



THE PAWPAW PRESS

Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society: October 2015

OCTOBER MEETING

Native landscapes are no fairy tale

Ginny Stibolt has been a Florida gardener since her move from Maryland in 2004. In that time she has written three books on the subject.

The first, appropriately, was titled *Adventures of a Transplanted Gardener*. Her second book, *Sustainable Gardening for Florida*, has many helpful hints. Her third book, hot off the presses, is titled *The Art of Maintaining a Florida Native Landscape*, with 50 percent of the royalties going to FNPS.

In her presentation at Pawpaw's October meeting, Ginny lamented how landscaping is often regarded as a "one and done event," meaning people don't realize it's something they need to work at continually. She expressed that native plant enthusiasts tend to oversell the benefits of

native plantings but undersell the facts that these plants and trees do have requirements for fertilization, soil types, exposure, and watering. We often talk about having "chemical-free" yards, when what we really mean is "poison-free," since even water is a chemical.

Ginny shared that managing "neat" edges in a native landscape lets the neighbors know that the landscape was



created with intention. Having the yard certified as a wildlife habitat, with a posted sign, further makes that point. Native landscapes may not be a fairy tale, but to those

who've undertaken the task, the reward is no less satisfying than that of conquering the dragon and saving the village.

Story by Katie Tripp/
photo by Sande Habali

ELECTION SEASON

Nominations for officers open

A nominating committee has been formed to select our officers for the 2016 year.

Board members to be elected include president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Our nominating committee

includes:

- Tom Colvin, tcat7@bell-south.net,
 - David Anderson, danderson726@yahoo.com, and
 - Paul Rebmann, wildfl-paul@earthlink.net.
- The floor is now open

for nominations. If you have any suggestions, please contact the nominating committee. Elections will be held during a brief meeting at 6:30 prior to our December dinner and plant auction.

—Sande Habali

UPCOMING EVENTS: OCTOBER

9

Pawpaw meeting: Dr. Jay Barnhart on identifying local mushrooms

14

Paul Rebmann will lead a walk at Longleaf Pine Preserve: wildflpaul@earthlink.net



NATIVE PLANT MONTH

New Smyrna, Port Orange honor FNPS

Governments and municipalities around the state issued proclamations naming October to be Native Plant Month, including New Smyrna Beach, on Oct. 13, and Port Orange on Oct. 20.

Five Pawpaw chapter members were present at the New Smyrna Beach City Commission meeting when Mayor Jim Hathaway read the proclama-

tion. They were were Dot Backes, Steve Provost, Lois Speer, Warren Reynolds, and Sonya Guidry.

Each commissioner was provided a packet of Florida native plant information, including an FNPS membership brochure and a copy of the *Palmetto* magazine. Also included was information on the Florida Milkweed Project, a University



of Florida brochure on monarch butterflies, and a packet of wildflower seeds from the Florida Wildflower Foundation.

After Port Orange's mayor, Allen Green, read the proclamation there, Sande Habali received the proclamation from Theresa Gutierrez, deputy city clerk.

FNPS CONFERENCE 2016

Take action to help auction

Don't forget that one of the biggest fund raisers to support the FNPS annual conference is the silent auction. Please contact Ray Jarrett with any items that you wish to donate: rayjarrett1@gmail.com; phone: 386-295-0481.

DECEMBER FIELD TRIP

Reserve your spot for St. John's ecotour

Take a two-hour narrated ecotour with St. Johns River Cruises out of Blue Spring State Park. The captain's knowledge of the flora and fauna along this most beautiful section of the St. John's River will make this a memorable trip.

Bring your own picnic lunch. We will do a plant ID walk along the Blue Spring Park's boardwalk afterward.

The group price for the trip is \$20 and there is a limit of 20 participants, so make sure to bring your \$20 check made out to

"Pawpaw Chapter FNPS" to reserve your space at the Nov. 9 Pawpaw chapter meeting.

Participants should be inside Blue Spring State Park by 9-9:15 a.m. For more information contact Sonya Guidry: guidry.sonya@gmail.com.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Liatis is first FNPS plant of the year

Liatis has been named the FNPS plant of the year. Common names for this plant include blazing star and gayfeather.

Members of this genus generally have tall, narrow spikes with lavender, pink, or white flowers. It is an excellent native for bees and butterflies! The plant has a tall upright growth habit, growing 3 feet to 6 feet, depending on the soil.

Propagation is through seed dispersal or the roots can be divided. If collecting seeds, sow 6–8 weeks before the last frost, barely covering the seeds. Otherwise, dig up the root system in the spring and cut the sections with a sharp knife. Each section should have an eye. Dust cut surface with a rooting hormone powder. Plant 4–6 inches deep.

There are 48 species of liatis in the plant database, with 14 species vouchered in Florida. Some liatis such as *L. gracillis* (slender blazing star) like a mesic to wet flatwoods, steep slopes, bogs, savannas, ditches, and secondary woods (FNPS). Other species



prefer the area to be a dry, scrub-like habitat. They tend not to be salt tolerant. Most do well in a sunny location. Once established, leave the plant alone!

Felder Rushing, in *Tough Plants for Florida Gardens*, advises this plant is not easy to grow because it needs neglect!

Photo is of the liatis purchased from Full Moon Natives and offered as the plant of the month by Carolyn Kiel, now making its home in Sande Habali's garden.

—Story by Carolyn Kiel/photo by Sande Habali

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendar for...

NOW THROUGH NOVEMBER 14

Pawpaw chapter member Paul Rebmann's exhibit, "Our World Around Us" at the Halifax Historical Museum, 252 S. Beach St. Daytona Beach.

NOVEMBER 7 Fall Festival at Dunns Creek State Park, 320 Sisco Rd, Pomona Park, from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Event hosted by the Friends of Dunns Creek. Entry is \$10 per vehicle, up to eight people.

NOVEMBER 8 Conference Planning Committee at Full Moon Natives from 1 to 3 p.m. Contact Marvette for more information: marvetteb@cfl.rr.com. All are welcome! This is a great chance to get involved!

NOVEMBER 9 Pawpaw chapter meeting, 7 p.m., Pigotte Center, 504 Big Tree Road, South Daytona. Dr. Jay Barnhart, a retired forensic pathologist and avid amateur mycologist will be narrating a visual presentation titled "What is This Fungus Among Us? 10 Easy IDs" based on his observations in the Space Coast area.

NOVEMBER 14 Field trip to Longleaf Pine Preserve in DeLand, 9 a.m. Meet at the west entrance to Longleaf Pine Preserve (2.5 miles east of the fairgrounds on SR 44)

to begin the approximately one mile loop. This trip will be a walk on the shortest of the trails at the west entrance of the preserve. It is a little-used trail that can be botanically interesting. Be prepared for walking in wet, muddy and/or shallow water (hopefully little of this or we can find a way around) areas. Contact Paul for more information: wildflpaul@earthlink.net,

NOVEMBER 14 Family Day at Bulow

NOVEMBER 14 Bird Day at Marine Science Center, Ponce Inlet

NOVEMBER 21 Purple Cow Festival at Full Moon Natives from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will need volunteers for this to help pass out FNPS information. If you can help us, contact sadehab@aol.com

DECEMBER 5 Eco Boat Tour at Blue Springs in conjunction with Lyonia Chapter. Cost: \$20. Contact Sonya for more information: guidrysonya@gmail.com

DECEMBER 14 Annual native plant auction and covered dish dinner. Brief meeting at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner and auction at the Pigotte Center, 504 Big Tree Road, South Daytona.



SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP

Diverse habitats of Clearwater Lake

Thirteen Pawpaw chapter members and friends took a “walk on the wild side” in September in one of the Ocala National Forest’s historic longleaf pine-turkey oak sandhill communities at Clearwater Lake.

Our guide, Dr. Susan Carr (niece of sea turtle expert Dr. Archie Carr), is a plant ecologist who did

her PhD work at the University of Florida on the diversity of native ground cover in fire-maintained pinelands throughout Florida.

At Clearwater Lake Recreation Area we found a variety of habitats: large stretches of rolling upland longleaf pine, oak hammocks, scrub, and the aquatic habitat surround-



ing the Clearwater Lake.

During the two-hour walk we discovered the importance of fire as a management tool in sandhill communities, and how specific plants successfully adapt to this fire regimen.

Though we missed the peak fall-flowering season for wildflowers, we did see Alicia (*Chapmania floridana*), Florida paintbrush (*Carphephorus corymbosus*), wild buckwheat, (*Eriogonum tomentosum*), and a showy pink milkwort (*Polygala violacea*). Kim

and Carolyn sampled some small semi-ripe wild persimmon, and we all jumped back as a 5-foot coachwhip snake slithered quickly down a nearby gopher hole.

Looping back by the lake to the picnic area there was ample opportunity to identify wetland plants along the shore. The picnic lunch overlooking scenic Clearwater Lake was a perfect end to a great day in the forest.

Story and photos by
Sonya Guidry





OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

From river to sea on Mala Compra trail

On Saturday morning Oct. 10, 18 individuals participated in the native plant field trip at the Mala Compra hike and bike park. It was a nice mix of club members and first timers, including retired biologist Suviandav Panacour and Jose Nunez from iNaturalist.org. Mark Wheeler was our intrepid leader from start to finish.



The trail began at the Matanzas River bank and ended at an ocean dune walkover with waves at our feet.

The hike traversed through four natural communities: mesic (maritime) hammock, pine flatwoods, wetlands (old canals cuts), and coastal uplands.

More than 50 species of plants, shrubs, trees, and ferns (not including lichens and mushrooms) were observed. Numerous examples from each of the four natural communities were identified on the trail.

On a beautiful October day the trip concluded with savory barbecue, tasty packed lunches, a trip to the museum, and one more hike to the river hammock.

A day well done.
Thanks to all!

Story by David Anderson/Photos by Sande Habali and Warren Reynolds





PLANT THIS, NOT THAT

A day to celebrate Florida's native plants

In celebration of Florida's Native Plant Month and sponsored by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPP), an event was held at Smith Creek Landing in Flagler County on Oct. 17.

Celena Cline, a Gamble Roger's State Park ranger, organized the event, which included nature and butterfly walks, as well as a saltmarsh restoration tour led by Paul Haydt, resource manager with the St. Johns River Water Management District.

It was a great opportunity to see the different stages of saltmarsh restoration accomplished by removing old spoil islands and returning the elevation back to a sustainable living marsh ecosystem. Some of their newly planted *Spartina alterniflora* plugs (smooth cordgrass) came from New Smyrna's "restoration nursery" site. Big plans



for a walkway and observation deck are in the future at the Smith Landing 18-acre project.

Pawpaw members Beth Murray, Kim Johnson, Mark Wheeler, and

Sonya Guidry shared FNPS information with visitors. Also in attendance were Pawpaw members Mike and Gail Duggins, who maintain a mini butterfly habitat

where gulf fritillary larvae and chrysalis were a real show-stopper.

A few days after the event, the local Flagler/Palm Coast News-Tribune carried a front-page story on the activities, prominently featuring Sonya and Kim.

Pawpaw members are always on the look-out to help with the Florida Milkweed Project. Mark shared a site displaying several velvetleaf milkweed (*Asclepias tomentosa*) producing four big seedpods. Hopefully, Ranger Celena will be able to gain permission from FANN to collect 10% of the seeds for its milkweed project.

In addition to all this, Ranger Celena presented participants with free muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*) plugs. This Florida native is a sure sign fall has arrived!

Story and photos by Sonya Guidry