

**MANGROVE CHAPTER**



**President's Message: Lois Cantwell**

We had a marvelous turn-out at the Holiday Pot-Luck Supper in December, with 41 members coming together for good food, lots of conversation, a spirited silent auction and just plain fun. I think this was a record for a pot-luck meeting.



On the following Friday, a group of 10 people (7 members, 2 workers from the county and a CHEC volunteer) formed our work party and tackled the wax

myrtles and willows at our adopted pond. Everyone worked well together, as we systematically went about the tasks at hand. Lots of trash along the roadside, an abundance of grapevine, some exotic orchids, and miscellaneous weedy growth were also dispensed with during the 2-hour work-fest. Mission accomplished. The edge of the pond along Placida Road looks much improved, still has a natural appearance, and there are remaining myrtles and willows there to serve their purpose without crowding out other vegetation and obscuring the view of the pond. Clean-up was facilitated by the use of David's small truck, which was loaded with piles of brush and hauled away, so no mess left behind. The 2 county workers were a big help to us. We gave them many thanks and sent a note of appreciation to the county parks supervisor in acknowledgement.

On December 18th, Al and I had an opportunity to represent our chapter during the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. We did our part in a section of Lemon Bay Park, although it was a bit quiet, with only 11 species and a total of 62 birds recorded, including one bald eagle. Al lamented the absence of any large flocks of swallows that are often seen this time of year. Of course, we botanized along the way, so we were either looking up or looking down. A couple days after we turned in our report, I saw a small flock of swallows fly over my house in Rotonda. As I say on many occasions "timing is everything".

## January Activities

Jan 6 (Friday): BOD Meeting, Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2:30 PM. Members are always welcome to attend.

Jan 10 (Tuesday): Membership Meeting, 7:00 PM, Speaker Program "Experiences with Planting a Native Yard", presented by Dave Clayton and Charlie & Jayne Woodruff. They will lead you through the design and landscaping process of establishing a native yard, through photos and descriptions of how their respective yards and gardens evolved over time. The Woodruff yard won the FNPS Landscape Award in April of 2016. Join us at 6:15 for our open door social time, followed by a brief business meeting.

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## Walks

Link

[January 2017 List of Walks](#)

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Babcock Webb

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission Celebrates the [75th Anniversary](#) of the Wildlife Management Area System

Link

[FWS Flyer](#)

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Clayton's front



Woodruff's front yard



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## Arbor Day Proclamation

The state of Florida's designated Arbor Day is January 20th. (National Arbor Day is April 28th). Charlotte County's observation for Tree Week is January 15th through the 21st. The reading and presentation of the Proclamation will take place at Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners meeting on **January 10th at 9:00 AM** at the administration building in Murdock. Dave Wilson, a long-time Mangrove Chapter member, will be on hand to receive the proclamation. **All members who would like to attend are welcome.**

Copy of Proclamation - Link:

[Arbor Day](#)

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## Volunteer Opportunities:

We need a new Newsletter Editor!!! If you have a background in writing, editing, publishing, or can put together a monthly newsletter of any kind, please contact Jim (941-830-0737) or jimthomson4@comcast.net. He would like to retire from this position. Or, if you know someone with these talents, even if they are not a member, contact me: birderlois@hotmail.com. We are currently using the Constant Contact (Basic Toolkit), which is ordered for use by the editor, and we reimburse him for the cost on an annual basis.

Auditor Needed: For the 2016 Fiscal Year, we held all of our Treasurer's reports for audit, having reviewed them at each BOD Meeting. Now we need someone to review our "books" to make sure everything is in order. It's not rocket science--just something we need to do to be in compliance with our By-laws. Any or our members qualify as an independent "pair of eyes" to accomplish this task. Please contact our current Treasurer, Linda Wilson (475-7210 or ljayewilson@juno.com) to assist.

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Local **Girl Scouts** walk on the wild side, by Sue Killion, Lemon Bay Garden Club, excerpted from The Sun, Local/Regional News, Saturday, December 17, 2016.

Englewood-Local Girl Scouts completed requirements to earn the National Garden Club's "Wildflower Patch".

The program entitled "A Walk on the Wild Side" was conducted by Lemon Bay Garden Club members. A major project completed within the program was writing letters to Charlotte County Commissioner Bill Truex supporting the Florida Wildflower Foundation's referendum.

This referendum encourages contacting county or city commissioners to turn

Florida green with wildflowers with the planting of wildflower seeds along county and state roadways.

To learn more about native plants in the Englewood area, the girls participated in a field trip to Cedar Point Environmental Center with environmentalist Al Squires.

At the end of their classroom sessions, the girls, their leaders, and members of Lemon Bay Garden club planted a native plant garden at Broadmoor Park, located in Rotonda West. Lemon Bay Garden Club is a member of the National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Region, and Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Incl., District VIII.

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Gail Finney

What's Blooming in the Garden - December 2016



Elliott's Aster (*Symphyotrichum elliottii*)

In late November and early December the Elliott's Aster was in full bloom with massive flower heads with lavender petals. This plant usually like a moist wet soil bed preferring marshes and ditches, but at Cedar Point it is doing well in a drier soil. The plant grows to be 4 feet tall and because it has a suckering habit can be bushy. Elliott's Aster likes full sun and falls over with too much

shade.

Because it is an aggressive suckering plant and rapidly fills in neighboring space it is not a well behaved plant for the home garden unless it is grown in a container. But, despite its limitations, Elliott's aster is a marvelous bloomer. The bushy lavender flower heads can be up to 1 inch and have a fragrance that is loved by butterflies and bees.

The plant is not salt tolerant but does do well in a variety of soils, sand, clay, and loam. It is winter dormant. You can see it now in a visit to the Cedar Point Environmental Center Demonstration Garden.

### **The Trouble with Exotic Mangroves**

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization lists 71 species of mangroves worldwide <http://www.fao.org/3/a-a1427e.pdf>. Southeast Asia has the greatest area of mangroves and contains the world's highest mangrove diversity with more than fifty species. The highest mangrove diversity in the entire Western Hemisphere (10 species) occurs along the Pacific Coast of Columbia and Panama. Florida's mangrove forests by contrast are composed of only 5 species. Due to the potential competitive advantages of some mangroves from the Eastern Hemisphere, the relatively species-poor mangrove forests of the Western Hemisphere seem to be susceptible to invasion. Since 2009, partners of Everglades Cisma have been trying to eradicate 2 exotic mangroves from Miami-Dade County which is proving to be difficult and costly.

On January 4th, 2:00-4:00 PM, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection will present this topic at their Monthly Meet-Up Workshop. Joseph P. D'Alessandro Building, Room 165, 2295 Victoria Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33901. You can register for this program via email to [Martha.Avila@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Martha.Avila@dep.state.fl.us) or [terry.cerullo@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:terry.cerullo@dep.state.fl.us)

Share notes from your last board meeting and address any unresolved topics of discussion.

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**Christmas Bird Count at Lemon Bay Park**



### Pond Work Day Photos





Lois and Al



Lois and Linda



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