

## Report from Your President:

by Lois Cantwell

Since we skipped a month, I have a few bits of information to share. The Vice President position, which is appointed rather than elected, has been filled. Linda Manley is now our new VP! She will serve as assistant to the President and fill in for the President when absent or unable to fulfill the responsibilities of that office.

Secondly, FNPS has recognized three chapters with an award for "Chapter of the Year", so our Mangrove Chapter shares this honor with the Lake Beautyberry and Dade Chapters. Our BOD was quite taken by surprise at the announcement. A very nice plaque has arrived in the mail. With no wall to hang it on, we will share it at meetings--nice to be able to brag about something.



Last, but not least, we are looking ahead to resumption of regular meetings this coming season. With the continuing uncertainty of the pandemic, we are watching to see how it plays out by the advent of October. Alternatives to restarting our traditional monthly meetings with speaker programs are being explored. Holding a couple of workshops or other "limited attendance events" are some things we have in the works. Stay tuned for updates in the next newsletters, or by direct email announcements.

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**Please Welcome New Members:** John and Jeanne Bowne, Susan D'hont, Delos Dunn, Linda Fair, Niles Higgins, Susan Rodgers, Aurora Walsh, and Missy Wilson.

### Status of our Chapter Membership

One of the important things that has kept us positive about our Chapters' future has been our sustaining membership. We sort of took a hit during the advent of the Covid19 pandemic, as membership renewals fell off over several months. Very disconcerting, but as time went by, we began to acquire new members at a surprisingly steady rate.

In 2020 we lost 10 members and gained 11 new people. This year, which is into its eighth

month, we have 13 members on our "dropped" list, but have gained 17 new ones. I am hoping that some of our "dropped" members are those who have simply forgotten to renew or are at least thinking about rejoining. So, if you are reading this and haven't renewed in the January-July time frame, please rejoin us!

And, Thank You to all of our "newbies" for becoming a part of our chapter. If you have certain talents that you can contribute to our continuing success, please step up and volunteer. These opportunities will be listed in forthcoming newsletters, or shared by direct email announcements (a.k.a. pleas for help).

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[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

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## Peace River Nature Cruise, King Fisher Fleet

by Linda Manley

On a cloudy but otherwise beautiful morning, we boarded the Helen M of the King Fisher Fleet for a nature and rookery cruise up the Peace River. The Kingfisher Fleet Cruises dock at Fisherman's Village, with plenty of parking and easy access. With the sun hidden away, a cool breeze kept us comfortable the entire trip. Once we were underway, the Peace River soon opened up into a wide expanse dotted with dozens of small islands.



Gayle Plaia, a Mangrove member and retired marine biologist, was our nature narrator for the cruise. She introduced the character of an estuary and explained why at the beginning of the cruise, the islands were covered by mangroves with edgings of reeds and grasses, and as we went farther up the river, transitioned to palms, oaks, and finally pines. Mangroves are highly salt-seeking and flourish nearer the ocean water of bay, while the others are increasingly less salt tolerant, so grow only where the proportion of fresh water to salt water is higher.





Then, the rookery! Hundreds upon hundreds of birds on and off nests, some nearly ready to fly and others still growing their flight feathers. Their parents remained at the rookery to feed them until they could forage on their own. Most common were cattle egrets, ibis, and wood storks, but we also saw tricolor herons, black-crowned night herons, great egrets, snowy egrets, anhingas, and roseate spoonbills.



The birds with the fuzzy tan crowns and wings are cattle egrets in breeding colors.





Where you find chicks just learning to fly, you will find alligators ready to scoop up those who fail.



We sat on the upper deck. In this off-season, the cruise was not at all crowded. Dave Manley is in the center in the bright green shirt and Gayle Plaia is just in front of him.



On our return trip to the pier, Captain Rickey found dolphins for us! He, Alan, and Penny did a great job hosting us on our cruise. Despite all the wonderful birds, I believe the dolphins were the hit of the trip. I was so lucky to get this shot of one actually out of the water! We think it was five dolphins who entertained us, but there might have been six of these remarkable creatures.



We followed up the cruise with a waterside lunch at Harpoon Harry's. Our timing was perfect; we just missed the rain.

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

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## **Growing Milkweed in my Northern Garden**

by Lois Cantwell

When I am spending time in the northern climate, I have a few more choices of milkweed species that I can grow more successfully here than in my southern yard. I have had no success with the swamp varieties nor the tuberous milkweed. Then, there's the love-hate relationship with the tropical variety that is all too prevalent, but a necessary evil if you want to support a monarch population. Seeing too many deformed adults emerging is too off-putting. I try to cut back the tropical milkweed during the winter months, as it doesn't go into a dormant stage like the true natives.

So, I revel in the successes I have had as a northern gardener, with at least 3 species that work well in this climate. In a previous garden a bit south of where I am now, the pink Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) was a prolific self-seeder around that yard, probably benefitting from the



irrigation system that had been installed there. There is no irrigation system in my current location, so I plan to try sowing some saved seeds in my little "wet garden" that I just created for my other moisture-loving natives.



Laying Eggs on *Asclepias incarnata*



*Asclepias syriaca* in flower

The other native milkweeds prevalent in NE Michigan are the *A. syriaca*, a tall variety, and *A. tuberosa*, a shrubbier plant bearing bright orange-yellow flowers. The tall milkweed bears lavender flowers in a ball shape, which is wonderfully fragrant, a bit more pungent smelling than lilacs.

Having the Monarchs flitting about the yard here is always a treat. The population is trending downward, so I do what I can to support them. Providing all the other pollinator-friendly plants that occupy the gardens helps the bee population, as well, which disappointingly seems to be diminishing. I am also seeing fewer hummingbirds. There is at least one pair that buzz my monardas from time to time. I have a token nectar feeder out in hopes that it supports their nesting activities.



*Asclepias tuberosa*



Monarch nectars on  
*Asclepias syriaca*



Monarch nectars on  
*Asclepias Incarnata*



Caepillars on Aclepias  
Syriaca

## Adventures of the Natives Episode 1

by Linda Manley

Cast:

Red Cedar, Nutty Thistle, Rusty Lyonia  
Laurel Oak, Starry Rosinweed, Summer Mimosa

Red Cedar, Nutty Thistle, and Rusty Lyonia walked into The Native Roots Bar at the end of a hot sunny day in Florida. They settled onto toadstools and sank their roots into the cool sand below them. They each ordered a double shot of Myakkahatchee Creek water and tossed it down. "Ah," breathed Nutty, "That'll put bristles on your leaves!" They all laughed.

Rusty said, "Do you realize it's almost election time at Mangrove again?"

Red and Nutty replied, "You're kidding. So soon?"

"Yep. I hear that all their long-time officers are retiring after seven or eight years of loyal service and the chapter is looking for new ones."

Red mused, "What a great opportunity for new folks to get involved! Do you two ever think about joining the Mangrove Board?"

Nutty and Rusty pondered the opportunity.

Meanwhile, at the Pampered Petals Spa, Laurel Oak, Starry Rosinweed, and Summer Mimosa were settling into their favorite lounge chairs. They each let out a long exhale as they sipped their Peace River tea and snuggled under their soft lupine-leaf wraps. Starry sighed, "I was so busy today! I had 12 butterflies and 14 wasps visit me."

Summer exclaimed, "Me too! The bees were buzzing all over me! I love them but they tickle my ears."

Laurel replied, "You flowers have it easy. I had 132 caterpillars munching on my leaves today. Talk about tickling!"

Starry said to her friends, "I'm thinking about helping out one of my favorite groups, Mangrove Chapter. I heard they're looking for new Board members. They need a president, a secretary, and a treasurer to help move the Chapter forward."

Summer added, "Did you know they won the Outstanding Chapter Award this year?"

"Yes, and well-deserved," said Laurel. "They've worked hard to stay in touch all year."

Starry peeked at her friends through her Myakka mudpack facial. "Maybe we could all help."

To Be Continued ...

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## Plant Survey

Barb Seibel is the anchor for our plant surveys. The plant surveys are an excellent method for learning the plants that grow here. You will also learn which are native and which are not. Volunteers are welcome and needed.

August's survey is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 4th, and Thursday, August 5th** at 8:30 AM. We will continue to start at 8:30 AM until it is cooler outside. Please reply to [leftyb3@comcast.net](mailto:leftyb3@comcast.net) for more information and to let her know you are coming.

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## Excerpts from "Nature's Best Hope:", by Doug Tallamy: Part 3

by Lois Cantwell

In reviewing Chapter 8, Restoring Insects (the little things that run the world), the focus is on the "cats" and bees! These are the two groups of insects that have the greatest impact on terrestrial ecosystems by contributing the most energy to local food webs. Caterpillars are the larger, more numerous, more edible and more nutritious than most other insects. Bees are responsible for most of the pollination required by plants. There are about 14,000 species of Lepidoptera and 4,000 species of bees native to North America.

Because of their nutritional content (protein, fats and carotenoids) caterpillars are so important to breeding birds that many species may not be able to breed at all in habitats that do not contain enough caterpillars. Nesting territories must contain lots of food concentrated in a relatively small area or the nests will fail. If an average pair of nesting birds need 6000-9000 cats to bring their brood to fledging and beyond, multiplied by a given number of bird species all feeding their young simultaneously, the numbers are astronomical!

If you want to landscape your yard with native host plants to accommodate as many caterpillars as possible, there is actually a large data base contained in a search tool developed by the National Wildlife Federation. Look for it at <http://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder>. Plant genera are ranked in terms of their ability to host caterpillars in every county in the U.S. Enter your postal code to find out which woody and herbaceous native plants are best at serving as host plant for caterpillars. Also, Audubon has created a similar website, Plants for Birds at <https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>. We will take a look at restoring native bees in the next issue.



## Home

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation.

[www.audobon.org](http://www.audobon.org)



## Home - Native Plants Finder - National Wildlife Federation

Search by zip code to find plants that host the highest numbers of butterflies and moths to feed birds and other wildlife where you live. Find the best native plants to help wildlife — based on the research of Dr. Doug Tallamy ...

[www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)



## Summertime in my Northern Garden

by Lois Cantwell



Whether it's the weather, or not, I am glad I am showing last summer's photos. A long, cold, rainy spring, followed by droughty conditions through May, June and early July seemed to have an adverse effect on many of my perennials. Most of the taller-growing species are only half to two-thirds as tall, and both the Shasta daisies and their wilder relatives have sparse or stunted-looking flowers. I also have seen a great number of aphids on most of the woody plants compared to previous years. A group of shiny black iridescent-looking beetles totally decimated my St. John's Wort, of all things. Then, there's the local rascally rabbit, but that's another story.

Left: Black eyed Susans and Shasta Daisies.

Then again, my *Asclepias tuberosa* (Butterflyweed) was very robust this spring. I had at least 6 or 8 healthy-looking monarch "cats" on that, looking ready to pupate any day. Then came 2 consecutive days of rain and they disappeared. Was that just coincidental or was it detrimental? I could not find one chrysalis anywhere. I know that birds don't eat them, so my other suspect in their

disappearance are the chipmunks. I had actually seen one snatch a monarch caterpillar and eat it last summer, so it's a possibility.



Native Milkweed



This summer, I have turned my attention towards adding more native plants to my yard. The last section of my "rock garden" project needed to be developed, and its location at the low end of that area lends itself to a wetter condition, so I focused on natives that like not only moisture, but tolerate a degree of shade. Joe-Pye Weed, Culver's Root, Turtle Head, and Monkeyflower went in there. Other natives I obtained at the same time include Bluestem Goldenrod, Dotted Horsemint, Wild Bergamot (Monarda) and Hoary Vervain. These are destined for the sunnier, drier realm of my original cottage garden, near the Coneflowers and Black-eyed Susans. Now, I just have to make some room for them. There's always something to do out there in the garden.

Left: False Sunflower with monarda



Wild Chickory



Coral Bells



Cardinal Flowers



All public wading trips take place in Cedar Point Environmental Park. On these guided programs with local experts, you'll experience a short guided hike through various ecosystems of the park, and then you will get to wade into the shallow waters of Lemon Bay and use dipnets to sample all the incredible wildlife that lives within the seagrass flats. **Prepare for each trip with plenty of water, insect repellent, reef-safe sunscreen (no oxybenzone or avobenzone), and clothing comfortable both for hiking and being in the water.**

**Advance registration is required. The health and safety policies for our programs are subject to change.** For information on mask requirements and Covid-19 safety precautions, please contact **[gerald@checflorida.org](mailto:gerald@checflorida.org)**. For more information or to register, call at **941-475-0769**. Trips are currently limited to 15 people, and wait lists are available for every trip.

**Tuesday, August 10th** Join CHEC for a free 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.** Trips fill up fast! Meet behind the Cedar Point Visitor Center at 8:00 AM.

**Saturday, August 21st** Come explore the park's nocturnal side! This trip will meet behind the Visitor Center 45 minutes before sunset (meet time: 7:30 PM) and take a short guided hike through the park down to the vibrant waters of Lemon Bay. There, we will have the chance to wade into the water right at sunset with nets and buckets to see what creatures we can observe living in the seagrass flats! We will also get to be in the water as day turns to night and see what sort of nocturnal animals we are able to find! All animals will be released at the end of the program.

The price of the program is \$15 per person, and children must be 8 years or older to attend. We will be providing headlamps and glowsticks to use in the dark while in the water, but you are welcome to use your own flashlights on the night hike back to the visitor center! Please bring plenty of drinking water, wear bug spray, and wear comfortable walking shoes that can also be worn in the water. Trips are limited to 12 participants total. For more information or to make reservations, please call (941)-475-0769 or email [gerald@checflorida.org](mailto:gerald@checflorida.org).

**Tuesday, August 24th** Join CHEC for a free 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

**Wednesday, September 8th** Join CHEC for a free 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.** Trips fill up fast! Meet behind the Cedar Point Visitor Center at 8:00 AM.

**Saturday, September 18th**

Come explore the park's nocturnal side! This trip will meet behind the Visitor Center 45 minutes before sunset (meet time: 7:30 PM) and take a short guided hike through the park down to the vibrant waters of Lemon Bay. There, we will have the chance to wade into the water right at sunset with nets and buckets to see what creatures we can observe living in the seagrass flats! We will also get to be in the water as day turns to night and see what sort of nocturnal animals we are able to find! All animals will be released at the end of the program.

The price of the program is \$15 per person, and children must be 8 years or older to attend. We will be providing headlamps and glowsticks to use in the dark while in the water, but you are welcome to use your own flashlights on the night hike back to the visitor center! Please bring plenty of drinking water, wear bug spray, and wear comfortable walking shoes that can also be worn in the water. Trips are limited to 12 participants total. For more information or to make reservations, please call (941)-475-0769 or email [gerald@checflorida.org](mailto:gerald@checflorida.org).

**Wednesday, September 22nd**

Join CHEC for a free 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.** Trips fill up fast! Meet behind the Cedar Point Visitor Center at 8:00 AM.

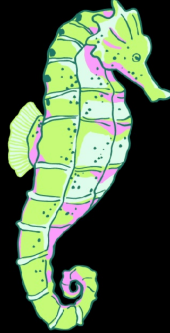


# SEAGRASS TRIPS... AT NIGHT!

EMBRACE YOUR INNER NOCTURNAL  
SIDE ON ONE OF OUR NIGHTTIME  
SEAGRASS WADING TRIPS!

PRICE: \$15 PER PERSON

TRIPS WILL BE  
SCHEDULED  
ACCORDING TO THE  
TIDE TABLES, AND  
WILL MEET 45  
MINUTES BEFORE  
SUNSET ON THE  
EVENING ON THE  
PROGRAM.



PLEASE BRING  
DRINKING  
WATER AND AN  
EXTRA  
FLASHLIGHT, AND  
WEAR BUG  
SPRAY AND  
COMFORTABLE  
WATER SHOES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND DATES,  
PLEASE VISIT THE CALENDAR AT  
[WWW.CHECFLOIDA.ORG](http://WWW.CHECFLOIDA.ORG).

TO REGISTER, PLEASE CALL (941)-475-0769  
OR EMAIL [GERALD@CHECFLOIDA.ORG](mailto:GERALD@CHECFLOIDA.ORG).

## Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the  
Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following  
free programs to the public in **August and September 2021**.

All programs can be found at [www.ChecFlorida.org](http://www.ChecFlorida.org)

### Nature Walks

All walks begin at **8:00 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.

**Advance registration is required. The health and safety policies for our  
programs are subject to change.** For information on mask requirements and

Covid-19 safety precautions, please contact [gerald@checflorida.org](mailto:gerald@checflorida.org). For  
more information or to register, call at

**941-475-0769.**

**Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**II**

Join CHEC on a guided walk through **Tippecanoe**

**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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Monday, August 9th** Join CHEC 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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Monday, August 16<sup>th</sup>** 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. Call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information. All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.

**Monday, August 23rd** Join CHEC on a guided walk through the old-growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre **Ann Dever Regional Park** in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Monday, August 30th** Join CHEC 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. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for information.

**Friday, September 3rd** Join CHEC 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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Tuesday, September 7th** Join CHEC on a guided walk through the old-growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre **Ann Dever Regional Park** in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Friday, September 17th** Join CHEC 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. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for information.

**Tuesday, September 21st** 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. We will meet in the parking lot furthest on the left. Call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Friday, September 24th** Join CHEC 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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

**Tuesday, September 28th** Join CHEC on a guided walk through the old-growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre **Ann Dever Regional Park** in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

Go to [www.CHECflorida.org](http://www.CHECflorida.org) for a complete program calendar.

## 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.

[Visit our website](#)