



April 2022

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We are using a new system for the distribution of the Mangrove Chapter newsletters and emails such as meeting and event reminders, while ensuring your ability to unsubscribe from these communications.

If you are a Mangrove member, you will continue to receive all our emails and newsletters, as always. No action is needed.

If you are not a Mangrove member and wish to continue to receive our communications, please opt-in now, using the link below in this March newsletter, or next month, in the April newsletter. Those who have not opted in by April 25, 2022, will no longer receive Mangrove communications, starting May 1, 2022.

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/3zbrFWy/mangrove>

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Report from Your President:

by Linda Manley

Our focus this month is to create a more livable Earth. Does this sound like a cop-out to you? Don't we always try to create a more livable Earth? Isn't that what we do every day in our roles as members of Mangrove Native Plant Society? I know we all try, every day, to take better care of our planet.

We plant native Florida plants to feed the insects: the butterflies sip nectar from the flowers they evolved to use as food and they lay their eggs on the plants that will feed their caterpillars, allowing them to complete their life cycles. We plant native Florida plants for predatory insects as well. Your beautiful milkweed is infested with aphids, but here come the ladybug larvae to feast on those aphids and continue their own life cycle.

We plant native Florida plants to attract pollinators, allowing the native plants to develop seeds and spread them to create more natives. Bees seem to swarm around most any nectar plant, but if you study their habits, you'll find they usually prefer native plants. We all know that bees are not the only pollinators. Dozens, perhaps hundreds of other creatures are pollinators, from wasps and beetles to bats and birds.

We plant native Florida plants to preserve what we like to call "Old Florida." But old in whose eyes? Folks who moved here last month think Florida is a beautiful paradise, but a neighbor who moved here 20 years ago tells them, "You should have seen it back in 2000, when I moved here." Someone else says to them, "I moved here as a child in grade school, and the wilderness was everywhere. No shopping malls or housing developments of McMansions." Then a native Cracker tells of the adventures of grandparents or great grandparents who cleared fields of sabal palms and saw palmettos to plant crops or pasture cattle.

We choose to avoid pesticides and "forever chemicals" in our yards and gardens because those toxins never go away. They flow into our waterways or remain in the soil to be

absorbed by growing plants, which are then eaten by any number of creatures, including humans. Creating a more livable Earth simply can't include substances that poison living things, whether pesky insects, plant-eating rodents, or other pests. Mother Nature has a purpose for everything on our Earth; we just need to learn what that purpose is and appreciate the reason for it.

Whatever reason you choose as your own reason to go native, kudos to you! Florida's birds, butterflies, and bees thank you, and members of Mangrove Chapter thank you too.

[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

Thank You to Lois Cantwell

by Linda Manley

As you read this, Lois will be deep into packing her car and the moving van to depart Florida permanently in just a couple days. She and Gordy have sold their home and given to charity most of the accumulation of some 17 years. Mangrove Chapter has been the lucky recipient of some of those items, some of you purchased others at Plant Native Day, and more items remain that will be available at our Silent Auction in May and on our raffle tables at upcoming meetings.

I've known Lois casually for only a couple years, and I've gotten to know her more closely for only a few months as I've prepared to assume the role of president. If there ever was a Superwoman, it's Lois. She has done so much work behind the scenes for Mangrove Chapter that it's nearly impossible to believe a single person could do it all. I touched on the highlights at our January meeting when Mangrove Chapter presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation. I'm not going to repeat all those tasks here, but let me assure you, they are daunting.

As each new meeting or event approaches, I discover more things she handled that no one really knew about. Somehow, all those things just came together, mostly because of Lois. Her visible work is impressive, no doubt, but her work in the background approaches monumental. Truly, I don't know when she ever sleeps!

I want to thank Lois for all that she has taught me, all that she has tried to teach me, and all that she has done quietly over the years to keep Mangrove Chapter alive. We wish the best of luck to her as she returns to her quiet life and wildflower garden in Michigan.

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter

April will be another busy month for Mangrove Chapter. On April 6, Ruth Ward and Bobbi Rogers will present a program on the value of native plants to the student garden club of a Charlotte County elementary school. We are happy to learn that both educators and children are enthusiastic about learning why choosing native plants for our landscape is important.

Cedar Point is hosting an Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 23, from 9 AM to noon. Mangrove will have an information table, along with several other nature-related organizations. There will be food trucks, live animals from animal rescue services, and a guided hike. The celebration continues the entire week with kayak tours and other activities.

National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April every year. In celebration, North Port is hosting a Tree Fair on City Center Green, 4970 City Hall Blvd., from 10 AM to 2 PM on

Saturday, April 30. People for Trees will be selling trees for \$15 to \$25, depending on size, and other nature-related organizations will be represented, including Mangrove Chapter. Hundreds of native trees will be for sale. Selections include Longleaf Pine, Sweetgum, Bald Cypress, Dahoon Holly, Pignut Hickory, Red Maple, Sycamore, and Sugarberry. Children who take the Tree Pledge will receive a free tree seedling! The event also features "Ask an Arborist", vendors, food trucks, and music. As an aside, I chose a pignut hickory from People for Trees a couple months ago. It has leafed out and is looking very happy in my yard.

Also in celebration of Arbor Day, as well as of Native Plant Month and Earth Day, Peace River Audubon Society has invited us to participate in an event at Centennial Park, 1185 Centennial Blvd, Port Charlotte, from 9 to 1. The event is co-sponsored by UF/IFAS Charlotte County Extension and includes several nonprofit organizations involved with conservation.

March Membership Meeting Summary

Linda Manley, President, opened the meeting by welcoming 31 members attending. She announced our growing membership as 129. The monthly plea for volunteers centered on a Chair and helpers for the Garden Committee, emphasizing the immediate need because current chair Lois Cantwell is moving permanently next month. Current garden volunteer Laura Soule offered to help but is unable to be in charge because of frequent travel. We hope other members will also help on Mondays, 9-11, at Cedar Point. Anyone interested should contact Linda at 88lingo@gmail.com

Marianne Owen, Hospitality Chair, several-term secretary, and longtime member, was presented with a Certificate of Thanks for her service. Marianne is returning to New England at the end of this season.

Ruth Ward, Program Chair, introduced Kate Borduas, Master Naturalist and Mangrove member, who spoke on the importance of insects in this world. She provided background on the history and evolution of insects; their many shapes, forms, and varieties; the functions they perform on Earth; and how humans benefit from them and the products they produce. She was accompanied by Brooke Elias, entomologist, who brought an interesting display of books and other insect-related items.

At the close of the program, Linda reminded everyone to visit our Facebook page, read our monthly Mangrove Messenger newsletter, and explore our website, where they can find walks, meetings, and other events. She highlighted Plant Native Day this coming Saturday, March 12, and asked Lois Cantwell, Plant Native Day Chair, to explain more. The next event highlighted was Venice Audubon Rookery Day, Saturday, March 19.

Anne Risberg and Jerry Markussen will staff a Mangrove Chapter table at that event, with native plants available for donations and a variety of literature for attendees.

More information will be available in April about Earth Day at Cedar Point on April 23 and Arbor Day at North Port City Center Green on April 30.

About a dozen nature-related books were given away at the raffle, and social time followed.

April Meeting

Intricately Entwined: Biodiversity, Nature, and Human Health

Dr. Katherine Clements discusses the loss of biodiversity and potential impacts on human health, including how time spent in nature provides direct benefits for our mental and

physical health
Dr. Katherine Clements is the Ecology and Natural Resources Educator for UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability, Sarasota County. Previously a practicing naturopathic physician with a background in environmental studies, she believes the health of the environment is intricately linked with our own health and well-being. She brings the love of all things natural to her position.

Mangrove Chapter Program May Meeting

Our May meeting will have a different format than our usual meetings have. We're planning a **BYOP (Bring Your Own Picnic)** in connection with a **silent auction** rather than a speaker program. We've had pot luck dinners in the past, but BYOP is a new twist. Previously, our silent auctions were largely member-grown plants and nature books. This year we will have a much larger selection of items, partly compliments of Lois, who donated so many of her gardening and nature-related items to the Chapter before she moved back to Michigan. We had many of these items available at our Plant Native Day in March, and many ended up new homes with people who found them charming and/or useful. Among the most beautiful of the items available will be artwork. Lois and Gordy collected endless numbers of art pieces from many nature festivals over the years, and those they did not take along to Michigan will now be available at our auction. Many more items will be offered as well, including books, knick-knacks, and some surprises. Please plan to join us and take home some treasures at our final meeting of the spring at 1:00 on Tuesday, May 10 at Cedar Point Environmental Park.

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

Rookery Day March 19



The Venice Area Audubon Society held its first Annual Rookery Day on Saturday, March 19th. An unexpectedly large community turnout had official estimates as high as 1000 people in attendance, a wonderful crowd.

Left: Anne explains highlights to Bob Clark, Rookery Day volunteer

The Mangrove tent, staffed by Anne Risberg, Jerry Markussen, and Joan McGowan, offered a variety of literature about the value of native plants and even ran out of the information sheets for butterfly gardening, as well as several other handouts. Children were offered coloring books featuring native plants and insects.

Right: Kate Borduas masquerades as a butterfly during a presentation.





Additionally, Ruth Ward presented a well-attended propagation workshop, and our Mangrove table gathered nearly \$50 in donations as people chose member-grown native plants to take home.

Left:
Ruth Ward demonstrates plant propagation.

Anne reported the visitors expressed a lot of interest in native plant gardening and a surprising number were members of the Mangrove Chapter Facebook group. Several were members of other FNPS chapters but enjoy our page and want to keep track of what we are doing. The Mangrove business cards were popular and many were given to attendees who wanted to know how to get in touch with us.



Picture right: Anne Risberg and Joan McGowan help an attendee choose literature.

This event helps fill the void created by the cancellation of many annual nature festivals in recent years, and its success means we will continue to participate in the future.

Do you wonder where to buy Native Plants

Big box stores sometimes have plants that are native, or that they call native, but too often they are hybrids or cultivars and you can't be certain that the plant is a true native. Other times, the grower might already have treated the plant or even the soil with pesticides that are harmful or fatal to native insects. Buying from a native nursery helps avoid those worries. Here are a few area nurseries where you can confidently purchase native plants:

Sweet Bay Nursery, 10824 Erie Rd, Parrish, FL 34219

Florida Native Plants Nursery, 730 Myakka Rd, Sarasota, FL 34240

All Native Garden Center, 300 Center Rd, Fort Myers, FL 33907

Plant Native Day March 12, 2022



Plant Native Day on March 12 produced our most donations ever, nearly \$800! Although the weather forecast was for 100% chance of rain, people determined to add native plants to their yards turned out to find them. Visitors crowded the sidewalks, examining the selection from the Florida Native Plants Nursery on Fruitville Road as well as the home-grown and donated plants

from our members. Picture Left: Volunteers and patrons scurry about.



Volunteers begin toting and carrying for the day



Native plant lovers gathering just as we open



All important volunteers who collected the money

An added attraction this year were the tag sale items donated by Lois Cantwell as she prepared to return to Michigan. They were a hit with those attending, and tables in the garden emptied steadily as the donation jar filled. More fragile artwork was displayed inside, out of danger of a downpour, giving people a chance to peruse and decide which one they liked best for their homes.



Safe indoor display for artwork and other donated items



People browse the garden to find just the right plant



Commercial native nursery plants ready

Over 20 volunteers helped people that day: some with plant decisions, taking into account location, sunlight, and watering considerations. Others helped with parking, staffing the literature table, or the all-important job of collecting donations. When the sky opened up just before 11:00, everyone scurried to get items in from the rain. All in all, the day was a rousing success. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers and to the members and eco-thoughtful folks who came to get native plants for their yards. We'll be back again next year!



One of the tables of garden and nature accessories



People help themselves to free literature about native plants



Donations from tag sale items filled the donation jars

FNPS Annual Conference

FNPS Annual Conference



Registration is now open for the Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference. Click the link to view the flyer.

Mangrove Chapter Nature Walks

Saturday, April 9th, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Kate Borduas from the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a nature walk at Amberjack Environmental Park, 6450 Gasparilla Pines Blvd., Englewood, FL. The walk will take us through a 13-foot elevation change with an opportunity to explore a range of habitats. Starting in the high, dry, southern area of the preserve, rare scrub rosemary and other plants adapted to xeric areas can be seen. Some of these plants are found almost exclusively in Florida. The walk will also lead around a large depression marsh where moisture-loving plants can be found. In April, many shrubs and flowers will be in bloom. Some parts of this walk are on sand paths, so closed shoes are recommended. For information visit mangrove.fnpschapters.org.

Tuesday, April 12th, 1:00-3:00 PM The Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society will host **Intricately Entwined: Biodiversity, Nature, and Human Health**, an educational program at the Cedar Point Environmental Park's Education Center, 2300 Placida Road, Englewood. This presentation by Dr. Katherine Clements discusses the loss of biodiversity and potential impacts on human health, including how time spent in nature provides direct benefits for our mental and physical health. Dr. Clements is the Ecology and Natural Resources Educator for UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability Sarasota County. Masks are required inside the education center. For information visit mangrove.fnpschapters.org.

Wednesday, April 20, 4:00-5:00 PM Join Dave and Linda Manley from the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society for a Sunset Stroll at Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Rd, Port Charlotte. This park has flat, paved trails for easy walking. The pace is slow, with time for questions and observations. In April many shrubs and plants will be in bloom. The shoreline mangroves are one of the main attractions in this park. Usually there will be some shorebirds nearby. Meet in the playground area between the two parking lots. For information email mangrovechapter@fnps.org.

Saturday, April 30th, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Kate Borduas from the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a nature walk at Curry Creek Preserve - East, 1500 Pinebrook Road, Venice FL. The eastern section of the preserve is home to a remnant longleaf pine forest. Once covering 90 million acres, longleaf pine was harvested heavily, with little thought to wildlife losses within the environment. Pond apple trees, rare for this area, may be found along the creek. The trails are unpaved but very even. Sturdy shoes are recommended. For information visit mangrove.fnpschapters.org.

ECNP Site Visits

Mangrove Chapter partners with our friends at the Environmental Conservancy of North Port and Surrounding Areas (ECNP) for walks and other events. The mission of the ECNP is to acquire and conserve undeveloped natural land parcels in the city of North Port and Sarasota and Charlotte Counties to provide a greenspace balance between nature and today's growing population.

The Conservancy recently acquired two additional plots and has offered the public an opportunity to visit these protected areas. Native plants living on the plots include slash pine, sabal palm, and live oak as well as frostweed and blue mistflower. Additionally, an active gopher tortoise burrow is now protected.

You can visit these lands March 6 or April 3, 2022, at 4 pm. Registration is required and limited to 10 people each time. If the date you prefer is filled, your reservation will be held for future dates to be announced. To register, email NPconservancy@gmail.com or call or text 941-218-9775 to obtain the address.

Pollinator Friendly Yards

by Linda Manley

I have found a Facebook group that advocates for less turf and more native grasses, flowers, and shrubs to feed and grow pollinators. It promotes all the principles we believe in as an organization as it locates and shares news articles and scientific studies supporting our causes and our views concerning the critical value of native plants. Although based in North Carolina, many of the recommendations apply equally well to Florida. I don't often suggest a social media source, but this one has captured my attention. It's among the most uplifting pages I visit and it gives me hope that others might come around to believing in the need for going native. Find it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/QuietOrganicYards>

Here Comes the Pollinators

by Bill Dunson



Finding butterflies and other pollinators is slim pickings in January and February in SW FL with recurring cold fronts and strong winds. But as March approached this year (2022) we have had a stretch of quite warm weather with mild nights. As a result I am seeing many butterflies,

moths, bees and wasps coming to our flowers. Now there are relatively few native flowers in bloom in winter so I have planted a number of mostly non-invasive exotics to attract insects. One example is a "rain garden" down near Lemon Bay where there are a number of native seaside goldenrods mixed with tropical milkweeds, mistflowers and Spanish needles. There are also mock bishop weeds and pellitory growing in a part of the adjacent yard which receives some fresh water flows during infrequent rains.

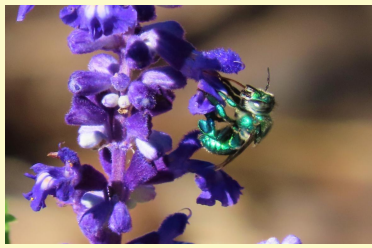
Above Left: Rain Garden next to Lemon Bay.

I have been impressed by the large numbers of native southern carpenter bees (*Xylocopa micans*, a male with green eyes shown here on goldenrod). They are solitary and capable of buzz pollination and nest in cavities in wood. They resemble bumblebees which

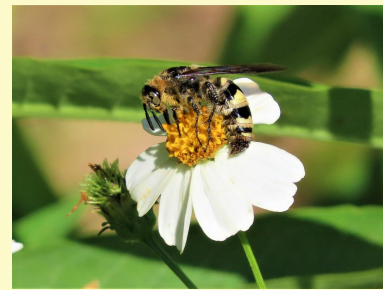
perhaps serves to protect them from predators.



Bee Carpenter, *Xylocopa micans*, male green eyed on seaside goldenrod



Orchid bee, male, on blue salvia

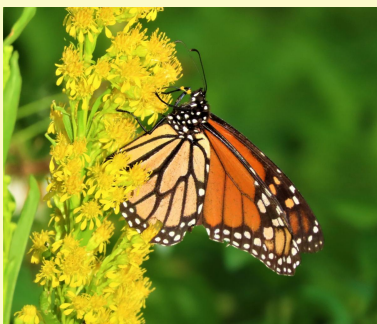


Wasp, feather legged scolid, *Dielis plumipipes*, parasitoid on soil scarab beetles on Spanish needles

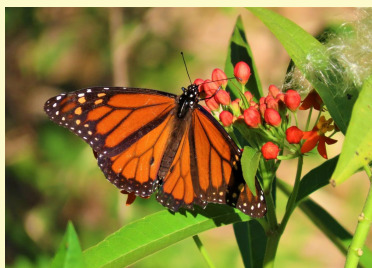
A very different bee is the much smaller bright green Mexican orchid bee (*Euglossa*) which has appeared in our area within the past few years. They have a very long tongue and the males collect fragrances which are stored in an enlarged hind leg cavity. These chemicals are apparently used to attract females to mate.

An unusual feather legged scolid scarab hunter/digger wasp (*Dielis plumipes*) is quite common especially on goldenrods (but shown here on a Spanish needles flower head). They search for buried beetle larvae, sting them and lay an egg which develops and eats the paralyzed grubs.

Monarch butterflies are our most common butterfly this time of year. They do not migrate to Mexico but remain in Florida. They are fond of native flowers such as seaside goldenrod but can only feed their caterpillars on milkweeds. Native milkweeds are very scarce so the only real hope of maintaining their populations is by homeowners planting tropical milkweeds (good also for nectar) or giant milkweeds. A closely related milkweed eating species is the queen which is shown here nectaring on the weedy Spanish needles. Queens are rare on Manasota Key and the related more tropical soldier butterfly is extremely rare; this soldier appeared one day recently and found some mistflowers it liked. This is only the second soldier I have been able to document in Charlotte County in 26 years. Photo upper right: Soldier butterfly on mist flower



Monarch on seaside goldenrod



Male Monarch on tropical milkweed



Queen on Spanish needles

Another butterfly we rarely see on Manasota Key is the zebra swallowtail which lays eggs only on pawpaws. This striking individual was attracted to a brilliant display of Mexican flame vine- an invasive exotic that is a fabulous attractor of butterflies. Note the mostly black and white coloration with striking red marks both inside and outside the wings; the

swallowtail structures are believed to provide a mimicry of the head leading predators to strike at the rear of the butterfly away from the most delicate body parts.

Our backyard has many red mangroves growing along Lemon Bay and this attracts mangrove skippers that are rarely seen inland. They are a large type of skipper with metallic blue markings. This individual was feeding on the flame vine but I see them also on Panama rose and especially native snowberries which are summer bloomers.

We regularly see orange barred sulphur butterflies attracted to native cassia flowers and coral honeysuckles. This female is drinking nectar from a honeysuckle which has a long corolla tube which prevents feeding by species which do not have a long enough tongue.



Zebra swallowtail on
Mexican flame vine



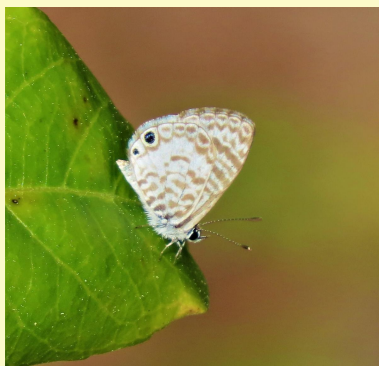
Zebra swallowtail on
Mexican flame vine



Orange barred sulphur
female on coral honeysuckle

This tiny Cassius blue butterfly was resting on a leaf but is attracted to many small flowers in lawns which are not treated with herbicides. The caterpillars feed on legumes. The oleander is an exotic shrub which is often planted for its flowers. Several moths are "pests" of these poisonous plants. This is one of the lesser seen species, the spotted oleander caterpillar moth. Both it and the more common polka dot moth are wasp mimics that fly in daytime and depend on their shape and coloration to confuse predators. It is definitely worth having an oleander around so that you can see some of these beautiful moths.

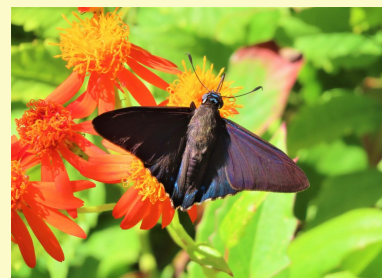
So get off the couch and go outside and start watching for insect pollinators and learn some of their names- it is fun, educational and just might get your brain functioning at a higher level. Planning and planting a native garden along with some non-invasive exotic flowers (such as zinnias) that attract pollinators will provide a lot of enjoyment and just might improve the prospects for our native pollinators.



Cassius Blue butterfly



Spotted oleander caterpillar
moth, wasp mimic



Mangrove skipper on
Mexican flame vine

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center April Programs

<https://www.checflorida.org/calendar>

Sat, April 2, 9–11, Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Rd

Tue, April 5, 9–11, Amberjack Environmental Park, 6450 Gasparilla Pines Blvd

Tue, April 12, 9–11, Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park, 6791 San Casa Dr

Fri, April 15, 9–11, Tippecanoe II Mitigation Area, Joppa Ave

Fri, April 22, 9–11, Amberjack Environmental Park, 6450 Gasparilla Pines Blvd

Tue, April 26, 9–11, Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Rd

Fri, April 29, 9–11, Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park, 6791 San Casa Dr

Guided Walks sponsored by Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve

www.LemonBayConservancy.org

UF/IFAS Eco-Walks

<https://www.scgov.net/a-z/dnd/calendar-month-view/-curm-4/-cury-2022>

Tue, April 5, 9-10 Mindful Movement in the Mangroves, The Bay Park, 655 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

Wed, April 20, 9–11, Guided Hike, Curry Creek Preserve East, 1500 Pinebrook Road, Venice

Thur, April 28, 9–10:30, Incredible Insects, Urfer Family Park, 4012 Honore Ave., Sarasota

In Memoriam:

It is with deep sorrow and much love that we mourn the passing of Douglas Eugene Williamson, M.D. of Venice, Fla., on Friday, March 24, 2022, at the age of 94 years. Dr. Williamson received his B.S. and medical degree from Northwestern University and completed his residency at Brooklyn Eye & Ear Hospital. Dr. Williamson was a Captain and Medical Officer in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Ramstein, Germany. Dr. Williamson established his eye surgery practice in Sarasota in 1959. Dr. Williamson will be lovingly remembered by his wife Alison and his daughter Theresa Hoban. At Dr. Williamson's request, no memorial services will be held. Donations may be made to **Doctors Without Borders** in honor of Douglas E. Williamson, M.D. Farley Funeral Home in Venice is handling the arrangements. A message of condolence may be sent by visiting www.farleyfuneralhome.com.

Mangrove Native Plant Society

COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Meetings and Field Trips

If you are not feeling well, or if you or a family member has been exposed to COVID, please do not attend our events.

For indoor meetings and events, wearing properly worn face masks is recommended and will align with rules of the facility. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own beverages and packaged snacks.

For outdoor events or field trips, wearing masks is optional for vaccinated participants; strongly recommended for unvaccinated participants. Bring water, insect repellent, and sunscreen. A hat or head covering is recommended.

Participants are encouraged to maintain appropriate 6' social distancing when possible.

[Visit our website](#)

