



Serenoa Notes

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The Serenoa Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

January, 2008

Monthly meetings at Selby Gardens:

Every third Monday. Doors open
at 7:00 p.m, business meeting
at 7:30, followed by program.
Everyone welcome!

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The 2008 FNPS Conference is on its way!

Estuaries to Uplands: Celebrating Florida's Native Plant Heritage

May 15th thru 18th

Manatee Convention (aka Civic) Center in Palmetto

Speakers:

- Jon Thaxton, Sarasota County Commissioner—an outstanding presentation on advocacy.
- Linda Young of the Clean Water Network—Water and how to protect it.
- Jim Egan of the Marine Resources Council—How Native Plants Save Lives: The Untold Story of Tsunamis and Hurricanes.
- Many more.

Workshops:

- Meg Lowman (Canopy Walk) of New College of Florida
- FNPS President Shirley Denton (Nature Photography)
- Lynka Woodbury of Fairchild Gardens (Plant Specimens)
- Dale Armstrong (Rain Barrel Making).

Field Trips on Thursday and Sunday are too amazing to detail here. Be on the lookout for registration packets.

Children's Program on Saturday that will take the kids away for hands-on learning and a field trip to Emerson Point Park.

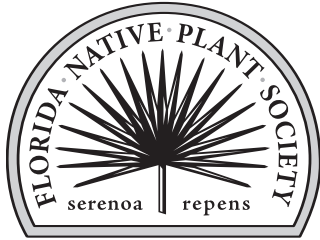
Native Plant Sale on Friday and Saturday (9 am to 6 pm). You won't want to miss this one.

We can't do it without you. Please help us put out the welcome mat and make this a memorable event. Contact our conference chair and share your talents. Wilda Meier: WQMEIER@aol.com 941-924-0706

continued on next page

List of opportunities to support your chapter

Please volunteer for the conference for two hours or more if possible.



Officers & Committees

President: **Nancy West**
941-748-1463

Vice-President: **Cathy Page**
941-795-8973

Treasurer: **Lee Breyer**
941-721-3486

Secretary: **open**

Chapter Rep: **open**

Membership: **Annemarie Post**
941-924-3319

Education: **Karen Fraley**

Editor: **Nancy West**

Graphics: **Charlotte Thomas**

Historian: **Martha Horton**

Web Site: **Bruce Holst**

At Large: **Brooks Armstrong**
Nancy Armstrong
Steve Black
Margaret Dahl
Dave Feagles
Tom Heitzman

Visit our chapter on the Florida
Native Plant society website:
www.fnps.org

Add your email address to the
FNPS eco-action alert list by send-
ing an email to info@fnps.org

Room Monitors (*Friday and Saturday*) Introduce the speakers, dim the lights, make sure the speaker has water available, hand out any publications that the speaker has brought, time the speaker so they stay on time, keep doors from slamming. A radio will be available to call for help for room problems. An audio-visual person will also be in the room to work on the A-V equipment and can also help out.

Audio Visual Aides (*Friday and Saturday*) Help speakers get their programs/talks onto the AV equipment. Fix problems that arise. There will be a super geek available for help.

Chapter Booth (*Thursday, Friday and Saturday*) A chapter booth will be set up to sell all the chapters items for sale, i.e. t-shirts, canvas bags, decorative license plates etc. The volunteer will be the sales person, collect the money for each sale, put out more articles, etc.

Registration Desk (*Wednesday night, Thursday, Friday and Saturday*) Hand out registration packets; enroll day of event registrants.

Vendor/Exhibitors help (*Wednesday/Thursday*) Help vendors and exhibitors with their set up, show them where to set up, be available to answer questions.

Native Plant 'Jeopardy' Host and Assistant (*Friday night*)

Silent Auction/Raffle assistants (*Friday and Saturday*) Sell raffle tickets, answer questions about how the raffle and silent auction work.

Sponsors We are still in need of sponsors for the conference. If you know of a company or person who would like to contribute, please contact Wilda Meiers or Nancy West.

Serenoa Board Members Elections Results

President: Nancy West

Vice President: Cathy Page

Treasurer: Lee Breyer

Secretary: open

Chapter Rep: open

Membership: Annemarie Post

Please consider joining the board for a one-year term. We meet monthly for approximately two hours, which includes a dinner, brought by a board member (\$3-5). Contact Nancy West 748-1463



Spring Gardening Guide

December/January

- This is a good time to plant native trees and shrubs as the plants are dormant and the weather is cool, so there is less stress on the new plants. Since it is cooler and the days are shorter, less watering should be required except by newly planted plants.
- Prune native grasses to about 2" from the ground (doesn't include dune grasses), as they're looking pretty nasty by now anyway. Nature would normally burn them every 2-5 years.
- Do NOT prune frost/freeze damaged plants until there is not another risk of another freeze.
- Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) can be pruned to 6–8 inches from the ground to keep it in bounds.

February/March

- Add more mulch if needed: 3–4" around trees and shrubs, about half that around others; hardly any around wildflowers that you want to reseed. Always keep mulch away from the base of plants.
- Prune back shrubs and trees to reduce or contain their size. Please don't shear them like a box or a giant meatball! Never prune more than 25% of the plant at one time. Beautyberry and firebush can be pruned severely to keep them more compact. Wait until after flowers fade to prune those plants that bloom in early spring.
- Native trees and shrubs really don't need any fertilizer after about 3 years of age unless for nutritional deficiencies. But weather and circumstances vary; so use your own judgment.
- Plant spring wildflowers: gaillardia, black-eyed susans, coreopsis, beach sunflowers, and scarlet sage. (Fall flowers need to be planted before the hot summers—goldenrods, asters, and liatris—either now or in April/May). Supplemental water newly planted trees and shrubs while we are in our dry season.



Nancy Edmundson, Rosalind Rowe and Bruce Holst identifying a plant at the Old Miakka Preserve field trip.

Various Notes

Gainesville Sun on October 8, 2007, by Stuart Carlton—By the time you've finished reading this sentence, Americans will have thrown away over 15,000 plastic bags. They will have recycled about 150.

Reuseablebags.com estimates that about 12 million barrels of oil are used annually to manufacture the plastic bags used in the United States. That's enough oil to create about 240 million gallons of gas, which could fuel over 500,000 cars with gas for an entire year.



Channel 6 WKMG:

OVIEDO, Fla. (20 minutes North of Orlando)— A Central Florida city is offering its residents green cash in exchange for a greenless lawn. The city of Oviedo will pay \$1,000 to residents who trade in their grass lawns for less thirsty landscapes with mulch and drought-resistant plants. City leaders said watering lawns is the No. 1 water-waste issue at a time that the state of Florida is facing a water crisis.

"We're looking at running out of water in 2013 and having the cost of water go up anywhere from 500 to 600 to 700 percent," Oviedo Deputy Mayor Dominic Persampiere said. City officials said the rebate program's biggest resistance will likely come from homeowner's associations claiming that grass-free yards will be an eyesore and bring property values down.

◁ Congratulations to Mary Foster!

Mary is the winner of the 2007 Serenoa Chapter prestigious Golden Acorn Award, presented to her by Richard Andrews, for her work on defending our lunch on a field trip to Hillsborough River State Park.

Websites to check out

"Saving our plants. We know plants and we know their value. One quarter of the native plants in the United States are of conservation concern. That's 5,000 different species. So we work to preserve and restore these native treasures." —Center for Plant Conservation

<http://www.centerforplantconservation.org>

Want to identify that frog, toad or snake you found? This is the site for you. It also gives information on Cuban tree frogs, which are eating our native frogs, and what you can do to control them—as well as information on venomous and non-venomous snakes and how to identify them. <http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Marine/Cane Toads This is a pdf file you can download about the invasive toad found mostly in southern Florida but moving north. The toad is very poisonous to dogs. If the toad even sits in a dog's water bowl the toxin in it's skin leaches into the water and can poison the dog. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/UW046>

FAQs on Native & Exotic Plants & Native Landscaping This is a great site to answer questions about landscaping with native plants. Definitely a site worth taking the time to read.

<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/GEM/ambassador/natives.htm>

Beauty Berry– *Callicarpa americana*

—Paul Wills

Among the finest of shrubs in a Florida native plant yard is the tough and easy to grow beauty berry.

Botanically called *Callicarpa americana*, which translates from Greek as “beautiful fruit,” it also called French mulberry.

Not planted for its nondescript foliage or barely noticeable flowers, it is noted for the arrays of bright red-purple berries clustered along its many stems. There also is a white-berried variety but it pales in comparison, so to speak, and is somewhat rare in the wild.

During our fall and winter months, the plant is among our most spectacular shrubs, lit by the balls of shining berries—unlike anything else in your yard. So finding specimens in the wild is child’s play during those months. Another easy marker is the fact that every part of the plant has a distinctive—though indescribable—odor when bruised; making the ID equally certain without the berries once it is experienced.

There may be two or three, up to 15 or more inch-and-a-half diameter clusters of fruit per stem, and from a few to dozens of stems. It all depends upon how rich and sunny the planting site.

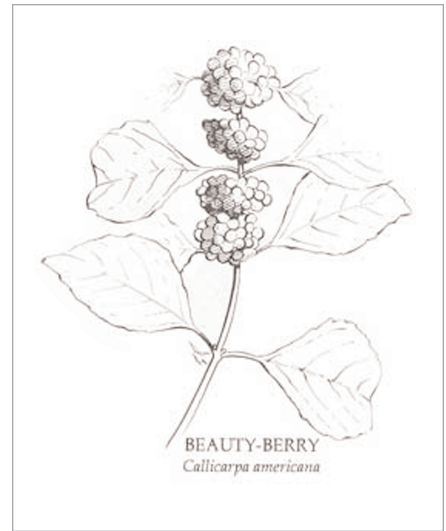
Callicarpa seems to have almost no parasites. I have seen them flourishing in pastures of cows and goats which will eat nearly any other plant. And in the woods or yards I cannot recall ever seeing any kind of devouring insect on the papery, light green leaves, which are about half-hand sized.

The beauty berry seems always to have been valued more for its looks than its use to people, even by the Indians of the South who found a use for nearly every kind of plant. William Bartram found it growing around ruins of ancient Indian settlements in South Georgia in 1773 and listed it as a food plant for the vanished people, but didn’t give any details.

From my own experience as a child, I can attest that the beauty berry has a sweetish taste accompanying the diagnostic smell. But it was not a flavor that enticed even the numerous and curious children in my South Alabama community. The girls smeared their cheeks with the violet coloring in the berries, but as I recall, it washed off easily.

Native plant nurseries usually offer this tough plant, but you also can easily grow it from seed readily found in town or country locations. And the roots can be subdivided and easily grown.

It grows all over the South, thanks to plantings by birds, which readily eat the berries if winter food runs short. Though found as far north as Maryland, it is somewhat cold sensitive and may be damaged by very light frost as far south as Manatee and Sarasota counties. But even when killed to the ground further north, it springs right back up when the ground warms.



Chapter Programs and Field Trips (continued from page 8)

- 17 **General Meeting Paynes Creek State Historic Park** Speaker: Jackson Mosely, park manager and entomologist, will talk about what we will see on Saturday's field trip and discuss bugs and their relationship to plants.
- March 22 **10 A.M. Field Trip Payne's Creek State Historic Park**, Hardee County. Located where Payne's Creek meets the Peace River. Jackson Mosely will lead us through this 400 acre park and tell us of its historical and natural importance. Carpool: Manatee 8:40 a.m., Sarasota 8:30 a.m. <http://www.floridastateparks.org/paynes-creek/default.cfm>
- April 12 **FNPS Conference Committee Meeting** 10:00AM to NOON. Everyone is invited to attend! Palmetto Library, 923 6th St. West, Palmetto, 722-3333.
- 19 **Earth Day Celebration** Felts' Audubon Preserve, Manatee County.
- 20 **Earth Day Celebration** Oscar Scherer State Park, Sarasota County.
- May 15-18 **FNPS State Conference**, Manatee County.
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Notes on Serenoa Chapter Field Trips

Please check our website, www.fnps.org for maps, changes, and more information: Look under chapters and then use the drop-down menu to Serenoa. We invite you to bring a bag lunch, trail snacks and water. We usually picnic after our hike, depending on its length. Directions will be given as each of the trip dates approaches. If you cannot attend the prior general meeting, please contact Brooks or Nancy Armstrong at 863-993-3966, 863-558-1588, or pinelilywind@yahoo for directions and carpool information.

FNPS 2008 Endowment Grant Research Awards

The Florida Native Plant Society maintains an Endowment Grant program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. These are grants in the amount of \$2500 or less, awarded for a one-year period, and intended to support research that forwards the mission of the Florida Native Plant Society which is "to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida."

Application deadline for the 2008 grant cycle is March 7, 2008. Grants will be awarded in Spring, 2008 and announced at the 2008 annual conference in Palmetto, Florida.

Application instructions are on the FNPS Web site (www.fnps.org). Follow the links Programs/Awards & Grants/Endowment Fund Grants. For additional information, contact Paul A. Schmalzer: paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov

Dec. 1, 2007 – Earth Day, Apr. 22 2008. Goal is for each and every member to present a gift membership to a friend, colleague, neighbor, family, ally, foe. Awards for all chapters enlarging their memberships by 100% When one member gives five gifts, four members do not have to give a gift and the Chapter can still win the grand prizes. If the FNPS gains \$10 on each gift membership and we double our members, FNPS adds \$10 x 3000 = \$30,000! Suggested reward: a 3x5 or 4x6 foot color Palmetto Logo Florida Native Plant Society flag.

Mega Membership Explosion Challenge

Photos of native grasses in the landscape needed

Christina Uranowski of the Pine Lily Chapter is putting together a CEU course for Landscape Architects entitled "Native grasses for landscape design." If you have photos to share showing native grasses in a landscape setting, please forward them to: curanowski@aol.com

County land acquisition program

FNPS is embarking on a project to provide resources to start a land-for-preservation acquisition program for those county governments that do not currently have one. We need FNPS members from different regions to work on the project. A workshop will be held at the conference in May (see page 1) to review the materials and action plan. If you are interested in contributing to this project, Contact Karina Veaudry at executivedirector@fnps.org or (407) 895-8446.

Welcome New Members!

Greta Man, Palmetto
Sarah Sigmund, Sarasota
Chris Becker, Sarasota
Lisa Hickey, Palmetto
Floyd Richey, Bradenton
James & Susan Young, Bradenton

Join now! Come to the meetings and field trips! Learn about conservation, restoration of native habitat, and landscaping with native plants.

Florida Native Plant Society Membership benefits: *Serenoa Notes* quarterly newsletter • Member discounts at events
• 1 year subscription to *The Palmetto*, a quarterly magazine • *Sabal Minor* bi-monthly newsletter

FNPS Membership Enrollment

Serenoa Chapter Newsletter

Name _____ E-mail _____ Phone (day) _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Membership number, if renewing _____ Life: \$ 1000 Donor: \$ 250 Business: \$ 100
Supporting: \$ 100 Contributing: \$ 75 Nonprofit: \$ 50 Family: \$ 50 Individual/Renewal: \$ 35
Individual/New or Gift Membership: \$ 25 Full-time student: \$ 15 Library: \$ 15
Payment: ☐ Check/MO ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Discover
Check/Money Order # _____ Please do not mail cash. Make checks payable to: FNPS
Credit Card # _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Exp Date _____ 3-digit CV code on back _____
Name on card _____
Billing address & zip code if different from above _____

Credit card payments can be faxed to 815-361-9166, or mail this form to: FNPS P.O. Box 278 Melbourne, FL 32902-0000

Chapter Programs and Field Trips (continued on page 6)

Monthly general meetings at Selby Gardens: Every third Monday, Sept. through May at 7:00 P.M.; speaker begins at 7:30. Selby Botanical Gardens Activity Center, 811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota. Everyone welcome!

Carpool Meeting Points: BRADENTON: Twelve Oaks Plaza, Bank of America building, on SR 70, ¼ mile west of I-75. SARASOTA: Durango's Steakhouse, in the mall on the NE corner of Fruitville Road & Honore Avenue.

Jan. 30–April Gardening Classes. Manatee County Extension Service offers a variety of classes, days and evenings on landscape design, landscape irrigation, landscape plant selection, composting, and rain barrels. Check out the website <http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu> or call 941-722-4524 for more information.

Feb. 9 FNPS Conference Committee Meeting 10:00AM to NOON. Everyone is invited to attend! Palmetto Library, 923 6th St. West, Palmetto, 722-3333.

15-17 2008 Rally for the Rivers, Putnum County, Three days of celebration, entertainment, workshops, field trips and Ocala National Forest restoration work. Florida folk story-tellers, Florida folk music, arts and crafts will be on display. Info: <http://www.pcecweb.org/> (352)475-1936.

18 General Meeting Crowley Nature Center—Where Southwest Florida Pioneer History and Nature Meet. Speaker: Bill Cowdright, Education Director. The discussion will center around Crowley's place in SW Florida pioneer history, and the Center's habitats which support a diversity of plants and animals.

23 10 A.M. Field Trip Crowley Museum and Nature Center, Sarasota County. This is an easy walk through dry pine flatwoods, shady oak hammock, over the Maple Branch swamp, and out to the edge of the expansive Tatum Sawgrass Marsh along the Myakka River. 16405 Myakka Rd, Sarasota. Carpool: Manatee 8:40 a.m., Sarasota 8:30 a.m. <http://www.crowleymuseumnaturectr.org>

24 Discover Lake Manatee 10:00AM to 4:00PM Celebrate the 4th Annual "Discover Lake Manatee" State Park event with a day of fun for the whole family. There will be guided nature walks, arts and crafts, junior fishing clinics, live bluegrass and folk music courtesy of Myakka Bluegrass; wildlife exhibits and much more. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer at the event, please contact the ranger station. Free to the public. Lake Manatee State Park, 20007 Hwy 64 East, Bradenton. (941) 741-3028, <http://www.floridastateparks.org/lakemanatee>. Serenoa Chapter will be there with a booth. Contact Nancy West to volunteer.

March 8 FNPS Conference Committee Meeting 10:00AM to NOON. Everyone is invited to attend! Palmetto Library, 923 6th St. West, Palmetto, 722-3333.



**The Serenoa Chapter
of the Florida Native
Plant Society**

P.O. Box 564
Sarasota, Florida 34230

www.fnps.org