

Serenoa Notes

The Serenoa Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

December 2014

FNPS Fall Plant Sale Success

– Carolann Cahill

Because our volunteer co-coordinator, Nancy West, is the epitome of organization, as volunteers arrived on this less than perfect October morn, each one got busy with their assigned task. Yes, clear skies and sunshine may have been preferable - and maybe some donuts, but sloshing through a few mud puddles isn't so bad. In retrospect (some may have to think back a bit further than others) there was a time when playing in the rain was enjoyable.

Anyway, by the time the first customers pulled in to the Serenoa Chapter Fall Plant Sale and Festival, displays were set, banners were flying and the two stray canines who were seeking shelter from the rain were on their way home.

Tom and his crew had the nursery in tip-top shape. New planting beds have been popping up and they offer great visual appeal and the covered seating area creates a warm, inviting atmosphere. Sweet bay Nursery is easily one of those places you could fritter away a few hours.

The crowd was a little light early on but by 10:00 the clouds disappeared and rain gear was shed. With the sun making its appearance the

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Monthly meetings at Selby Gardens:

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

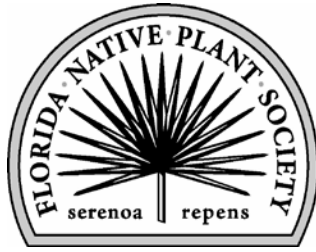
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PHOTO BY FRANK PALMIERI

Budding young native plant gardener at FNPS fall plant sale



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If you change your home address
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From Our Outgoing President— Tom Heitzman

As we get ready to begin a new year I want to thank all the members of the Serenoa Chapter for their support during my term as President. I am most grateful to the board of directors who help steer our chapter. The programs, field trips, plant sales, community outreach, educational grants and newsletter could not be completed without their guidance.

It is time to hand over the reins of president to Erica Timmerman. Erica, who is now retired from teaching, will bring a new energy to our chapter. Join me in welcoming her as she takes over running the programs and board of directors meetings in January 2015. We are still looking for a secretary should anyone want to volunteer.

I look forward to continued involvement with the Florida Native Plant Society. Interest in Florida's native plants continues to grow and we are the go to source for those seeking information. Participation in volunteer events, the programs or field trips only helps strengthen our position in the community making more people aware of the value of going native.

FNPS Fall Plant Sale *continued from page 1*

water droplets were glistening from the thousands of plants that were waiting to be adopted.

This day is not just about selling plants. Representatives from Audubon, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, Around the Bend Nature Tours and Citizens Climate Lobby were there with information and the Manatee County Extension service set up a butterfly component. We also had information supporting the passing of Amendment 1 in the November election.

Despite the rain, 100 visitors purchased over \$3,000 in plants, mulch and t-shirts. We are also happy to welcome seven new members to our native plant family. We appreciate everyone who supports the efforts of the Florida Native Plant Society by purchasing and planting native and a big thank you to our volunteers.



*Native plants headed to a new home
at the FNPS fall plant sale*

Species Spotlight—Florida goldenaster

Chrysopsis floridana —Elizabeth Gandy

As most of us know, fall is the time to get out and visit the scrub and pine flatwoods as these communities show off their gorgeous diversity of grasses and colorful wildflowers. On display are lopsided Indian grass (*Sorghastrum secundum*), coastalplain palafox (*Palafoxia integrifolia*), goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), lovegrass (*Eragrostis* spp.), gayfeathers (*Liatris* spp.), paintbrushes and vanillaleaf (*Carphephorus* spp.), the list goes on. One very special plant, especially to several of the counties represented by our local FNPS Serenoa chapter, is the Florida goldenaster (*Chrysopsis floridana*). While most fall bloomers start flowering about late summer, Florida goldenaster comes on later, with a peak flowering season from November through about mid-December.

Florida goldenaster plants are perennial, starting off and typically spending their first year as individual rosettes of leaves growing at ground level (basal rosettes). The leaves are green but so densely covered in silver, short-wooly hairs that they often appear silver and have a furry texture. At blooming time, plants put out one to several upright to reclining stems that can be 1 to 1.5 feet long and are covered with silver-haired leaves. The inch-wide flower heads are sunflower shaped as is typical of the Asteraceae family and have bright yellow disc flowers (center) and ray flowers (around the edge). Plants can live several years, producing new rosettes adjacent to the parent plant. When all the rosettes bloom, plants will have many flowering stems and can cover an area several feet in diameter. Plants prefer open areas of fine, white sand so the best habitats to find them are scrub, scrubby flatwoods and even coastal scrub or back dunes. Plants will tolerate shade for a time but in the absence of disturbance such as fire to open up the canopy, plants will eventually decline and die. Plants spread well from seed in suitable habitat so it is not unusual to find sizable populations where they occur.

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PHOTO BY LIZ GANDY

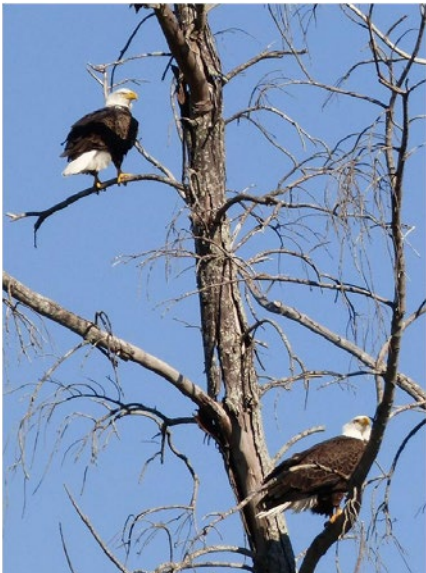
Florida goldenaster plant



PHOTO BY LIZ GANDY

Florida goldenaster plants in introduction site at Paynes Creek

PHOTO BY FRAN PALMERI



Bald eagle pair

Perico Preserve: Work in Progress

—Tonya Clayton

My labor of love.” That’s how Damon Moore of Manatee County’s Resource Management Division describes the new Perico Preserve in Bradenton. Gone are the Australian pines (*Casuarina* spp.) and Brazilian peppers (*Schinus terebinthifolia*). On the scene now are coontie (*Zamia pumila*), coralbean (*Erythrina herbacea*), and lopsided indiagrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*). This little island slice, slated to open in 2015, will be a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts, from wading birds to watchers of wildlife.

Local FNPSers recently enjoyed a sneak preview. At the Serenoa chapter’s October meeting, Damon told the parcel’s story. Drawing on historical narratives and aerial photos, he traced its evolution from pine flatwoods and coastal scrub through an era of agriculture and mosquito ditch-digging. Later, the “fallow years” followed. Invasive and nuisance plants ruled.

Rebirth and restoration began in 2007. The story since then has been one of resourcefulness, rapid-response adaptation, and community contribution. Volunteers from Bay Guardians, the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, and the Tampa Bay Estuary Program have planted thousands of plugs of saltmarsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*). The preserve’s own “Rip Squad” planted broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*) and marsh gentian (*Eustoma exaltatum*). This team still comes twice a month to beat back the incessant creep of invasives. Other partners include the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Stantec Consulting. More than a hundred native plant species are on the re-vegetation roster.

The result of all this hard work will be 175 acres of old-style Florida with modern-day merit. One overall goal includes the restoration and re-creation of a range of high-quality upland habitats. At the same time, the site must be manageable for county staff. Therefore, the original uplands—expensive to restore and maintain—will not be brought back in toto. Instead, the new landscape will include a mix of upland, freshwater, coastal, and marine communities. Saltier habitats are easier on the budget. New wetlands will help compensate for the many county wetlands previously lost to development. New seagrass beds will help compensate for other beds destroyed in future county projects.

In mid-October, chapter members visited Perico Preserve. (With good humor, Damon tolerated the typical FNPS amble—“slower than a snail’s pace,” as he put it.) We strolled past a new water-supply pond, handy for prescribed burns. White morning-glory (*Ipomoea* spp.) adorned its shores. We roamed over a sandy hill full of wildflowers in bloom. Every stripe of the rainbow was represented. Blood sage (*Salvia coccinea*), goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.), dune sunflower (*Helianthus debilis*), narrowleaf

PHOTO BY FRAN PALMERI



Muhly grass in bloom

PHOTO BY FRAN PALMERI



Coastalplain palafox and narrowleaf silkgrass

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In Memoriam: Carol Ann Breyer (1934-2014)

—Fran Palmeri

Carol Ann Breyer, a longtime member of the Florida Native Plant Society, died in her sleep on September 12 in Savannah on her way to a retreat in West Virginia. During her lifetime, Carol Ann worked in the peace and civil rights movements and advocated for the disabled, for prisoners, for the homeless and for the planet. She had a doctorate in Educational Administration and worked for the Florida Department of Education in Tallahassee helping to establish the community college system.

In 2000 she and her husband Lee, a Board Member of the Serenoa Chapter, moved to Ellenton, Florida where Carol Ann was active in the Earth Charter movement, the Master Gardener Program, the Florida Native Plant Society and Sierra Club. She and Lee built their home—Mercy-on-the-Manatee—which won an award for energy conservation (the FPL BuildSmart Gold Award). Tom Heitzman of Sweet Bay Nursery installed their native plant garden which won a landscaping award from the Florida Native Plant Society.

Carol Ann cared about the welfare of the earth. She spoke out in defense of the environment. She was an indefatigable doer and a great leader. Even in later years she kept up the pace. Many of us benefitted from her kindness and interest in what we were doing. She will be sorely missed.

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silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), blue curls (*Trichostema dichotomum*), *Liatris*, *Palafoxia*, *Carphephorus* ... the list goes on!

We skirted the moat of a future rookery island for nesting birds. Here, a different set of wildflowers showed off their fall colors. Another shallow pond—once the site of an Australian pine grove, now the precursor to a brackish marsh—already hosts baby snook. Young strangler fig (*Ficus aurea*) and gumbo limbo (*Bursera simaruba*) trees will eventually provide some welcome shade.

The restoration isn't complete yet, but feathered friends aren't waiting. We spotted a killdeer and a kingfisher while ospreys fished nearby. Two roseate spoonbills flew in for a visit, and two bald eagles adorned a tall snag.

Standing in a sea of glowing-pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), botanist Bruce Holst aptly summed up the sense of the day when he said to our host: "You've done a great job here."

Perico Preserve is on facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com/Perico.Preserve>



PHOTO BY FRAN PALMERI



PHOTO BY FRAN PALMERI

Carol Ann and Lee Breyer at a Conservation Foundation Event in 2012

Goldenrod and dune sunflower



PHOTO BY JULIET RYNEAR

Volunteers monitoring Florida goldenaster plants at Paynes Creek

Florida goldenaster is one of sixteen species and subspecies of *Chrysopsis* known to occur in Florida, half of which are endemic to our state. This species is no exception, currently found in only four counties, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Hardee and Manatee. This plant was listed as federally endangered in 1986 when a range wide assessment found it to be both rare and unprotected, with all known populations occurring on private lands. Since then, a number of introductions have been done on protected lands, many by Bok Tower Garden's rare plant conservation program. Introduced populations can be found at places like Weedon Island, Duette Preserve and Little Manatee River Southfork Tract (Cordell to most of us).

One of the most recent introductions by Bok Tower was done at Paynes Creek Historic State Park near Bowling Green in Hardee County. Prior to the introduction in 2011, there were no known protected populations of Florida goldenaster in Hardee County. One hundred ninety-nine plants were planted in an area of open sand around the historic site of Fort Chokonikla. The high ground that previously made the site ideal for a fort also made the site ideal for Florida goldenaster with its open, deep, white sands. Bok Tower staff and volunteers have monitored the plants annually since 2011. Monitoring in 2013 recorded a total of 688 plants! Fellow FNPS member Rosalind Rowe and I went and assisted with the monitoring this year. The total numbers are not in yet but many new seedlings were found and the population is steadily expanding. Some of the original plants from 2011 are also still alive and blooming.

Bok Tower staff regularly request volunteer help for annual monitoring of Florida goldenaster populations. It is a bigger and bigger job every year as successful introduction sites expand. Our FNPS chapter sends out an email to members so when you see it, please consider volunteering if you can or pay a visit to some of the sites to treat yourself to a great experience with a beautiful and special plant.

General Information

- Our local FNPS chapter held elections at the November meeting. Please welcome our new Chapter President, Erica Timmerman! We will certainly miss Tom at the helm, but he will still be amongst us. Congratulations to the other board members, who essentially stayed the same on their re-election. There is still an opening for Secretary so if anyone is interested in volunteering, please contact Erica. A huge THANK YOU! to all our board members for all the work they do to make our chapter a success!!
- A special thanks to everyone who voted and helped to get out the vote for Amendment One! The Land and Water Legacy Amendment passed with 75% approval from voters in the November election. It was the only amendment to pass and gives us all a positive reminder that conservation and the environment are important issues for Floridians.
- After over a year of development the new IFAS Assessment web site and database are live. The assessment is a powerful tool to help determine the invasive potential of non-native plant species that are already in Florida or may be imported to Florida

or even horticultural cultivars that are developed. It uses literature-based data on each species like life history, whether or not it is invasive elsewhere, whether or not it has closely related species that are invasive and adaptability to different habitats to estimate invasive potential. The site features 800+ species, easily searchable by common or scientific name, and results can be filtered by origin, conclusion, tool used, growth form, etc. Over 1500 pictures (all open source or credited) were compiled and growth form, origin, and links (EDDMaps, USDA Plants Database, Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants) were entered. The database is directly linked to the web site so any time a species is added or updated in the database, the species web pages are automatically built or updated and available for public viewing. You can visit the website at <http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

- The Serenoa Chapter has a Facebook page! It has interesting articles and also upcoming events. Please join! It is a great way to stay up to date on what is happening so check it out! Once you sign up to join, you will be accepted in a day or two. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/serenoafnps/>

FNPS Membership Enrollment

Serenoa Chapter Newsletter

Name _____ E-mail _____ Phone (day) _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Membership number, if renewing _____ **Dues:** ___ Life: \$1,000 ___ Donor: \$250 ___ Business or corporate: \$125
___ Supporting: \$100 ___ Contributing: \$75 ___ Not-for-profit organization: \$50 ___ Family or household: \$50
___ Individual: \$35 ___ Full-time student: \$15 ___ Library subscription: \$100
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 and zip code if different from above _____

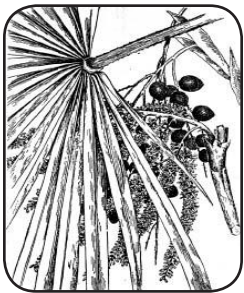
Credit card payments can be faxed to (815) 361-9166; or mail this form to: FNPS, PO Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

Florida Native Plant Society Membership benefits: *Serenoa Notes* newsletter, Member discounts at events, subscription to the quarterly magazine *Palmetto*, Bi-monthly newsletter *Sabal Minor*

Events Calendar

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!

- Dec. 16** ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK DINNER AND GIFT EXCHANGE 6 P.M. St Andrew United Church of Christ, Sarasota
- Jan. 19** GENERAL MEETING 7 P.M. —CONSERVING FLORIDA’S TREES. Dr. Michael Andreu of the School of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Florida will talk about tree succession in Florida habitats including hammocks and the importance of trees in the urban/wildland interface.
- Jan. 24** FIELD TRIP 9 A.M.—ROHLWING PARCEL, SLEEPING TURTLES PRESERVE, SARASOTA COUNTY. With Nancy Edmondson, Environmental Specialist Sarasota County, we’ll walk through an oak and sabal palm hammock. Expect to see resident and “snow” birds and wildflowers in the swamp along the river and in the pine flatwoods.
- Feb. 16** GENERAL MEETING 7 P.M. —THE IMPACT OF MINING ON FLORIDA. Rosalind Rowe, Florida State Parks Biologist, will tell us about the restoration at Alafia State Park, a former phosphate mining site. From Serenoans Brooks and Nancy Armstrong we’ll hear what it’s like to live in Hardee County, a heavily mined area.
- Feb. 21** FIELD TRIP 9 A.M.—ALAFIA RIVER STATE PARK, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY. Rosalind Rowe will show us the park’s extensive restoration of the mixed hardwood forest and pine flatwoods in old mining areas.
- Mar. 16** GENERAL MEETING 7 P.M. —THE AMAZON OF NORTH AMERICA. The Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, a rich repository of native epiphytes and orchids is still giving up some of its secrets. Longtime Park Biologist Mike Owen will fill us in on new plant discoveries and efforts to conserve the “rarest of the rare.”
- Mar. 21** FIELD TRIP 9 A.M.—FAKAHATCHEE STRAND PRESERVE STATE PARK, COLLIER COUNTY. You’ll have a choice of an unforgettable swamp walk for the hardy or a landlubber’s ramble along some of the old tram roads through the strand.
- Apr. 4** PLANT SALE 9 A.M. TO 3 P.M. SWEET BAY NURSERY, 10824 ERIE ROAD, PARRISH, FL 34219, MANATEE COUNTY. <http://www.sweetbaynursery.com> Volunteers needed!
- Apr. 19** EARTH DAY CELEBRATION 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M. OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK, SARASOTA COUNTY. Exhibits, plant sale, music, food, guided walks.
- Apr. 20** GENERAL MEETING 7 P.M. —PLANTING A REFUGE FOR WILDLIFE. Retired Broward County Environmental Administrator Gil MacAdam who created three National Wildlife Federation yards will tell us how he did it.
- May 18** GENERAL MEETING 7 P.M. —NATIVE PLANT GARDENS/THREE APPROACHES. Mary Foster will tell us how she landscaped her sunny yard; Nancy West will talk about gardening in drier uplands near the Manatee River. We’ll also hear about native plantings at the Manatee County Courthouse thanks to the great efforts of Cindy Shore.
- May 23** FIELD TRIP 9 A.M.—A VISIT TO THE FOSTER/WEST YARDS plus a Stop at the Manatee County Courthouse
- May 28–31** FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE, TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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of the Florida Native
Plant Society**

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