

The Mission of the
Florida Native Plant Society is to
Champion Florida's Native Plants and their Habitats

Feathers and Flippers - Dec 8



The Mangrove Chapter will be hosting an informational table and plant sale at the Feathers and Flippers Sculptures Opening on Sunday, December 8, directly behind 240 W. Dearborn St, Englewood, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Come out and support your community!

Magnificent and Imperiled Mangroves

Recent hurricanes have raised awareness about how mangroves protect our coast, and we need to protect them. At November's Chapter Meeting, speaker Armando Ubeda concluded with a clear message: **mangroves need our help now**. Florida's mangroves are of great ecological, economic, and social importance, and are an increasingly rare resource.

Speaker Armando Ubeda (photo at left) is the Sarasota County Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent III and his UF/IFAS Extension program focuses on the Florida Master Naturalist Program, Living Shorelines, Sustainable Fisheries, Marine Resource Conservation,



Marine Debris Prevention, and Water Quality/Quantity. Below are some highlights from his presentation and data from sources such as the [Global Mangrove Alliance](#) and [The Nature Conservancy](#).

Mangroves are magnificent!

- **Biodiverse ecosystem:** Habitat and refuge for plants, fish, birds, invertebrates, and mammals. Nesting rookeries for coastal birds and spawning and nursery habitat for shrimp, crabs, and many commercial and sport fish species.
- **Coastal stabilization:** Prevent erosion, dissipate wave action, and absorb storm surge impacts, protecting millions of people and billions (USD) in property.
- **Improve water quality** by trapping sediments and pollutants like nitrates and phosphates before they reach the ocean, and organisms such as oysters that live on their roots filter water as well.
- **Carbon sequestration:** Mangroves store almost three times the amount of carbon stored by tropical forests of the same size.



Figure: Surge is reduced behind mangroves, helping ease flooding to land and properties. © The Nature Conservancy

Mangrove forests in Florida

- **Red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*):** Closest to the water with reddish, arching prop roots and pointed leaf tips (“red, red, pointy head”).
- **Black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*):** Roots (pneumatophores) project upward from the soil and leaves are whitish on the underside from excreted salt (“black, black, lick the back”).
- **White mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*):** Usually on higher ground with no visible roots, and the petiole has two distinguishing glands near the leaf base (“white, white, bolts on tight”).
- **Buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*):** An upland species in coastal intertidal environments with oblong leaves and button-like fruits.

Mangroves are threatened – and protected

- **Climate change:** We say someone is “in deep water” to indicate danger, and

the impact of sea level rise is even worse for mangroves because in many places, they cannot migrate inland due to shorelines with sea walls, buildings, roads, and other infrastructure. Mangroves are also battered by more severe and frequent storms.

- **Deforestation:** Mangroves are cut down for agriculture, aquaculture such as shrimp farming, and other coastal development, releasing massive amounts of carbon dioxide and contributing to climate change.
- **Vanishing ecosystem:** Only a fraction of the world's mangrove ecosystems remains, and although the rate of destruction has slightly decreased, more than 50% are at risk of collapse by 2050.
- **Protection:** **Florida law** protects mangroves and regulates trimming.

What can you do?

- **Don't cut down mangroves** and help others in your community understand why it is important to protect them.
- **Secure items in your yard and shed**, especially toxic chemicals. After hurricanes, the coastal mangroves are covered in all types of storm debris and gas cans, landscape chemicals and equipment, and other toxins are of particular concern.
- **Don't walk on mangrove roots.** The prop roots of the red mangrove and the "breathing roots" (pneumatophores) of the black mangrove are delicate. For cleanups, a permit and specialized training is required.
- **Educate elected officials and your community** about the benefits of **living shorelines** and mangrove protection.
- **Get involved in citizen science projects** and others to protect mangroves.

-Kristin Hoffschmidt

Photo at right: A boat washed up in the mangroves at Lemon Bay Park.



Chapter Meeting – Tuesday, December 10

We invite you to bring a lunch and join us beginning at noon for social time. Meeting starts at 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Agenda

- Call to order
- Introductions and ice breaker
- Announcements of Chapter business
- Chapter history
- Plant of the Month - Tropical sage
- Introduction to guest program:

The Success of the Venice Urban Forest
presented by Greg Vine
Chairman of VABI (Venice Area Beautification Inc.)

The Venice Urban Forest is a greenbelt corridor that stretches from the Venice Train Depot to Center Road and provides a beautiful woodland trail for pedestrians parallel to the Venetian Waterway Park. Only native trees and shrubs are being planted so that the forest provides habitat specifically for migratory songbirds and native wildlife.

We will adjourn the meeting following the guest program.

For more information about the meeting email mangrovechapter@fnps.org

POTS!!! We need 1-gallon plant pots for growing Plant Native Day plants!
Save your pots and bring them to the Chapter meeting on December 10!

Chapter Plant of the Month - Tropical Sage

For many native plant people red or scarlet tropical sage (*Salvia coccinea*) is one of their first native wildflowers. I got mine at a plant trade several years ago. I reluctantly took this unfamiliar plant from its gifter who loved its constant flowers. In my hands there were no blooms just a short stalk of attractive leaves that looked like mint. Sage, was it edible? No, but pollinators love it I was told; it immediately grew and bloomed. I gasped at the beauty and how I nearly turned the plant down. I wished for more

I soon got my wish as volunteers surrounded the mother plant. I let my sage go wild reseeding wherever the wind carries it. The red caught my eye among the green of my existing native shrubs. I was so excited to have the burst of color! Adding a light pink tropical sage, I learned that there is also a white tropical sage, a mutation in the scarlet sage resulting in the absence of color. The white and red sages have bred leading to shades of pink. Over the years my sages have massed together, a striking sight, bumble bees are frequent visitors. My daughter loves to swipe the crisp seeds and sprinkle them around leaving the bare stalks for dragonflies to perch. For me this plant tolerates extreme drought, reseeds generously, and requires virtually NO maintenance. I hope others find as much joy in growing this plant as I have.

-Alicia Irvin



From left: Red and pink flowers mixed; tropical



sage volunteers add pops of red to Alicia's landscape; a patch of tropical sage.

2024-2025 Native Plant Grants Available

To assist those within the Mangrove Chapter FNPS area (South Venice to Punta Gorda to Englewood), our Annual Landscape Grant has been changed a bit to better accommodate those affected by the storms. In most years, we have provided grants to PUBLIC properties, but, this year (2024-2025), we will provide up to \$100 in grant funding for PRIVATE landscapes.

Applications are accepted November 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025. Projects need to be completed by September 30, 2025. Complete details and applications can be found at: <https://mangrove.fnpschapters.org/outreach/grants/>

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter

All our events are free to attend. Please, no dogs, smoking, or vaping.

Friday, December 6, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and member Dr. Mary Davis for a walk at the Oscar Scherer State Park, 1843 S. Tamiami Trail, Osprey. Mary will tell us how local ecosystems are managed for the endangered Florida Scrub Jay and other endemic species. Meet at the Nature Center.

Saturday, December 7, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join Dr. Bill Dunson from the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Lemon Bay Conservancy for a nature walk at Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve. This walk will focus on saltwater ecology and the effect of saline waters on animals and plants that is especially pertinent since hurricane Milton spread salt water as a tidal surge and aerosols, which have had major ecological effects. We will look for bioindicators of damage from salt and discuss the long-range implications for management of the preserve.

Sunday, December 8, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Feathers and Flippers Sculptures Opening, 240 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. Visit educational tables sponsored by the Mangrove Chapter and other environmental partners, the Coastal Wildlife Education Garden, and the Artist Colony's Outdoor Gallery. Ribbon cutting for the Feathers and Flippers sculptures takes place at noon.

Tuesday, December 10, 1:00 PM. The Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society invites you to join us to learn more about the “The Success of the Venice Urban Forest” at Lemon Bay Environmental Center, 570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood, presented by guest speaker, Greg Vine. BYOPicnic social at 12:15pm.

Thursday, December 12, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join Dr. Bill Dunson from the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society for a nature walk at the South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve, north entrance on Kenisco Rd. One of the more obscure but interesting local natural areas in the Sarasota/Charlotte County area, this preserve is roughly broken up into three main areas. The northern-most area is entered at 5472 Kenisco Rd (Venice) near the intersection with Euclid Rd. We will hike about 1.5 miles through scrubby flatwoods, and pass brackish marshes, salt flats, and see Lemon Bay.

Monday, December 16, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and UF/IFAS Sarasota Extension Service for a guided walk by Dr. Mary Davis at the Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center, 570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood. We will learn more about our amazing and unique Florida ecosystems as we explore the transition from coastal mangroves to upland scrub.

Saturday, December 21, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join Dr. Bill Dunson from the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Lemon Bay Conservancy for a nature walk at Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve to explore the following questions. What are native plants and why are they important to habitat restoration? This is not actually a simple question to answer for two reasons- 1. Defining native vs non-native is not a black and white matter, and 2. Assuming you recognize the advantages of using some non-natives as sources of flowers, fruit and foliage, what criteria are acceptable to use some non-natives in our landscapes?

Wednesday January 1, 2025, 9:00-11:00 AM. Join Dr. Bill Dunson from the Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Lemon Bay Conservancy for a New Years morning nature walk on Manasota Key Beach. We will park in a private yard on the bayside and walk along the beach to observe the progress of on-going beach restoration after Hurricane Milton. We will identify plants and animals seen and enjoy the beautiful Gulf beach. We will debate various scenarios for the future of the island ecology and long-term human habitation. This event is free, and all are welcome. but reservations are required with a limit of 20 people. Carpooling is strongly advised. Contact Bill at wdunson@comcast.net to be placed on the list. Directions to the parking area will be provided.

For more information, contact mangrovechapter@fnps.org



A successful Alligator Creek Fest!

Membership Chair Gail Brynildsen talks with the public at the November 23 Alligator Creek Fest while Chapter Treasurer Alicia Irvin looks on. Come see us at Feathers and Flippers in downtown Englewood on Sunday, December 8!

Monthly Plant Survey - get involved!

Each month, the Mangrove Chapter of FNPS with Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) and Charlotte County conducts plant surveys at **Cedar Point Environmental Park** in Englewood, FL. These surveys record both blooming and seeding plant species along designated trails. These data provide land managers and educational professionals with information for climate-related projects and other important issues. Plus, it is a fun and educational morning learning new plant species and meeting new people with similar interests! Volunteers are always needed for the scheduled survey dates:

December 17 and 18 (Tuesday and Wednesday)

Please contact Barb Seibel at leftyb3@comcast.net

The Chapter welcomes new people (membership in the Chapter is nice but not necessary) to help with these surveys.

Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2300 Placida Road, Englewood, FL.

We will meet from 9:00 AM to approximately 11:00 AM. Wear comfortable shoes that can get wet, and bring sunscreen and bug spray, as needed. We look forward to meeting each of you.

Plant Native Day - March 1, 2025

SAVE THE DATE! Plant Native Day will be held March 1 at Lemon Bay Park, Englewood, from 9:00 am until noon. There will be partner exhibits, guided walks, a guest speaker, and plant sale. We hope to see you there!



Cordgrass, coral bean,
and beauty berry



Tropical sage and porterweed



Muhly grass, bee blossom,
and frogfruit

Want to get involved? We need volunteers to make this event a success. Email us to sign up.

Do you have plants to donate? Contact us to learn about how you can grow and donate homegrown plants to the Mangrove Chapter.

Where to Buy Native Plants

Mangrove Chapter Members 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.

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/>

Sweet Bay Nursery, 10824 Erie Rd, Parrish, FL 34219
<https://sweetbaynursery.com/>

[Mangrove Chapter Facebook page](#)

Remember FNPS in your end-of-year giving

You can champion Florida's native plants and their habitats by donating to the FNPS Annual Fund Campaign at the button below:

[Donate to FNPS!](#)

Organizations of Nature Related Friends

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

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

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

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

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

ECOSWF (Environmental Confederation of SW Florida) <https://www.ecoswf.org/>

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

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.

Mangrove Board of Directors & Coordinator Positions

President; Newsletter – Ava Lasseter, PhD MangroveAva@gmail.com
Secretary – Kristin Hoffschmidt
Treasurer – Alicia Irvin
Chapter Representative – Laura Soule
Membership – Gail Brynildsen
Education and Outreach; Grants – Bobbi Rodgers
Publicity and Field Trips – Laurie Via
Greeter – Joan McGowan
Conservation and Policy – Linda “Willie” Wilson

Coordinator Positions (Non-board members)

Programs Coordinator – Renee LePere
Social Media Coordinator – Anne Risberg
Data Assistant – Sean McMillan

To reach us, email mangrovechapter@fnps.org



[Visit our website](#)

Mangrove Chapter Florida Native Plant Society | P.O. Box 1153 | Englewood, FL 34224-1153
US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!