President's Message
By Jan Allyn
Wow! I've just returned from the annual FNPS conference in Plant City, and as always, I feel simultaneously exhausted from all the activity and energized by the people and experiences. It was wonderful to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, and hear about the many ways FNPS members are working to preserve our natural places and get the word out about how special they are. I was absolutely delighted that we had such a large contingent of Pinellas Chapter members attending the conference--by my count, 19 people, and I may have missed one or two! Our chapter was disproportionately represented among the winners of the annual plant identification contest, with Debbie Chayet, Ray Wunderlich III and Mary Beth Wagner all receiving prizes. Congratulations to all three of you--you did us proud!

I came back from the Thursday field trip to Brooker Creek Headwaters Preserve in Hillsborough County physically spent, overheated, and slightly bug-bitten, but oh, so happy that I went -- because we saw beautiful wet flatwoods plants like meadowbeauties (Rhexia sp.), milkworts (Polygala sp.), pipeworts (Eriocaulon sp.), bog buttons (Lachnocalon sp.), hooded pitcherplants (Sarracenia minor), pink sundews (Drosera capillaris), many different species of Hypericum, bromeliads (Tillandsia sp.), and so much more! It was marvelous. The talks and workshops on Friday and Saturday renewed my appreciation for the research, conservation, restoration, and advocacy work that environmental resource professionals and volunteers do. It inspired me to want to learn...
and do more, and gave me ideas we can use to make our Chapter more effective. The social events were great fun, sited at entertaining venues, and filled with interesting people to eat, drink and chat with. Although I swore I wouldn't buy plants, my resolve immediately evaporated when I saw the hard-to-find species offered by the native plant vendors, and I found a lot of other "cool stuff" in the silent auction and at the other vendors as well. And while my Sunday field trip to Cockroach Bay was less exhausting than the Thursday one, it was every bit as awe-inspiring, with the added bonus of a pleasant afternoon paddling trip through mangrove tunnels into the open bay. I hated to come home!

Whether or not you made it to Plant City, I hope you'll consider attending next year's conference in Jacksonville. Members Debra Davies and Kodiak Brothers used their "scholarships" of $165 from the Chapter to attend this year, and we intend to make those scholarships an annual occurrence. Even though northeast Florida is a long drive away, we can carpool—and see some native plant communities that are completely different from those in our own backyards. Until then, we'll keep exploring our patch of paradise and do what we can to keep it green!

Jan

Pinellas Members Flock to (Native) Plant City

We had a great turnout of Pinellas Chapter members at the annual FNPS conference in Plant City, and we were extremely well represented among the winners of the annual novice and expert plant ID contests. Congratulations to Debbie Chayet, Mary Beth Wagner and Ray Wunderlich, all of whom showed their identification prowess! Members who attended the conference:

Candy Arnold, Mary Ann Beekman, Kodiak Brothers, Debbie Chayet, Adam Conner, Greg Coston, Debra Davies, Craig Huegel, Mary Jackson, Jim McGinity, John Pinnell, Monica Pinnell, Cathy Quindiagan, Katy Roberts, Mel Rollins, Mike Stallings, Kelli Stickrath, Mary Beth Wagner, Ray Wunderlich

Low Pinebarren Milkwort
Polygala ramosa

Drumheads
Polygala cruciata

FNPS.org Gets a Facelift

Beginning June 1st you will notice that the Society's website, www.fnps.org, looks a little different. The technology used to create the "old" website was getting a bit creaky and hard to maintain, so it is being updated. Society web experts Shirley Denton, Cindy Liberton, and Paul Rebmann chose a new content management system that will allow individual chapter websites to more easily be updated and customized, even by those without web programming experience. This is great news because previously many chapters had no website of their own, just a minimal information page on fnps.org, and this will make it easier for them to have one. Because our chapter's website is custom code it will not be directly affected by the change, but in time we will switch it over to the new format. The new chapter templates are attractive, with good graphic design and infinitely customizable, so when we do change our website we will be able to retain all its features and content; it will just look a little different... And, we hope, better!
Annual Native Landscape Tour
By: Mary Jackson

Get ready to rumble! (to be said in the voice of Michael Buffer). Surprised? Most people are when they realize we plant geeks can rattle off the names of professional wrestling announcers as if they were rare species of elm. Yep, it’s true, mostly, but my purpose here is not to boast. Rather, I want to motivate you all to gear up for the 2012 Pinellas FNPS Native Landscape Tour. We have traditionally held the tour in September, but this year, in an attempt to beat the heat, the tour will be held a bit later: October 6th and 7th. We need landscapes that are at least 60% native. Edible plants and some non-invasive exotics are fine. Invasive exotics (think Brazilian Pepper, Mexican Petunia, and Carrotwood, among others) are not. We also need to round up some volunteers to work the weekend of the tour.

Having your yard on the tour is fun. I cannot promise that it will involve no work, but I can promise that you’ll get great feedback and lots of appreciation from tour-goers; it’s a blast. Several homeowners from the 2011 tour enjoyed the experience so much, they have already tried to bribe their way into this year’s tour. I have put those individuals on the list for 2013, and will return their bribes shortly (really). The tour is truly a feel-good event, and a great reward for all your effort to bring your landscape to a more natural and wildlife-friendly state. I know that sometimes, when you’re out there removing lawn or planting in the Florida heat, you think you may be the only creature on the planet that considers your vision of landscape important or worthwhile. Certainly most neighbors merely tolerate your vibrant lack of lawn. In contrast, tour-goers glory in the refreshing difference your landscape offers; it’s extremely affirming and rewarding.

My landscape was on the 2010 tour. I always thought of my yard as a work in progress, certainly not finished enough to be on a native landscape tour. It didn’t even occur to me, therefore, to answer the call for native landscapes for the 2010 tour. Then one day, Bruce Turley wandered into my back yard and remarked “Have you thought of putting your yard on the tour? I think it would be great.” “Wow, well now I have,” I thought. I had never seriously considered it until that moment. So it came to pass that my yard was on the 2010 tour, and it was one of the most positive experiences of my life. My neighbors are sort of politely disinterested in my yard, but the tour-goers were so interested, involved, and curious about the planning, process, plants, pollinators, and overall effect. It was simply amazing.

If you would like to be involved in this year’s tour, please contact me (maryjack333@gmail.com, 542-1138). We are beginning to screen yards now. Be aware that we have to take several factors into consideration: not only the beauty of the landscape, but location, parking, etc. If you would like to volunteer to work the weekend of the tour, please contact our spectacular volunteer coordinator, Maryann Beekman (mbeekman@tampabay.rr.com). It’s an easy, fun gig in a beautiful setting, working alongside diverse, yet like-minded people. Whether you volunteer your landscape, your time, or both, the tour is a great way to contribute your energy, while learning more about Florida’s natives, planning a habitat, and (for a lucky few) announcing wrestling events.

"Green Fire" Film Showing July 18

The Pinellas Chapter is partnering with the new Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing & Interactive Museum to screen the film "Green Fire," about the life and philosophy of naturalist Aldo Leopold, the author of "A Sand County Almanac." The event will take place on July 18th at 6:30 p.m. at the Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing, and will be followed by a group discussion about land and water: i.e., the connections between the "land ethic" promoted by Leopold, the health of our watersheds, and ways in which we can all be better environmental stewards. The discussion will be moderated by fishing museum staff, Pinellas County Water Atlas staff, and representatives from the Pinellas Chapter. The film is being provided by the Clearwater Audubon Society, who obtained the rights to screen it in our area. The Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing & Interactive Museum is adjacent to the Florida Botanical Gardens, at 12211 Walsingham Road. It is open Mon.-Fri. from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and beginning in June it will be holding summer camps to teach kids about the natural world through fishing. For more information about "Green Fire" and to watch a movie trailer, visit www.greenfiremovie.com.
Upcoming Meetings

June Program: Wed., June 6th, 7 pm
Dr. Rebecca Johns, associate professor of geography at USF, will speak on "Why not native? Barriers to environmentally-friendly landscaping."

The presentation will illustrate what we know about who, in Pinellas County, is transforming their residential yards into more ecologically appropriate and Florida-friendly landscapes, and why. It will also discuss the tenacity of the lawn -- with its need for chemical fertilizers, pesticides and water -- as the centerpiece of the American yard, and what prevents many people from making the transition to a Florida friendly or native landscape. Dr. Johns has extensive experience in environmental geography, with particular emphasis on community organizing around economic and environmental issues.

Where: Pinellas County Extension, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

June Field Trip: Sat., June 16 -- Ft. DeSoto Park
Meet at 8:30 am at the Arrowhead area parking lot. (Note: There is a $5.00 parking fee). We will hike on Arrowhead Trail, through a variety of coastal habitats. Then we'll move to the beach side for a picnic, swim and social time.

WHAT TO BRING: For hiking: Most of the walk will be shady, but be sure to bring your sunscreen, hat, bug repellent, and water. Closed toed shoes are recommended. Binoculars & camera optional.

For the Picnic (starting around 11:30 if you can’t make the hike): Bring chairs or beach blankets, You are welcome to bring your kayak, rafts, etc. FOOD: Everyone bring your own main dish , utensils, plates, etc. AND one thing to share (Salad, chips, beans, brownies). The chapter will provide coolers of water, iced tea, and sodas.

The Arrowhead trail is a 1.4 mile loop with offshoots. We will start under tall slash pines, and up a short hill towards a tower. We might take the Spur Trail for a meander out to the bay. The trail passes through a stand of southern red cedar, then mangroves, and a coastal savanna, where cabbage palms rise out of a sea of tall marsh grasses. Further on, the trail reaches the edge of Bunce’s Pass, providing panoramic views. Then the trail loops back into the savanna and pines to the parking area.

July Program: Wed. July 11th, 7 p.m.
Pinellas Chapter member Ernest Franke, a retired electrical engineer, will share the extensive knowledge he acquired--and successfully applied--in restoring three unsightly and unhealthy retention ponds at his condominium complex using native aquatic plants. A detail-oriented person with great curiosity and dedication, he received several grants to support his project, including one from the Pinellas Chapter and one from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program. With a lot of hard work and the help of his neighbors, he was able to improve the appearance of the ponds, the quality of the water in Cross/Long Bayou, and to provide nearby wildlife with much better habitat.

Note: Meeting is the second Wednesday of the month, due to the Independence Day holiday.

Where: Pinellas County Extension, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

July Field Trip: Sat., July 21. Annual Canoe/Kayak trip….. Place to be determined….. choices are: Rock Springs Run, or Chassahowitzka; To voice an opinion, about which you would prefer, and why, email Alexa at alexa776@tampabay.rr.com.

Other Events

June 14 - "Getting to Know Florida Native Plants"
In this free class Bruce Turley, owner of Wilcox Nursery & Landscape, will introduce you to many of the plants that contributed to the naming of our state as the "land of flowers." Select from two classes, one from 2-3:30 pm and one from 6:15-7:45 pm. Palm Harbor Library, 2330 Nebraska Ave. Pre-registration is required one day in advance, at: http://www.eventbrite.com/event/3436549813/eorg

Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP)
Courses--Fee schedule and registration at www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu. For additional information, contact FMNP Instructor Jeanne Murphy at 727-397-2306 or jmurphy@sensingnature.com.

May 30 (evening); June 2, 9, 16 (Saturdays daytime): Special-topic FMNP course, "Habitat Evaluations." Equip yourself to participate in data collection for habitat evaluation projects while being taught by professional biologists. This course covers large-scale habitat evaluation, local-scale habitat evaluation, and water quality moni-
May Garden Tour Draws Small But Enthusiastic Crowd

The May 2nd membership meeting was our annual tour of the native garden at Pinellas County Extension. The weather was beautiful and many species were blooming earlier than usual due to the unseasonably warm winter. Many thanks to our tour guides for sharing their knowledge about the many native plants on the property. We are indeed lucky to have such a resource as the gardens at Pinellas County Extension, and also to have the volunteers and Extension employees who do such a great job there. Here are a few pictures taken by Ed Schoen during the tour.

Other Events, FMNP classes, continued:

July 24-27 (Tues-Fri) & July 30 (Mon): Upland Habitats, FMNP Core Module.
Encounter Florida’s upland ecosystems with the Florida Master Naturalist Program. The class includes indoor learning and regional field trips with an opportunity to trek through remote upland habitats. Prepare to learn about upland pinelands, hardwood forests, scrub and prairies, and their related plants and wildlife inhabitants. Interpretative speaking techniques, conservation issues and human ethics are also woven into course material. This program is for any adult, novice to knowledgeable, who enjoys learning and experiencing nature.

July 31-August 3 (Tues-Fri) & August 6 (Mon): Freshwater Wetlands, FMNP Core Module
Discover Florida’s freshwater ecosystems with the Florida Master Naturalist Program. Learn Florida’s freshwater ecosystems including marshes, swamps, lakes, rivers and springs, and their related plants and wildlife inhabitants. The class includes indoor learning and regional field trips with an opportunity to experience freshwater habitats. Interpretative speaking techniques, conservation issues and human ethics are also woven into course material. This program is for any adult, novice to knowledgeable, who enjoys learning and experiencing nature.

July 18, 6:30 p.m.: "Green Fire" film at Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing, 12211 Walsingham Road, Largo. The first full-length documentary film ever made about legendary environmentalist Aldo Leopold, "Green Fire" highlights Leopold’s extraordinary career, tracing how he shaped and influenced the modern environmental movement. Leopold remains relevant today, inspiring projects all over the country that connect people and land.
Wildflower Profile: *Krameria lanceolata*
By Jason Sharp

While stumbling around looking for wildflowers last fall I happened upon a small plant with red flowers. I snapped a picture of the flower and thought nothing more of it. Recently I went back through some old photos and came upon the red flower photo. One of my favorite hobbies is finding and identifying plants that I am not familiar with. The only clue about the flower that I had was that it seemed to resemble an orchid. After an exhaustive search through the online USF Plant Atlas Orchidaceae I came up empty. Just a short time later I found myself at a bookstore browsing a wildflower field guide and made a surprising discovery! There was my mystery flower.

Turns out my mystery flower was the plant *Krameria lanceolata* which can commonly be known as: trailing ratany, trailing krameria, ratany, crameria, or prairie sandbur. Trailing ratany (as we will call it for this article) is a member of the Kramerieae family, a small plant family of only 15 to 25 species. The Kramerieae tend to be woody shrubs of no more than three feet high with small leaves and reddish flowers which live in deserts and desert like areas in Southern North America and northern Central America (http://www.desertmuseum.org/books/nhsd_krameraceae.php).

At one time the Krameraceae were included in the Fabaceae, but have since been moved. The leaves are alternate, mostly stalkless, and are usually simple. The Krameraceae are an interesting family for two reasons. First of all they are partial parasites of neighboring plants. Their roots can tap into other nearby roots to steal nutrients. Secondly, the flowers produce a type of oil as a reward instead of nectar. The pollinators tend to be Centridine bees, which are highly specialized collectors of oils (http://bugguide.net/node/view/110919).

Trailing ratany can be found blooming from spring to fall in open, sunny areas in central and northwest Florida, southern Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona. The specimens that I have run across have been in a sandhill type community with neighbors consisting of turkey oaks, lupines, yuccas, milkweeds, wiregrass, many species of aster, and gopher tortoises, just to name a few.

It turns out that the five large red 'petals' are actually bracts, while the true petals are reduced (see flower picture).

The upper three petals exist on a claw-like structure while the two lower petals are round and sessile. The leaves tend to be silky and the fruit is globose and spined, hence the name sandbur. And lastly the plants tend to be sprawling or trailing.

Photos by Jason Sharp

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Florida Native Plants
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wmnsrey@tampabay.rr.com
www.WilcoxNursery.com
Let us help you Plant Real Florida!

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**Welcome New Members**

Pamela Avis, Jill Branham East, Keith & Dorothy Gardner, Pam Klawinski, Jim Linton, Tom Mobley, Barbara Montanari, Kathy Neumann, Barbara Poore, Kelli Stickrath

**FNPS T-shirts Available**

Back by popular demand—our coontie and atala butterfly t-shirt with beautiful art by Cathy Vogelsong. Show your support for the Florida Native Plant Society in style! Shirts will be sold at our June 6th meeting. Ladies' shirts are available in white (sizes M-XXL). Men's shirts are available in white or natural (sizes S-XXL). The cost is $15 each, tax included.

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**Chapter Directory**

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(area code "727" unless otherwise noted)

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A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the state (800-435-7352, reg. no. CH4271). Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state. (FDACS/DPI Cert. #47222877).
Southwest Florida’s Water Management District Surplus Lands Assessment Report
By: Candace Arnold

The second round of the Surplus Lands Assessment (SLA) took place May 10th at the Southwest Florida’s Water Management District at the Tampa Service Office. This evaluations included surplus options for Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Polk counties. Katy Roberts, Debbie Chayet, and I attended. Katy, representing FNPS, commended the subcommittee and staff on their thoughtful and conservative approach in this assessment process.

The subcommittee wanted more information on the parcels designated along Tampa’s Bypass Canal and requested the staff do the following research before the next SLA meeting: look into leasing options, do due diligence on maintenance cost, evaluate title verifications, clarify deed restrictions, and explore the options of using a quit claim deed to other government facilities. The board will vote on these parcels once they have more complete information.

Here is an example of why it is important for the public to attend these meetings. Lake Hancock is 4,841 acres in Polk County at the headwaters of the Peace River watershed. It was acquired in 2003 for a restoration project, and at that time 833 acres along the eastern portion of the lake was slated for surplus after the project’s completion. It came up for surplus in this evaluation.

Board member Carlos Beruff suggested altering the original governing board’s decision and current staff recommendations by extending the original 833 acres to include the shoreline of the lake, with certain restrictions, as an amenity or enticement to any future developers. In response to this proposal Charles Lee, representing Audubon, spoke to the importance of this shoreline for migratory birds. He added that any attempt to include the shoreline property would be opposed because it was purchased with Florida Forever money. An employee for Polk County also advised that a nature trail along the shoreline was approved in next year’s budget and the board should look at current and future projects around the lake.

After hearing the public comments, the board ignored Mr. Beruff’s suggestion and voted to retain the 150-year floodplain area around the lake and extend a 50-foot boundary on both sides of the nature trail.

Chito Branch Reserve, located in southeastern Hillsborough County, was purchased in 2001 in cooperation with Tampa Bay Water for the purpose of building the 15-billion gallon C.W. “Bill” Young Regional Reservoir. The two long narrow parcels jutting from the northern and eastern boundaries totaling 126 acres were identified for surplus. Farming, excluding row crops, was one suggestion for land use, however there must be a full disclosure about the water restrictions. A resident spoke in strong opposition to selling any part of the reserve, stating that with ongoing water shortages they should be doubling the reservoir area, not selling off parcels of it. Any actions taken on these two parcels will need the approval of Tampa Bay Water and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection because both hold easements over the land.

The Jerry Lake property is located in Pinellas County immediately east of the City of Dunedin. The original purchase agreement includes provisions that prevent public access and public recreation on the property during the original owners’ lifetime or until they move from the adjacent property. Because of the limitations imposed by the “life estate” very few surplus options are possible until these limitations are removed. The City of Dunedin may have an interest in the property once the public use restrictions have been lifted. The staff recommended continued discussions with the City of Dunedin regarding transfer of ownership in the future.

No parcels were voted for surplus at this meeting, instead it was more about carefully reviewing staff recommendations and getting more information before any decisions are made. The next meeting is scheduled for July. For more information go to http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/surplus-lands.
2012 Contacts

Officers:
President: Jan Allyn
Vice-President: Mary Jackson
Secretary: Alexa Wilcox-Huegel
Treasurer: Cindy Smith
Chapter Representative: Debbie Chayet
Past President: Alexa Wilcox-Huegel

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Candy Arnold, Mary Ann Beekman, Tiffany Custer,
Andy Karpinski, Shreeram Krishnaswami, Monica
Pinnell, John Pinnell, Katy Roberts

2011 Committee Chairs/Coordinators:
Advocacy/Conservation: Candy Arnold
Displays: Marie Hughes
Field Trip Coordinator: Alexa Wilcox-Huegel
Field Trip Leader: Dr. Craig Huegel
Hospitality/Info Greeter - Meetings: Andy Karpinski

Membership: Ellen Clayton
Newsletter Editor: vacant
Co-editor/Publisher/Artist: Cathy Vogelsong
Programs: Alexa Wilcox-Huegel
Publicity/Social Media: Shreeram Krishnaswami
Refreshment/Hospitality Coordinator:
Mary Ann Beekman
Sales/Merchandise: Jane Williams & Jan Allyn
Scholarships: Cindy Peacock
Speakers Bureau: Mary Jackson
Special Events/Displays: Andy Karpinski
Volunteer Coordinator: Mary Ann Beekman
Co-Webmasters: John and Monica Pinnell

Interim Committees:
Budget Committee: Cindy Smith, Chairperson
Plants Sales: Tiffany Custer, Chairperson & Bruce Turley
Landscape Tour: Monica Pinnell and Jan Allyn, co-chairs

See Directory of phone numbers and e-mail addresses on page 7