



# THE PAWPAW PRESS

Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society: June 2018

## The president pays us a visit

How fortunate the Pawpaw Chapter was to be the first chapter visited by our new FNPS president, Dr. Susan Carr. Susan presented herself as a native Floridian, who grew up close to nature and continued this environmental thread all the way through her doctorate in the ecology of Florida's fire-maintained pinelands.

Susan's presentation (drawn from her extensive doctoral studies) pointed out why Florida is the third most plant-diverse state in the country. This diversity is not only due to our three obvious north-south growing zones, but also due to a range of different soils. Also a factor was the historic presence of fire, which periodically cleared out the woody understory, permitting fire-resistant longleaf pines to grow. Thanks to fire and a light-filtering pine canopy, an amazing diversity of plants (including Ruge's pawpaw) can thrive in the understory.

Getting back to FNPS and our mission of conservation and preservation, Susan added connectivity. She said the biggest threats to Florida's native plant communities are: loss of habitat, changes in climate, poor land management, lack of public awareness, and invasive species. With the word "connectivity" in mind, she reminded us that we as members of FNPS need to urge our Florida legislators to set aside the funding that Florida voters passed in 2014 to finally purchase those environmentally sensitive lands already approved by Florida.

At the close of the meeting Susan asked for volunteers who are willing to help do surveys in the Ocala National Forest. Paul Rebmann will be our point person in this regard. If you can help please let [wildflpaul@earthlink.net](mailto:wildflpaul@earthlink.net) know.—*Sonya Guidry (photo by Paul Rebmann)*



## Pollinators get their day

Five members of the Pawpaw Chapter joined other like-minded folks to spread the word about pollinators and the plants they love during Pollinator Day at Tomoka State Park on June 16. But the real star of the show was a monarch caterpillar, donated by a beekeeper for the swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) Nancy Hull brought.

Nancy also brought tropical milkweed (*A. curassavica*), so visitors could clearly see the difference in the plants and be warned about the *Oe* parasite, which occurs on the stems and



can do damage to the emerging caterpillars. In addition to the “hands-on” knowledge, Nancy provided storyboards to explain about butterflies and to show how she made a space for them in her own yard.

As always, we enjoyed our day at Tomoka and look forward to talking again with the many people who signed up to get more information about our chapter and the Florida Native Plant Society. —Sande Habali

## Into the woods of Tiger Bay

Pawpaw member Cathy Lowenstein, who just happens to be a retired Florida Forestry administrator, was a key guide on the Tiger Bay State Forest field trip on June 16.

Trip coordinator Warren Reynolds prepared plant lists for all 18 participants to use as a learning tool. The list will be published on our website. The group explored fire-suppressed as well as fire-maintained pinelands. But a special



treat was viewing a nice population of both our rare endemic Rugel’s pawpaw (*Deeringothamnus rugelii*) and reticulated pawpaw (*Asimina reticulata*) plants.

Alongside them we found fragrant pennyroyal (*Piloblephis rigida*), bright yellow-flowering Atlantic St. John’s-Wort (*Hypericum tenuifolium*) as well as plenty of gallberry (*Ilex glabra*) and saw palmetto bushes (*Serenoa repens*). It was a pleasant surprise to see so many first-timers to the backroads of Tiger Bay plunge right in to the undergrowth to search for a Rugel’s pawpaw with fruit. —Sonya Guidry



## Upcoming events:

July 9 (Mon): Pawpaw meeting with Witney Cosner of Bok Tower Gardens. Plant of the month: Sawtooth blackberry (*Rubus pensilvanicus*), with Warren Reynolds

July 14 (Sat): Field trip to DeLeon Springs State Park. Contact: Warren Reynolds

July 16 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

Aug. 13 (Mon): Pawpaw meeting with Tom Broome on regional variations in coontie. Plant of the month: Hogplum (*Ximenia americana*), with Sonya Guidry

Aug. 18 (Sat): Plant swap and picnic, Bushman Park, Port Orange. Contact: Sande Habali

Aug. 20 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

Sept. 8th (Sat.): Natural History Festival, Museum of Arts and Sciences, Daytona Beach, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sept. 10 (Mon): Pawpaw meeting with author Ginny Stibolt on sustainable gardening for climate change

Sept. 15 (Sat): Self-arranged paddle trip at Cracker Creek. Contact: Warren Reynolds

Sept. 17 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

**Keep up with chapter events on our Facebook page: [facebook.com/pawpawchapter/](https://facebook.com/pawpawchapter/)**