

The Understory



2014 Issue 1



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what

we are taught." Baba Dioum

I look forward to our monthly meetings and particularly enjoy the silent plant auctions that start each program. Pots of donated native flora sprout from the tabletops and become a living, educational smorgasbord. Often there are plants I have never seen before and it's a marvel listening to fellow members that know the plant so well they can tell you how to grow it and which wildlife it attracts. I always learn something new from every guest speaker and every topic presented at our meetings, and I love that we start most of our programs with a teachable moment.

My favorite program for 2013 was the Landscape Tour. It inspired all of my senses in a way an indoor presentation isn't able to

do. I came away with ideas to make my existing native landscape something that both wildlife and my neighbors will love. I wonder how many other people have been motivated with ideas to change or improve their landscape after attending one of these tours?

I watch others enjoying the meetings as much as I do. I would love to know which topics you would like to learn more about. Where would you like to go for a field trip? Do you have any suggestions for a workshop? There is a good chance that if you are interested in a topic others will be too. Please share your suggestion by sending me an email at camold10@tampabay.rr.com or giving me a call at 727-867-9149.

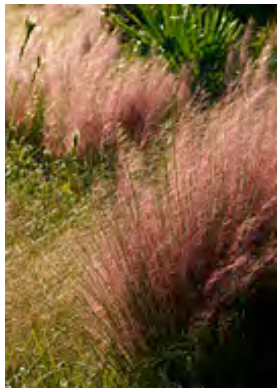
Reflecting back on 2013, I am proud that our chapter took such an active role in supporting the Florida Water and Land Legacy conservation initiative. We donated money to the cause and some of our members spent hours out in the hot sun and pouring rain to gather signatures on petitions.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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As of early December, 99% of the 910,000 needed signatures were collected. Before this amendment is put on the 2014 ballot volunteers will be needed again. Please consider helping out because restoring funding for conservation is vital. Without it, prescribed burns and exotic removal just won't happen. As it is now, many parks and preserves barely have enough funding to mow and pick up trash.

When the DEP published their list of Surplus Lands, many of you responded by sending e-mails and making calls to voice your opinions on the selections and criteria (or should I say lack of criteria). Your actions resulted in hundreds of previously saved, irreplaceable and environmentally important acres being removed from the surplus list. If we are to preserve Florida's natural areas it is vital that we take a few minutes, despite busy schedules and the daily grind, to contact our elected representatives and let them know that conservation is

important. For information: <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/>

I always try to keep in mind that our mission is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Candy Arnold



Upcoming Programs

Most member meetings are held at 7 pm on the first Wednesday of the month at:

Pinellas County Extension

12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida

These events are organized by the Pinellas Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society -- free and open to the public. Complimentary refreshments. Seed swap. Silent auction of native plants. For more information visit: <http://pinellas.fnpschapters.org>

8 January 2014

Note: 2nd Wed. of the month due to the New Year's Day holiday

Wednesday 7 pm

Native Florida Plants for Drought and Salt-Tolerant Landscaping

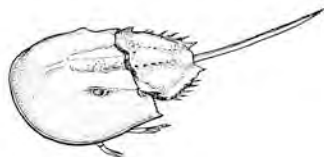
Rescheduled from October: George R. Kish, co-author of *Native Florida Plants for Drought- and Salt-Tolerant Landscaping*, shares descriptions and photographs of native plants that will thrive with little care in most Florida yards. George Kish is an instructor at St. Petersburg College and an affiliate of the USA National Phenology Network.

5 February 2014

Wednesday 7 pm

Some Like It Wet: Aquatic Plants

Jan Allyn will speak about the role aquatic plants play in freshwater ecosystems and profile some species that are commonly used in landscaping around retention ponds and backyard water features.



5 March 2014

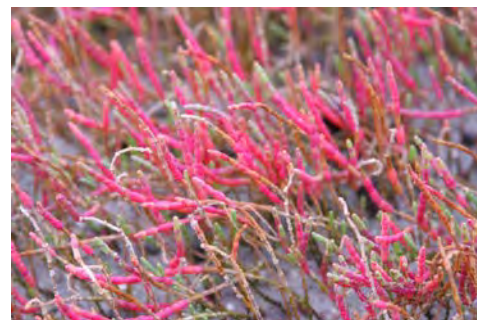
Wednesday 7 pm

Estuaries

Join us for a fascinating exploration of estuarine ecosystems with Jeanne Murphy and Brian Lane, instructors with the Master Naturalist Program. Estuaries are the productive ecosystems where river and ocean waters meet. Learn about species adapted to this mixing zone and our own local estuary, Tampa Bay.

Welcome New Members

David and Karol Camp
 Louis Castillo
 Ms. Denise Chezek
 Trey and Angie Conner
 Stephanie Coutant
 Genevieve Dimmitt
 Kathy Thornton
 Donna Fagersten
 Nancy Feldkamp
 Tami Nicholas
 Elizabeth Pearson
 Mary Putnam
 Donna Ruppitz
 Lucille Scouras
 Eve Taylor
 Susan Traub
 Yvonne A Washburn
 Meghan White and Wade Saul
 Lincoln Yates
 and
 Hoffman Architects, PA





THE RETURN OF A NATIVE

A plant profile by Jan Allyn

On my most recent trip to Wilcox Nursery, Bruce Turley led my husband and me over to check out an interesting, recently arrived plant. “What is that?” I asked. “It looks like... hmm... *Garberia*? But the leaves are too small.”

“No,” he said. “That’s what I thought of when I first saw it, too. But it’s a south Florida species, akin to saltbush.” Bruce went on to explain that although the plant once grew in the Miami area on the edges of rockland hammocks, it had been extirpated from Florida. However, it has been reintroduced and is now being cultivated by native nurseries.



The endangered hammock groundsel (*Baccharis dioica*), thriving in Pinellas County. Photo by Jan Allyn

Intrigued, I decided to do a little more research on the plant, *Baccharis dioica*, which is known by the common names

hammock groundsel and broombush falsewillow. It is listed as “endangered, presumed extirpated” in the Florida Statutes regulated plant list. It’s not federally listed as endangered, likely because it was thought to be already nonexistent. According to the website of the Institute for Regional Conservation, it was collected several times near Brickell Hammock in Miami between 1904 and 1915 by botanists Nathaniel Britton, John Kunkel Small, and others. A woody shrub, it produces creamy white flowers from August through November. The species name *dioica* is related to the word “dioecious,” referring to the fact that male and female flowers grow on different plants. (This does not, however, distinguish it from other plants in the genus, which are also dioecious.)

Most sources report that hammock groundsel grows to a height of about 9 feet. Though loss of habitat has eliminated its natural populations in Florida, it is still found in many places in the Caribbean and it is from those populations that plants now being cultivated in Florida were produced. Though one would expect that a tropical species like this one would be tender, Woodlanders nursery in South Carolina has plants for sale that it says were propagated from specimens found on Alabama’s Dauphin Island in 1979, just before Hurricane Frederick came ashore there. It says that they have proven to be “winter hardy” and assigns them a USDA Zone of 8-10. At least two wholesale nurseries in Florida are now growing hammock groundsel and have it for sale. It would be an interesting addition to anyone’s native garden, and its salt tolerance makes it valuable for coastal landscapes.

PINELLAS CHAPTER NEWS

Upcoming Field Trips

Please RSVP (sign up) for all field trips with Jan Allyn:
jallyn@tampabay.rr.com



11 January 2014

Honeymoon Island State Park

Park Ranger and Pinellas FNPS member, Tim Marshall, will lead a hike at Honeymoon Island to explore its coastal flora. Meet at 8:30 am in the parking lot near McDonald's at the intersection of Alt. 19 and Causeway Blvd. For park information, visit

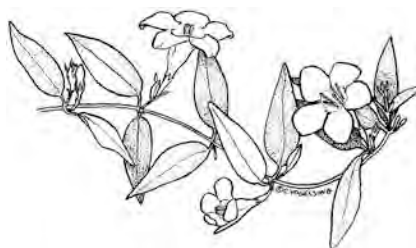
<http://www.floridastateparks.org/honeymoonisland/>

8 February 2014

Chinsegut Conservation Center Brooksville, FL

Located 7 miles north of Brooksville, Chinsegut Conservation Center covers 408 of the 850 acres comprising Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area (WEA). Carpool meet at 8 a.m at Target parking lot at Clearwater Mall. Bring water, insect repellent, and a bag lunch. Information about the Center, including a map and trail guides, may be found at

<http://www.myfwc.com/chinsegut>



8 March 2014

Lake Manatee State Park Bradenton, FL

Jason Sharp will be our leader for this trip. The park extends three miles along the south shore of Lake Manatee, which serves as a water reservoir for Manatee and Sarasota counties. Park habitat consists of pine flatwoods and sand pine scrub with some depression marshes and hardwood forests. Bring drinking water, insect repellent, sun protection, and a bag lunch. Carpool meet at 8 a.m. at the Publix parking lot at 54th Avenue South and US Highway 19 in St. Petersburg. For information about the park, visit

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/lakemanatee/>

MORE EVENTS

29 January Wednesday 6 - 8 pm

Clyde Butcher: PRESERVING EDEN

**Dinner Forum at the Village Square at
St. Petersburg College, Seminole
Campus Conference Center**

The Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions holds quarterly dinner and debate forums known as The Village Square. For his commitment to Florida's fragile environment, Clyde Butcher is the guest speaker for the January program. The public is encouraged to attend.

Reservations required: 727-394-6942 or visit www.spcollege.edu/solutions

\$30 guests, \$25 Institute members, \$20 educators and students.



25 February Tuesday 7 pm

Everglades National Park: People, Pythons, and Billions for Restoration

Fox Hall, Eckerd College

A forum led by Dan Kimball, Superintendent of Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks on restoration efforts and history of these parks. Sponsored by St. Petersburg Audubon Society. Event to be held at Fox Hall, Eckerd College, 4200 54th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711, (727) 864-8834.

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Volunteers

WE NEED YOUR HELP, PLEASE!

BEHIND EVERY PROGRAM AND EVENT STANDS A VOLUNTEER WHO MADE THAT PROGRAM POSSIBLE.

The Pinellas Chapter can exist only if its members contribute their time and talents.

Volunteer help is needed to perform these roles on a continuing basis:

Volunteer Coordinator: Mary Ann Beekman is leaving this position come January and we need a similarly cheerful and persuasive person to replace her. The Volunteer Coordinator calls and emails Chapter members to ask for their assistance in carrying out chapter events like the landscape tour and spring and fall plant festivals. Not too hard, because our members are awfully nice people and say "Yes" whenever they can!

Field Trip Coordinator: This is an important role which has been unfilled since Craig Huegel left it. The Field Trip Coordinator helps to scout and identify good sites for Chapter outings, is the contact person for participant sign-up or questions, and either leads field trips or recruits leaders who are familiar with the chosen sites.

Publicity Coordinator: This is a vital role for the Chapter and involves posting information about upcoming programs, field trips and events on websites, emailing news releases, creating and distributing flyers, and the like.

To volunteer as a coordinator, please contact Candy Arnold at carnold10@tampabay.rr.com

Work Days: We occasionally have workdays to control invasive species at local parks or preserves. Volunteers are always needed. See the Volunteer Coordinator.

Newsletter Contributions: Write a newsletter article about native plants such as plant profiles, gardening, landscaping, invasive species, land management, restoration, or a book review. This is a great way to share information with a wide audience. Also welcome are photos, illustrations, puzzles, or even poetry. Email Understory Editor, Ellen Raabe, at juncusjane@gmail.com

Website Assistant: For someone with a rudimentary knowledge of web servers and HTML, this is an easy job. We need someone to post program, field trip, and Chapter event information monthly on our website's calendar.

Contact Jan Allyn
jallyn@tampabay.rr.com



Garden Maintenance:

Lisa Boing is coordinating a group that meets regularly at Pinellas County Extension to perform routine maintenance and plant replacement at the native garden. To help with this project, please contact Lisa at lisaboing@tampabay.rr.com

Begin 2014 on a positive note, volunteer now.

Hawthorn Hill Wildflowers
HawthornHillWildflowersblogspot.com

Craig Huegel, PhD
Author & Professor
Huegelc55@AOL.com

(727) 422-6583
Nursery open by appointment only
Pinellas County, Florida

From Our Members

Sue Taylor writes: In the spring of 2010, I began Florida Native-izing my yard. I had Bruce Turley from Wilcox Nursery draw up a plan for my front yard and planted it myself. Then Bruce made a plan for my back yard and it has been planted in the past year with considerable help from the Detail Divas. I'm pleased with how it's looking these days and enjoy watching the bees, wasps, butterflies and skippers that the plants, especially the Dotted Horsemint, have attracted to my landscape.

I love Muhly Grass in the fall when the seed heads turn russet and sway in the wind. The Sea Lavender has lovely sea-green velvety leaves and is just now beginning to bloom. The Yellow Necklace Pod contrasts nicely with Muhly Grass and Purple Liatris. Purslane growing wild over the stepping stones is even edible.



The contrasting crisp colors of Silver Buttonwood and Yellowtop makes a lovely combination and their fast growth quickly fills in the landscape. *Photo by Sue Taylor*

Plant Identification Class

to be offered at Brooker Creek Preserve

University of Florida/IFAS Extension will offer a six-part plant identification series at Brooker Creek Preserve beginning in January. The classes will introduce participants to the basic and not-so-basic steps required to positively identify plants.

During each 2-hour session, participants will have lecture, hands-on, and field experiences. Each session will build on the previous; attending the entire series is recommended. All sessions will take place from 10 a.m. until noon on alternating Saturdays. Class dates: Jan. 11th, Jan. 25th, Feb. 8th, Feb. 22nd, Mar. 8th, and Mar. 29th.

A modest \$20 fee for this series will cover the cost of a notebook and a copy of "How to Identify Plants" by H.D. Harrington, which participants will keep.

Upon completion of the entire course, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion from the University of Florida.

To register for the course, visit <http://brookercreekpreserve.eventbrite.com/>



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What's in a Botanical Name?

Scientific plant names are confusing to a lot of people, but often the species name in Latin can tell you something important about a plant. It may give a clue as to:

- **Flower, fruit, or leaf color** - Examples: *Salvia azurea* (blue sage), *Morus rubra* (red mulberry), *Asclepias viridis* (green antelopehorn), *Agalinis purpurea* (purple false foxglove)
- **A plant's range** - Examples: *Cercis canadensis* (eastern redbud), *Calamintha georgiana* (Georgia calamint), *Capparis jamaicensis* (Jamaican capertree), *Palafoxia texana* (Texas palafox)
- **Who discovered or named it** - Examples: *Licania michauxii* (gopher apple, for Andre Michaux), *Pinus elliottii* (slash pine, for Stephen Elliott), *Torreya taxifolia* (Florida torreya, for John Torrey)
- **Habitat** - Examples: *Nyssa aquatica* (water tupelo), *Poinsettia pinetorum* (pineland spurge), *Glandularia maritima* (coastal mock vervain)
- **Leaf shape/size** - Examples: *Dyschoriste oblongifolia* (oblongleaf twinflower), *Chamaesyce cordifolia* (heartleaf sandmat), *Gymnopogon brevifolius* (shortleaf skeletongrass)

Other commonly-used species descriptors may tell whether leaves are hairy/smooth, whether a species is upright or prostrate, whether it is tree- or shrublike, whether it has large or small flowers, etc.

To learn more terms and what they mean, check out this article: <http://awaytogarden.com/decoding-botanical-latin>

Community and volunteer support

"Every aspect of our lives is, in a sense, a vote for the kind of world we want to live in." —Frances Moore Lappe

Chapter Directory

Officers

Candy Arnold, President carnold10@tampabay.rr.com
Open, Vice President
 Jan Allyn, Secretary, jallyn@tampabay.rr.com
 Cindy Smith, Treasurer csmith55@tampabay.rr.com
 Debbie Chayet, Chapter Representative dchayet@verizon.net
 Jan Allyn, Past President, jallyn@tampabay.rr.com

Board Members

Kodiak Brothers kodiak224@gmail.com
 Andrew Karpinski, ak@stonemarmot.com
 Katy Roberts, kroberts@ij.net
 Sue Taylor susn31taylor@gmail.com

Committee Chairs and Coordinators

Advocacy/Conservation: Katy Roberts
 Artist: Cathy Vogelsong
 Events/Displays: Andy Karpinski
 Hospitality: Andy Karpinski
 Membership: John and Monica Pinnell
 Programs/ Field Trips: *Open - coordinator needed!*
 Publicity: *Open*
 Sales/Merchandise: Jane Williams
 Social Media: *Open*
 Understory Editor: Ellen Raabe
 Volunteer Coordinator: *Open - coordinator needed!*
 Web Master: Jan Allyn - *Assistant needed!*

Member and Volunteer Support



THANK YOU to the volunteers who help plan our programs, field trips, plant tours and festivals, and conduct general behind-the-scenes efforts for the Pinellas Chapter of FNPS, including contributions to this newsletter! Our volunteers are the best. Thank you to our members, new and old, and thank you to our business members. They support the Native Plant Society. Please support them.

Wilcox Nursery
 12501 Indian Rocks Road (727) 595-2073
 Largo, Florida 33774 wnursery@tampabay.rr.com
 FAX: (727) 674-0731 www.wilcoxnursery.com
 Bruce Turley
 Tiffany Custer

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Kathy Schaedel **Darcey Phillips**
 727-455-6910 727-510-7067
 - Serving Pinellas County & Surrounding Areas -

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

The mission of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Join us at monthly meetings for inspirational speakers, on field trips to see natural habitats, at plant sales, or visit local plant nurseries specializing in native plants. Visit us online.

Pinellas Chapter web address: <http://pinellas.fnpschapters.org/>

FNPS Blog: <http://fnpsblog.blogspot.com>

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Pinellas Chapter FNPS



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