



THE PAWPAP PRESS



Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society – March 2026

The Florida Native Plant Society's mission is to champion Florida's native plants and their habitats.



Field Trip to Tomoka State Park

– by Georgann Meadows

– photos by Barb Davis, Sonya Guidry & G. Meadows

February 21st brought a welcome warm sunny day, perfect for a Saturday morning walk exploring Tomoka State Park in Ormond Beach. Before visiting the Chief Tomokie statue, 24 Pawpaw members and friends strolled through the forested trail leading from the community center to the northern edge of the peninsula where the Tomoka and Halifax Rivers meet.

On the return trip, we stopped to tour the native habitat featured in the last issue of this newsletter. Although damage from this winter's freezing temperatures was apparent throughout the park, there were still plenty of natives thriving and available for teaching moments.





Field trip leader Paul explained how (*Phlebodium aureum*) got the common name of golden polypody fern.



Barb found seeds in the non-native indigo plants cultivated in the 1700's for its blue dye.



Sonya gave a quick ID lesson on members of our native *Tillandsia* family: ball vs. Spanish moss.

Park of Honor Update

– by Sonya Guidry

Father Frost sure left his mark on the Park of Honor. The scorpion-tail turned black, the dune sunflowers just melted, while many remaining shrubs wore only brown leaves! Hopefully by mid-March we can see how far back we need to prune our fiddlewood, wild coffee, necklace pod, firebush, grayleaf teabush, blue porterweed and frostweed.

Yet some plants withstood the freeze just fine...plants like Simpson stopper, Yaupon holly, saltbush, elderberry, coontie, Jamaican caper and some tough Bluecurls. Even one small bear's-foot was hidden away and completely untouched. Judi discovered the first promise of spring: our two twiggy dormant small-flowered Pawpaw shrubs had just sprouted tiny new leaves and buds.

In addition to photo bombing the Park of Honor regulars, Leslie observed the damage might be like wildfires in nature: once in a while we just need a big freeze to clear everything out so everything can start over.

<< left to right: Karen, Amelia, Judi, guest visitor Leslie and Peter on Monday, February 16th.



Jimmy Harrell Fence Garden Prep

— by Sonya Guidry

With the 33rd Annual Black Heritage Festival just a day away, four Pawpaw members showed up on February 20th with pruning shears in hand to rescue Jimmy Harrell's Fence Garden from much of its unsightly freeze damage display. We were happy to see Jimmy's brother, Alan Harrell, pop by while helping with event preparations at the Mary B. Harrell Black Heritage Museum.

Hopefully March will bring warmer weather, so we can do final pruning and replace some lost species with more cold-hardy pollinator plants.



THE OBSERVATORY



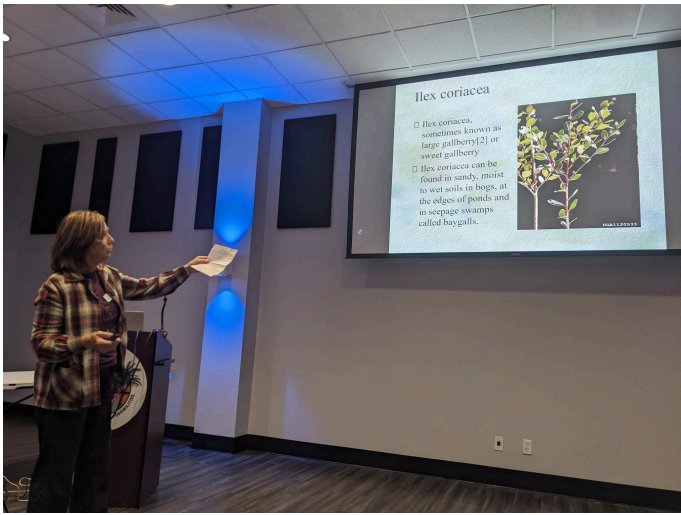
Heather Circelli captured this cloudless sulfur on lyre-leaf sage during the field trip at Tomoka State Park.

ReGrow the Loop Event!



As part of the 2026 Regrow the Loop Program, on February 7th, Leslie Nixon made an interesting – and entertaining! – presentation at the Ormond Beach Library on home composting.

Scenes from the February meeting:

Guest Speaker	Plant of the Month (POM)
 Marsha Cox and Joyce Riddel from Southeast Volusia Audubon told us about the group's history (Florida's chapter is older than the national society!) and their work at the Marine Discovery Center.	 Lisa DiNicolo told us all about gallberry (<i>Ilex glabra</i>). Also known by the common name inkberry, this plant certainly fits this month's POM theme as a <i>Native Alternative for Common Invasives</i>.

Join us!

Monthly meetings take place on the **second Monday** of the month at the Piggotte Community Center, 504 Big Tree Road, South Daytona.

***** Next meeting Monday, March 9th *****

Meeting starts at 6:30 pm, doors open at 6 for socializing

Speakers: Brandon Evans, Director of D Ranch Preserve &

Kristin Anderson, Programs and Community Engagement Lead

Topic: Conservation Florida's D Ranch Preserve

Videos of our monthly speakers and plant of the month presenters are available...
on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PawpawChapter>
and website: <https://pawpaw.fnpschapters.org/meetings/recordings/>

Save the Date!

Saturday, April 25th, 2026

Pawpaw Chapter's

🌻 Annual Spring Native Plant Sale! 🌱

Upcoming Field Trips & Events:

Saturday, March 21st at 9 am - Ponce Preserve, 4401 S. Peninsula Drive, Ponce Inlet
Meet at the parking area (seen in the photo below) on Peninsula Drive by 9 am

A leisurely 2.5 mile hike from river to ocean through several ecosystems including tidal marsh, maritime hammock, and coastal strand. At the parking lot on Peninsula Drive, Barbara Davis will present a brief history of the preserve and the work that has occurred there, including extensive invasive plant removal. Then we will split into two groups to take turns exploring the park. One group will walk over a 1,000-foot long boardwalk to the river first. The other group will enter the maritime hammock area to visit the three designated historic trees and learn of the invasive plants removed from this area, then we will proceed to the east side of the Preserve and the dune boardwalk which leads us to the beach. The maritime hammock area includes labels on the native plants with QR codes that access the Florida Native Plant Society website for each plant. Then each group will visit the other portion of the preserve.



Trip Leader(s): Barb Davis, Sonya Guidry & Karen Walter.
Wear: clothing/shoes suitable for uneven dune trails & weather
Bring: drinking water, insect repellent.
Restrooms are available at the parking area on Peninsula Drive.
Trip Lunch option: There are picnic tables near the Peninsula parking lot or enjoy lunch at any of the four waterfront restaurants in Ponce Inlet. Please register for this field trip through [EventBrite](#). (Registration opens at 6 pm February 9th & ends at 6 pm March 20th.) For more information, contact Barbara Davis barbaracdavis@gmail.com

Upcoming ReGrow the Loop Events:

Pawpaw Chapter is proud to be a partner in the Ormond Beach ReGrow the Loop and Trail initiative, bringing awareness to the importance of Native Plants in landscapes. Enjoy the variety of events available!

March

3/11/26, 11—12 noon • 20 Native Wildflowers

Ormond Beach Environmental Discovery Center (EDC), 601 Division Ave, Ormond Beach, FL

3/14/26, 10 am—12 noon • Pruning Trees

Ormond Beach Regional Library, 30 S. Beach St, Ormond Beach, FL

3/28/26, 10 am—12 noon • Tree ID Walk

Bulow State Park, 3351 Old Dixie Highway, Ormond Beach, FL

April

4/5/26, 8—10 am • Halifax River Audubon Beach Walk

Michael Crotty Bicentennial Park, 1800 Ocean Shore Blvd., Ormond Beach, FL

4/8/26, 10–11 am • Terrific Native Trees

Ormond Beach EDC, 601 Division Ave., Ormond Beach, FL

4/11/26, 10–11 am • Land Conservation Update/Halifax River Projects Update

Ormond Beach Regional Library, 30 S. Beach St., Ormond Beach, FL

4/18/26, 8–11 am • Earth Day Tree Giveaway

Ormond Beach EDC, 601 Division Ave., Ormond Beach, FL

Native plant garden workdays:

- * Park of Honor, 9 am - 12 noon every third Monday, 755 Olive St, South Daytona
- * Dunlawton Sugar Mill Gardens, 9 am - 12 noon every Wed & Sat, 950 Old Sugar Mill Rd, Port Orange
- * Environmental Discovery Center, 8:30 - 9:30 am Fridays following the monthly meeting,
601 Division Ave, Ormond Beach
- * Mary Harrell Black Heritage Museum, 9 - 11 am Fridays following the monthly meeting
314 Duss St, New Smyrna

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Our website: <https://pawpaw.fnpschapters.org/>

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