



THE PAWPAW PRESS

Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society: July 2021

Virtual meetings to continue as cases increase

Although the Board of Directors had been making plans to resume in-person meetings in September, in light of the explosion of new cases in Florida it voted unanimously at the last meeting to table further consideration of the matter until the situation improves. The board will continue to investigate how to conduct hybrid in-person and videoconference meetings in the future. We would like to get your input on this matter. If you have ideas or concerns, please share them during our Zoom meeting on August 9 or via e-mail at pawpaw@fnps.org.

Partner with pros to help with land reviews

Since 2009, Florida Native Plant Society members have participated in almost every state land management review. These reviews, which occur every five years at each site, ensure that conservation lands of more than 1,000 acres are being managed in accordance with the plans set up for them. Volunteers join professionals and often get to see parts of parks and managed lands that the public rarely sees. The reviews are a great way to become more involved in FNPS.



Recently, Pawpaw members Paul Rebmann and Sonya Guidry assisted in reviews of Tomoka, Bulow Creek, and Haw Creek state parks and the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve.

Here are some of Sonya's thoughts on her experience:

My field experience was great. I was already familiar with the sites the team visited.

Over the years I have been following this Spruce Creek Preserve, pulling up unwanted sand pine seedlings and reporting exotics that needed to be removed, like soda apple and Chinese tallow. I feel more like an unofficial "Friend of Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve" and was happy to serve on this LMR.

I was really impressed to see how well just eight Volusia County management team members could set up a rotation of frequent site visits of all the Volusia County conservation lands. The management team said this preserve was the most utilized by the public, involving hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, kayakers, disc golf enthusiasts, anglers, picnickers, and campers.

Despite all this activity, the preserve got a unanimous thumbs up from the LMR team.

The only recommendation made was that a barrier fence should be sprayed with herbicide to keep the native wild pea vines from covering it. If only all areas had such challenging problems!—*Photo by Sonya Guidry*

If it's sultry, it's time for the plant swap

If it's August it's time for the chapter's annual plant walk and swap. This year's version will take place Saturday, August 21, at Buschman Park, 4575 Spruce Creek Road, Port Orange, beginning at 9 a.m. Bring two to three potted native plants to share, but if you don't have any, come and join the fun anyway as there are always plenty of plants to share. Reserve your spot by e-mailing Warren Reynolds at warrenreynolds70@gmail.com.

A summery escape on a St. John's byway

Pawpaw members and guests from throughout Volusia and Flagler counties enjoyed a perfect summer day's pontoon excursion down the St. John's River during July's field trip.

Captain Rob thankfully guided our boat off the main river, which was crowded with noisy jet skis, and into the quiet back waters of Blue Creek, which borders the Ocala National Forest. Along the creek we were pleased to see little blue and great blue herons, territorial ospreys, several slider turtles, and one small gator sunning itself on a log. Plant people were not disappointed to find this quiet green waterway decorated with a steady floral array of scarlet swamp hibiscus, Virginia saltmarsh mallows, bright purple pickerelweed, the white blooms of duck potato, and swamp lilies. Spanish moss hung from the branches of cypress, pop ash, and water hickory. Thick mats of spiky air plants emerged from the tree trunks hanging over the waterway.

Amazingly the Blackwater Inn managed to deliver all 21 trip participants their tasty meal of choice within a rather short serving time. It was a great day enjoyed by all.—*Story and photos by Sonya Guidry*



For a fine hedge small or tall: Walter's viburnum



Walter's viburnum, *Viburnum obovatum*, is listed by the University of Florida's extension service as a superior hedge. It is just that. It is a long-lived perennial that will do well anywhere from zone 7 to 10. It is native to acidic wetland forests but tolerates a broad range of conditions including moderate drought. It will grow in full sun to shade. It is evergreen and has no known pests.

Walter's viburnum sports small to medium leaves that range from 1-2 inches depending on the variety. They are a glossy dark green with a leathery texture, slightly lighter underneath and have a mild fragrance when crushed. Showing its attractive green leaves throughout the year, it splurges with beautiful white inflorescences in late winter and early spring. The blooms occur in small convex cymes at the branch tips before new growth and last for 2 to 3 weeks. They give way to an abundance of red-black fruits that attract the spring birds.

A number of cultivars have been developed, resulting in plants of sizes to suit anyone's landscape. The straight species will grow to 27 feet, while the "Withlahoochee" cultivar is a medium-size bush. Perhaps the most commonly encountered is the cultivar "Mrs. Schiller's Delight," which will stay around 3-4 feet. Walter's viburnum can be used as a specimen plant or a hedge. You can agree that this hedge is a high performer, providing year round display that will not only enhance your landscape but attract the birds and butterflies as well.

—*Story and photo by Karen Walter*

Mark your calendar for programs, field trips

August 9, Vitor Vasconcelos, Associate Professor of Ecosystem Dynamics at the Federal University of ABC, and Jesse Jones, of the University of Florida's Residential Landscape Ecology Lab, on yard management, native plants, and how we benefit August 16: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

August 21: Plant swap, Buschman Park, Port Orange

August 23: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

September 18, Field trip, Tomoka State Park, Ormond Beach

September 20: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

October 16, Field trip, Lake Beresford, DeLand

October 18: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

November 15: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

November 20, Field trip, Gamble Rogers State Park, Flagler Beach

December 4 Field trip, Sugar Mill Ruins, Port Orange

December 20: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

The Observatory

One thing you can safely do during a pandemic that seemingly knows no end: Get out and savor nature! Dave found blooms galore thanks to summer rains, including pine lily; it's a good year for Sonya's gingerbush; Carol was happy to have something other than an echo moth caterpillar visit her coontie; Katie's cornflower snakeroot has a striking presence; a beetle was among the many pollinators drawn to Leslie's ironweed. Share your delights and discoveries by emailing them to Doug at shalehill@gmail.com.

