

March 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>

Report from Your President:

by Linda Manley

Building on the “create” series I began last month, our focus for March is to create a more vibrant chapter. Our chapter has a lot going for it but we can always be better. Our 35th anniversary meeting last month had many long-time members in attendance who spoke enthusiastically of past projects, events, and workdays when everyone pitched in to accomplish terrific results. The vibrancy of those days was clear. Grants from other organizations helped build projects like our demonstration garden and fund other activities. Let’s find that enthusiasm again! Come to our meetings, join our nature walks, and follow our Facebook page. Find a place where you can immerse yourself in nature and feel the stress of the day drain as your vibrancy increases.

One of the best ways to create a more vibrant chapter is to volunteer to help it grow and flourish. Mangrove Chapter needs valiant volunteers, versatile volunteers, vivacious volunteers. We could use vast numbers of volunteers! To us, our volunteers are not only vibrant, but they are also valuable and vital.

We need versatile volunteers to help in our demonstration garden, and we’re looking for one especially versatile volunteer to be garden chair next year. Lois Cantwell, our current garden chair and immediate past president, is returning to the North permanently in early April and we will be without anyone to lay future plans for the garden or supervise the crew of gardeners we have. By the way, handypersons, there may be some construction involved. Do you like building and relish the opportunity to use your skills? This could be right up your alley. Are you a versatile volunteer who wants to create a more vibrant chapter?

We need a vivacious volunteer to lead morning walks at Englewood Beach. We have Sunset Strolls, which are one-hour walks on flat, easy-to-walk trails. We’d like to add Sunrise Strolls (maybe not exactly at sunrise) on the boardwalk for those who would like

a shorter, easier morning walk. The beach walk would offer the rare opportunity to enjoy the Gulf shoreline at a time when it's less busy and has fewer people. Are you a vivacious volunteer?

This fall we will have an opening for a valiant volunteer who primarily will do data entry. If you are looking for a useful project while at home; if you are unable to help in other ways because of work hours, scheduling, or other difficulties, perhaps you'd like to do some data entry for the chapter. We have plant lists to maintain that have been kept for decades, but our list-keeper is considering retirement. If you're computer literate and want to help Mangrove Chapter from home or as a snowbird, you could be a valiant volunteer. We believe that every one of our members is a valuable, vital volunteer. You volunteer your time every time you choose to attend one of our meetings or participate in one of our walks. Your volunteered time is what keeps our chapter going, what brings us our wonderful, knowledgeable speakers, and what inspires our walk leaders. Without you, we wouldn't have a vibrant chapter. Thank you for volunteering, no matter how you do so.

Welcome New Member!

Welcome to our new Mangrove Chapter member, **Susan Galvin** from Punta Gorda.

[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter



Dave and Linda Manley represented Mangrove Chapter by hosting a table at North Port Newcomer Day on February 5. This exposition features local businesses and nonprofits, giving new residents a chance to connect with the community. This first endeavor was considered a success, as many active gardeners stopped by our table and were happy to find an organization like ours. Many people had questions about their frost-damaged plants, as

well as general gardening questions.

Of the literature we took, we gave away 28 Good Citizen Guides, 18 Florida Association of Native Nursery catalogs, and 38 "20 Easy-to-Grow Wildflowers" books. We also used drawings to give away six white violet plants donated by Lois Cantwell. All in all, it is worth doing again next year.

Mangrove Chapter Aprons

We're delighted to let all of you know that we have purchased custom aprons for our chapter! These will serve as advertising when we have an information table at events like nature festivals, Earth Day celebrations, and similar places. They will also identify people who can offer

assistance and answer questions for guests at our own Plant Native Day at Cedar Point on March 12. That will mark the premiere showing of our aprons, and the second opportunity to see them will be at Rookery Day sponsored by the Venice Area Audubon Society on March 19. Be sure to attend these festivities to learn more about native plants and ecosystems.



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

Rookery Day March 19

Venice Area Audubon Society will hold its first Annual Rookery Day on Saturday, March 19th from 9:00–Noon.

This family-friendly festival will showcase the many ways that we can all support wildlife, especially birds, in our own backyards. No species stands alone, so we must learn how to work with native plants and trees in order to support insects that will, in turn, support all types of birds and bats. We can start by putting away the pesticides.

Stations will be set up around the Rookery where docents will explain about the interconnectedness of nature, starting with butterflies and bees and the plants they need; the benefits of “leaving the leaves”; and the additional environmental gains of creating tree thickets for birds. You may tour the stations at your own pace, or you might elect to join a 45-minute guided tour, starting at 10:00 and 11:00 at the Bat Houses.

Urbanization has limited cavity nest opportunities for a number of bird species, including the glorious Purple Martin, an important insectivore. You can learn how humans are intervening to create habitat for these wonderful birds. Other important insectivores in need of habitat are bats! While they feed at night—often consuming their own weight in insects—they need daytime homes to rest and sleep. Visit the Bat Houses to learn more.

There will be a number of demonstrations at the Pavilion and Audubon will be giving away native elms and maples, together with instructions on where and how to plant them. The Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society will also have native plants and will demonstrate why native plants are the foundation of a healthy ecosystem. Mangrove member Ruth Ward will give a demonstration on plant propagation.

Other participants and presenters include Healthy Ponds Collaborative, Sarasota County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources, Peace River Butterfly Society, FPL/Audubon Florida, and Annie Schiller’s Florida Native Plant Nursery.

This first annual event helps fill a void created by the cancellation of many annual nature festivals in the wake of COVID. The Mangrove tent, headed by Anne Risberg, will offer a variety of literature about the value of native plants and will have a limited number of native plants available. Please come and immerse yourself in nature; this will be a morning to remember!

For the past few months, native friends have gathered for socializing at their favorite local spots. At the Native Roots Bar, Red Cedar, Nutty Thistle, Rusty Lyonia, Joe Pye, and Elliot Aster are discussing volunteer positions in the Mangrove Chapter, while Laurel Oak, Starry Rosinweed, Summer Mimosa, Goldie Chapman, and Penny Royal think about their own volunteer possibilities at the Pampered Petals Spa.

The Natives all attended the happy 35th Anniversary Celebration in February and had a wonderful time. They saw a lot of old friends and enjoyed the cookies and Iced tea, although Red Cedar said he really liked his Myakkahatchee Creek Water better and Goldie worried that she ate too many cookies. Most of them had already volunteered or made plans to volunteer within the next few days and they were all happy to be helping their native plant friends with the ongoing task of promoting the benefits of using native plants in gardens and landscapes.

But the Natives also saw that their chapter still needed volunteers in several areas. A few positions remained unfilled, and people who were already working on the responsibilities of their own positions had to double up or triple up to take care of everything. Some of the Natives wondered why others hadn't stepped up to help for a few hours a month. But March is a busy month for the Natives and they decided to pitch in as best they could with Plant Native Day, Rookery Day, the demonstration garden, and the plant surveys. April brings spring, the happiest month for The Natives, and they were all looking forward to it. If you want more information on how you can help, you can email Linda Manley, President, at 88lingo@gmail.com.

35th Anniversary Celebration Feb 2, 2022

[Anniversary Meeting Video](#)

[Photo Loop Link \(about 15 minutes\)](#)

Although the weather outside was gray and drizzly, inside the Cedar Point Visitor Center all was bright and sunny as over 30 members and former members gathered to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. good friends..

Chapter President Linda Manley introduced the current Board members and gave brief descriptions of their positions. Committee member Linda Wilson introduced special guest Dave Wilson, a founding member, and committee member Bobbi Rodgers introduced Al Squires, longtime walk leader. Both shared stories of days gone by, including the time before Mangrove became affiliated with the Florida Native Plant Society. Other longtime members added vignettes from their own memories.

A running video loop of old photographs offered a starting point for many conversations. People browsed the giant binders of old newsletters, meeting minutes, newspaper clippings, and publications, and some took home vintage copies of the FNPS magazine, *The Palmetto*. A special display commemorated Denny Girard, whose walks with Al Squires were fondly known as The Denny and Al Show. Those attending rekindled old friendships and formed new ones, recognizing that everyone present held the common belief in the importance of native plants. As the afternoon wore on, people shook hands, exchanged hugs, made lunch plans, and promised to stay in touch. Perhaps the best part of this day is what happens in the few days afterward, as people reminisce about the past and remember good times with

Demonstration Garden Report

Central area of
Demonstration
Garden 2008

We continue to keep working toward having the garden beds presentable by the advent of Plant Native Day on March 12th. With our limited number of helpers, we have accomplished quite a bit. Improving pathways, borders, and adding some transplants from my yard have been our latest tasks.

Cleaned up
area for
Butterfly
garden -2008

Center area
ready to plant
-2008

Improved
Butterfly
garden - late
2008

I have serious concerns about the future of our Chapter-sponsored Native Plant Demonstration Gardens, knowing that after I move back north, we are in need of a new Garden Chair. If anyone has an interest in taking charge of the garden, you don't have to have a great deal of native plant knowledge, as it is inherently a learning experience. Also, there can be a Co-Chair option, so one person doesn't have to shoulder the load. If you are an avid gardener and can dedicate a couple hours a week during "season", or are a full-time resident, those are great attributes. Our current garden keepers are great to work with and always up for new assignments, as well as general maintenance tasks. We actually have fun while working!

Beautification
Award (2009)
presented by
the
Englewood-
Cape Haze
Area
Chamber of
Commerce
Visit our
website

It is an educational site where the public can actually see native plants in the landscape. The garden dates back to 2008 when Jane Wallace was a driving force responsible for its creation and development. We started with the existing Butterfly Garden that had been established many years prior to this project. I am including photos from the past, provided by Jane to give you an idea of how far we have come from its origins. This may give you a greater appreciation for where we are today, and what the area may revert to if it is abandoned for lack of support.

Newly planted
bed in front of
visitors
center at CP
(Dec. 2009)

In the left column is a series of photo of the early days of the demonstration garden. Click on each link to view the photo.

Mangrove Chapter Program March 8 at Cedar point

Please join us for our March 8 meeting at 1:00 at Cedar Point when Master Naturalist and Insect Enthusiast, Kate Borduas, explores the lives of the creatures that run the world in a program titled:

Q: Why Do Insects Matter So Much?

A: Because They Run the World!

According to the late, great, entomologist, E.O. Wilson, "If all mankind were to

disappear, the world would regenerate back to the rich state of equilibrium that existed ten thousand years ago. If insects were to vanish, the environment would collapse into chaos. All life, and humanity with it, would most likely disappear from the land within a few months.”

In other words, insects are the nexus of life on earth. In this program we are going to explore the many ways that insects are among the most amazing creatures on earth. Insects are miracles of evolution; insects were the first creatures to evolve flight and ruled the skies for millennia; insects outnumber all other living species combined; and they come in a wondrous array of sizes, colors, and shapes.



Along their evolutionary pathways, insects also invented agriculture, animal husbandry, and manufacturing. Humans put insects and their byproducts to use as dyes, honey, ink, silk, and shellac. And we didn't even mention pollination!

Kate is a self-described “Adult-onset” Naturalist. A transplant from coastal Maine, she is trained as a Florida Master Naturalist and as a nationally Certified Interpretive Guide. Following a life-long, long-distance love affair with nature, Kate is delighted to be living the life of a naturalist full time and gives frequent walks and talks in Charlotte and Sarasota Counties, with a specific focus on scrub habitat and the endangered Florida scrub jay. Other organizations that have hosted Kate include Oscar Scherer State Park, several Audubon chapters, and Sarasota County Libraries. Kate was the recipient of Sarasota County Parks “Volunteer of the Year” award in 2018. As a naturalist and guide, Kate is committed to sharing with others the hidden wonders of nature all around us.

Homegrown National Park

Doug Tallamy: Have you heard this name? Are you familiar with his work? If not, Doug Tallamy is currently the foremost advocate for growing native plants and restoring native habitat. He has written a number of books, but his current best-seller, *Nature's Best Hope*, has become a must-read for amateur and serious gardeners alike. In Chapter 5 he introduces the concept of a Homegrown National Park, advancing that if everyone were to convert half of their lawn to growing native plants, we would have the equivalent of a huge new national park—some 20,000,000 acres. That's “bigger than the combined areas of the Everglades, Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Teton, Canyonlands, Mount Rainier, North Cascades, Badlands, Olympic, Sequoia, Grand Canyon, Denali, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks.”

Wow, some park! And all in our own backyards. It's not likely that we are able to convert half our lawns to native plants, but we can start somewhere. If you have a native plant garden or grow native plants on your land, or even have one native plant in a pot on your balcony, you can register your property at <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/> and add it to the nearly 14,000 people who have already done so. It takes just a couple of minutes—I've done it.

I urge you to join us in efforts to save native plants, their habitats, and the insects that need

native plants to survive.

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

Out of Date Gardening

Are you lucky enough to have a garden? Are you even luckier to have a native garden? Part of making our chapter more vibrant is to do what you can to preserve our irreplaceable native plants.

Do you sometimes feel constrained by the rules of your HOA? My own HOA allows us to plant what we want within a certain border around our house, so I've filled mine with firebush, milkweed, black-eyed Susan, coontie, spotted bee balm, calamint, blue mist flower, beauty berry, starry rosinflower, and as many other natives as I can squeeze in. Even if you can fit only one native plant in your garden, do it! Your outlook will brighten and you'll begin to feel some of the vibrancy of belonging to Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

I recently read an article by L. J. Markson ([link below](#)) suggesting that planting non-native plants and applying pesticides are out of step with contemporary gardening ideas. This is so true! Why have I never considered this viewpoint before? Every week we hear new stories about the damage done to human health by some chemical so many people freely apply to their lawn or garden. And this is to say nothing about the loss of beneficial insects brought on by chemical death. Who wants to be an out-of-date gardener?

All too often, we find scientific reports about the decline in insects caused by loss of habitat or other reasons. What happened to all the butterflies? Why do I no longer find bees in my yard? If they can find nothing to eat, they may be starving, and if you don't offer food in your yard, the insects look elsewhere. Insects and plants evolved together over hundreds of thousands of years, with each insect finding a specific variety of plant on which to feed and lay eggs. When non-native plants are substituted for native plants in landscape and other plantings, insects have nothing to eat and no place to lay eggs. It's little wonder their numbers are plummeting.

We can help restore the native habitat for our insects by planting native host plants for butterflies, beetles, and wasps. We all know that monarchs depend on milkweed to lay eggs so their caterpillars have something to eat when they hatch. The black swallowtail chooses dill, parsley, and fennel. I bought a few parsley plants last summer and had dozens of baby swallowtail caterpillars. I was so excited! But some neighbors plant ixora or hibiscus and wonder why they never see butterflies. Ixora and hibiscus are nonnative and our Florida butterflies don't recognize them as food. It might as well be concrete to the insects.

When you decide to add a plant to your garden, remember to choose a Florida native. While the match site at our own Florida Native Plant Society website is under construction, you can find lists of plant-insect matches at the Florida Wildflower

Foundation website: <https://www.flawildflowers.org/> . Visit the site, come to our Plant Native Day event, take home some natives for your garden, and become an up-to-date gardener. Then get planting!
L. J. Markson article:
(<https://www.nurturenativenature.com/post/gardening-advice-turns-a-corner>)

Plant Native Day March 12, 2022

The Mangrove Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society invites you to join us for our annual Plant Native Day. This free half-day educational outreach event will be held on Saturday, March 12, 2022 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2300 Placida Road in Englewood and from 9:00 AM to noon. The theme, “Planting for Pollinators”, illustrates the use of native plants in your landscape to attract butterflies, bees, beneficial bugs, and other pollinators.



Plant sales begin at 9:00 AM. The Florida Native Plants Nursery from Sarasota, managed by Annie Schiller, and the Peace River Butterfly Society will have a variety of plants to purchase. Mangrove Chapter member-grown plants will be available for donations. Live butterfly-raising demonstrations, as well as educational handouts will be on hand. Plant sales will close at noon.

For more information, contact Cedar Point Environmental Park at 941-475-0769. This event is sponsored by the Mangrove Chapter, FNPS; Charlotte County; and Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. For more information about native plants, go to www.fnps.org. Mangrove Chapter activities are described at www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org. CHEC programs are listed at www.checflorida.org.

[Plant Native Day Flyer to print and share](#)

Plant Native Day Helpers Needed!

Our annual spring fund-raiser, also known as “Plant Native Day”, is rapidly approaching. I will be sending out a separate, more detailed plea soon to our membership for help on Saturday, March 12th, when we will be setting up at around 8 AM that day in preparation for a 9 AM start. I will outline specific tasks then, but a general overview includes:

assisting our co-hosts with unloading; schlepping our tables, tent, and “tag sale” items from storage; setting up and manning our plant sale and yard-and-garden-art sale; returning everything to storage at the end of the event.

There is a probability that I will only have a limited supply of plants this season, due to lack of time and opportunity to dig and pot, so please consider donating native plants from your own gardens. That will be a big help. Make sure they are labeled! Picture upper left: Plant Native Day Feb 2014 - flowering plants are not up yet.



Plant of the Walk Carlton Preserve 2/12/22 *Cat's Ears* *Hypochaeris radicata*

by Kate Borduas

Resembling tall dandelions, Cat's Ears can also be easily mistaken for Hawkweed. Native to the Old World, this vigorous perennial was deliberately introduced by settlers to North America, Australia, and New Zealand. It now flourishes on every continent except Antarctica.



The yellow, composite flower sits atop a hollow stem that releases a milky substance when broken, and the leaves are deeply lobed rosettes. Cat's Ears can grow to about 24 inches, but if mowed in a lawn it will blossom at a much lower height. Early settlers used this plant for food and medicinal purposes. Young, tender foliage can be used as a salad green and may also be cooked once it toughens up. Medicinal uses include treatment of kidney problems,

urinary tract infections, gall bladder problems, constipation, rheumatism, and liver problems.

Cat's Ears presented in shocking abundance during our Mangrove Chapter outing at Carlton Preserve in early February. We were there eight months following a devastating fire, and as we know, some plants go into overdrive in those conditions. Cat's Ears can set seed heads with considerable speed,

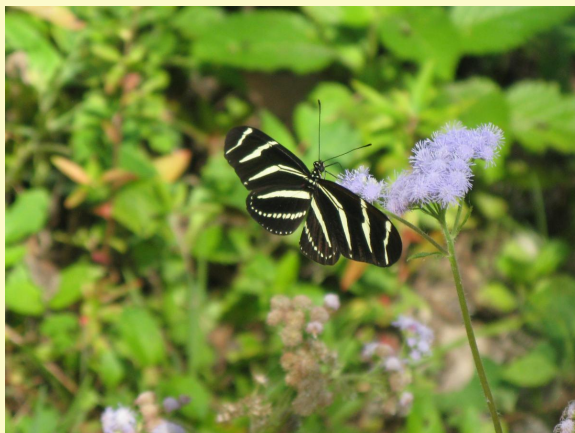
produce prodigious amounts of seed that are readily spread on the wind. Once germinated, new seeds can become established plants within a month. This suggests, and was confirmed by our observations, that Cat's Ears generations can overlap. In spite of its abundance, Cat's Ears do not provide a lot of support for wildlife. Native bees are known to pollinate them.



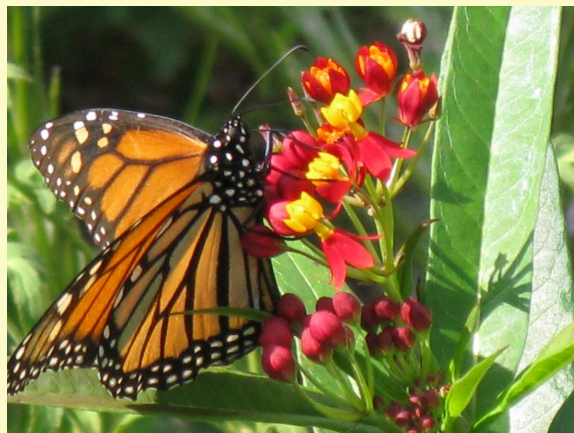
What's Up in My Garden

by Lois Cantwell

Unfortunately, the only thing blooming in my yard these days is the Tropical Milkweed, which I had cut back in early winter. With the recent warm-up, I am seeing a few Monarchs flitting about, nectaring and possibly laying some eggs. The plentiful Longwings I had in December and early January disappeared during the cold spell. They have not returned just yet, although the Corky-stemmed Passion Vine is still plentiful. The Cassias are not in bloom so no Sulphurs. I did see one Swallowtail just the other day, so that's a portent of more action in the days ahead. Just need more blooming things!



Zebra Longwing on Mistflower



Monarch on Tropical Sage

My local birds have been daily visitors this winter, especially since there were most likely slim pickings for insects and caterpillars during the colder weather. I supplement the lack of those sources of nutrition by tossing some seed and nut mixtures out behind our lanai under the trees. "Early bird" Warblers show up first to get little suet nuggets and a few seeds before the "big birds" start coming in. Blue Jays and Red-bellied woodpeckers home in on the peanuts, as well as a few local gray squirrels that live up in the Sabal Palms.



Robin in bird bath

I also see Brown Thrashers, Gray Catbirds,



Mourning Doves, an occasional Red-winged Blackbird, and the dreaded Grackles (the pigs that fly). Four strategically placed bird baths are also bird favorites. Keeping them clean and replenished is a challenge but a necessity. I enjoy sitting quietly on my lanai and watching their antics. The Blue Jays have a habit of testing the peanuts (in the shell) by picking them up and dropping them until a heavier one is found. It must be a “food value” thing. I see this behavior with the jays up north, too. Very clever birds!

Has anyone seen Robins, yet? I was seeing them in late January to early February last season. Now there’s a bird that loves a good bath! Above Left: Mourning Dove on feeder.

CHEC Grant Advisory Committee Member Invitation

Mangrove Chapter has received an invitation from CHEC (Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center) to have a representative from our chapter sit on the advisory board for a grant-supported project to encourage and assist local businesses with installing native plants in and around their places of business. The grant is from the National Environmental Education Foundation and would be between \$50,000 and \$100,000. The advisory board will have up to seven members.

The goal of the grant is to create a native plant program with local business participation. Enrollment would come with pots, plants, and quarterly maintenance. Businesses would receive a decal to display that acknowledges their participation and would receive recognition through social media posts. Annual business memberships would support ongoing maintenance, with costs kept as low as possible to ensure program retention. Initial program enrollment would come with no up-front cost for plants, pots, or installation. The CHEC goal is 50 business partners in Phase 1, with concentration in Punta Gorda for logistical purposes. Phase 2 would aim for 100 new partners, with emphasis on Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte. Phase 3 would target 250 businesses throughout Charlotte County, with ambitions to share the program design with partners throughout the state.

The goal of the advisor position is to answer questions and offer advice on the best ways to implement the program (e.g., What plants would attract the most pollinators? What plants would grow best under these conditions? What soils would be the best for planting? and similar), as well as to promote the program through social media. The primary line of communication among the committee members would be through email, with quarterly Zoom meetings for updates. The anticipated timeline for the program would be June 2022—June 2023, if the grant is approved.

The advisory committee position would be a year-long commitment and the person would need a good knowledge of native plants and their growing requirements. Most work would be done from home via either email or Zoom meetings, so location in Florida is not essential. Snowbirds are welcome to consider this volunteer position.

If you are interested, please contact Linda Manley at 88lingo@gmail.com by April 1.

Mangrove Chapter Nature Walks

Tuesday, March 1, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Bill Dunson and Anne Risberg for a nature walk at South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve, 5472 Kenisco Rd., Venice (at

the corner of Euclid Rd.). There is a choice of two walks at this preserve. Bill will lead the long loop (about 1.5 miles), and Anne will lead the short loop (about .5 miles). Walking is predominantly on sandy trails. The preserve is mainly scrubby flatwoods with extensive scrub oak stands managed for scrub jays. There are both fresh water and saline wetlands and the long loop extends down to Lemon Bay. The emphasis will be on plant ecology and identification and we hope to see wild lupine in bloom. The leader requests that all participants be vaccinated. No dogs are allowed in this park.

Saturday, March 5, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Kate Borduas for a nature walk at Myakka State Forest, East River Road Entrance, Englewood. The forest is well-managed with frequent burns, which helps promote the growth of many wildflowers. This two-hour walk is on well-maintained flat trails through the quiet northern part of the forest. Long pants and closed shoes are recommended since ticks can be thick in this area. There is a \$2 entry fee. If you do not intend to pay online, bring \$2 cash to the parking area. The walk leaves from the northern entrance of the forest, not the main River Road entrance. From River Road turn onto East River Road. The forest entrance will be about 1 mile on your right.

Tuesday, March 15, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Anne Risberg for a nature walk at Middle Beach/Blind Pass Beach Park, Manasota Key, 6725 Manasota Beach Rd, Englewood. This one-mile walk will explore the back half of the park which runs to Lemon Bay, identifying plants and their pollinators along the way. Directions: Meet in the parking area farthest back from the road and close to the kayak ramp. Watch for the playground equipment and a covered area with picnic tables.

Wednesday, March 23, 4:00-5:00 PM Join Dave and Linda Manley for a Sunset Stroll at Ann and Chuck Dever Regional Park, 6791 San Casa Drive, Englewood. The pace is slow, with time for questions and observations. This park has wide, flat, grassy trails for easy walking. Spring in Florida should offer an abundance of wildflowers. From San Casa Drive, use the entrance across from the county building. The leaders will have a sign at that entrance. Meet in the parking lot opposite side the pond.

Tuesday, March 29, 9:00-11:00 AM Join Bill Dunson for a nature walk at Myakka State Forest, Main Entrance, 2555 South River Rd., Englewood. The 1.5-mile walk will be along the Gordon Smith Trail through pine flatwoods and near a fresh-water pond. This is a spring walk to see what flowers are in bloom and to identify classic flatwoods and wetland plants. Meet in the parking lot 1 mile east of the entrance to the forest. There is a \$2 entry fee. If you do not intend to pay online, bring \$2 cash to the parking area. The leader requests that all participants be vaccinated. No dogs are allowed on this walk.

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.

March's Cedar Point Programs

(Check our website/blog/calendar for details)

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following free programs to the public in **March 2022**.

All programs can be found at www.ChecFlorida.org
Cedar Point Programs

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. For more information or to register, call at **941-475-0769**. Trips are currently limited to 12 people, and wait lists are available for every trip.

Saturday, March 5th 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 sunscreen and insect repellent and to bring plenty of drinking water. **Advance registration is required.** Trips fill up fast! Meet in the Cedar Point Visitor Center at 8:30 AM.

Friday, March 11th Slices and Scientists Lecture: Come out to Cedar Point at 6:00 PM for a free lecture from a local environmentalist about a myriad of topics relating to Florida nature! This is a great opportunity to learn from an expert about some of the local wildlife and habitats we have surrounding us here in South Florida. The lecture is open to all ages, and will include pizza and refreshments for sale and activities for kids. Speaker and topics TBA.

Saturday, March 19th 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 sunscreen and insect repellent and to bring plenty of drinking water. **Advance registration is required.** Trips fill up fast! Meet in the Cedar Point Visitor

Center at 8:30 AM.

Tuesday, March 22nd Nighttime Seagrass Wading Trip: Come explore the park's nocturnal side! This trip will meet behind the Visitor Center 1 hour before sunset (meet time: 4:30 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.

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

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center March Programs

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following free programs to the public in **March 2022**. All programs can be found at www.ChecFlorida.org

Free Guided Nature Walks

All walks begin at **9:00 AM**. On these casual walks with CHEC volunteers, you will search and learn about plants, animals, fungi, and more that live in Charlotte County preserves. Prepare for each walk with plenty of water, insect repellent, sunscreen, and clothing that will protect you from insects and plants.

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**.

Tuesday, March 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.

Friday, March 4th 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.

Tuesday, March 8th 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, March 11th 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, special adaptations that allow mangroves to thrive in salty environments, and why mangroves are important and protected in Florida. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

Sunday, March 13th 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.

Tuesday, March 15th 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.

Saturday, March 19th 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, March 22nd Join CHEC on a guided walkthrough **Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park**, a 487-acre Charlotte County property of mature pines, dry prairie, marsh wetlands, and freshwater ponds. It's location adjoining state lands make it an important wildlife corridor. Meet at the parking lot on US 41. Please call 941-475-0769 to register or for more information.

Friday, March 25th 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.

Sunday, March 27th 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.

Tuesday, March 29th 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.

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

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](#)
