



September 2023

Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society

The mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Report from Your President:

by Linda Manley

The Exquisite Benefits of Forest Bathing

My first trip to Costa Rica was over 20 years ago. Our group tour traveled the country by bus, seeing the ocean and rivers and jungles and small villages and such. Most of the lodges we stayed in had been carved out of the rainforest and were surrounded on all sides by trees, vines, and lush tropical plants. The feelings I experienced on that trip were unlike anything I had known previously. Stress, worries, and cares seemed to melt away. I came home far more relaxed than with other vacations. At the time, I couldn't put my finger on it. I thought maybe it was just the different location of the trip, even though I had previously vacationed in the tropics. A friend suggested it might be the higher concentration of oxygen due to the rich, abundant plant life. Someone else asked me what was so special about Costa Rica and I had to come up with words: renewed, refreshed, and reborn were what I decided on.

Modern scientific studies have supported what ancient peoples and our own ancestors knew instinctively: that spending time in a forest brings balance back into your life. Japan invented the term *shinrin-yoku*, which translates to our forest bathing, and many benefits have been claimed for the experience, ranging from revitalized cell metabolism to enhanced immune function, among many others. I'm not going to try to defend what might or might not be accurate. I can only relate how it affects me.



You don't have to go to Costa Rica to experience similar benefits of your own. Just find a quiet place in the natural world where you can spend some uninterrupted time. We are lucky to have so many nearby parks and preserves where we can escape: to observe, to listen, to touch, to absorb. The conscious connection with nature is what is most important. I urge you to give this a try. Don't rush through the process. Set aside enough time to sit down or stroll slowly and truly engage with the environment, with your surroundings, with nature. If we commit to immersing ourselves in nature, it can work wonders for our mental health.

Welcome new members: Nancy van Hone, Julia Mercier, and Barbara Dennett. We're glad you have joined us!

Congratulations to Hilda Dillman, who joined Mangrove Chapter in April. She won a year's free membership in the random drawing for people who completed the interests survey.

Click here to **Visit our Website**

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter

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Saturday, October 7: Mangrove Chapter will again have an information table at the Alligator Creek Fest, Saturday, October 7, 11 AM-2 PM, South Venice Yacht Club, 4425 Yacht Club Dr, Venice. Come and enjoy this first event of the season!

Tuesday, October 10: Our first chapter meeting of the 23-24 season is Tuesday, October 10 at 1:00 in the Visitors' Center at Lemon Bay Park in Englewood. Our speaker for this meeting will be Kristin Hoffschmidt, Florida Master Naturalist and Immediate Past President of Venice Area Audubon Society, who will speak on Native Plants for Birds. This season we are introducing a new social aspect: a BYOP 30 minutes before the meeting. The Bring-Your-Own-Picnic has been popular in the past, and we want to give everyone an extra opportunity to get to know other members before the meeting begins. Bring a light lunch to nibble on while you meet and socialize with us before each meeting. See you then!

Saturday, October 14: Our first guided walk of the 23-24 season is Saturday, October 14, 9-11 AM, at Old Miakka Preserve, 251 Myakka Rd, at the end of Fruitville Road in Sarasota. Our leader will be Jeff Weber, Environmental

Specialist at Sarasota County Parks. More details next month.



Mangrove Chapter walk at Old Miakka Preserve, 2022

Library Display: Our library display for September is at the Shannon Staub Library, 4675 Career Lane, North Port. Stop by and check it out!

We are on Facebook!!!

**Look for: Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society or
click this link:**

[Mangrove Chapter Facebook page](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

Our 2023 cumulative volunteer hours reported to the FNPS state level through 8-12-23 are Mangrove Chapter = 3877 hours, which equals 27.59 hours per chapter member. Thank you to all our volunteers!

New Mangrove Speakers Bureau: As the Mangrove Chapter FNPS enters a new season, we are being asked more often to participate in many local activities, including presenting talks to local clubs and providing educational materials at area nature fairs and festivals. To best facilitate this, we are creating a Speakers Bureau.

If you would like to assist by helping with these outreach events, we would welcome you! Some events will require talks, often with slides and/or Power Point programs. Other opportunities include participating in nature festivals where the Chapter member (usually with a partner) distributes native plant literature and answers questions from the interested festival-goers. These tabling events include a table and tent as well as a good supply of literature to hand out. Bobbi Rodgers, as Outreach Chair, is the contact and will schedule these events

when we are asked. She will then send the event to the Speakers Bureau, and members who are available on the program date and time would be the new contact for the event. Usually the topic requested for a speaking event is very broad; anything relating to native plants, such as “Native Plants and Wildlife” or “Plant Selection After a Hurricane.” If interested, please contact Bobbi Rodgers at elipsi@comcast.net



Plant Native Day Committee:

If you are interested in being involved with the Plant Native Day plant sale, a steering committee is forming now. We will meet in late October/early November to begin planning the March 9, 2024 event. Interested people, please contact Ruth Ward at Rward2121@aol.com

Garden Tour Planner

If you have joined our chapter in the past two or three years, you probably received a New Member Survey. The results of these surveys have indicated a strong interest in touring the native plant gardens of other members. To meet this desire, we are looking for someone who would like to find members willing to share their success in growing native plants and make arrangements for tours of their gardens. We don't anticipate a flurry of tours; perhaps just two or three during the season. Additional tours during the summer are also a possibility because many of our members are here in Florida year-round. If you like finding new gardens and arranging local trips, you might be the right person for this position. To help in this position, contact us at MangroveChapter@FNPS.org
P.S. If you would like to offer your garden for a tour anytime during the 23-24 season, let us know. Picture above right: passionflower from home garden.



Program Committee:

The Mangrove Chapter is encouraging input from members as we plan upcoming programs and speakers. If you'd like to be involved on the committee, please contact Ruth Ward at Rward2121@aol.com.

Jeff Weber, speaker

Plant Survey Assistant:

Volunteers continue to conduct monthly plant surveys at Cedar Point Park and could use extra help, especially during this summer. We have also resumed our Adopt-A-Pond cleanup at Cedar Point, usually completed on the same day as the

plant surveys. If you would like to help with either of these projects, please email us at MangroveChapter@FNPS.org to volunteer. Picture right: Linda Wilson and Bobbi Rodgers beginning a plant survey.



Do you wonder where to buy native plants?

Save 10% on Your Plants: Buy Native

Below are a few area nurseries where you can confidently purchase native plants, plus they offer a discount for FNPS members! Too often, big box stores sell plants that they call native, but instead they are hybrids or cultivars, or even worse, the grower might already have treated the plant or the soil with pesticides that are fatal to native insects. Buying from a native nursery helps avoid those worries.

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

<https://sweetbaynursery.com/>

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

<https://nolawn.com/>

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

<https://www.floridanativeplants.com/>

Events with Our Nature Related Friends

The Environmental Conservancy of North Port (ECNP) <https://ecnorthport.com/>

Venice Area Audubon Society
(VAAS) <https://veniceareaaudubonsociety.wildapricot.org>

Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve <https://lemonbayconservancy.org/>

Florida Wildflower Foundation <https://www.flawildflowers.org/>

Peace River Butterfly Society (PRBS) PRButterflySociety@gmail.com

Sarasota County <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/ufifas-extension-sarasota-county-422952084>

Charlotte County Environmental Center <https://www.checflorida.org/calendar>

Mangrove Chapter meets the second Tuesday of the month, October through May, at 1:00 at the visitor center at Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center, 570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood. Our meetings are open to the public

Your Mangrove Board of Directors

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Visit our website

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