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The Suncoast Grapevine

Newsletter of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc.



Volume 30 Number 7

July 2013



Florida's Vanishing Springs: Lost Flow, Increasing Pollution and the Future of Our Drinking Water

Presented by Craig Pitman

Wednesday, July 10, 2013 @ 7PM

Nature's Classroom, 13100 Verges Rd, Thonotosassa
Joint meeting with Audubon and Sierra

Don't miss this opportunity to meet and network with our fellow support groups and listen to Tampa Bay's top environmental reporter! Craig Pittman is an award-winning journalist and book author who has covered many of the state's top environmental issues at the Tampa Bay Times.

In his investigative series "Florida's Vanishing Springs" published in November, Craig and a team of researchers uncovered the devastating truth about the state of Florida's aquifer and springs including Tampa's own Sulphur Springs, Ginnie Springs, and Silver Springs. He will also discuss the political process that has led to the neglect of our springs and what the future holds for our drinking water if action is not taken soon.

Nature's Classroom is a 365-acre environmental studies program and learning laboratory that is used by students of the Hillsborough County Public Schools. It houses an abundance of natural Florida plants, birds and animals which is why you may choose to come early for a guided walk with Gail Parsons.

Please arrive at 3:45 pm if you would like to join the 4 pm Nature Walk (bug spray, hat and sturdy walking shoes recommended). Contact Gail at gailpar1@verizon.net to RSVP.

At 6 pm a pot luck dinner will begin in the beautiful AIR-CONDITIONED comfort of the Teco Center for Environmental Studies. Plenty of parking can be found in the lot directly in front of the Center. Please bring a dish of your choice (appetizer, salad, entrée or dessert); plates, utensils, coffee and cold beverages will be supplied.

Bring your checkbook as there will also be a silent auction and plant raffle!

- submitted by the Sierra Club



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

Betty Wargo Remembered

Those of you who never met Betty Wargo missed out on knowing a great lady. She was a long time member of Tampa Audubon Society and Suncoast Native Plant Society. Betty was involved in Learning Gate School where our chapter met for several years. She was an excellent photographer of wildlife photos who contributed to our chapter's first book and to the Atlas of Florida Plants.

I have so many memories of her as we spent 5 years photographing and collecting plants at the Avon Park Air Force Range. We also took many field trips in Florida and from Colorado to South Carolina and attended FNPS conferences together. She will be sorely missed.

-submitted by Carmel vanHoek

Betty died peacefully Sunday (6/23) night at home per her daughter, Sandy Moore. Betty's photos of native plants are everywhere, and many of us will think of her often as we use the USF atlas. She received the Green Palmetto Award in 1998. The family has included FNPS in the list of suggested memorial donations. Also, they have made sure that Betty's extensive photo collection of slides of Florida flora & fauna will have a good, appreciative home.

-from FNPS admin. email, Cammie Donaldson



Thanks for helping with the June meeting to -

Shirley Denton for being our speaker

Phyllis Green for bringing the refreshments.

Fred Mulholland, Reed, Janet Bowers, Cliff Brown & Mike Fite for providing plants for the auction.

Note from the Editor

June brought the USF Butterfly, Herb and Native Plant Fair and we were well represented by Devon, Troy and Debbie. We sold a lot of books and had a guest at our June meeting as a result of being at the festival.

The recent Colt Creek fieldtrip had a huge attendance- 18 plus 2 that arrived late! Jabari brought 4 of his friends and we had attendees from other chapters also. I'm looking forward to the Joint meeting in July.

Shirley made reservations for our Kissimmee Prairie State Park campout (note the date change to late October) - see you under the stars!

- Janet Bowers, Grapevine editor





Abundant, inexpensive electricity isn't necessarily a good thing. Growing up in south Florida, we didn't have air conditioning so all summer, which was 9 months of the year, was spent outside, climbing trees, building forts and playing in the woods.

Today, the kids in my neighborhood spend all summer indoors, venturing out only for an occasional game of soccer or trip to the beach. Carmel vanHoek told me she remembers walking to school and trying to pick every different color and shape of wild-flower she could find, never quite achieving her goal.

What inspired your interest in native plants? Was it a walk in the woods with a grandparent or perhaps seeing a hummingbird in a friend's garden? Maybe you listened to a talk by a Biologist or had an intriguing teacher.

On this, our 30th anniversary of the Suncoast Native Plant Society, think back to all who have inspired you, taught you to love and cherish the flora of Florida, and think how you can inspire interest in the natural world, as you have been inspired by others. Reach out to those around you and invite them to "take a walk in the woods", show them how to examine a leaf in a magnifying glass or point out the butterfly larvae on plants.

Teach others! Inspire them to become interested in native plants by taking time to talk with your neighbors, a school class, a scouts group or 4H. You never know when you will inspire a future Botanist!



Devon Higginbotham



Photo by Joel Jackson

June 22 Field Trip to Colt Creek

Eighteen people attended including- 3 people from the Lake Beautyberry chapter and one from Hernando. We also had visitors including 4 of Jabari's friends (thanks to Bunny for picking up and transporting all of them to the park.) Luckily, we had multiple people who knew the plants. Thanks to everyone who helped identify plants. When we broke for lunch, two from Pine Lily came in -- they had gotten lost and had failed to get there on time! At least 6 had learned about the trip from the web site (all of those from other chapters including the 2 who showed up late). The first part of the trip was shady and then we went back down the road a ways to see another area and some plants blooming in the sun. It was great to see all the people interested in being outside despite the heat!

-submitted by Shirley Denton & Janet Bowers



Read any good books lately?

Philip Juras' book - [The Southern Frontier Landscapes Inspired by Bartram's Trail](#) is now available from the SNPS library. Check it out!

Note - Please remember that library materials are checked out for a month and are due at the next meeting, please do your best to comply with this. Other people may be waiting for the SNPS resource that you have checked out.

-submitted by Janet Bowers

Hernando Chapter Meeting

The August 5th meeting of the Hernando Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society is titled: "Playing locally - Get Kids Outside!". The enticements of technology has had the unfortunate side-effect of keeping a lot of the younger generation home bound. Karen Farley of 'Around the Bend Nature Tours' has spent the last 25 years learning the secrets of mother nature by walking local trails in the Bradenton/Sarasota area. She is now bring the advantages of modern technology to age old pleasures of field trips in natural habitats. Karen will discuss the why and how of field trips and how to lure kids away from video games by taking technology outdoors

Our regular monthly meetings are held at 7:00 PM, on the first Monday of the month at the Hernando County Mining Association Enrichment Center, 800 John Gary Grubs Blvd., Brooksville, FL 34601. Come as early as 6:30 for a bite to eat and a bit of socializing.

-submitted by Mark Hutchinson

Suncoast Celebrates 30 Years!

The Suncoast Native Plant Society is the Florida Native Plant Society's Hillsborough County chapter. The chapter was founded in 1983 and is one of the Society's oldest chapters. Debbie Butts (current BOD member and membership chair), recently reminded us that we've been around for 30 years. Looking through the membership list, I see several members who have been with us over 20 years and are still making a difference in the Suncoast chapter. **Please share your story by sending it to me at jbowers27@yahoo.com** for next month's newsletter. Let's celebrate where we've been and the important things that we have accomplished. Here's to the next 30!

Thanks, *Janet*



Dates to remember (Note- July 10 is joint meeting)

July 10 Joint meeting with Sierra Club, Audubon and SNPS—Nature's Classroom,
13100 Verges Rd, Thonotosassa

4:00 optional tour

5:30 social time

6-7 potluck dinner—Bring a covered dish

7-8:30 Vanishing Springs program with Craig Pittman

Oct 4-6 2nd Annual Wings and Wildflowers Festival in Tavares, FL



July 20 - Cypress Creek Preserve Fieldtrip

Location: Freedom High School (see below)

Time: 9:00 AM

Cypress Creek Preserve is located in the apex of I-75 and I-275 and south of County Line Road. We'll be on a mostly canopied hiking trail that meanders through 2,450 acres of wooded floodplain, cypress swamps, upland islands and pine flatwoods.

- Bring a Hat and drinking water.
- Wear shoes and clothes you don't mind getting wet.
- Bring a dry change of clothes.
- Mosquito repellent maybe useful too.
- Plan for 2 to 3 hours of easy walking.

Directions: If you're driving on Bruce B. Downs Blvd heading north, turn left on to Tampa Palms Boulevard West. (Across the street from Lowe's). If you're driving south on Bruce B. Downs Blvd., turn right on to Tampa Palms Boulevard. Drive less than a ¼ mile to Commerce Park Boulevard and take a right (north) onto Commerce Park Way. Drive about a mile; you'll be passing Liberty Middle School on the left and Freedom High School immediately after that. On the north side of Freedom HS, turn left into the school's entrance and parking lot. Follow the road along the north side of parking lot until you arrive at the NW corner near the baseball fields. There is a walk-through gate into the preserve a few hundred feet to the north.

We will be meeting near the gate on the north side of the Freedom High School parking lot at 9AM.
Field trip co-chair - Shirley Denton 986-6485



Future Fieldtrips

Aug 24 Upper Tampa Bay Park with a potential extension to an adjacent Hillsborough County Preserve. We will walk a trail that leads through coastal hammock out to a boardwalk through salt marsh. Expect a 2.5 mile walk. Restrooms and picnic area available.

Sept 21 Bell Creek Preserve. We will be looking for blooming pine lilies. We will also keep our eyes open for early fall bloomers. Florida golden aster is found at this site and there is the potential that a few may be in bloom (primary bloom time is October).

Oct 19 Lake Dan. There are excellent xeric uplands on this site as well as Lake Dan. This is a new addition to the Hillsborough County preserve system.

Oct 25-27 Overnight Camping Kissimmee Prairie State Park Camping. Reservations required. This weekend was chosen both for anticipated fall wildflowers and for dark skies. The park is noted for being a wonderful place for stars, and we are planning to be there at the new moon. The park features a broad expanse of dry prairie. **Please contact Shirley Denton, be prepared to pay for a campsite.**



Nov 16 Green Swamp— Fall wildflowers should be at their best. We will plan the specific location based on where recent burns have been conducted. **This trip is a week earlier than usual to avoid Thanksgiving week.**

FLATWOODS WILDERNESS PARK NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

On a recent June morning, Suncoast Native Plant Society members Mary Miller and Mike Fite assisted Rangers Dixie Morgan and Clint Perigard at Flatwoods Park to weed the native garden in front of the Ranger's Station. At the end of three hours, the garden was trimmed up and mostly weed free. Clint hauled away several ATV carts loads of debris from the garden. Additionally, old wooden sidewalk edging was removed. This edging required more maintenance and was a potential tripping safety hazard for park users. The next day the rangers mulched the garden with pine straw from the park. The advantage of using 'homegrown' pine needles is that it reduces the risk of introducing weeds or disease brought in from another location and it is cost effective.

There were a few surprises that were uncovered: a colonial patch of gopher apple, several beautiful Necklace Pods in bloom, Liatris hidden among the Horseweed and a small pygmy rattlesnake under a Wild Cotton plant. We were weeding carefully because in the past, Clint had been bitten by another little rattler in this garden. The group also enjoyed watching a Ruby-throated hummingbird feed on the Firebush and a Green Tree frog was sighted. Mary donated another *Hamelia patens* which was planted near a privacy fence to soften the landscape appearance.



Clint Perigard, Mary Miller and Dixie Morgan

A few years ago, with the help a SNPS grant, native plant gardens were established at the three wilderness parks -- Flatwoods, Trout Creek, and Morris Bridge in Northeast Hillsborough County. Signs were erected in the gardens which explained the benefits of planting with natives and mention the Parks Department and the Suncoast Native Plant Society. Since the appearance of these gardens are a reflection upon the Parks Department as well as the Chapter they need to be maintained. We would appreciate some volunteers to help share the responsibility of keeping these areas with the SNPS name on them looking good. If any Suncoast Chapter member or members are interested in adopting a Wilderness Park or doing occasional upkeep- please contact Mike Fite (bfite1@tampabay.rr.com) or Mary Miller (limpkin1945@verizon.net). This is a fun volunteer opportunity in a beautiful and peaceful setting which permits us to give back to the community!

-submitted by Mike Fite



Hillsborough County Wildflower Resolution Media coverage

The recent wildflower resolution about managed mowing of roadsides to allow native wildflower growth got some coverage in the local media. ABC news has a video on their website that includes parts of an interview with Troy in his yard showing off his rosinweed and gaillardia. It mentions the Suncoast chapter and is wonderful exposure about the benefits of natives. Many thanks to County Commissioner Al Higginbotham for his support of the resolution.

The Tampa Bay Times also covered the topic with an article featuring quotes from Lisa Roberts, executive director of the Florida Wildflower Foundation.

Check out the whole coverage at the links on SuncoastNPS.org

Plant Profile

Common name: Parsley Haw; Parsley Hawthorn

Botanical name: *Crataegus marshallii* Eggl.

Family: Rosaceae

Zone: 6-9A

Plant Habit: Small, deciduous, often multi-trunked, shrubby tree, usually thorny

Habitat: Floodplain forests, edges of wet woodlands, damp areas, old fields

Size: Up to 20 feet tall, but flowering and fruiting when much smaller

Leaves: Leaves pinnately dissected-lobed, broadest at or just above the base (parsley-like)

Trunk: Silvery-gray stems and exfoliating, old bark, exposing orange bark underneath.

Stems may have thorns up to 1 ½ inches long.

Bloom: White, five-petaled, ½ to 1 inch in flat clusters

Flowering time: Spring

Fruit: Small, apple-like red berries attractive to wildlife

Distribution: Eastern U.S., northern and central Florida

Growing conditions: Partially shaded understory of moist to wet woodlands

Light: Sun to part shade

Propagation: Seeds, cuttings

Motility: Some plants sucker

Maintenance: None, do not plant where sharp thorns may be a problem

Availability: Readily available from native plant nurseries

Comments: An attractive plant, even when not flowering, with delicate parsley-like foliage and interesting bark.

References:

- Haehle, R.G. & Brookwell, J. 1999. **Native Florida Plants**. Gulf Publishing Co., Houston, TX.
- Osorio, R. 2001. **A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants**. 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, from the August 2005 Grapevine



Photo by Betty Wargo

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 SNPS also entitles you to membership privileges in the Suncoast Native Plant Society and a subscription to their monthly newsletter *The Suncoast Grapevine*. Contact the membership chair, Shirley Denton, at 986-6485.

New Member Renewal

Name _____

Business name or organization _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Home phone _____ Email _____

Check pertinent category:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Renewal \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-profit organization \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full time student \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business or corporate \$125 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library subscription \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family or household \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$75 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$1,000 | |

Make check payable to FNPS.

Detach and mail to:

FNPS

P.O. Box 278

Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

Activities & Committee Chairs

Field Trips

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Steve Dickman 326-0221

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Publicity/ social media

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Outreach

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Troy Springer 967-4538

USF Botanical Garden Liaison

Kim Hutton 974-2329

Chapter Representative

Devon Higginbotham 478-1183

Webmaster

Ron Huston 951-0946

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for the next issue:

August 1 2013

Please send articles and original artwork for The Suncoast Grapevine to **Janet Bowers**, by the deadline above. **Text should be in MS Word; graphics should be in a standard graphic format (.jpg, .bmp, .gif).** Previously published artwork should be accompanied by a letter of permission from the original publisher.

Email-

jbowers27@yahoo.com

DIRECTIONS TO:

Hillsborough County
Extension
5339 County Road 579
Seffner

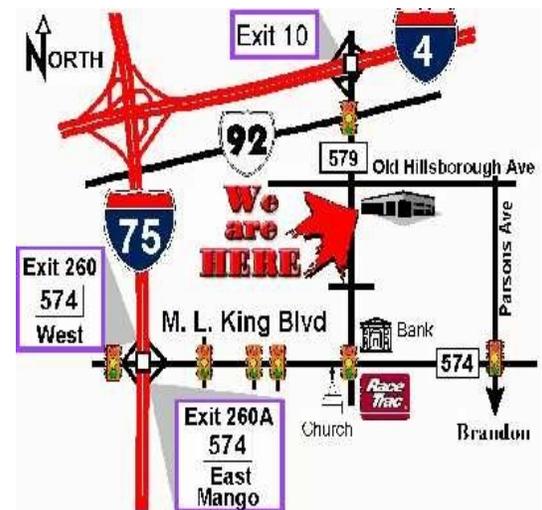
Take I-4 to Exit 10 (just east of I-75). Go south for two blocks. The office is at the corner of Old Hillsborough Road and County Road 579.

Meeting Location

The Suncoast Native Plant Society, Inc. meets the third Wednesday of the month @ 7pm @ the Hillsborough County Extension Service office in Seffner.

SNPS Web Address

<http://www.SuncoastNPS.org>



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