



October 2021

Report from Your President:

by Lois Cantwell

October is usually the month that our Mangrove Chapter activities resume for another season. It may take us a little longer to get back in the groove, but we will get there a few steps at a time. We will start with a field trip at the end of this month, followed by an in-person membership meeting planned for November 9th. Details are forthcoming, so this is a little teaser to get your attention. It will be more than 20 months since we last met as a group, so this will surely have a "welcome back" feeling.

Welcome New Members: Kyrsten Lemke, Venice and Jerry Markussen, North Port. Thanks for joining us.

Email us at mangrovechapter@fnps.org.

Taming Wildflowers

While rummaging through stacks of books during a local library-sponsored book sale, I spotted a book entitled "Taming Wildflowers", by Miriam Goldberger (2014). She has been a "flower farmer" since 1986, establishing a 100-acre, pick-your-own Flower Farm in Ontario Canada. This farm supports a seed company as a by-product of wildflower gardens and meadows, sustained without irrigation or pesticides. She also promotes a wildflower wedding theme, allowing brides-to-be to create their own floral arrangements.

This was a nice little primer and how-to book for people new to native plants, delving into evolutionary history, relationships with pollinators, a recommended selection of plants from her list of favorites, propagation methods, as well as urging us to "get in the garden" and "plant natives"! Her two websites .

Wildflower Farm

Wildflower Farm is your source for organically grown, non GMO, native North American wildflower seeds, native grasses and wildflower seed mixes. Put our experience in natural landscaping solutions to work for you! We are also the home of Eco-Lawn the ultimate low maintenance lawn seed. Now you too can have a lawn with

www.wildflowerfarm.com

Taming Wildflowers

www.tamingwildflowers.com

Click here to **Visit our Website**

We are on Facebook!!!

Look for: Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Adventures of the Natives Episode 3

by Linda Manley

Cast:

Red Cedar, Nutty Thistle, Rusty Lyonia

Laurel Oak, Starry Rosinweed, Summer Mimosa

Native friends have gathered for socializing at their favorite local spots. At the Native Roots Bar, Red Cedar, Nutty Thistle, and Rusty Lyonia are discussing volunteer positions in the Mangrove Chapter when they are joined by Joe Pye and Elliot Aster.

“Hey, howdy, Joe and Elliot! Why don’t you join us? Sit down and I’ll order you up a couple tankards of Myakkahatchee Creek water,” said Nutty, greeting their friends.

“We’ve been talking about using some of our spare time to volunteer at Mangrove Chapter. Red and Rusty already have good ideas about where they’d like to help.”

Looking up from his own Myakkahatchee Creek water, Nutty continued, “Red wants to help with leading walks, and Rusty would like to keep his green thumb active by helping with the garden at Cedar Point. Me, I like to be in the thick of things, and I’d like to help spread the word about our great chapter. We have such informative programs at our meetings, and our walks and field trips introduce us to new and interesting parks and preserves where we often find flowers we’ve never seen. I’ve learned so many wonderful things when our chapter gets together, and I want to make sure others know about these so they can come too.”

Red thought for a moment and suggested, “I bet Mangrove has a publicity committee. Someone has to be responsible for putting notices in the *Sun* and the *Englewood Review* and the other places we read about our events. That’s a really important job.”

Elliot added, “Think about the Native Plant Day we have each year, where people have the chance to see and learn about native plants and take home their favorites. Someone has to contact and make arrangements with the other organizations that want to participate, like the butterfly society and the wildlife rehab folks.”

“I’d love to do that kind of thing,” exclaimed Nutty! “Maybe I could make flyers to post on bulletin boards, too, or I could contact homeowners’ associations and see if there is a way to let their members know about our meetings and other events.”

Red and Rusty laughed as Joe and Elliot joined in. “It seems like you can hardly wait to volunteer and start helping!”

Excitedly, Nutty asked, “How do I do that? How soon can I start? Who do I talk to?”

Joe suggested, “Go to their website at <https://mangrove.fnpschapters.org/> and click *Contact Us* in the brown bar at the top of the page. Tell them you want to help, and I promise, they’ll get back to you quickly.”

“Or just call one of your friends among the members. I would think that most any of them could tell you who to call or email,” added Red.

Laurel Oak had been thinking quietly at the Pampered Petals Spa while Starry Rosinweed and Summer Mimosa discussed volunteer positions at the Mangrove Chapter. Laurel ventured, “I love to meet new people. Do you suppose there is a committee where I could meet lots of members?”

Sitting up from her herbal wrap, Starry immediately exclaimed, "Hospitality!" And Summer chimed in, "Membership!"

Laurel said, "Wow, both of those seem like good ideas."

"Hospitality seems so busy," said Starry as she smoothed lotion across her petals. "Having to sign people in when they arrive, hand out raffle tickets, and prepare beverages and snacks, all at the same time. They also have to be sure there are enough supplies, like napkins and cups. That's a lot of things to do. It might take several people to do that job."

"Think of membership," added Summer. "Just at meetings, there is the table to set up, all the name tags to put out, literature to arrange for browsing and pickup, and helping guests with new name tags. That's a lot! And behind the scenes, there are membership packets to assemble and mail to new members, as well as emailing reminders to folks when their membership renewals are due."

Sipping her Peace River tea, Laurel agreed with both Starry and Summer. "You're right," she said. "I'd never thought of all the preparation that goes into those positions. They might like some help with all that work."

Tune in next month for another exciting episode of **Adventures of the Natives** as they continue to find out how they can volunteer to help Mangrove chapter. We encourage you all to think of how you, too, can contribute. Nearly all our positions can use assistance, and new faces and ideas are always welcome.

From "Nature's Best Hope", by Doug Tallamy; Part 5 of a Series

by Lois Cantwell



In chapter 9, we read "What have weeds done for us lately"? When it comes to gardening habits, are your preferences in the neat and orderly category, or along the lines of organized chaos? And, how do you define a "weed"? Are you an avid gardener living in an HOA

where the "plant police" have an attitude towards any plant that is growing within a design that did not specify it, therefore it is out of place (even though it is a native), and therefore needs to be plucked out? (Top: Sneezeweed)

Native plants had most likely occupied that site for thousands of years before modern developers scraped the land, "planted" condos, and followed some arbitrary landscape design that included all those pretty ornamentals imported from foreign lands. Our subjective perception of where plants belong is how so many of our native plants came to be called weeds.

It all started with our European ancestors who imposed their farming techniques on the New World, planting monocultures and doing their best to weed out all other plants. Any wrong plants that grew in the wrong places were designated as "weeds", and that word became part of their common name. You have heard of horseweed, milkweed, ragweed, pigweed, bindweed, smartweed, pokeweed, hawkweed, tick weed, sneezeweed, and the list goes on. This has led to a marketing issue with our native plants that have to compete

with those foreign imports with exotic blooms in all colors of the rainbow.

In Doug Tallamy's words, "the bad rap that has been bestowed upon many native plants is more than an undeserved shame--it's become an ecological disaster. Those so-called weedy native plants support much of the animal diversity in North America, and our war against them in residential and commercial landscapes, along roadsides, and on the edges of croplands has been a primary cause of the decline of butterflies such as the monarch, thousands of species of native bees, and countless other insects that no-one is monitoring. There is little doubt that without our native weeds, we would face ecosystem collapse."



Starry Rosinweed



Ironweed



Poke Weed

The View from My Reading Roo

by linda Manley

We told people we bought our house because of the view.
At the time, we didn't know how true that would become.

I call it my reading room because it is; but in reality, it's just a chair in the bedroom, placed in front of a window that gives me good light at any time of day. I have to turn around to look out, but every time I pause my reading to do that, I'm rewarded by what I see. I planted a Monarda punctata, spotted bee balm, in front of the window a few months ago. It has dozens of blossoms now, and although I wish they had more color, their pale lavender is enough to attract bees, wasps, and other pollinators. Nearly every time I look out, I see 1, 2, 4, or more insects feeding on the nectar. I'm amazed, and my heart is warmed



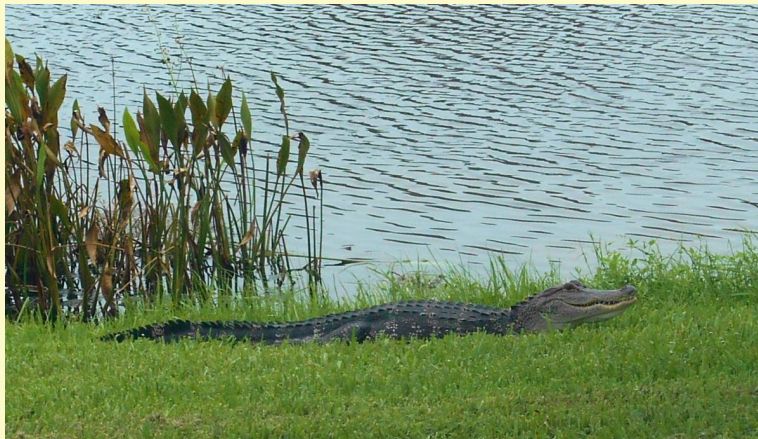
A few feet away are two small firebushes, Hamelia patens, but so far I haven't seen as many butterflies on them as I expected. They're young and small, barely 24" in any direction, so I need to be patient. A few winged jewels have found them; more will come.

Beyond the short expanse of lawn lies the pond. A few years ago—back when Sarasota County required it—our association planted a number of aquatic plants on its shores: pickerel weed, duck potato, spike rush. Since then, some of the residents say they don't like the plants and every month a company comes around and sprays them with something or other. In spite of this, the plants survive. The pickerel weed flowers (Upper right) seem to last only a day or so, and the arrowhead doesn't seem to bloom as often as it used to, but

the plants continue to support a population of birds, turtles, and fish.

A few days ago we had one of those unique Florida showers. Rain poured down, then let up, then poured down again. An anhinga was nestled up facing the oak tree, so close to the trunk that its beak was in the way of being able to look straight ahead. It turned its beak left, then right, then left again,

over and over. I guessed that it must have been fishing and come out of the water to dry off. The rain wasn't helping with that goal. Several ibis were feeding a few feet away. When the rain was hardest, they stopped pecking and stood perfectly still, letting the raindrops pelt on their feathers. When the rain let up, they began pecking again, looking for those juicy bugs and worms that come to the surface when the soil is wet.



To our delight, and much to the dismay of some folks, we nearly always have a resident alligator. The gators move around, as most Floridians know, and the one in our pond at any given time might be around five feet in length or as large as ten feet. Eventually, most of the gators choose to relax in the shade of our oak tree. It's the

nearest to the shoreline of any tree, which means its shade is most convenient to a gator sweltering in full sun in the pond. The gators are skittish and head for the pond if we venture outside the lanai, or sometimes even if we appear in the window to look out. We love that we have the opportunity to see them as they seek cooling shade. And indeed, we're happy that we bought this house for its view.

Revitalizing Butterfly Garden

The Florida Native Plant Society has awarded \$500 to VAAS to help vitalize our butterfly garden. President Jack Foard asked member Roy Musick to oversee expanding and replanting the 16 year old garden. Dozens of native plants are being purchased and transplanted. The garden took a beating in 2020 and earlier this year. The South County courthouse expansion required cutting off the north end of the garden and for months the garden was fenced off. Simultaneously, the garden caretaker the past three years, Leslie Jones moved to Massachusetts. Then an extra dry May stressed



plants even more. Musick and Jayne Neville, a FNPS member, have pruned, weeded, and replanted. With guidance from Jane Wallach FNPS chairman and Linda Masterson, a conservation writer, dozens of butterfly larval host and nectar plants are in place. VAAS with its garden is helping provide an oasis for butterflies and pollinators that entomologists report are in decline. Worldwide invertebrate populations have dropped as much as 45% in the past forty years. Widely publicized, Monarch butterfly numbers have decreased by 96% in the Americas. Climate change, loss of favorable habitat, wide use of pesticides and herbicides are

cited as major causes of the invertebrate losses.

Each home owner can help, advised Professor of Ecology Doug Tallamy last September to VAAS members in a virtual presentation. Portions of each yard can grow native plants that are beneficial to butterflies.

VAAS members and guests are welcome to visit the expanded garden. Native plant donations are welcome as well. Contact Jack Foard (captainjackfoard@yahoo.com) or Roy Musick (rmusickphd@aol.com).



A view from 2 years ago



June 2021



June 2021



FNPS 2022 Endowment Grant Research Awards

Conservation Grant Awards, the Dan Austin Award for Ethnobotany, and Cornelia McNamara Grant

The Florida Native Plant Society maintains an **Endowment Research Grant** program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. These are small grants (\$2500 or less), awarded for a 1-year period, and intended to support research that forwards the mission of the Florida Native Plant Society which is "to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and

native plant communities of Florida."

FNPS Conservation Grants support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida. These grants (\$5000 or less) are awarded for a 1-year period. These projects promote the preservation, conservation, or restoration of rare or imperiled native plant taxa and rare or imperiled native plant communities. To qualify for a Conservation Grant, the proposed project must be sponsored by an FNPS Chapter.

The **Dan Austin Award for Ethnobotany** will provide up to \$1500 to graduate or undergraduate students who are studying Florida ethnobotany – i.e., the study of the relationship between peoples or cultures with plants native to Florida or Florida ecosystems. These can be current uses or historic uses.

The Florida Native Plant Society has established a **Cornelia McNamara Grant** program for the purpose of funding applied research on native plants and habitats, particularly those that are rare or imperiled. These are small grants (\$1500 or less), awarded for a 1-year period, and intended to support research that will yield data to inform the management for or restoration of native species and habitats.

Application guidelines and details are on the FNPS Web site (www.fnps.org), click on 'What We Do/Awards and Grants'. Questions regarding the grant programs should be sent to info@fnps.org.

Application deadline for the 2022 Awards is March 4, 2022. Awards will be announced at the May 2022 Annual Conference. Awardees do not have to be present at the Conference to receive award.

Our Demonstration Garden

by Lois Cantwell

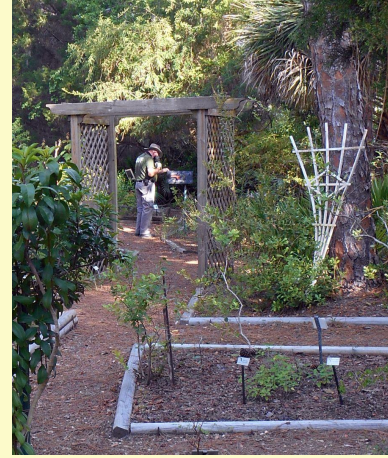


After the summer heat and rainy months recede, our Chapter-sponsored Demonstration Garden always needs a certain amount of TLC to bring it back under control. This may include trimming shrubs and vines, removing dead-fall, weeding, dead-heading spent blooms, replacing mulch, top-dressing beds, potting up sprouts for future plant sales, and adding

new plantings to the landscape. That process can begin in October/November if we have enough volunteers to take on the challenge.

Last season there was considerable progress made by a dedicated group of Garden Keepers. By January, we began advertising "native plants available" with a roadside sign out on the curb on our work days. This was a preamble to a major native plant sale in March, which yielded enough to finance our garden budget for the coming season.

For those of you who have an interest, the experience will help you learn about plants native to our area, their natural habitats, growing conditions, wildlife value, and uses in the home landscape. Starting dates and times will be announced in the coming weeks. The pictures are the Cedar Point Demonstration Garden taken at the Earth Day Event taken by Linda Manley.



Natural Beauty in Boone N.C.

by Bill Dunson



Here is some of the natural beauty to be found in our Boone NC yard and nearby in early/middle September, 2021

Many flowers have completed or are near the end of their blooming cycles and butterflies and bees are having to search more widely for nectar and pollen. The abundant blooms of touch me not are attracting hummingbirds. I have seen several female preying mantis heavy with eggs getting ready

to lay their distinctive egg capsules. You will notice large somewhat scary spiders such as this harmless arabesque orb weaver gathering the bounty of insects attracted to house lights. Few homeowners will appreciate their insecticidal habits and will be freaked out by arachnophobia- try to fight against this tendency and enjoy their predatory beauty. Above Left: Hummingbird feeding on tough me not.



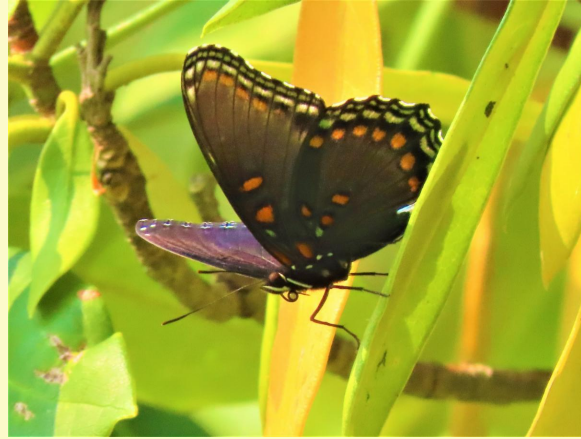
Spider arabesque orbweaver



Praying mantis



Red spotted purple butterfly, inner wing



Red spotted purple butterfly, outer wing



I noticed several red spotted purple butterflies which mimic the toxic pipevine swallowtails for protection from birds but are in a separate unrelated family- the brushfoots (not swallowtails at all but are pretty good mimics on both the inside and outside wing surfaces).

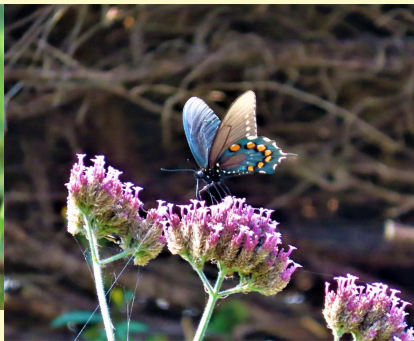
Many birds are migrating southwards, including the confusing fall warblers (see here a Tennessee warbler which blends well with the habitat) and hawks (best seen from Elk Mountain overlook).

Some special fall blooming flowers, such as this bottle gentian which can only be pollinated by strong bumblebees that force the petals open, remind us what season it is.

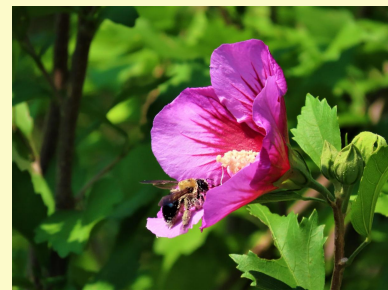
Soon enough we will be admiring fall leaf colors and raking up the results of fall frosts. Enjoy it all, it is marvelous!



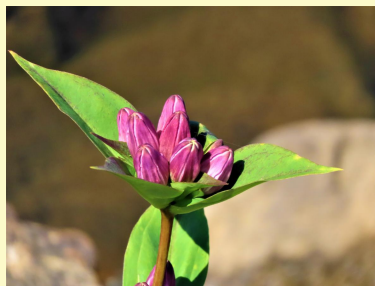
Skipper female zabulon on
heal all mint



Pipevine swallowtail on
Brazilian vervain



Bumblebee in althea
blossom



Monarch
on butterfly bush

Gentian bottle G. clausa



Cabbage white on ironweed
flowers

A Message from Gerald Thompson

I know some of you may not be back down in Florida for the season yet, but if you are, we could use your help for our Halloween Haunted Festival events at Cedar Point! We'll need help for all sorts of activities, including working the ticket table, leading different crafts, directing parking, setting up decorations, or even being scarers or a hike guide for our haunted hike if you're feeling extra spooky! The events will be taking place on Saturday nights (10/9, 10/16, 10/23, 10/30) from 6:00-9:00 PM. That first one is next weekend! If you have questions or are interested and would like to help, please respond to this email or give me a call at (941)-914-3427.

Cedar Point Programs for October

All public programs take place in Cedar Point Environmental Park. For information on mask requirements and Covid-19 safety precautions, or for more information and to register, call **941-475-0769** or email **gerald@checflorida.org**.

Monday, October 4th Come explore the park's nocturnal side! This trip will meet behind the Visitor Center at 6:15 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.

Wednesday, October 6th Join us for an incredible guided kayak trip to explore the natural beauty and incredible wildlife in Oyster Creek and Lemon Bay. This trip will begin at 9:00 AM and meet at the boat ramp located directly across

the street from Cedar Point at Oyster Creek Park. This trip is open to all skill levels, from novices looking to try kayaking for the first time to experienced paddlers wanting to take in the sights. The trips are led by CHEC partner Biotica Eco-Tour, who can be reached at **(941) 350-4905** or **mail@bioticatours.com** to register. Price: \$50.00 per person.

Thursday, October 7th SEAGRASS WADING TRIP: 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 REEF-SAFE (no oxybenzone or avobenzone) 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, October 9th HAUNTED HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL: Come out to Cedar Point for our spooky Haunted Halloween Festival! This event will last from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, and will cost \$5.00 to enter. It will be an absolute blast with live animals, a haunted hike, food trucks, games, a pumpkin patch, and more! Parking will be provided in the grassy fields located in front of our neighbors at Harborside Marine Sales. Face masks are STRONGLY encouraged.

Saturday, October 16th HAUNTED HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL: Come out to Cedar Point for our spooky Haunted Halloween Festival! This event will last from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, and will cost \$5.00 to enter. It will be an absolute blast with live animals, a haunted hike, food trucks, games, a pumpkin patch, and more! Parking will be provided in the grassy fields located in front of our neighbors at Harborside Marine Sales. Face masks are STRONGLY encouraged.

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Thursday, October 21st SEAGRASS WADING TRIP: 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 REEF-SAFE (no oxybenzone or avobenzone) 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, October 23rd HAUNTED HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL: Come out to Cedar Point for our spooky Haunted Halloween Festival! This event will last from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, and will cost \$5.00 to enter. It will be an absolute blast with live animals, a haunted hike, food trucks, games, a pumpkin patch, and more! Parking will be provided in the grassy fields located in front of our neighbors at Harborside Marine Sales. Face masks are STRONGLY encouraged.

Saturday, October 30th HAUNTED HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL: Come out to Cedar Point for our spooky Haunted Halloween Festival! This event will last from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, and will cost \$5.00 to enter. It will be an absolute blast with live animals, a haunted hike, food trucks, games, a pumpkin patch, and more! Parking will be provided in the grassy fields located in front of our neighbors at Harborside Marine Sales. Face masks are STRONGLY encouraged. Go to www.CHECflorida.org for a complete program calendar.

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 **October 2021**.

All programs can be found at 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. For more information or to register, call at

941-475-0769.

Friday, October 1st 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, October 5th 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, October 8th 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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information. All participants are required to wear face masks during the program.

Tuesday, October 12th Join CHEC on a guided walkthrough 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 941-475-0769 to register or for information.

Friday, October 15th 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.

Tuesday, October 19th 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 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

Friday, October 22nd 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, October 26th 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 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](#)
