



President's Message: by Lois Cantwell



Where the heck did February go? There were a number of workshops and happenings at Cedar Point Environmental Park; hosted Roger Hammer for our Membership Meeting (what a character, so knowledgeable, tells great stories, too); Denny's Celebration of Life (thank you to Al for organizing such a wonderful tribute); our field trip to 6 Mile Cypress Slough; plant surveys; and our garden keepers came to my house to pot up 130 specimens of plants for our "Plant Native" Day offerings, followed by lunch (yes, they work for food). I potted about 50 more plants after that. Try writing out all the plant names on

180 little sticks to identify them all.

Looking at the calendar, I only have about 9 weeks left in Florida. Crikey! That also means that I am nearing the end of my term as President of our Chapter—time for someone else to take the helm. This is not a difficult task. Anyone with organizational skills (or not) can steer the ship. We have a wonderful collection of members from diverse backgrounds, who love the environment and what grows in it. We socialize, have fun, promote "the natives" and enjoy nature. Many of you pitch in at our meetings and events to make things happen. Surely, there is one among you who can step into a leadership role and keep this merry band of botanizers moving forward. Don't be shy, raise your hand!

Please Welcome New Member

As of this past December, the membership of **Jean and Bill Evoy** was transferred from the Serenoa Chapter to our Mangrove Chapter. Jean has been an FNPS member since 1981! Those who already know Jean recognize her as both a lepidopterist as well as a native plant enthusiast. I marvel at her vast knowledge of both subjects, and to hear her rattle off all those scientific names is most impressive. Jean recently gave a very interesting and entertaining presentation on diurnal moths at the last Peace River Butterfly Society meeting. PRBS will have a booth at our upcoming "Plant Native" Day event, so please stop by and say hello, as Jean will be among their crew. Also, our May field trip to Morgan Park in Arcadia will be led by Jean as it is sort of "in her own back yard".

Plant Native Day March 9, 2019

The Mangrove Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society will hold its 16th Annual "Plant Native" Day on Saturday, March 9th, 2019 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2300 Placida Road, Englewood, FL. This half-day event is free and open to the

public. The theme of this year's event is "SHADE: Planting for it & Planting in it". Learn about the various native trees, palms and shrubs that can be used to create shade in your sunny yard. Find out which native shrubs, ferns, groundcovers and wildflowers do well in a shady landscape.

The guest speaker is Laurel Schiller, Florida Native Plants, Inc., Sarasota, Florida. She will use live plants to demonstrate her lectures, which take place between 10:00 a.m. and Noon. Her nursery plants will be offered for sale, beginning at 9:00 a.m., outside the Environmental Center during the day's program. Mangrove Chapter members will also be offering their home-grown native plants for donations out in the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. The Peace River Butterfly Society is also participating in the event, with their monarch-raising paraphernalia, as well as nectar and larval host plants for sale at their booth. Additionally, educational handouts will be available, a light refreshment will be served and the program will be followed by a choice of a Garden Tour or Guided Trail Walk. For more information, contact Cedar Point Environmental Park at 941-475-0769.



[Click to View the Plant Native Day Flyer](#)

[Click Here to VISIT THE MANGROVE CHAPTER WEBSITE](#)

Mangrove Chapter FNPS Presents EVA FURNER, March 12 7:00 pm

The Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society is pleased to welcome Eva Furner as speaker at their March 12 meeting.

Eva holds a BA from Vanderbilt University and an MBA from the University of Miami. She has served as a member of the Lemon Bay Conservancy board of directors since 2012, and currently chairs the Lemon Bay Conservancy's Wildflower Preserve Committee, working with Conservancy volunteers on implementation projects and long-range preserve planning. She also chairs the LBC Grants Committee. She is an active birder and accomplished nature photographer.

Before retiring to Cape Haze, Eva's professional life was at IBM and included professional management positions in systems engineering, customer education, new product development, market analysis, and marketing strategy and planning.

Eva will be presenting an overview of the rehabilitation project at Wildflower Preserve on Gasparilla Pines Blvd. in Englewood.

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 6:15 pm. The evening promises to be informative with plenty of time for comments and questions.

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. To learn more about the Mangrove Chapter or the Florida Native Plant Society, visit mangrove.fnpschapters.org

Chapter speaker programs, field trips and special events are free and open to the public.

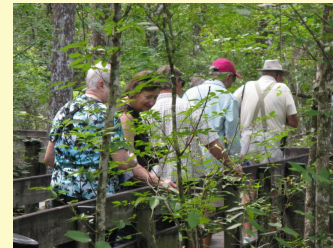
Volunteer Opportunities

1. Offer to **share your yard** for a membership outing, or organize a couple of yard visits during the remainder of the season.
 2. We need a couple of members (not running for office) to **serve as Nominating Committee** for our upcoming annual election of officers in May. Contact Lois at birderlois@hotmail.com.
 3. We need a member (not on the board) to **audit our treasurer's reports for 2018**. Linda Wilson keeps excellent records and can share them with someone for review. This is just a formality that we go through each year, so not a big deal.
 4. We need a new **Chairperson for Speaker Programs and Publicity**. These 2 categories go hand in hand so they are combined to simplify the process. Carolyn Gregsak is stepping down from this position at the end of April. She has superbly organized these responsibilities, so the next person to follow her can easily step into her shoes.
 5. We are in need of a **new President to lead our Chapter for the 2019-2020 season** and beyond. Several of us have served as Past President, so plenty of support is available.
Immediate Past President stays on the board, so lots of help there, too. We need new people on our board!
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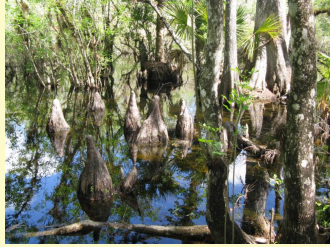
Field Trip Report



This was my first time at 6 Mile Cypress Slough. My, what a fabulous place! It reminded me of a trip to Corkscrew Swamp, where there was a boardwalk that led you through the swamp. It's been 15 years since I walked there. Yah, I don't get out much. Parking was a bit dicey, and we were glad to have carpooled. It seemed as soon as we got parked, the rest of the available slots disappeared within minutes.



Some who arrived later had to do loop-de-loops, driving around numerous times to find a spot. All in all, we had 15 members on the walk, and "herding cats" strung out along the boardwalk was an exercise in futility. Glenn made a valiant effort to keep watch for those who were lagging behind. A tall person wearing a bright yellow/green shirt is a great beacon.



As a harbinger of spring, some of the cypress were beginning to leaf out in bright green. The older large specimens exhibiting a large buttressed base were most impressive. And those knees! A photographer with lots of film (or spacious memory card) could spend all day taking shots of these artistic prehistoric-looking appendages. Very cool!



The numerous types of epiphytes or “air plants” provided a lot of interest. The tillandsias, Florida’s most common bromeliads, are relatives of the pineapple, hence the name “wild pine” which is often used to describe them. Giant wild pine, *T. utriculata* is the largest species, with tapering leaves as long as 2 feet, a branched stalk and white flowers.

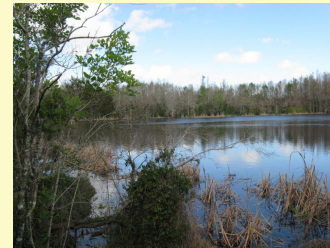


Stiff-leaved *T. fasciculata* has stiff, down-curved leaves, large red and yellow bracts and violet flowers.



Needled-leaved air plant, *T. setacea*, forms clumps of thin, dark green to coppery leaves. These are just a few examples, as there are more than a dozen species in Florida.

All in all it was a fun trip, the weather was perfect, lots of wildlife photo-ops as well as the plants that we identified (not sure how many different species we checked off on our list, though). The number of different types of trees was amazing, too. Many of the locals revisit this park numerous times. Wish it was closer.



Biological studies at CHEC Conservation Easement

I will doing some biological studies at CHEC Conservation Easement, Eastport, on March 25 - 29, or so. I will need volunteer assistance. It is located off of Kings Hwy in Pt. Charlotte.

We usually meet at 9 AM & try to finish each day by noon or so. If we can get the stuff done quickly, it won't take all week.

I need 1 - 2 to help with vegetation transects. We do 2- 100 foot transects per day for 2 days. I have one helper for one of the days (Doris, which day?). We usually do these on Mon & Tuesday.

On Wed, we can use more volunteers to survey gopher tortoise burrows within the 51-acre easement.

I can do the scrub jay surveys by myself.

Anyone interested? This is pretty much trudging through overgrown scrub; thick trees & vegetation; not for the weak.

Give me a call & I can you more info.

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Bobbi Rodgers
Resource Manager
Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
Cedar Point Environmental Park site
941-475-0769

www.checflorida.org

Spring Break Camp 2019 at Cedar Point Park

Get the children outdoors to learn about the natural world around them! Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Inc. (CHEC) will be conducting Spring Break Camp 2019 at Cedar Point Park for children ages 8 to 12 beginning Monday, March 18 to Friday, March 22 from 9 am to 3 pm.

Our theme this year is “For the Love of Nature”, and the cost is still only \$150 (\$135 for CHEC members) per child for a week of adventures and excitement! Planned activities include guided walks and professional speakers on birds, shells, bees (taste local honey), and other local wildlife, in addition to collecting and pressing favorite flowers, wading into Lemon Bay, and more games and crafts to explore the diversity of nature.

Cedar Point Environmental Park, a Charlotte County-owned facility, is located at 2300 Placida Road in Englewood. It is managed by Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Inc. (CHEC), a nonprofit organization serving the Charlotte County community with environmental education, recreation, research and preservation land management.

Join the fun and call 941-475-0769 for further registration information and/or a copy of the planned agenda. Space is limited to no more than 15 “campers”..

-- Cedar Point Environmental Park
P.O. Box 613
2300 Placida Rd, Englewood, FL 34224
(941) 475-0769

What’s up in my garden?

by Lois Cantwell

Those little patches of blue dotting the landscape as I stroll throughout the yard in springtime accentuate many of the other plants and shrubs growing there. Especially in the early light of a dewy morning, these ephemeral glittering sapphires bring a splash of color to the eye. They pop up everywhere that they have been allowed to self-seed and establish their own domains. Guessing what they might be? Why common Spiderwort, of course. I once heard Laurel Schiller remark that “you can’t have enough Spiderwort

in your yard”. It is highly recommended for novice wildflower gardeners since the plants are nearly indestructible, pest-free, and easy to grow under a wide range of conditions. Bonus—they attract bees and other pollinators. Not only that, but it is a good plant to dig up for our events, and sharing with others at our plant raffles. We will have quite a bit of it for “Plant Native” Day, as the topic is about planting in the shade. What a deal!

While writing out my labels, I decided to check my copy of “Complete Guide to Florida Wildflowers”, by Roger Hammer (acquired at our February meeting), to see if there was any other information about Spiderwort that would be of interest. He used the common name “Bluejacket” in reference to this plant, *Tradescantia ohimensis*. The genus name honors English naturalists and gardeners John Tradescant (1570-1638) and his son John (1608-1662). The species name relates to where this plant was first collected in 1814. It also is known to readily hybridize with another Spiderwort common to Central Florida called “Longleaf”, *Tradescantia roseolens*, which refers to its rose-scented flowers. Members of this genus were once used as a treatment for spider bites, hence the name spiderwort. Different color forms can be found growing together within the same population.

