

May 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

May is Gardening for Wildlife month. My guess is that not many of you think about wildlife when you plan your garden. You might think about birds and butterflies, and maybe bees, but many other wild creatures need homes and food sources too. Florida's native plants and animals, from black bears to butterflies, have coevolved over thousands of years and depend on each other for survival. Not that you want to invite black bears to your yard!

First, think about what you already have in your yard. Do you have an oak, with acorns that can feed squirrels, deer, and raccoons? Maybe you have shrubs that have berries, such as beautyberry, red mulberry, or marlberry. These attract and feed songbirds such as cardinals, catbirds, and mockingbirds, and can also feed small mammals such as mice and raccoons. Would you like to have an owl in your neighborhood? If you supply the owl with a food source, such as mice and lizards, you are more likely to hear hooting at night.

Beyond birds and insects, think about lizards, snakes, frogs, and toads. Water is essential to all living creatures, including reptiles such as gopher tortoises. You can put a shallow bowl at ground level to help rabbits, mice, and amphibians during our long dry season. Keeping a small brush pile of your shrub trimmings and fallen leaves provides a home for the same small creatures, and a hedgerow can provide not only cover but also a corridor between safe havens. Cocoplum makes a thick, attractive hedge, and if you have a lot of room, red cedar will form an impenetrable hedge that birds will feel safe nesting in. A standard bird bath can provide drinks for larger animals, even deer, as



well as for birds. If you add a couple rocks for a landing zone just above water level, you may find bees and butterflies appreciate it.

Do you have a slope on your property that is hard to mow? It might be a perfect place to create a meadow of wildflowers or low shrubs that would not require mowing. Such an area would not only reduce your workload but also provide a haven and safe highway for all kinds of creatures. The shrub level of your property is likely the most important level for animals, more than trees or wildflowers, because it is the layer that wildlife uses most. It's where the birds nest and where small animals find shelter and safety. Keep all these points in mind when you decide to add native plants and expand your garden. Make it their garden, too.

Welcome New Member

Welcome to our chapter, Diane Savicky and Hilda Dillman! We're glad you joined us!

Click here to [Visit our Website](#)

Out and About with Mangrove Chapter

Chapter Meeting

Tuesday, May 9, at 1:00 is our annual BYOP meeting; that is, Bring Your Own Picnic. Pack yourself a picnic lunch and we will have a social meeting so you can catch up with friends while you pick up gardening tips and tricks. Instead of a formal speaker, we will have an informal Q&A, sort of like Show and Tell. Remember that? Bring your favorite hints that make your gardening better or easier and share them with other members. If you have a favorite tool, bring it to show to others. And if you have a question, we'll have our experts on hand to give you an answer. We'll also have the last few leftover plants from Plant Native Day in March. These orphans need a lot of TLC and will be available for modest donations, or maybe even free. Meet at the Environmental Center, Lemon Bay Park, 570 Bay Park Blvd, Englewood.



Friends at the May 2022 BYOP

Guided Walks

Friday, May 12, 9:00-11:00 AM.

Join Mary Davis for a nature walk at Shamrock Park and Nature Center, 3900 Shamrock Drive, Venice. We will explore the scrub habitat of the Florida Scrub Jay and Gopher Tortoise and learn how the ecology of the area has changed with development and the Intracoastal Waterway. Bring your phone with the "Seek" app loaded as a tool to help identify the plants and animals we see. Meet in front of the nature center. Plant List for Shamrock Park: <https://mangrove.fnpschapters.org/field-trips/shamrock-park/>

Picture: Gopher Tortoise at Shamrock Park



Wednesday, May 17, Sunset Stroll, 4:30-

5:30 PM. The **Venice Urban Forest, 308 E Venice Ave, Venice** is the site for our final Sunset Stroll for the season. This narrow strip of restored native habitat runs beside the Legacy Trail and features a butterfly garden and natural shelter for wildlife. The entrance has been changed, so plan to park at the historic depot and meet under the bridge. We will walk across the street to the entrance as a group. This park has no restroom facilities.

Led by Dave and Linda Manley.

Picture: Lantana involucrata at Venice Urban Forest

Library Display

We have no library display this month.

We are on Facebook!!!

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

Mangrove Chapter Facebook page

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

May 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/>

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

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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