



President's Message

by Lois Cantwell

Thirty-plus people turned out for our Holiday Pot Luck December membership meeting. It was kind of organized chaos, but we managed to get tables and chairs set up, food items laid out, punch and coffee made and fill out our forms for the auction items. So many items that we ran out of forms and had to improvise with pieces of paper. As usual, it was a fun evening with lots of socializing, fabulous food and spirited bidding. Linda collected \$150.50 from the auction, plus \$21 in donations. Prior to the fun, we did manage a brief business meeting and unanimously voted approval of the proposed Bylaws changes.

Earlier that day, I signed and mailed in our Partnership Application for this season's room reservation, which would be a rental valued at \$528. That's nearly 12% of our treasury. Thankfully, there are a number of Mangrove Chapter Members who volunteer at Lemon Bay Park. Their hours contribute to offsetting the rental fee, so we can use the room without charge. So, thank you to those of you who make this possible. And thanks to the Sarasota County Parks Partnership Program, as well.

Of Ponds and Pots

About the **pond** that our Chapter adopted at Cedar Point Environmental Park: We are trying to renew interest in that project. When this was first proposed, a lot of people raised their hands to indicate enthusiasm for supporting this effort. Since we started holding work days, very few are turning out to help. We will have a **Pond Work Day on Friday, January 19th at 9 AM**. There will be a list of tasks forthcoming, either at the next Membership Meeting, or in a blast email reminder as we get closer to that date. Volunteers are welcome!

[Visit our Website](#)

January 9 Meeting, Mangrove Chapter FNPS

For their first meeting of the 2018 winter season on January 9, The Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society has the pleasure of welcoming Biologist, Nigel Blakly. Mr. Blakly's subject will be "Milkweeds, Monarchs and

Milkweed Bugs.”

Mr. Blakly began his career as a biologist at the University of Iowa where he worked in the laboratory of Dr. Hugh Dingle, an expert on migratory milkweed bugs. He recently retired from the Washington State Department of Ecology and spends winters in Englewood, where he volunteers at the Lemon Bay Wildflower Preserve. He, along with Eileen Collins, grow native milkweeds for the Wildflower Preserve restoration project. Mr. Blakly’s current focus is overwintering milkweed bugs and Monarch butterflies in southwest Florida, in light of recent discoveries about Monarchs made possible through new genetics technologies.

Mr. Blakly holds degrees in Civil and Environmental Engineering and a PhD in Ecology. His doctoral studies included field studies of tropical milkweed bugs throughout the Caribbean Islands and south Florida. He was born New Zealand, grew up in Australia, and emigrated to the USA in 1969. He has traveled worldwide throughout Central America, Ecuador, New Zealand, Australia, New Guinea, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Mongolia, southern Africa, and Europe.

Mangrove Chapter meetings are held at Lemon Bay Park, [570 Bay Park Blvd.](#) in Englewood, Florida with speakers beginning at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6 pm. The evening promises to be informative and inspiring with plenty of time for comments, questions, lots of good discussion, and snacks. We encourage Floridians and our winter visitors to learn more about the importance of Florida’s native plants and communities by becoming a member of the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

For more information about Mangrove Chapter activities and events, please visit mangrove.fnpschapters.org. FNPS is a nonprofit organization whose mission is the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native communities of Florida.

FNPS Mangrove Chapter Nature Walk January 27

The Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society invites the public to join in a nature walk to Manasota Scrub Preserve, West on January 27 at 9 am. The Preserve is 154 acres of protected land located at 2695 Bridge Street in an area of Englewood, Florida that is part of the Lemon Bay watershed. The preserve includes trails, a boardwalk, and a picnic area. The preserve's upland and wetland habitats are home to gopher tortoises, Northern quail, Swallowtail butterflies, and great horned owls. Wildflowers along the trails include grass leaf, golden aster, and liatris, also known as blazing star.

DIRECTIONS: Take SR-776(Englewood Rd) to Manasota Beach Rd, and turn west onto Manasota Beach Rd. Travel 0.1 mile to Bridge St, then turn left onto Bridge St. Go past the main parking lot on the left and stop at the walk-thru on the right. You may park along the road. Walkers will meet at the walk-thru at 9 am. We plan to be on the trail for about 1.5 hours. For more information you may contact Trail Guide, Al Squires at [941-769-3633](tel:941-769-3633) or email him at ahsquires1@comcast.net

We encourage Floridians and our winter visitors to learn more about the importance of Florida's native plants and communities by becoming a member of the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. The Florida Native Plant Society promotes the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. Meetings, field trips and special events are free and open to the public.

Report from the November Field Trip to Miakka Preserve in Sarasota

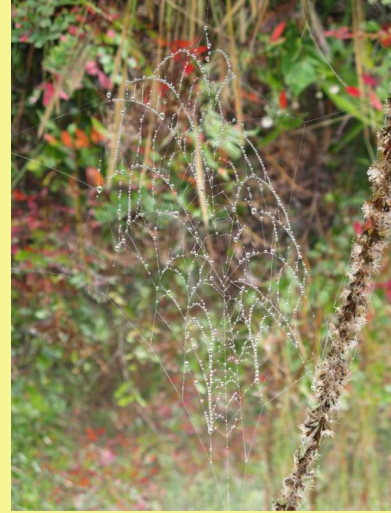
If you have never gone botanizing in the fog, this was the trip for you. It was just foggy enough to cast an eerie haze over the forest as we set out on our walk, lending a bit of whimsy to our mission. It soon burned off and we were blessed with a sunny and pleasant morning. So, our twenty-something band of enthusiasts set out to see what was doing the blooming. Actually we saw a lot of berries—Beautyberry's galore. Also, lots of Sumac, lending their red fall colors to the mix. Many in our group were birders, so there was much attention paid to the red-headed woodpeckers zooming from tree to tree. With lots of heavy dew, it was interesting to see the bowl and doily webs and other spider webs, as well.

Jeff Webber joined us for much of the walk, pointing out a specimen that is relatively new to the preserve. A few Scrub Olive's (*Cartrema floridanum*) were making an appearance here and there. Apparently, this is not the same as the Wild Olive that Craig Huegel describes in his book "Native Plant Landscaping for Florida Wildlife", which is *Osmanthus americanus*. Three other native genera in the olive family that are wonderful wildlife plants include the fringetrees, privets (*Forestiera* spp), and ashes. I have to do a bit more homework on the scrub olive.

Some of our group meandered over to Laurel Schiller's Florida Native Plant Nursery after the field trip ended. Lots of shopping, browsing, and chatting with Laurel. I was looking for flowering shrubs to use in my "plant-over" now that my mango tree is gone with the winds of Irma. Lots of sunshine in the back yard in the absence of dense canopy. I purchased Bahama Cassia, Beautyberry,



Darrow's Blueberry, and a Button Sage (*Lantana involucrata*). I had already planted a Dwarf Viburnum, Lyonia (Fetterbush), and *Lantana depressa* in that area. Looking forward to a nice variety of blooms and fruits in the coming months and beyond.



High Wind Damage Revisited



Southern Red Cedar doing the Irma-lean.

Naturally wind resistant trees are typically deciduous, losing their leaves sometime during the year. Good replacement trees after Hurricane Irma might include bald cypress, gumbo limbo, Florida and winged elms, pond cypress, red maple, sweet gum, sugarberry and sycamore.

A few evergreen trees show better than average wind survivability, like cocoplum, green buttonwood, black ironwood, live oak, myrtle oak, pitchapple and southern magnolia. Southern red cedar is rated poorly for hurricane wind resistance and is not considered a good candidate for trying to re-set, if leaning badly. Some of the problems with the red cedars are related to improper installation—roots being root-bound in the pot and needing to be flared out at planting time.



Pre-Irma Mango tree in Lois's yard

Lastly, several trees perform better in hurricanes when given special attention. Trees in this group need regular assessment (every 3 to 5 years) followed by corrective pruning. For young to medium-aged trees, inspect the tree's crown, remove suckers and any low branches. Examples of these include Laurel oaks, red maples, mahogany, slash

pine, southern red cedar, fiddlewoods and wax myrtle.



Post Irma - now with a tree stump.

CHEC 's January Calendar

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following free programs in **January 2018**. All programs can be found at www.ChecFlorida.org

Unless noted, all walks begin at **9:00 AM**. For directions or further information, call Cedar Point Environmental Park at [941-475-0769](tel:941-475-0769)

Wednesday January 3 Join **Bob “Coop” Cooper** on a guided walk through the scrub and pine flatwoods of 217-acre **Amberjack Environmental Park** in Cape Haze. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Gasparilla Pines Blvd.

Sunday January 7 Join **Dave Clayton** on a guided walk through the 81-acre **Bill Coy/Buck Creek Preserve** in Englewood. The scrubby flatwoods and mangrove swamp border Buck Creek, which flows into Lemon Bay. Meet in the parking lot.

Tuesday January 9 Join **Nancy Clayton** on a guided birding walk through the scrub and pine flatwoods of 217-acre **Amberjack Environmental Park** in Rotonda. Meet at the end of Gasparilla Pines Blvd. **Walk begins at 8 am.**

Wednesday January 10 Learn about “**My Town: The History of Hickory Bluff, Florida**”, with **Les Caraher** at **10 AM** at **Bayshore Live Oak Park** in Port Charlotte. During this free lecture, Les will discuss early Pt. Charlotte, from the Calusa Indians to the Spanish invaders, mullet fishermen and cattle ranchers to early recreation. **Reservations advised.**

Thursday January 11 Join **Al Squires** on a guided walk through **Tippecanoe II Mitigation Preserve** in Port Charlotte. This 150 acre preserve is home to several families of the threatened Florida scrub jay. Meet in the parking lot.

Friday January 12, 19, 26 Take a tour of the historic “**Cookie House**” at Cedar Point Environmental Park from **1 – 4 pm** with Charlotte County Historical staff. Formerly known as the Bass Biological Laboratory, the scientific studies from this facility is linked to the world renowned Mote Marine

Laboratory. Cedar Point Park's Visitor Center will be as well.

Saturday January 13 Take a tour of the historic "**Cookie House**" at Cedar Point Environmental Park from **10 am – 1 pm** with Charlotte County Historical staff. Formerly known as the Bass Biological Laboratory, the scientific studies from this facility is linked to the world renowned Mote Marine Laboratory.

Sunday January 14 Join **Bob "Coop" Cooper** on a guided walk through the old growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre **Oyster Creek/Ann Dever Regional Park** in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance.

Wednesday January 17 Join **Bob "Coop" Cooper** on a guided walk through the old growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre **Oyster Creek/Ann Dever Regional Park** in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance.

Friday January 19 Join **Cindy Christel** and **Phyllis Cady** on a guided walk through **Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park**, a 487-acre Charlotte County property of mature pines, dry prairie, marsh wetlands and freshwater ponds. Its location adjourning state lands make it an important wildlife corridor. Meet at the parking lot on US 41 at **8:30 am**.

Saturday January 20 Join **Gloria Hansen** on a guided walk through the scrub and pine flatwoods of 217-acre **Amberjack Environmental Park** in Cape Haze. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Gasparilla Pines Blvd.

Sunday January 21 Join **John Phillips** on a guided walk through **Tippecanoe II Mitigation Preserve** in Port Charlotte. This 150 acre preserve is home to several families of the threatened Florida scrub jay. Meet in the parking lot.

Tuesday January 23 Learn about "**The Importance of Native Plants**" with **Craig Huegel, PhD**, from 5 pm – 7 pm at **Cedar Point Environmental Park** in Englewood. In addition to the lecture, the evening will include complimentary wine, hors d'oeuvres, and music. Your donation to this CHEC fundraiser provides educational environmental programs to local adults and students. CHEC members only \$8 per person; Non-members \$12 per person. Space is limited. **Call for reservations.**

Thursday January 25 Join **Denise Hart** on a guided walk through the 81-acre **Bill Coy/Buck Creek Preserve** in Englewood. The scrubby flatwoods and mangrove swamp border Buck Creek, which flows into Lemon Bay. Meet in the parking lot.

Monday January 29 Join **Bobbi Rodgers** on a guided **moonlight walk** through the scrub and pine flatwoods of 217-acre **Amberjack Environmental Park** in Cape Haze. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Gasparilla Pines Blvd at **6:30 pm**. Space is limited. **Reservations recommended.**

Go to
www.CHECflorida.org
for complete program calendar

COASTAL DUNES TOUR

March 9 – 12, 2018

There are only a few places on our planet Earth with Coastal Dune Lakes and Florida is one. If you have yet to discover them, join us March 9 – 12, 2018 when we journey to the panhandle to see them for ourselves. Known as the **Emerald Coast**, Walton County Florida has 15 coastal dune lakes, functioning as nature intended, interlaced along the coast just feet from the Gulf of Mexico, yet they remain fresh water for most of the time.



During periods of high rain, storms or hurricanes, they become brackish, sometimes breaching their outfalls and pouring into the Gulf with their tannic waters staining the turquoise ocean. But the lakes eventually flush out the salt and return to freshwater.

Inspired by the documentary, **COASTAL DUNE LAKES – JEWELS OF FLORIDA'S EMERALD COAST**, by Elam Stoltzfus, this tour traverses iconic Hwy 30A, crossing Fuller, Morris, Campbell, Stallworth, Allen, Oyster, Draper, Big Redfish, Little Redfish, Alligator, Western, Eastern, Deer, Camp Creek and Powell Lake, so you will see for yourself why these ecosystems are so precious.



We travel by luxury motor coach with professional driver departing from Plant City at 7 AM on Friday March 9th and stop first in Apalachicola to visit the home, gardens and cemetery of eminent Botanist, **Dr Alvan Wentworth Chapman** who spent most of his adult life exploring the flora of this area and died in this historic

coastal community. Some of the plants named after him include Chapman's Rhododendron, custard apple, wild Florida azalea, large-flowered skullcap, spreading yellow foxglove, Georgia holly and many others. Two of his neighbors, John Gorrie, the early inventor of mechanical refrigeration and Thomas Orman, local cotton merchant, were friends, as was Asa Gray, another noted Botanist of this era.

Our accommodations for this 4day/3night tour are in cabins and bungalows at **Topsail Hill Preserve State Park**. Friday night is our pizza get-together in the Clubhouse. Saturday morning we join the rangers for breakfast and explore Topsail Hill's dunes trail and recently burned sections along with two park naturalists, then head to **Grayton Beach State Park** for a tour of their natural areas. Both parks support populations of the endangered Choctawhatchee beach mouse. We will learn how they are monitored and what the outlook is for their future.

Sunday we head to **Blackwater River State Forest** for a canoe/kayak trip or hike along the river so we can understand where all the coastal white sand comes from and search for the wild Azalea in bloom. In the afternoon, we tour **Seaside Village**, the first New Urbanism walkable community built in Walton

County with all native front yards, varied architecture, and no-mow lawns. We finish the evening with dinner and shopping in Seaside Village at their numerous restaurants and trendy food trucks.

Monday morning is open to explore the trails of Topsail Hill, then board our coach to head back to central Florida, arriving in time for dinner.

Make 2018 the year of discover, starting with our tour of the Coastal Dunes of Florida, March 9 – 12th. For more information, call Devon at 813-478-1183, email indigotravelcompany@gmail.com or visit our website at www.indigotravelcompany.com.

Some fabulous flowers of late fall in SW Florida

by Bill Dunson



Although you do not generally think about late fall as a time for beautiful flowers, there are indeed some very interesting native and exotic flowers in bloom that are attractive to butterflies and other insects.

On the beach you typically expect to see the striking pink/purple morning glories that are called railroad vines. But on the upper edge of the beach and dune complex at Stump

Pass you will also find the native bay bean with a similarly colored but very differently shaped flower. This is a wide spread but little noticed plant that is reputed to be attractive to those who like to smoke plants for their psychoactive effects (<https://drugs-forum.com/threads/baybean-canavalia-rosea-maritima.13352/>). However the green seeds are reported to contain various toxins including an amino acid that substitutes for arginine and disrupts protein synthesis. It is probably mainly pollinated by large bees and has extra-floral nectaries that produce sweet fluids that reward insects such as ants, which may then protect the plant from herbivores.



A very different native plant is this swamp lily, which was found along the edge of the Myakka River and has a striking white flower against the dark hues of the swamp. Whenever one sees a white flower, the initial reaction is that it may be a night-pollinated plant, most likely by moths in our area. This swamp lily seems to be specially designed to attract a night-flying hawk moth with a very long

tongue which hovers like a hummingbird. Look carefully at the very long corolla tube under the base of the flower petals, and the extended stamens and style which will brush up against the hovering moth as it approaches the flower.

A common type of flower designed to attract a wide variety of potential pollinators is in the huge aster family;

one example still blooming in December is this exotic Mexican sunflower planted in our yard. Many different types of bees and butterflies are attracted to this composite flower with numerous small disc flowers in the center. There is a convenient "landing pad" on the flat flower and the distance to the nectar is short. In this case there is a bright green sweat or a mason bee on the flowers. This



generalist approach to pollination, in contrast to the specialist hawk moth pollinator of swamp lily, is quite distinct. Each strategy has advantages and disadvantages.

So when you are enjoying flowers simply for their beauty, think a bit more deeply about the huge variety of colors and shapes and how this influences the types of insects attracted, and which ones can actually pollinate the plant.

History of Charlotte Harbor

Learn about the cultural history of Charlotte Harbor (formerly known as "Hickory Bluff") at Bayshore Live Oaks Park, 23157 Bayshore Road, Charlotte Harbor with local resident Les Caraher on **January 10, 2018**. Les will show, through period photographs, the local history, from the Natives to now, including stories of his own childhood days in Charlotte Harbor.

Program begins at 10 am. Reservations advised. Please call [941-475-0769](tel:941-475-0769) or email Bobbi@cheeflorida.org.

This program is presented by the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and Charlotte County Parks and Natural Resources. Bayshore Live Oak Park is a Charlotte County facility overlooking beautiful Charlotte Harbor.

Save the Date: March 10, 2018 Plant Native Day

Calling for Pots! The theme for our annual "**Plant Native**" Day event (March 10th) will be "**Container Gardening with Native Plants**". We would like to be able to offer examples to the public during the event, either as a raffle, silent auction or donation. Therefore, if anyone has a **suitable pot (ceramic, clay, durable plastic) deep and wide enough to hold 3 to 5 specimens** of native plants, please either bring them to the next two Membership Meetings, or drop them off with the "Garden Keepers" at our Demonstration Garden on any Monday morning (9 to 11) up until the 19th of February. If you wish to **contribute plants** for this purpose, we would need them by that same date. That gives us 3 weeks to get them potted and looking presentable.