**OCT 10—Composting** 7:00 pm

**SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS** see website: [www.selby.org](http://www.selby.org) or phone 941-366-5731.

**Through AUG 29—An Artist's Tribute to Selby Gardens' Botanical Legacy**, featuring the paintings of Karen J. Schunk.

**OCT 6—Get the Dirt on Your Soil** 10:00 am Fee and Pre-registration required

**SIERRA CLUB OF TAMPA BAY:** meets second Wednesdays at 7:00 PM

Gulf Ridge Council of the Boy Scout's headquarters, 13228 N. Central Ave. Tampa; For information: 813-253-3555 or 727-824-8813.

**USF BOTANICAL GARDEN** 974-2329.

Volunteer orientation last Saturday morning of the month 10:00. Workshops require fee & registration. Website: [www.cas.usf.edu/garden/calendar.htm](http://www.cas.usf.edu/garden/calendar.htm).

**OCT 8—Fall Festival** 10 am to 4 pm.

**OCT 9—Fall Festival** 10 am to 3 pm.

**OCT 29—Native Plant Day** 10 am to 4 pm.

**OCT 29—Ghouls in the Garden** 4:00 to 7:00 pm

## HELP WANTED:

### FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPERS

Many of you might know that Suncoast Native Plant Society members helped plant a native garden at radio station WMNF. It was a “blooming” success and now volunteers are needed to make sure that the planting becomes established. Your help is essential!

The landscaping schedule (please see below) offers opportunities every other Saturday morning to promote Florida’s native flora. Maintenance gardening begins at 9:00 AM. to about 11:00 AM. When you arrive at WMNF’s studio, please begin weeding, trimming etc., and offer advice to less experienced volunteers (such as which plants to leave and which to remove). Also, you can bring extra garden trowels and/or buckets since not everyone will remember to bring tools. A sign-in sheet can be helpful to thank and contact people afterwards.

The WMNF’s station is located a few blocks east of I-275 in Tampa at 1210 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. The schedule is flexible so if there is another time which is better for you or for more information please contact Carrie Core at (813) 238-8001x134 or [carriec@WMNF.org](mailto:carriec@WMNF.org)

Landscaping Saturdays at 9:00 AM:  
September 10      September 24



## Glossary

Need help identifying native plants? Here are a few more definitions to help you from the [Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida](#) by Richard P. Wunderlin

### D

- Deciduous.** Falling off at the end of the growing season.
- Dehiscent.** Opening regularly by valves, slits at maturity.
- Dentate.** With sharp-pointed teeth, tips pointing outward.
- Digitate.** Palmately compound.
- Dioecious.** Having male and female reproductive structures on different individuals as opposed to monoecious.
- Distichous.** Arranged in two ranks, producing leaves or flowers on opposite sides of the stem in the same plane.

### E

- Ebracteate.** Without bracts.
- Eciliate.** Without cilia.
- Emarginate.** Having a shallow notch at the apex.
- Entire.** A margin without teeth, lobes, or divisions.
- Epiphytic.** Growing on another plant, but not deriving nutrition from it as opposed to parasitic.
- Erose.** With an irregularly eroded or jagged margin.
- Evergreen.** Retaining green leaves in the dormant season
- Exfoliating.** Peeling off in layers.

### F

- Falcate.** Sickle-shaped.
- Farina.** The mealy coating on a surface.
- Fascicle.** A small close bundle or cluster.
- Filament.** The stalk of the stamen.
- Filiform.** Threadlike.
- Fimbriate.** Unevenly fringed with slender projections along the margin.
- Flabellate.** Fan-shaped.
- Flexuous.** Having a zig-zag form.
- Floriferous.** Having flowers
- Fruit.** A ripened ovary, together with any other structures that ripen with it and form a unit with it.
- Funnelform.** Shaped like a funnel
- Fusiform.** Spindle-shaped, swollen in the middle and tapering toward both ends.

(To be continued.)



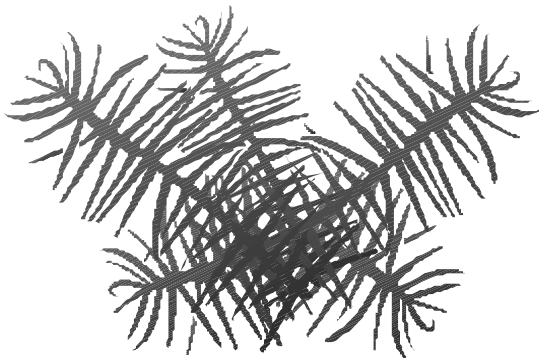
**Welcome  
New and Renewing Members**

**NEW**

**Leonora & Joe Guidry of Lutz  
Christopher Loy of Tampa**

**RENEWED**

**Mary Cross of Tampa  
Hugh & Cora Harless of Tampa  
Angela Hinchey Machado of Lutz  
Keith & Jan Moyer of Tampa  
Fred Spriggs & Sally Sun of Tampa  
Patricia Todd of Brandon  
David Gordon & Vivienne Handy of Lithia  
Loretta Hodgdon of Tampa  
K Cashon & W Moriarty of Plant City  
Jane Pugh of Tampa  
Brian Skidmore of Tampa  
William & Lenna Stone of Dover  
Merrilee Wallbrunn of Tampa  
Paul Zmoda of Riverview**



**St. Pete Beach Tree-Athalon**

Be sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, September 24, 2005, at 10:00 A.M., as the City of St. Pete Beach will be hosting the "Esurance St. Pete Beach Tree-Athalon."! Esurance, the direct to consumer auto-insurance company of San Francisco, California, sponsors this event, which is being coordinated by the City of St. Pete Beach; and the Tampa Bay Reforestation and Environmental Effort, Inc. (T.R.E.E. Inc.).

T.R.E.E. Inc. has been the recipient of a generous \$3,000.00 donation from Esurance for the purchase of several varieties of trees that are indigenous to this unique, sub-tropical region of Florida. The varieties include Live Oak, South Florida Slash Pine, Gumbo Limbo, Green Buttonwood, Geiger Tree, Redbay, West Indies Mahogany, Yellow Elder, and Bald cypress.

The trees will be planted at six (6) locations spanning the entire city of St. Pete Beach.

The Tree-Athalon will start at 10:00 A.M. at Lazarillo Park near the Don CeSar Beach Resort, and is slated to last for approximately two (2) hours, ending at Ron McKenney Park.

Volunteers are needed, and following the plantings food will be provided courtesy of the Blue Parrott restaurant, so if you can attend, please contact Richard Strickland, T.R.E.E. Inc. Secretary, at 813-920-0757 and let him know that you'd like to help out for this event three weeks from now.

For printable PDF versions of the event's News Release, Public Service Announcement and Directions and Schedule, please click to <http://www.treeinc.org/treeathon.html>

P.R. contact: Jennifer Thompson



## A Big Thank You

Thanks to those who contributed Raffle plants at the last meeting,

Remember, you get a free plant before the raffle begins when you donate plants for the raffle.

(Please sign the donor sheet so that we can acknowledge you in the Grapevine. Thanks.)

## Plant Raffle Guidelines

By Harriett Wright

When you bring plants to the plant raffle, please sign the raffle donor sheet and record the number of plants you donated. Before the start of the raffle, we will offer first choice of a plant on the raffle table to our speaker, followed by plant donors in the order of the number of plants donated. After these selections have been made, we will begin the raffle.

## Programs For 2005

By Harriett Wright

**January 19, Brian Schatz:** WMNF Project. A native plant demonstration garden for Tampa.

**February 16, Warren Clark:** History of Native Gardening in Florida.

**March 16, Carl Weekley:** Florida's Fire Ecology. The history of fire in Florida ecosystems, and the consequences of fire suppression, particularly in scrub and sandhill communities. How fire structures these pyrogenic communities, how a few endemic species respond to fire, and devices used at Archbold Biological Station to measure fire's intensity.

**April 20, Mark Hostetler:** Why the Hell Should I Mow My Lawn?: Thoughts, Issues, and Research on Developing Eco-Intelligent Communities

**May 18, William Lorenzen:** Tampa Bay Conservancy Project.

**June 15, Pinellas Chapter:** Landscaping and Gardening with Native Plants.

**July 20, Dr. Gregory A. Jones:** Birds, Bugs, Sunflowers, and Sustainable Farming; Joint meeting with Sierra and Audubon clubs.

**August 17, Sid Taylor:** Historical Commercial Exploitation of Pinus in The Land of Flowers. An expose of Naval Stores and turpentine Distillation.

**September 21, George Kish:** Native Grasses of Florida

**October 19, John Tobe:** Pitcherplants of Florida

**November 16, Steve Farnsworth:** Pseudonatives: Plants that are passed off as natives but aren't.

## Florida Native Plant Society Membership Application

Membership in the Florida Native Plant Society enables you to receive their wonderful quarterly magazine The Palmetto. Joining the FNPS also entitles you to membership privileges in the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc. and a subscription to their monthly newsletter The Suncoast Grapevine. Contact the membership chair, George Kish at (813) 920-0853.

New Member  Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business name or organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail and/or FAX \_\_\_\_\_

### Check pertinent category:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25           | <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-profit organization \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full time student \$15    | <input type="checkbox"/> Business or corporate \$100      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library subscription \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$100                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family or household \$30  | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$250                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$40         |   |

Make check payable to **FNPS.**

Detach and mail to:

**Suncoast Native Plant Society**

**P.O. Box 82893**

**Tampa, FL 33682-2893**

## Activities & Committee Chairs

### Field trips

Vacant

### Publications

Richard Wunderlin 977-6484

### Librarian

Vicki Sinclair 989-2896

### Membership

Vacant

### Newsletter editor

Shirley Brown 977-0454

Mike Fite, Assistant 977-0892

### Programs

Harriett Wright 908-9398

### Publicity

Amee Bailey Speck 863-206-3439(c)

### Refreshments

JoAnn Hoffman 671-2131

### Education

Betty Wargo 237-1509

### Book Sales

Sally Sun 935-1312

### USF Plant Sale

Sally Sun 935-1312

### Conference

Amee Bailey Speck 863-206-3439(c)

### Meeting Location

Harriett Wright 908-9398

### USF Botanical Garden Liaison

Shirley Brown 977-0454

## Newsletter Submissions

**Deadline for the next issue:**

**OCT 3**

Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to the editor, Shirley Brown, by the **deadline** of each month (earlier, please, if not typed). Text should be in MS Word; graphics should be in a standard graphic format. Previously published artwork should be accompanied by a letter of permission from the original publisher.

Mail:..... Shirley Brown  
1804 Curry Road  
Lutz, FL 33549

Email:...srbrown11@msn.com

## Meeting Locations

Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc. meets the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at either the **Hillsborough Extension office in Seffner** or the **Learning Gate Charter School, 16215 Hanna Road, Lutz.**

## SNPS Web Address:

[www.fnps.org/chapters/suncoast](http://www.fnps.org/chapters/suncoast)

## Grapevine Subscription

You may subscribe to the Suncoast Grapevine (not including membership in the SNPS or the FNPS) for \$10 per year. Contact George Kish at 813-920-0853.

## Officers & Board of Directors

### President

George Kish 920-0853

### Vice-president

Harriett Wright 908-9398

### Secretary

Amee Bailey Speck 863-206-3439(c)

### Treasurer

Pat Clouser 662-7222

### Chapter Representative

Amee Bailey Speck 863-206-3439(c)

### Board Members

Amee Bailey Speck 863-206-3439(c)

Shirley Brown 977-0454

Pat Clouser 662-7222

JoAnn Hoffman 671-2131

George Kish 920-0853

Bob Scheible 626-6815

Harriett Wright 908-9398

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Tampa, FL 33682-2893

Stamp



**Please deliver to:**