



News from Serenoa Chapter

March 2023 Announcements

Our monthly meeting (via Zoom) is Monday, March 20th, 7pm. The topic: Bugs! Kate Borduas returns to us for Part 2 of her Bug Series.

Our Field trip this month is to Little Manatee River State Park, Hillsborough County, on Saturday March 25, 9am. The guide for this one is our chapter president, Tom Heitzman.

Save the Dates:

Serenoa Day at Sweet Bay Nursery: April 15. Discounts for members, vendors and demonstrations. Proceeds support our grant fund.

Earth day is Saturday April 22. We will have a booth at a local celebration, and will need volunteers.

Florida Native Plant Society 42nd Annual Conference, April 28-30, 2023.

Future Garden tours: Would you like to share your yard with the chapter?
Please email us: srepens@gmail.com.



March Meeting

Insect Armageddon (Insects Part Two)
Monday March 20, 2023, 7pm
via Zoom

Insects are suffering population losses so vast that it has been called “Insect Armageddon.” Also “The Death of a Thousand Cuts.” What is causing the damage to insect populations? Can insects adapt to climate change? And can losses be reversed? What will the loss of insects mean for the health of the planet? Join Master Naturalist Kate Borduas as she describes just how bad things are. More importantly, she will discuss ways that we can each make a positive difference in the lives of the creatures that rule the world.



Monday March 20, 2023
Meeting via Zoom at 7:00 pm

[Click here to register for the meeting.](#)

A link to the zoom will be sent to you.



Kate is a self-described “Adult-onset” Naturalist. A transplant from coastal Maine, she is trained as a Florida Master Naturalist and as a nationally Certified Interpretive Guide.

Following a life-long, long-distance love affair with nature, Kate is delighted to be living the life of a naturalist full time. Kate gives frequent walks and talks in Charlotte and Sarasota Counties with a specific focus on Scrub Habitat and the Endangered Florida Scrub Jay. As a naturalist and guide, Kate is committed to sharing with other the hidden wonders of nature all around us.

Kate was the recipient of Sarasota County Parks “Volunteer of the Year” award in 2018.

Kate gives walks and talks for a number of organizations, including several Audubon chapters and the Native Plant Society.

Field trip: Saturday, March 25, 2023

[Little Manatee River State Park](#)

[215 Lightfoot Rd, Wimauma FL](#)

9am



We will meet at the main park, off Lightfoot Rd. at the Trailhead parking lot. Once in the park, it is the first right turn. There is a sign for Trailhead parking. See you there at 9am, Saturday 25th!

Nature enthusiasts will appreciate the rare ecosystems found within the park, including sand pine and oak scrub and oxbow wetlands.

[Click here to sign up for the field trip.](#)

About our Field Trip Guide:



Tom Heitzman, Chapter President, Serenoa FNPS; Owner Sweet Bay Nursery

Tom Heitzman is the current president of Serenoa FNPS, and Co-Owner and founder of Sweet Bay Nursery. A graduate of Ohio State University with a degree in Horticulture, Tom has broad knowledge and many years of experience about the culture, identification, and landscape uses of native plants.

Chickasaw Plum
By Nancy West

Right now, in my yard, the Chickasaw Plum is blooming. With clear blue spring skies, these white flowers are just outstanding. The flowers do not last long, and spring rains will knock off many of the flowers. It is still worth it for the stunning beauty of this native small tree.

One of the photos below is the first time I saw a [Chickasaw plum](#), *Prunus angustifolia*, blooming.

It was at Becker-South Fork State Park before it was a state park. As you can see, it tolerates very dry soils. Chickasaw plum tends to form thickets and therefore suckers which it has done in my yard. See more info [here](#).

A better choice for your garden, would be [Flatwoods plum, Hog Plum, *Prunus umbellata*](#), which does not sucker.

Both trees are deciduous, which means they lose their leaves in winter, but the reddish bark and tree form make up for the loss of leaves.

Both plums attract a lot of pollinators and today I saw a Parula warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler and a Pine Warbler searching for those insects and maybe a little nectar sipping.





Photos above: **At top is the Chickasaw plum in full bloom; below it is a close up of the bloom.**





Photos above: At top is a female Red-bellied Woodpecker on the reddish bark; below it is the late July fruit. Edible but not sweet. Best to use as a jelly.



[Check out this short video](#) of our Pamela Callender on the WEDU PBS show, Greater Sarasota, Season 3, Episode 1

Finding her greatest sense of inspiration in nature, Pamela Callender takes a different approach to landscape design. As an artistic response to environmental concerns, she uses native plant species to expand natural habitats, connect communities and allow wildlife to flourish.

Website: <https://greater.wedu.org/sarasota/>

Video Portal: <https://video.wedu.org/video/planted-in-art-ktm8hz/>

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEVGINX2d_E

Gardening tips for March

- **Use the oak leaves for compost and mulch.**
- **Cut your grasses back to the ground.**
- **Keep weeds under control, hand pull or apply mulch as a deterrent. Mulch 2-3” to form a nice weed barrier. Get them out before they go to seed.**
- **Mulching not only helps control weeds, it also helps keep the soil cooler and retain more moisture. Recycled mulch is available, as is pine straw, pine bark, Eucalyptus or Florimulch.**
- **Your new plantings of all types – flowers, shrubs, trees, etc, will need watering. We are in the dry season. Check your county’s water use guidelines. Use rain barrels if you can. Water rings are good around trees and shrubs to keep the water over the root zone. Encourage deep rooting by giving plants a good soaking once or twice a week.**



Just a few of what is blooming in Parrish:

Photos above: **At top,** [Green eyes](#), *Berlandiera subacaulis*; **below is** [Wild Azalea](#) (also called Piedmont and Pinxter azalea), *Rhododendron canescens*.

Interesting links:

Our neighboring FNPS chapter to the south, Mangrove, is having a Plant Native Day on Saturday March 4. It will be held at Lemon Bay Park in Englewood. [Mangrove Chapter Plant Native Day](#). It looks like a fun and informative day!

Florida Native Plant Society 42nd Annual Conference, April 28-30, 2023. All presentations are virtual. In person "Field days" at various areas around the state. Find out more here: [Florida Native Plant Society \(FNPS\)](#)

Duette Wagon Tours 2023. These are free tours of Duette Preserve, sponsored by Manatee Fish and Game Association. March 4: manatee-fish-game.ticketleap.com/duette-wagon-tour---pioneer-tour---march-4th/

Manatee County is seeking citizen scientists to be Water Stewards: [Florida Waters Stewardship Program 2023 Registration, Wed, Mar 8, at 4:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

The Florida Wildflower Association will open grant applications for Seedlings for Schools on March 23. If you know an educator who might be interested in wildflowers and classroom resources, here is more information: [Seedlings for Schools - Florida Wildflower Foundation \(flawildflowers.org\)](#)

[Farm and Garden Festival: March 18 at Mindful Blooms Farm, Bradenton](#)

Wild About Nature Festival, April 1, 2023, Bay Preserve, Osprey FL [Click here for information.](#)

Kenny Coogan [Check out his carnivorous plant videos](#)

Serenoa Chapter Board Members

President: Tom Heitzman

Vice President: Nancy West

Chapter Representative: Pamela Callender

Contact us via email: srepens@gmail.com

Did you miss a meeting? Want to check out a past Serenoa FNPS program? They are now on You Tube!

[Click here.](#)



Serenoa Chapter FNPS

The Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Go Wild! Go Native!

<https://serenoa.fnpschapters.org>

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Florida Native Plant Society
Serenoa Chapter
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Palmetto FL 34420**

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