



December 2020



Happy Holidays



Report from Your President:

by Lois Cantwell

Now that we are again knee-deep in more Covid19 cases, it looks like we will be covering our faces and minding our spaces for an indeterminant amount of time. It's a good time to get outdoors, which we will be doing a couple times a month by scheduling more field trips. We can also use our downtime to catch up on reading the newsletters and journals we may tend to set aside and sort of forget about. Did you receive the latest volume of the "Palmetto" journal, or see the Nov/Dec issue of "Sabal Minor" in your email inbox?

I read the "Palmetto" from cover to cover, and then returned to some of the content to read it again. "Planting a Wildflower Meadow", Craig Huegel; "Paper Wasps as Pollinators", George Rogers; "The Ecosystem Beneath Our Feet", Ginny Stibolt; and "Nature's Best Hope", Dr Doug Tallamy, reviewed by Sue Dingwell were all so very informative. I was inspired by the concept of the wildflower meadow as a possible project that our membership might consider. Interested? And, Dr. Tallamy's new book promoting the concept of using our own planting spaces to form connected corridors to preserve native ecosystems seems to take "the back 10 feet" idea to a more urgent level. Can you say "Homegrown National Park"? This book will be on my Christmas wish list.

Please Welcome New Members: Robert Sigler and Martha Spielman of Englewood

Your FNPS Florida License Plate is on Sale Now!

If you have read your Nov/Dec issue of Sabal Minor, then you already know about this. If not, check your inbox for details so that you can be informed about how to go about getting the FNPS plate. At least 3,000 plates must be sold in advance before any can be produced. This is not just for FNPS members, but open to all Floridians, so get the word out. A photo of the plate is included in the article.

Other features I found interesting included "Pollen Packin' Mommas", John Lamkin (excellent photos); "Choosing a Field...", Alice Herden; "Update on M-CORES Toll Roads Project", Eugene Kelly. By all means, check out the reports from the other chapters and see what their memberships are doing. Also, the "Lunch and Learn Archives", by Valerie Anderson give you an opportunity to catch up on what you may have missed in previous

weeks and months. By the way, Sabal Minor back issues are archived under "Resources" on the FNPS Website <https://www.fnps.org>, and those Lunch & Learns can also be found under "News". Speaking of archives, you will find previous issues of our Mangrove Chapter Newsletter on our website <https://mangrove.fnpschapters.org>



[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

December 2 Nature Walk

The Mangrove Chapter of the FL Native Plant Society will sponsor a nature walk on **Wednesday Dec. 2, 2020, from 9-11 am at Middle Beach/Blind Pass Beach Park** on Manasota Key; (6725 Manasota Key Rd, Englewood, FL 34223).

We will meet at 9 am in the parking area adjacent to the playground (turn east from Manasota Key Rd and watch for the playground equipment and a covered area with picnic tables. We will walk on firm sandy trails for about one mile identifying plants and their pollinators.

This eastern area of the park was dredge spoil from the construction of the ICW. Look at the aerial photo taken in 1969 and compare it with a recent aerial showing the current vegetation. There is a very interesting mixture of salt tolerant halophytes, upland hammock species and weedy disturbed grassland/prairie plants. The degree to which forest and mangrove succession have occurred will be a matter of discussion.

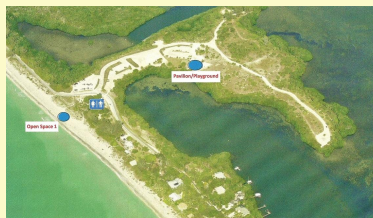
We will split into several smaller groups with separate guides, Masks are mandatory, and temperatures will be taken with an IR device. You are required to sign a waiver. No dogs or smoking allowed.

No reservations are required. For additional information contact Bill Dunson (wdunson@comcast.net)

A strong weather front is expected on Monday so there may be windy/cooler weather.



Middle Beach Blind Pass



Recent Middle Beach Aerial Photo





Poinsettia with Paper Wasp

White Great Southern on
Mexican CloverSkipper Mangrove on
Snowberry Flowers

A We are on Facebook!!! Look for: Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Mangrove Chapter Communications: Website Updates and Facebook

Recent **website updates** include Covid19 Safety Guidelines, Revised Chapter Bylaws, and Grant Application Forms. The **Safety Guidelines** are posted in several areas: The Welcome Page, under Events, Outreach (Field Trips), and on the News Blog page. Now there's no excuse for not knowing what to expect regarding wearing masks, social distancing, etc.

The **Chapter Bylaws** have undergone a total revamping over the summer months, with a final draft approved by the Board of Directors on September 21st. They appear under "Who We Are" on our Welcome Page. You will also see a current list of Officers and Committee Chairs when you visit that area.

The **Grant Application Form**, accessible under "Outreach", has been updated to include a change to the amount of each of 2 grants offered per season. The limit for these grants has been raised from 4 at \$250 each to 2 at \$500 each. Offering 2 larger grants per season allows applicants with larger projects to make plant purchases without having to apply for a second grant to cover those expenses, which has happened over the last couple of years. If applicants don't spend the maximum allowed, there may be some dollars left for others.

If you are a **Facebook** fan and a Mangrove Chapter Member, be aware that you can join our **Members' Facebook** by clicking on the Facebook icon wherever it appears on our website. You will see the most current postings on the left side of the screen and scrolling through those will give you a flavor of what's happening, and perhaps entice you to Join! Then, you can participate and post your own contributions. The advantage to tuning in to our Facebook page is to learn about upcoming educational programs offered by many environmental organizations including other Florida Native Plant Society Chapters. In these current times, with

the unavailability of in-person learning at meetings, this is a great venue.

About Composting

Reading Ginny Stibolt's article, "The Ecosystem Beneath Our Feet", the last section on "Restoring soil" talks about encouraging soil recovery by adding compost. It improves soil texture and structure, adds nutrients and provides new populations of soil microbes. She also cautions against using manure in your compost for native landscapes, as its high nutrient levels push the plants into unnatural growth spurts. Be sure to read her entire article, which impressively reveals a whole lot of activity that goes on underground that we take for granted.

Her article also reminded me of something else I had read lately. In the Nov/Dec issue of "Sierra" magazine, an article on composting estimated that 40% of our trash is comprised of food waste. Landfills are the third-largest source of human-related methane emissions in the U.S., mostly because of rotting organic matter. In the Miami area, a small non-profit, Back2earth, started by a group of teenagers in 2017, diverted an estimated 40,000 pounds of food waste from landfills, creating 9,500 pounds of compost, and preventing 70,000 pounds of greenhouse gases from escaping into the atmosphere over a 2.5-year period. If every household took up composting...just imagine!

Mangrove Native Plant Society COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Meetings and Field Trips

For All Events:

If you are not feeling well, please don't attend this gathering.

Properly worn masks or face coverings are always required for participation.

Participants must maintain appropriate 6' social distancing at any event.

Please do not gather in groups.

Use provided hand sanitizers as needed.

Nearby restrooms are available for hand washing.

Additional Guidance for Indoor or Outdoor Meetings:

Participants must maintain appropriate 6' social distancing inside and outside the meeting room, following the markings on the floor.

Entrance/exit signs and arrows may be posted for directional traffic flow.

Chairs are placed at least six feet apart.

Surfaces of tables and chairs in use are sanitized before and after use.

No food or beverages are served. Attendees may bring a personal beverage.

Attendance may be limited, depending on state/county/city mandates.

Additional Guidance for Outdoor Walks and Activities:

Properly worn masks or face coverings are always required for participation.

Social distancing of 6' is emphasized for sitting, standing, and walking activities.

Surfaces of tables, chairs, and benches in use are sanitized before and after use.

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own chairs, beverages, packaged snacks, and hand sanitizer.



We made our debut in the community in February 2020 and between February 2020 – August 2020 thanks to the collective efforts of a multitude of generous donors, we raised enough funds to purchase two 10,000 square foot vacant lots through Sarasota County's surplus land auction in September 2020. These two lots are located in a Scrubby Flatwoods neighborhood that hosts an active Florida Scrub-jay population.

Left is Yellow Batchelor button/Yellow Milkwort (*Polygala rugelii*)

In October 2020 our Land Manager and Vice President, Debbie Blanco (recently retired from Sarasota County), our volunteer Jeff Weber, a Sarasota County Land Manager, and our volunteer Nathalie Smith, a Sarasota County Parks Naturalist, visited both of our lots to create our first native plant inventory, with President Barbara Lockhart as photographer.

From left to right, Nathalie Smith, Jeff Weber and Debbie Blanco



At the end of the day, Lot 1 was found to contain 52 native plants/trees and 1 invasive (a melaleuca), and Lot 2, which is heavily populated with saw palmetto, was found to contain 29 native plants/trees and 1 invasive (a carrotwood).

The entire inventory for each lot is available upon request to NPconservancy@gmail.com. We invite you to visit our Facebook page or our website (www.ecnorthport.com) to learn more about us.

Below are some of the plants the collective efforts of so many have conserved forever.



Pink Sundew (*Drosera capillaris*)



Deer Moss/Reindeer Moss/Powderpuff Lichen (*Cladonia evansii*)



Axiflower (*Mecardonia acuminata*) (Florida endemic)



Nuttall's Meadow Beauty *Rhexia Nuttallii*



Lopsided Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*)

Trip report Tippecanoe 1 walk 11.21.20

article and photographs by Bill Dunson

A group of 14 native plant society members met at the entrance to Tippecanoe 1 Environmental Preserve at 9 am Nov. 21.2020, for a walk on the wild side. We all wore masks and kept our distances. What we encountered was a Veteran's rally with Huey helicopters, motorcycles, bands and lots of people. We snuck around the edge of the celebration and escaped into the semi-wilds of the preserve. There were 14 people and we split into two groups of 7 led by Bill Dunson and Kate Borduas. One group went clockwise and the other counter clockwise around the green marked (on the map) four-bridge trail. We did not

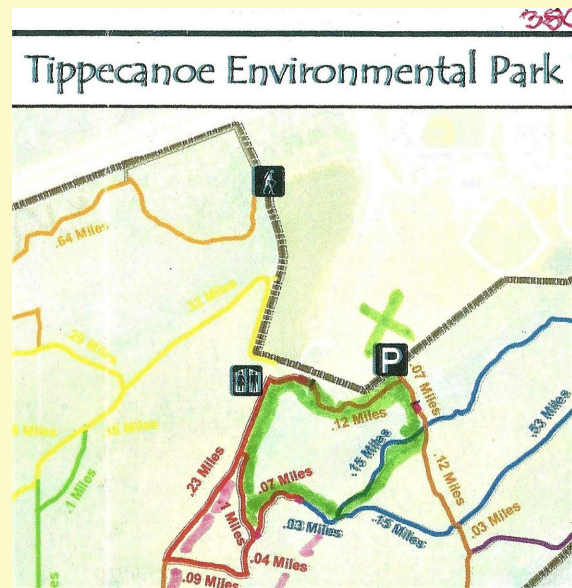


From left Luke and Susy, Barb, Jane and Charlie, Thomas)

see the signature bird of the area- the scrub jay- perhaps scared away by the helicopter, but there were several beautiful ospreys circling overhead. This is not a particularly flower rich period in this habitat but we did manage to find a wide variety of plants of which some were in flower. The white Sabatia is not so spectacular as the pink but interesting nonetheless. The female salt bushes were releasing their copious white seeds.



Male Osprey



Polygala Milkwort
Bachelor's Buttons



Female Salt Bush with
Flowers



Narrow Leafed Sabatia

There were a series of yellow flowers seen. The St John's wort (used to be St Peter's wort) is a distinctive Hypericum with only four petals. The four yellow petaled Ludwigia were a native species (petals do not overlap and seed pods are quite long) and the exotic one with larger flowers and overlapping petals. The silver leaved aster was common but not in full flower. The water loving Carolina aster was found only in a freshwater swamp. An unusual chain fern was also common in one wetland that was almost knee deep after a recent five inch rainfall. A yellow milkwort (Bachelor's buttons) was blooming very early or very late. A group of yellow buttons were only remnants of the flowers from last spring.



Hypericum St. John's Wort



Ludwigia Octovalvis
Native Water Primrose



Ludwigia Primrose Willow
Exotic



Carolina Aster



Silver Leafed Aster



Fern Chain

There are two short bridges over tidal creeks that allow a wonderful view of some estuarine marshes supported by occasional fires that exclude mangroves and favor grasses and sedges. Black needle rush dominate these sites if fire excludes their competitors, primarily white mangrove.

There were many grasses and the most interesting was seeds of wire grass or three awn. It is remarkably adapted to twist itself into the fur of animals and hitch a ride elsewhere.



Black Needle Rush and
marsh with False Willow



Wire Grass



Red Bay with galls

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Water Hickory



Yellow Buttons Baldunia

Tippecanoe 1 Environmental Preserve is an especially interesting place of many different habitats, each with its particular groups of species that form communities specific for the conditions found there. It certainly is a very challenging spot for the naturalist to explore.

CHEC Volunteer Opportunities

There are volunteer opportunities out there, especially in the outdoor environment, so plenty of ways that you can get outside, socialize to some extent and serve your chapter! See the link below for the CHEC Calendar.

Lois sent in this note about our Chapter and CHEC opportunities:

I spoke with Shelby Festa, Volunteer/Program Coordinator at the Alligator Creek location. She was inquiring as whether our Chapter would be leading any walks on any of the CHEC managed preserves, such as Oyster Creek, as we have in the past. I will keep in touch with her as we get into the season.

Shelby has inherited some additional responsibilities associated with Cedar Point Environmental Park, since the Resource Manager's position* is open again (Susan Converse has resigned) and the building is still closed for remodeling. She is gathering information on volunteers, so if you have been or are planning to be a CHEC Volunteer at that location, contact Shelby at 941-575-5435 or **shelby@checflorida.org**. She may be short of trail guides at the moment.

*This position will soon be posted on the CHEC Website, so anyone out there with background and qualifications should inquire.

She has also just found out that we have a history of doing monthly Plant Surveys there. If anyone among you has been continuing to do these, let me know. If those of you who have done them in the past would like to help, perhaps the best person to contact would be Barb Seibel. She has been the keeper of the data. If this is no longer a CHEC project, it can continue to be a Mangrove Chapter project.

I also updated Shelby on our Chapter's ongoing sponsorship of the Demonstration

Garden at Cedar Point and that many of us in Mangrove Chapter have also been CHEC Volunteers. I will be looking to our membership to add people to our "garden keepers" list, as we have lost a few people for various reasons. Let me know if you are interested in participating. We meet on Monday mornings at 9 AM and work for just a couple of hours. As soon as we have identified a group, we can get started, although I will not be back until mid to late November. (Someone would need to keep track of who is working so that volunteer hours can be recorded until I return).

See the link below for the CHEC Calendar.

<http://www.checflorida.org/Calendar.html>

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center Schedule of events

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following free programs to the public in **December 2020**.

All programs can be found at www.ChecFlorida.org

Seagrass Wading Trip- Friday, December 4th Join CHEC for a wading adventure through the seagrass beds of Lemon Bay! All participants will be guided approximately a half-mile to the wading site, where they will collect and view creatures of the bay. Participants will need to wear closed-toe shoes and clothes that may get wet during the trip. Participants are also encouraged to wear sunscreen and insect repellent and to bring plenty of drinking water. Advance registration is required. Call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. Meet in the **Cedar Point** parking lot near the restrooms at 10:00 AM. **All participants are required to wear a face mask.**

Seagrass Wading Trip- Thursday, December 17th Join CHEC for a wading adventure through the seagrass beds of Lemon Bay! All participants will be guided approximately a half-mile to the wading site, where they will collect and view creatures of the bay. Participants will need to wear closed-toe shoes and clothes that may get wet during the trip. Participants are also encouraged to wear sunscreen and insect repellent and to bring plenty of drinking water. Advance registration is required. Call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. Meet in the **Cedar Point** parking lot near the restrooms at 10:00 AM. **All participants are required to wear a face mask.**

Nature Walks

All walks begin at **9:00 AM**. On these casual walks with CHEC volunteers, you will search and learn about plants, animals, fungi, and more that live in Charlotte County preserves.

Prepare for each walk with plenty of water, insect repellent, sunscreen, and clothing that will protect you from insects and plants. **Registration is required for all walks and all participants are required to wear face masks.** For more information or to register, call at **941-575-5435**.

Wednesday, December 2nd Join CHEC 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 adjoining state lands make it an important wildlife corridor. Meet at the parking lot on US 41. Please call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Wednesday, December 9th Join Kate Borduas 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. Phone 941-575-5435 for information. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Friday, December 11th Join **CHEC** on a guided walk through 308-acre **Tippecanoe Environmental Park**. This Charlotte County park includes habitats such as scrub, pine flatwoods, marsh, and wetlands. Meet behind the Charlotte County Sports Park. Please call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Friday, December 18th Join CHEC on a walk at **Bayshore Live Oak Park** along the shoreline of Charlotte Harbor to explore the various mangrove species found there. We will cover mangrove identification, general ecology including special adaptations that allow mangroves to thrive in salty environments, and why mangroves are important and protected in Florida. Reservations are recommended for this program. Call 941-575-5435. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Wednesday, December 23rd Join Kate Borduas 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. Please call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Tuesday, December 29th Join **CHEC** 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. Please call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Thursday, December 31st Join Kate Borduas on a guided walk through the scrub and pine flatwoods of 217-acre **Amberjack Environmental Park** in Rotonda. Meet at the end of Gasparilla Pines Blvd. Please call 941-575-5435 for more information or to register. **All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.**

Go to www.CHECflorida.org for a complete program calendar.





As the winter season approaches, there's a lot happening at LBC! Please click on the link below for news on our Habitat Restoration Project, December "Sneak Peak" Walks at the new preserve, the Englewood Mullet Fest, nature walks at Stump Pass, and more!

Whether you are just curious about what's going on there, are not a Lemon Bay Conservancy member, or are a member, or thinking about becoming one, there are quite a few things in the update below that may be interesting to read and consider.

Lemon Bay Conservatory

