

Report from Your President:

by Linda Manley

For the final message of my word-of-the-season series, I've chosen "Create More Positive Feelings." As naturalists and lovers of native plants, we are often distressed to witness what is happening to the wild areas of our Earth. In our own state we see rampant development of natural lands, with clearcutting and bulldozing of endangered habitats that render all the wildlife of the area homeless. It's easy to adopt a pessimistic viewpoint and send messages of gloom and doom. We're pretty good at doing that because we have so many targets.

What we need to get better at is sending positive messages to create more positive feelings. Instead of focusing on the sad things we cannot control, we need to highlight the encouraging projects, developments, and accomplishments around us. One example was realized last year when the U.S. Congress declared April as National Native Plant Month. Wow—great! Here in Florida, we celebrate our own native plant month in October. Now we have two chances to recognize and honor native plants. Yay!

Closer to home, our Mangrove Chapter has its own positive news. We resumed in-person meetings after a hiatus of over a year. Our membership now hovers around 127, about a 25% increase from a couple years ago. We sponsored over 25 walks this season, over twice as many as we used to have, and we're training new walk leaders to guide those walks.

We've put our chapter and our name in front of people at five events this year as well as at our own Plant Native Day. Hundreds of people have seen us, stopped at our tables, asked questions, and taken home literature to help them learn more about native plants. Our Plant Native Day event brought in record donations—the most ever! Thank you to those of you who took home native plants for your own yards and found treasures among the

tag sale items. And thank you to all of you who come to these events and support the nature-oriented organizations there, as well as coming to our own meetings and walks.

The Florida Native Plant Society has 33 chapters across the state and many have success stories like we have. We can all celebrate the new awareness of the value of native plants and the efforts of like-minded organizations to preserve our remaining natural areas, establish more protected areas, and limit destructive development practices. And we can thank our members statewide who plant native.

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to Marilyn Foren from Placida, Marie McCaughan from Englewood, and Kristin Hoffschmidt from Venice! So glad to have you with us!

[Click here to Visit our Website](#)

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter



Earth Day at Cedar Point

Cedar Point hosted an Earth Day celebration on April 23 where Ruth Ward and Bobbi Rodgers staffed an information table for Mangrove Chapter and collected donations for a few native plants. (pictured left) Gerald Thompson provided seed-starting supplies including peat pots, seed-starting soil mix, and seeds of *Bidens alba* and Beach Sunflower. The perfect weather cooperated beautifully for this event.

Children were excited to have the opportunity to plant seeds and take them home to watch the seeds germinate and grow. The event had a light crowd and the 20-25 people they talked with showed genuine interest in native plants. Pictured right: Gerald explains the touch tank to visitors.





A gulf fritillary visits a blue porterweed in the chapter native garden.



Gerald helps a boy handle the Cedar Point resident king snake

Charlotte County Go Florida Native Event



Mangrove Chapter participated in the Go Native Florida event held at the Charlotte County UF/IFAS grounds in Centennial Park, Port Charlotte. Pictured left is Dave Manley preparing to greet visitors as the event opens. Friday, April 29, was a beautiful day, with bright sunshine and a nice breeze. Hundreds of gardeners turned out to pick up a free native plant kit they had registered for

in advance, consisting of a tree and four more plants, either shrubs or grasses. I was expecting small plants; perhaps a four-foot tree and some small shrubs. Instead, the free plants were lush, top quality nursery stock. This was an incredible gift for homeowners who wanted to upgrade their property. I would estimate the retail value at around \$75.

I was fortunate to get a six-foot red maple tree, a beautiful shiny-leaf coffee plant, a firebush in bud, and two pots of muhly grass. Others chose live or laurel oak and fakahatchee grass. Barb Seibel and Jerry Markussen, who helped staff our table, perused the choices and Barb found some plants for her own yard. Jerry decided to consult his HOA and develop a plan first. Pictured above: the selection of free native plant kits.



We gave out hundreds of pieces of literature about native plants and answered many questions about specific plants and general gardening. Thirty-five people signed up to receive our monthly newsletter and several picked up information about membership. With all the glorious plants available at the event, only a few people were interested in our homegrown natives and took them to new homes. We collected

\$17 in donations. Pictured above Left: Visitors crowd around our table.

Among the other participating organizations were the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Charlotte County Master Gardeners, the Environmental Conservancy of North Port, Keep Charlotte Beautiful, Peace River Audubon Society, and D&R Nursery.

Longtime member Jane Wallace waves as she enters the event.



Volunteer Jerry Markussen talks with Barbara Lockhart from the Environmental Conservancy of North



Port.

This valuable event is definitely worth returning to each year. It gave Mangrove Chapter the best public exposure I've experienced in my time with the Chapter. I wish the timing had been different so we could capitalize on the enthusiasm of those attending and invite them to a series of upcoming meetings. Perhaps we will see a few new faces at our May meeting before our summer break. Overall, we can classify this day as a success.

Summary of Chapter Meeting, April 2022



Construction tape and a little extra walking time were not deterrents to a dozen people who came to Cedar Point to hear Dr. Katherine Clements, Ecology and Natural Resources Educator, UF/IFAS Extension, Sarasota County, (pictured left) speak on the relationship between humans and nature in a program titled, "Intricately Entwined: Biodiversity, Nature and, Human Health." Dr. Clements provided

fascinating information on how humans have impacted biodiversity on Earth, which has in turn impacted our own health.

Following the program, Linda Manley, President, previewed next month's meeting, which will have a BYOP (Bring Your Own Picnic) theme as well as a silent auction of items

donated by members and by Lois Cantwell, Immediate Past President, before she moved. Also announced were three upcoming events at which Mangrove will have an information table: Earth Day at Cedar Point, Go Florida Native Day at Centennial Park in Port Charlotte, and the Arbor Day Tree Fair at City Center Square in North Port. Members were encouraged to attend and show support for the events.

The meeting closed with the traditional raffle of donated items, and people took home nature books and other treasures.

The link to the video of the meeting is here: <https://youtu.be/xoFeTKBQ-PI>

Marianne Owens is presented with a Thank You Certificate from the chapter for her volunteer work over many years.



Open Position for Chapter Secretary

The position of secretary for our chapter is currently open and we are looking for a volunteer to fill that position. Of course, we would like the individual to be able to attend both membership meetings (second Tuesday of the month at 1:00) and Board of Director meetings (first Friday of the month at 1:00), but Board meetings are critically important. Traditionally, we've had about eight membership meetings and ten Board meetings each year, with fewer of both during the summer. We have been using alternating volunteers to take notes for a few months now but we would like to have a person to fill the position. The individual should be familiar with computers and email, and preferably with using Microsoft Word or one of its clones. The responsibilities consist primarily of taking notes during Board meetings, writing the notes into a traditional meeting minutes format, and distributing them to Board members via email. If you'd like to help our chapter with this position, please email me at 88lingo@gmail.com.

Fun at May Meeting

At our **May 10th** meeting we will have a **BYOP** (Bring Your Own Picnic) and a silent

auction—what fun! Bring a sandwich or snack and a beverage to drink, and start now to burrow through your garden items, stored-away art, and dusty books and find some things to bring to the auction. We'll have a photo loop running during picnic time as you eat at your seats, and you can peruse the auction items and place bids anytime during the gathering. The silent auction will have additional items donated by Lois Cantwell before she returned to Michigan as well as more artwork, additional nature books, and a treasure trove of items from all you chapter members. The meeting will be at 1:00 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2300 Placida Road, Englewood. Be sure to join us for this entertaining afternoon!

School Garden Club Presentation

On April 6, Ruth Ward and Bobbi Rodgers presented an educational program at Meadow Park Elementary School for 12 Garden Club students, ranging in age from 7 to 12 years. Ruth and Bobbi spoke about the importance of native plants, the problems with invasive plants, and how various pollinators are vital to the Earth's food chain. After the discussion, the students each potted seedlings supplied by Ruth and placed each in a homemade mini-greenhouse consisting of a plastic baggy, with instructions on how to plant their new native plants in their home gardens.

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

[Mangrove Chapter Facebook page](#)

North Point Tree Fair

The annual Tree Fair sponsored by People for Trees is always a popular event. People line up ahead of time to get first choice among the 10 or so native varieties of trees available, even though hundreds of trees are on site, and



we saw many smiling faces as people left with their purchases. This was the first year Mangrove has participated and we plan to continue in coming years. Picture Left: Our table set up and ready for visitors

The most valuable part of tabling events (new term to me) like this is the publicity we receive from having our name in front of people. Most people have never heard of Mangrove Chapter, evidenced particularly by the number of people who had specific questions about mangroves. Today we had available an excellent publication on mangroves produced by a cooperative venture of five organizations. It seems as though we should add these brochures to our permanent collection. Picture Above: Linda answers questions for a visitor while another examines the handouts.



We also fielded dozens of other questions ranging from butterfly gardens to a couple building a new home who asked how to stop the builder from clearcutting their entire lot. Some questions stump us, but we do our best to supply the answer or send people to a source where they can find it. We handed out so much literature that we will have to restock over the summer so we have a good supply going into next year. In my book, that's good news. We collected \$37 in donations and found new homes for all our member-grown plants except one.





Bella, the Great Horned Owl was popular next door.

Peace River Wildlife was our neighbor - how great!

Thank you to Joan McGowan and Jerry Markussen who helped with our table. We collected 20 new people who asked to receive our newsletter, plus one very special woman who is offering the incredible opportunity for free dig-your-own plants from her lot; she calls it free yard-shopping. She said her property is overgrown and thick with all sorts of plants that need new homes. If you want native plants for your yard, you can contact this generous woman at Cathybeausoleil@comcast.net Picture Above: Joan talks with a visitor.



Other organizations that participated in the Tree Fair included Peace River Wildlife Center, North Port Parks and Recreation, the Environmental Conservancy of North Port, Girl Scouts, Save Soil, Sarasota County Democrats, Homemade Bakery, Sunburst Gourmet Popcorn, and about half a dozen food trucks.



Summer Yard Tour?

by Linda Manley

Our chapter doesn't have regular activities in the Florida summer, so I'm scouting out our members to see if you have any interest in a yard tour over the summer. A yard tour is simply a tour of the yard of one (or more) of our members. Summer is a great time for a

yard tour because so much is blooming. On our guided walks in season, we sometimes struggle to find plants in blossom. It is, after all, winter. Finding an abundance of flowers on a yard tour would be a welcome delight.

We'd prefer that the majority of the plants are native, of course, but nonnatives are okay too—it's your yard! If you're just getting started on a native garden, maybe you'd like to show us what you've chosen. If, on the other hand, you're a seasoned native gardener, you might like to show off the hard-won results of your work.

As you see, I'm scouting for interest not only from people who would like to attend, but also from people who would like to host a yard tour. Don't worry—you don't have to invite us in or serve tea and crumpets. Just offer us the opportunity to see all your lovely plants.

If you have an interest in either hosting or attending, please drop me a quick email at 88lingo@gmail.com Thanks!

Reflection on Plants

by Gerald Thompson via Linda Manley

Gerald Thompson is the Program Coordinator at Cedar Point Environmental Park, where we hold our meetings and have our chapter garden. He's a lifelong Sarasota resident and has been with the park for just over a year now. A graduate of Nova Southwestern University, he has had experience at Mote Marine, Save Our Seabirds, and White Oak Conservation. Gerald has been a delight to work with and we're happy he's here. Gerald's first love has always been animals and wildlife, but since coming to Cedar Point, he has been learning about the plants in the park. He recently wrote this reflective post on Facebook, which I found deeply moving. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Reflections on Plants

I've been feeling introspective this week, and was thinking about the effect nature has on me as a person. Specifically, how it affects people in different ways, and especially how spending the last few years getting more and more interested in plants has changed me.

I know so many people where it seems like nature gives them a power trip. It stokes their egos and seems like they see nature as something to overpower so they can have dominion over it. They see themselves as better, elevated higher above the nature.

I feel like over the last few years, nature has really been drastically changing me.

Learning more about the plants around has 10,000% been the biggest catalyst for this. I feel more in tune to the subtle seasonality of everything, the hidden interconnectivity that connects all living things. It has made me more compassionate, more empathetic. It makes me confident without arrogance and humble without self-doubt.

This budding love of blooms has influenced my religious views, my political opinions, my relationships. My personality as a whole has grown like a seedling freshly finding the sun anew ever since I started listening to the flowers. The best way I can put it is that the newfound attentiveness toward the plants all around me just makes me better.

Go out and show some plants how much you love them today.

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

Photographer Needed

Volunteer Photographer Opportunity

Our chapter needs volunteer photographers to take photos at membership meetings and occasionally at events like those listed above. We have missed some wonderful opportunities to keep all of you informed of our activities as well as to promote our organization to the general public. You don't have to be at every meeting or every event, just those that are convenient and interest you. We don't care whether you use a phone or a camera. Our only requirement is that you are able to email or otherwise transmit the photos to Linda Manley (88lingo@gmail.com) or Dave Manley (godave@boun.cr) so they can appear in our newsletter and be kept for our historical archives. Just send us labelled photos from the events you attend and we'll sort through them. To volunteer, please contact either one of us at the email addresses given..

FNPS Annual Conference

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

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center May Programs

Guided Walks by Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC)

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

Sat, May 2, 9–11, Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park, 6791 San Casa Dr

Thur, May 12, 9–11, Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park, 15801 S. Tamiami Trail

Thur, May 19, 9–11, Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Rd, Port Charlotte

Sat, May 21, 9–11:30, Seagrass Wading Trip, Cedar Point Environmental Park

Thur, May 26, 9–11, Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park, 15801 S. Tamiami Trail

Fri, May 27, 9–11, Amberjack Environmental Park, 6450 Gasparilla Pines Blvd

Tue, May 31, 9–11, Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park, 6791 San Casa Dr

For CHEC June events, see <https://www.checflorida.org/calendar>

Upcoming Walks from Nature Organizations

News from the Environmental Conservancy of North Port (ECNP)

<https://ecnorthport.com/>

Guided Walks by Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve

<https://lemonbayconservancy.org/>

UF/IFAS Eco-Walks

<https://www.scgov.net/a-z/dnd/calendar-month-view/-curm-5/-cury-2022>

Tue, May 3, 9–10 Mindful Movement in the Mangroves, The Bay Park, 655 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

Tue, May 10, 9–11, Guided Hike, Sleeping Turtles South Preserve, 2800 North River Road, Venice

Thur, May 19, 9–10:30, Meditation in the Parks, Red Bug Slough, 5200 Beneva Rd.,
Sarasota

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](#)
