



Report from Your Past President:

by Lois Cantwell

We learned a lot about “Landscaping for Wildlife with Native Plants” from Tom Heitzman at our February Membership Meeting. We had over 50 people in attendance. He said he was sort of “preaching to the choir”, but it is always good to get a refresher course, plus there’s always something new to learn. His program was full of terrific photos of trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, etc. I nodded my head a lot, identifying with about 85% of the plants, as I have them in my own yard. If only more people would subscribe to the concept of creating habitats for wildlife in their own yards. What a wonderful world it could be!

Speaking of wildlife habitats, we will be featuring “planting for butterflies and pollinators” at our upcoming “Plant Native” Day event on March 14th. If you have any home-grown varieties that are either larval host plants or nectar sources, please contribute them to our event. As usual, please contribute baked goods, paper goods, and beverages for our hospitality table. We also need someone to lead the nature walk at Cedar Point Environmental Park at the end of the event.

Commentary about the Future of Mangrove Chapter

We are still in need of a slate of officers for the 2020-2021 season moving forward. So, why is it that no one is coming forward to fill these offices? Do you think your past president is going to cave and step back into the President’s position? Are you intimidated by the “responsibility” associated with being on the board? Do you think that you have to do the same things in the same way they have been done over the last 10 years? Do you think the current bylaws are carved in stone? Do you think you have to know a lot about native plants?

Have you NOT renewed your membership in anticipation of our chapter dissolving? Remember that 26% of your dues to FNPS are returned to the chapter, adding about \$850 or more to our treasury annually. Besides that, FNPS is a worthy cause. They preserve natural lands from development, conserve rare native plant species and launch major rescue and restoration projects. Have you thought about the \$5,000 donation we received from Denny Girard’s estate? Do you want that to be “donated” to some other non-profit environmental group (if our chapter dissolves) instead of funding our Native Landscape Grant Program?

Let's think positive for a moment. Consider forming a "focus group" that will examine all of the inventive ways that point to a solution to this dilemma. Consider BOD positions "shared" with others, such as "first and second" President, Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer. Example, we have a "snow bird" member who is willing to be Secretary during the months that they are here if someone else will fill in during the summer months. You don't have to be a full-time resident to be an officer. Become a "shadow" to one of the current officers, and waste no time in getting the basic information that you need to take over that position at the end of this season. Time is of the essence.

Your Immediate Past President is continuing on the BOD in an ADVISORY capacity. She is going back to Michigan in May. Your current VP/Chapter Representative is moving away in May. Your Secretary and Treasurer will remain in the area, expecting to be travelling and enjoying life after retiring from their day jobs, but could be consulted for advice. BOD meetings could even be "suspended" for the summer and we can regroup in the fall. We do have 9 Committee Chairs who also serve on the BOD. How about moving our Annual Membership Meeting to January when the majority of members are available and elect officers then? Do you have any other ideas? We have lots of potential flexibility here. Think about it and give us some feedback soon. Otherwise, you are missing an opportunity to create a new path for Mangrove Chapter.

[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

Announcement!!!

During our April 14th meeting, we plan to acknowledge, honor and celebrate the enormous contributions made by four of our officers: Al Squires; Lois Cantwell; Bobbi Rodgers and Linda Wilson. Each of them will receive a gift certificate from Florida Native Plants Nursery (Laurel Schiller's nursery). If you would like to contribute to this gift (completely voluntary), Mitch Leavitt will accept donations at our March 10th meeting. We will celebrate after the meeting with cake and beverages. For questions, feel free to call Mitch Leavitt, 941-257-3292 (mjleavitt@gmail.com).

March Membership Meeting Tuesday March 10 at 6:15 pm

**The Mangrove Chapter
of
The Florida Native Plant
Society
Invites You To Their March
Program:**

“The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly”

By Alice White, People for
Trees

Photo by Alice White



**Tuesday March 10,
2020**

**6:15 p.m.
social/snacks**

7:00 Program

**Lemon Bay Park
570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood**

*For more information: mangrovefnpschapters.org
Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of Every Month October - May
Field Trips are held the last Saturday of Every Month*

Support Your Local Native Demonstration Garden!

"Plant Native" Day, which takes place at Cedar Point Environmental Park on March 14th. The theme of this season's event is **"Gardening for Butterflies"**. Please bring us your "extra" plants to for Plant Native Day. Those seedlings and new growths that are unwelcome in the areas of your garden where you did not plant them, are very welcome at our Plant Native Day.

We are in need of help with the plant native day, so please sign up at the March meeting. We still need help in parking, Setting up Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, Greeters and Floaters, Hospitality and Refreshments, Plant sales, exhibits and the nature walks.

We are on Facebook!!!

Log into your Facebook account. To find our posts:
Type in: Mangrove Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society in the search box and press enter. You will see our page. If you have not yet joined the group, clip on the "Join" button. You must join to be able to add comments and post pictures.

Free Programs from CHEC

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

Tuesday March 3 Join **Kate Borduas** 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 9 am.**

Wednesday March 4 Join **Kate Borduas** 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.

Saturday March 7 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.

Saturday March 7 Join **Rick Linden** 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.

Saturday March 7 Visit the waters of Lemon Bay on a single person, sit-on-top kayak with **Eileen Gerle** to search for marine life. All equipment provided. Participants must be ages 16 and above for the free educational program. Space is limited to 10 participants, so **registration is required**. Meet at **Cedar Point Environmental Park**.

Monday March 9 Join **Denise Hart** 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.

Tuesday March 10 Get wild & wet! Join **Eileen Gerle** at **Cedar Point Park** on a **Seagrass Adventure Wading Trip** into Lemon Bay in search of marine organisms such as sea horse, crabs and juvenile fish. **Registration required.**

Thursday March 12 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 March 13 & 20 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.

Saturday March 14 Join **Bob “Coop” Cooper** 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.

Saturday March 14 “**Plant Native Day**” at **Cedar Point Environmental Park** includes lectures, exhibits, free information, nature walk, garden tour, plant “sales”, and refreshments from **9:00 am – 1:00 pm**. The theme this year is, “Gardening for Butterflies”.

Saturday March 14 Join **Tamara Chik** 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.

Sunday March 15 Join **Greg Brezicki** 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.

Tuesday March 17 Join **Jean Leavitt** 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.

Wednesday March 18 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.

Saturday March 21 Visit the waters of Lemon Bay on a single person, sit-on-top kayak with **Diane Drewry** to search for marine life. All equipment provided. Participants must be ages 16 and above for the free educational program. Space is limited to 10 participants, so **registration is required**. Meet at **Cedar Point Environmental Park**.

Wednesday March 25 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.

Saturday March 28 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.

Tuesday March 31 Join **Jean Leavitt** 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.



Indigo Isles Grant Success

Indigo Isles Mobile Home Park's native garden was supported with a grant from the Mangrove Chapter of FNPS. The January newsletter reported on the completion of the grant. In February, they had monarch caterpillars and sent us this picture.

Take a Walk on the Wild Side SeaGrass Wading Trips

Join a Seagrass Wading Adventure at Cedar Point Environmental Park in Englewood at 9 AM on the following dates:

March 10, 2020

After an introductory program on aquatic environments, participants will walk a short distance to Lemon Bay where, using dip nets and hand viewers, they will wade into the mangrove-protected waters in search of the plants and animals that reside there. This exciting hands-on activity is both educational and fun for people of all ages. Participation is limited therefore **pre-registration is necessary** for this free program. All children must be accompanied by an adult. For further information and/or to register, call Cedar Point Park at (941) 475-0769.

Seagrass Adventures are organized by the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and Charlotte County Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources. Cedar Point Park is a Charlotte County facility located at 2300 Placida Road in Englewood. For further information, call (941) 475-0769.

14th Annual Plant Native
Day
March 14, 2020
Gardening for Butterflies

Plant Native Day

What's Up in My Garden

labelled and transported to the demonstration garden for the big event. I have lots of Wild Petunia, which self-seeds into my lawn while I am away for the summer months, making it easy to harvest in the fall and winter. Many of my other “self-seeders” follow suit in various areas —Spider Wort, Tropical Sage, Wild Coffee, Black-eyed Susan, Gaillardia, Coreopsis, White Violets, Rouge Plant, Painted Leaf (which doesn’t transplant well), Privet Cassia, Scorpion’s Tail, Blood Leaf, and Mist Flower, which I treat more like a “weed”.



Top: Gaillardia
Bottom : Spiderwort



Wild Petunia
Also known as Florida
Petunia



Rouge Plant



Black eyed Susan

Thank goodness for the trove of empty pots that we have behind the restroom building at the park. They seem to multiply like rabbits, or in reality we have some anonymous donors who drop them off periodically. At last count, I have filled 133 pots, some with multiple specimens, and still have two paint buckets full of bare-root Wild Coffee. There is already a collection of about 70 pots of plants at the garden. No such thing as too many plants, so please contribute any “starts” of plants to the cause. The remaining inventory after our event is advertised at the entrance to the park on the Mondays that the Garden Keepers are working in the Demonstration Garden. Our goal is to get as many native plants out into local resident’s gardens as possible.

Then there is the supply of dirt/soil that is needed to pot up all of these plants. I buy either potting soil or garden soil, then “cut it” with the dirt that I pull out of the culvert beneath the driveway with a drain shovel. By mixing the two together, I get either sandy dirt or dirty sand that can support most of the native plants I dig from the yard. Most natives do well in relatively poor dirt, so I don’t drown them in too-rich soil. Drainage is the key. They don’t like to be overwatered, so the sandier soils drain well, giving them a better chance of surviving the shock of being dug up and moved from their happy home. I have seen good plants do poorly in richer soils that hold too much moisture, turn yellow, roots

rot and they fail. I don't plug the drain holes in the bottom of the pots either. This whole process works well enough and the mortality rate is low.

[Visit our website](#)
