



THE PAWPAW PRESS

Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society: March 2022

In March, we spread the word

March was a busy month for one of the chapter's most important activities: outreach. Here's a wrapup of some of the places we went.

—Sande Habali/photos by Sonya Guidry and contributed by Battle Island member

Wildflower and Garden Festival

The annual Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival in downtown DeLand is always a great venue for finding kindred spirits and this year was no exception. Karen Walter filled three pages with potential new member contact information, and the last of 2021's seed packets brought in a lot of dollar donations. Many Pawpaw members also attended the event and stopped by, and Stacy Matrazzo of the Florida Wildflower Foundation dropped off a new supply of the foundation's "20 Best Wildflowers" planting guides.



Ponce Inlet

Members made three trips to Ponce Inlet, beginning with a talk and tour of Ponce Preserve early in the month. Since there was no way to bring electronic aids with us, we relied on our poster board to tell about the FNPS mission and some of the activities of our chapter.

Later in the month, we got to enjoy Ponce Inlet's Earth Day celebration, also at Ponce Preserve. This year the vendors were scattered among the pathways, making it quite an adventure for visitors to find us. Imagine our happiness when, on more than one occasion, we heard participants turn the corner and exclaim with delight that they had found the native plant people.



For Heritage Day at the lighthouse in Ponce Inlet, Sugar Mill Gardens' historian and Pawpaw member Gail Murray was on hand to discuss Sugar Mill Gardens and plants suitable for the beach.

Battle Island

Battle Island Adventure Club is located on 35 acres of privately owned land on the Indian River Lagoon in New Smyrna Beach. Pawpaw members Carol Hawkins, Karen Walter, and Sande Habali were invited to join their Coffee Klatch in early March to share information

about the Pawpaw Chapter and FNPS. The group turned out to be very environmentally conscious and interested in native plants and the society's mission. After the talk, we took a short tour of the area. The group works hard to keep invasives out of the property and to leave plenty of Yaupon hollies and Simpson's stoppers, as well as mangroves and other water-loving plants. The trip was a step back in time and a real treat.



Remembering Renate

In March, the chapter lost beloved member Renate Calero after a long battle with illness. She had been a member of the chapter since 2016, and many will remember her for having an uncanny gift on field trips of spotting creatures along the trail that everyone else had missed. She enjoyed taking walks around her neighborhood and sharing pictures of plants and insects to post in our newsletter. Renate was a life-long learner; always educating herself about the environment and other science-related issues. The chapter will dedicate a plant in our Park of Honor to Renate, as a token of our appreciation for all the gifts she gave us.

The chapter also wishes to express condolences to Mark Wheeler on the recent loss of his wife, Fran Wheeler, and to Dr. Donald J Spence on the recent loss of his father, Donald L Spence.

Exploring the springs in the spring

The March field trip was to Gemini Springs County Park, which was purchased in 1994 through the combined efforts of Volusia County, the Trust for Public Lands, the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Florida Communities Trust, and which some old-timers remember as the site of a treasured swimming hole for escaping the summer heat. If there were a sur-



prising number of invasive plants to be found, there was also the chance to thank these conservation agencies for the vision and dedication to set aside this land for public use.—*Story and photos by Sonya Guidry*

Join the City Nature Challenge and look for life



The Pawpaw Chapter is partnering with other local organizations as a coordinator for The Nature Conservancy's City Nature Challenge, a four-day global event from April 29 to May 2 in which communities compete for recording the most species, documenting the most observations, and engaging the most participants.

You can participate on your own, or join a chapter-members-only event at Lake Ashby on April 30, details of which will be available to those who register for the challenge and then email Sonya Guidry at guidry.sonya@gmail.com. To register, you'll need to download the free iNaturalist app from the Google Play store or the Apple App store, then access the

Volusia County event page via the QR code to the left. You can take pictures of plants, bugs, birds, butterflies, or wild animals. iNaturalist will do the documentation. Put on your citizen scientist hat and join the fun.

Native plant school grants available

The Florida Wildflower Foundation's Seedlings for Schools grants program is accepting applications now through May 15, 2022. Teachers at Pre-K–12 public and private Florida schools may apply to receive an assortment of small Florida native wildflower plants with which to establish or enhance a native wildflower garden. Professional guidance on garden establishment and classroom resources also are provided. These gardens can beautify school grounds and provide an outdoor classroom that helps create connected pollinator pathways.

Grant awardees will receive plants in September for fall planting. Species supplied will be a good fit for smaller garden spaces and should thrive year-round. Those who successfully establish fall gardens will be eligible to receive more plants in spring 2023.

In the 2021 school year, a total of 49 schools were awarded grants. Visit the Seedlings for Schools grants page at floridawildflowers.org for more information and to apply.

Mark your calendar for 2022 programs, field trips

👉 **The April 11 chapter meeting will be in person at the Piggotte Center, 504 Big Tree Road, South Daytona**

April 9: Spring native plant sale, Piggotte Community Center, South Daytona

April 11: Meeting, Piggotte Community Center, South Daytona, with Stephanie York, Park Services Specialist at Gamble Rogers Memorial State Recreation Area and North Peninsula State Park.

April 16: Field trip to the Eldora House and loop trail, Canaveral National Seashore

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

April 23: Earth Day Festival, Washington Oaks Gardens State Park, Flagler Beach

May 9: Meeting, program TBA

May 14: Field trip to Haw Creek Preserve State Park, Palm Coast

May 16: Park of Honor work day, 9 a.m., Olive Street, South Daytona

May 19-22, 2022: FNPS annual conference, virtual: fnps.org/conference/2022

June 13: Meeting, program TBA

June 18: Field trip to Green Springs, DeBary

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



The Observatory

While Leslie Nixon is admiring the spring blooms in her yard, including the crossvine, Fred and Suze Peace are wondering why there is such a variation in leaf size on their big old oak tree. Share your photos by e-mailing Jenny Nazak at jnazak@yahoo.com.