

Serenoa Notes

THE SERENOA CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2006

FNPS 2006 Conference Saturday Keynote Address:

*Richard Louv on
"Last Child in the Woods:
Nature Deficit Disorder"*

day, seven days a week. . . . Which house. . . . Which telephone number." Louv says that this is essentially placing children under "house arrest."

Louv blamed the media for much of this fear. Every report of child abduction is dragged on and dragged on in media reporting, even though U.S. children are actually safer now than they have been at any time since 1975, and even though most abductors are family members. "Stranger danger" translates to the outdoors being off limits.

"Society is sending an unintended message to children," Louv has stated. "Nature is the past, electronics are the future, and the bogeyman lives in the woods." Often what outdoor time they have is structured by supervised team sports, such as soccer.

In contrast, environmental psychologists report that children's well-being is enhanced by exposure to nature around the house, or even just a room with a view of a natural landscape. Louv asks where the environmentalists of tomorrow will come from if children don't develop some kind of positive relationship with the world outdoors.

As someone who was a child in the 1950s and 1960s, I find it difficult to imagine that in general, today's children don't know what it's like to just go outside and play.

[Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* is available from Algonquin Books (Chapel Hill, NC).]

— Jody Larson

President, Mangrove Chapter FNPS
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"A child today can likely tell you about the Amazon rain forest, but not about the last time he or she explored the woods in solitude or lay in a field listening to the wind and watching the clouds move."

According to Richard Louv, author of six books about family, nature, and community, and an active journalist and child advocate, today's children are suffering from what he has termed "Nature Deficit Disorder." Modern American kids' average exposure to electronic media per week is 45 hours—more time than most parents spend on full-time jobs. They are not going outside to play.

But this is not completely the fault of modern electronics. A 1991 study in *Environment and Behavior* journal reported that by 1990, the radius within which children were allowed to roam on their own from home had shrunk to one-ninth of what it had been in 1970.

Louv asked parents around the country why children are spending so much time indoors. He expected lack of access to nature to be on the top of the list. But even in rural areas, parents reported that their children are withdrawing from nature.

Even more important is parents' fear of children being out of the house. One suburban father told Louv, "I want to know where my kid is 24 hours a

WE MEET EVERY THIRD MONDAY
AT 7:00PM, SEPTEMBER THROUGH
MAY, AT SELBY GARDENS ACTIVITY
CENTER. EVERYONE WELCOME!

Officers & Committees

President	Nancy West 941-748-1463
Vice-President:	Brooks Armstrong 863-993-3966
Treasurer:	Mary Foster 941-722-7922
Secretary:	Cathy Page 941-795-8973
Chapter Rep:	Mike Kenton 941-355-1267
Membership:	open position
Web Site:	open position
Historian:	open position
Newsletter:	Heather Hill 941-792-2691
At Large:	Nancy Armstrong Steve Black Margaret Dahl Tom Heitzman Karen Fraley Trisha Egolf

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 sending an email to:
info@fnps.org



*"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us.
When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to
use it with love and respect."*

Aldo Leopold, American environmentalist and author

APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE!

Serenoa Chapter Members Recognized

Karen Fraley was awarded the Green Palmetto plaque for her achievements in education, service, and technical areas to promote Florida native plants. The FNPS state board of directors award Green Palmetto awards.

Mike Kenton was awarded a Silver Palmetto plaque for his work on the FNPS state board of directors. Mike was especially recognized for his work to get a representative of the FNPS on the granting board of the Florida Highway Beautification Council.

Carol Ann and Lee Breyer won First Place Residential/Professional "Design With Natives" Landscape award for their home in Palmetto. Tom Heitzman, as the landscape designer, shared in this award. This category is for homeowners who have their projects designed by professional landscape architects or designers.

Jean and Bill Evoy, won First Place Preservation "Design With Natives" Landscape award for their home in Arcadia. This category is for efforts to preserve native plant ecosystems or vegetation.

NEW MEMBERS:

Sherri Swanson
Sara K. King
Lee Schlesinger FSBA
Francis Roberta FSBA
Dianne Waters FSBA
Betsy Russell FSBA
Anne Marie Brady FSBA
Kimberly Conklin FSBA
Pamela Theiler FSBA
Olivia Braid-Chiusano FSBA
Susan Benjamin FSBA
Paula Biles FSBA
Julia Rega FSBA
Karen Harmening FSBA
Susan Coffey FSBA
Susan Hubbard FSBA
Melanie Dutoit FSBA
Phillip Louis Phillips FSBA
Jo Ann Kerekes
Jami Elwood

We have been very fortunate to have many new members to our Serenoa Chapter from the newly founded Florida Society of Botanical Artists (FSBA).



"As wilderness shrinks and backyard acreage increases, the ecological impact of home gardeners grows ever greater."

— Janet Marinelli, Brooklyn Botanic Garden



The Backyard Wildlife movement is growing. Give a gift that helps raise awareness about how we can protect wildlife: a membership in the Florida Native Plant Society and a beautiful T-shirt. Memberships start at \$25 and T-shirts are only \$16.

PRICKLY ASH

By Paul Wills

Tramping in the woods, you could easily miss a scraggly little tree with thin, reddish-gray bark that goes by the resounding name, *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*. Clava means club in Latin

But if you stumbled against it or grabbed a limb, leaf or trunk for balance, you'd pay attention, for it is almost sure to be armed everywhere with sharp, tough thorns. These give it its most common name, prickly ash.

But that is not its only name, for these include toothache tree, Hercules club, pepper wood and sting tongue. These are clues to another of its outstanding characteristics—a stinging astringency that quickly numbs the tongue and gums if you hold a wad of the inner bark against a throbbing tooth. The berries are zingers, too, and even the leaves, while less potent, still pack some of the numbing sting.

Prickly ash thus was useful to Florida frontiersmen far removed from painkillers, as well as dentists. No doubt, they were shown the little tree by Indians, who used it for a wide range of ailments such as bronchitis and rheumatism.

The taste is not great, but I'm sure was preferable to a throbbing toothache.

Even modern medics long considered extracts from prickly ash bark a tonic for chest congestion, varicose veins and headaches. Botanist Dan Austin reports it was listed as a medicine from 1820 to 1926 in the official U. S. Pharmacopoeia, and for 21 years, until 1947, in another medical list, the National Formulary.

Prickly ash is fairly common along both Florida



coasts, and isn't rare inland. The leaves are compound, with as many as 19 thin, pointed leaflets that only slightly resemble those of the ash tree.

A typical example grows beside one of the walking trails at Emerson Point Park. This one has many thorns growing from corky domes, but the spikes would be shed if the trunk grew to more than about six inches in diameter, but the corky growths would remain. Particularly husky specimens of this tree often can be spotted around coastal Indian mounds.

The small, greenish-yellow flowers and shiny black fruits grow off the ends of the twigs, other good field marks at some seasons of the year.

The Giant Swallowtail butterfly (*Heraclides cressphontes*) lays its orange colored eggs on the very young leaves of the *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis* from February through early November.



DINNER ON PALMA SOLA BAY

Karen Fraley

I left my house just after the August sun set into Palma Sola Bay hoping to see my friends leaving the bridge over the boat basin. I was stopped halfway there by the sight of the wading birds at low tide and the salmon color of the Florida sunset reflecting on the calm waters. Could that be a reddish egret in front of me? I can't see color in the backlight. Yes! She is doing her dance! chasing her dinner with joy and grace. Hopping and flapping and flying low over the water, she flies a short way then searches for the fish she's scared into

her path. A glorious way to eat! And look at the skimmers – a small group of four glide by with open jaws under water, feeding on the wing. Egrets and herons and pelicans work the background. There is plenty to feast on tonight in the bay.

But onward to the bridge... no action yet, so I start around the boat basin. The water is so low I can see the tide flowing back in to the inlet. As I turn the corner at the top of the cove, I look back at the bridge 100 yards away and see smoke rising. Not real smoke, but a cloud of bats emerging from the baffles under the bridge. Hundreds upon hundreds fill the night air and disperse looking for insects to feed on. They fly off in every direction, black on brilliant cerulean blue – the glowing sky after sunset on Palma Sola Bay.

Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) is an adult education extension program developed by the University of Florida (UF) and provided by participating organizations. FMNP training will benefit persons interested in learning more about Florida's environment, seeking educational contact hours, or wishing to increase their knowledge for use in education programs as volunteers, employees, and ecotourism guides.

The FMNP includes courses in 3 subject areas – Freshwater Wetlands, Coastal Systems, and Upland Habitats. Students receive 40 educational contact hours including classroom learning, field trips, and practical experience in interpretation. Cost per course is \$200. Students receive detailed 1,000 page course manuals and, upon completion, UF certificates, patches, and pins denoting their area of expertise (e.g., Wetlands Naturalist) and are registered in the UF database of Florida Master Naturalists.

There are 2 FMNP Instructors in Sarasota county whom you may contact about upcoming classes:

Sarasota County Extension Office
FMNP Contact: Robert Kluson
Email: rkluson@scgov.net
Phone: 941-232-3090

Historic Spanish Point (Osprey)
FMNP Contact: Debbie Dixon
Email: DebbieDixon815@msn.com
Phone: 941-371-8804

Roseate Spoonbill Sightings

Many members of FNPS love to watch and spot birds and since many of us are in the outdoors, we have an opportunity to help scientist track Roseate Spoonbills. Audubon of Florida has banded spoonbills in the Tampa Bay area and also in the Everglades. The spoonbill's population is increasing in Tampa Bay area, but declining in the Everglades. In 2004, 363 pairs of spoonbills nested on small islands in the bays and inlets from Pinellas to Manatee County.

The spoonbills from the Everglades are banded with black bands and the ones from the Tampa Bay area have bright red bands.

For more information about what/how to report sightings go to www.audubonofflorida.org. The website has great photos of what the bands look like, more information and photos about spoonbills and the banding project.

Or write to:
Coastal Islands Sanctuary
401 Ware Blvd, Ste 702

Community Message Board

- Want to know what insects are singing in your native garden? <http://buzz.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Rain gardens: how to make one and how they reduce run off from your yard. <http://www.rainkc.com/home/index.asp>
- Hernando Chapter websites with lots of articles on natives including what to plant for a moon garden. <http://hernando.fnpschapters.org/index.htm>
- Know the difference between native and non-native firebush, necklace pod, porterweed, wild petunia etc. at the Association of Florida Native Plant Nurseries website. Look under articles. This has great photos. <http://www.afnn.org>
- Yearly Florida wildlife activities organized by month, <http://snre.ufl.edu/events/wild.htm>

Serenoa Chapter has a new email address:
serenoafnps@yahoo.com

Don't forget to check out our website at www.fnps.org. Look for the chapter menu which drops down to Serenoa for up to date information on field trips and general meetings. Please email to serenoafnps@yahoo.com your updated email address so we can send you up to date information on changes to field trips and meetings. We will only send you FNPS events.

National Wildlife Federation's 70th Anniversary

To celebrate this anniversary, the NWF has a nationwide drive to certify 70,000 yards as Backyard Wildlife Habitats™ by the end of 2006.

The NWF promotes planting native plants in the landscape. Get your yard certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitats™. Provide: 1. Food 2. Water 3. Cover 4. Places to raise their young 5. Sustainable Gardening to qualify.

Fill out the form at www.nwf.org/bwh.

HELP WANTED for the Serenoa Chapter Newsletter Editor

Amateurs accepted! There are so many newsletter computer programs that if you have an interest in trying, the chapter is willing to pay for the program. The newsletter is put out the minimum of 4 times/year.

Website Manager

The chapter website is at the fnps.org website and is very easy to keep updated. No web experience is needed. The website manager keeps the upcoming events up to date and removes old events.

Please contact Nancy West at
serenoafnps@yahoo.com for more details.

Join Now!

Florida Native Plant Society Membership Benefits: 1 year subscription to The Palmetto, a quarterly magazine; the newsletters Serenoa Notes quarterly and Sabal Minor bi-monthly; member discounts at events. Come to the meetings! Come on the field trips! What a great way to learn about, and stay current with, conservation and restoration of native habitat and landscaping with natives.

Serenoa Chapter
Newsletter

FNPS Membership Enrollment

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone (day): _____

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Full-time Student: \$15

Individual: \$25

Family: \$30

Library Subscription: \$15

Nonprofit: \$50

Business: \$100

Supporter: \$100

Donor: \$250

Make checks payable to:
Florida Native Plant Society

and mail to: FNPS
PO Box 278
Melbourne, FL 32902-0000

Calendar: Chapter Programs and Field Trips

Monthly, Third Monday:

Serenoa Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, 7:00 pm, at the Selby Botanical Gardens Activity Center, 811 S. Palm Avenue, Sarasota (September through May). Meeting details below.

Carpool Meeting Points:

Bradenton - Twelve Oaks Plaza, Bank of America building, on SR 70, 1/4 mile west of I-75.

Sarasota - Durango's Steakhouse, in the mall on the NE corner of Fruitville Rd. and Honore Ave.

September

18 7 pm

Our first meeting at Selby promises to be very entertaining. Our speaker is Dr. Martin Quigley, Dept. of Biology at UCF. His talk is titled "Native to What?" Dr. Quigley is a landscape architect and restoration ecologist.

23 9am

Little Manatee River

Members of our chapter will guide this float as we observe native plants and wildlife along the way. This river is in southern Hillsborough County. Canoe rental, dropoff and pickup is available. Allow 30 min. from Bradenton carpool and 45 min from Sarasota carpool location.

October

16 7 pm

Cindy Campbell, Historic Bok Sanctuary's Rare Native Plant Curator, will discuss the Conservation Program at the Sanctuary including research, propagation and other topics. Be prepared to glimpse a side of Historic Bok Sanctuary that most do not know.

21 10am

Historic Bok Sanctuary

Ms. Campbell will guide our tour as we learn more about Florida's endangered native flora on the Lake Wales Ridge. Allow 2:15 from Bradenton carpool and 2:30 from Sarasota carpool location.

November

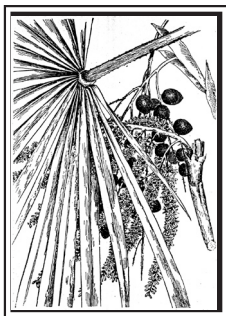
20 7 pm

FNPS Executive Director, Karina Veaudry will discuss "Extending the Florida Forever Land Acquisition program, Conservation Success Stories and Critical Areas that still need to be Preserved."

25 10 am

Babcock Ranch

We will take a ride on the swamp buggies at the Babcock Ranch in Charlotte County. As the debate continues regarding the fate of this 90,000 acre ranch, we will get to see the sustainable operations and conserved wild communities of this beautiful place. The cost for groups of 20 or more is \$14.95 + tax. Allow 1:15 from Sarasota carpool and 1:30 from Bradenton carpool location.



The Serenoa Chapter of the Florida
Native Plant Society

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www.fnps.org