

# Newsletter Archive (pre 2017 newsletters)

## NOVEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

President's  
Lois Cantwell

Message:

Just a few words about membership and communications. When you join FNPS, your contact information goes in a data base that our Chapter BOD can access. This serves to update us on who is new, who is dropped, etc. If you have provided a current and correct email address, you are added to a list that I keep in my computer. This address is also added to our newsletter editor's send-out list.

These two lists are not identical and are managed separately. I recently spent a couple of days sorting out my lists, culling out dropped members, and finding several email addresses that had changed or were misspelled. This list is used for communicating "blast" announcements and reminders to our membership that occur between monthly issues of the newsletter.

The newsletter list is cumulative and includes non-members who have subscribed by signing up at meetings and events, as well as any past or present member (who can unsubscribe at any time). These two lists are compared about once a year to reconcile any discrepancies, delivery failures, etc.

I will mention this at our next few meetings for the benefit of those who may not be receiving these communications. If you prefer NOT to receive emails and/or newsletters, send me a note at [birderlois@hotmail.com](mailto:birderlois@hotmail.com).

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Welcome new member Eileen Collins of Englewood

## November

Activities

Nov 4th (Friday): BOD Meeting, Cedar Point Environmental Park, 2:30 PM. Members are always welcome to attend.

Nov 5th (Saturday): Our FNPS State Board of Directors and Council of Chapters has chosen Cedar Point Environmental Park for their meeting site. We will be supplying sandwiches, chips, coffee, iced tea, lemonade and other snacks as nourishment. Time will be set aside for a tour of the grounds and our Chapter-sponsored Demonstration Gardens. If you would like to be on hand to help with parking, meet, greet and serve refreshments, check with Al Squires.

Nov 8th (Tuesday, voting day): Membership Meeting, Lemon Bay Park, 570 Bay Park Blvd, Englewood, FL, 34223. Speaker Program begins at 7:00 PM, preceded by our usual social and business meeting time. Topic is "Raising Monarchs & Other Butterflies". Genny Bedard-Plumb and Rachel Nellis from Peace River Butterfly Society will discuss the general rearing techniques and differences encountered when raising a variety of butterfly species, including the host plants used for each. Chris Parisi may also bring plants from Restless Native Nursery. (TBA)

Nov 19th (Saturday): Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival, sponsored by CHNEP), Charlotte Sports Park, 10 AM-3 PM. Set up time for our booth/displays/plants is 8:30 AM. Festival includes guided walks, wagon rides, exhibits, children's activities and more. Sign up to help out at our next meeting or contact [birderlois@hotmail.com](mailto:birderlois@hotmail.com). We need plants!

Nov 26th (Saturday): Field Trip, Lemon Bay Park, 9 AM, 570 Bay Park Blvd, Englewood, Fl, 34223. More info, check with Denny Girard. (Email address and phone number on our website or in our calendar).

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Signs of Fall Abound - Bill Dunson

Our weather is showing some cool night time temperatures, but frost is still 2-3 weeks away and there is lots of insect activity and still some late bird migration underway. Fall fruits are much in evidence, offering immediate snacks and some long term food supply. One of my favorites is the blue fruit of arrow wood viburnum. They are small enough for many species to eat and we have so many plants that they last into the fall. In contrast, the winterberry hollies in our marshes are very bright red and seem to be a fruit that is not eaten so early as the viburnums. Isn't it interesting that such different colors are both so attractive to birds? Caterpillars are still present in large numbers, many preparing to overwinter as pupae. This rarely seen marsh dagger moth caterpillar was especially interesting since they were present in very large numbers in the open, eating cattails, and their color is quite bright. This would normally indicate that the caterpillars were toxic but I could find no information on this topic. In distinct contrast the caterpillars of snowberry clearwing sphinx moths or hornworms are extremely well camouflaged. They can damage our coral honeysuckles severely, so I move many of them to the exotic Japanese honeysuckles where they do so harm. A few caterpillars fall prey to the very painful assassin or wheel bug which is shown here eating an army worm. You must be careful not to pick up this bug or it may inject you with a painful bite.

Monarchs are still passing through our area and here a beautiful female is finding some nectar on an aster, characteristic of the fall season. The meadowhawk or yellow legged dragonfly is the last dragonfly to emerge in the north, a beautiful "fall color" and a true indicator of the fall season. Bird migration is quickly passing although we are still enjoying some warblers. This Cape May male was spotted feeding on wild grapes near the Blueridge Music Center. During spring migration the same species is very fond of the flowers of sea grapes in our Florida yard. Nearby we spotted a flock of seven wild turkeys which all appeared to be young males or jakes, since their beards were of intermediate length. Some hawks are migrating through and others will remain during the winter. An immature red-tailed hawk was engaging in some amusing aerial dogfights with three ravens; it is here shown upside down as it buzzes one raven below. So fall with all of its beauties is here with a vengeance- there is no stopping the seasons and we would not want to. Enjoy the changing parade of nature and savor each moment.

The Latest on Butterflies - Lois Cantwell

Not only is our topic for the next membership meeting about raising butterflies, there are a couple of other writings about them that I came across recently. Check out the FNPS website home page for an article written by Bill Berthet of the Ixia Chapter. "My Habitat Garden: Attracting Butterflies-Bees-Birds & Other Forms of Life". While he is in Hardiness Zone 9a to the north of us, his description of what he has done in his area has many applications that one can utilize anywhere. And his photos are wonderful!

I received an email in the latter part of September that came in a round-about way. Lee Amos had made an inquiry to Joyce Amsel of [floridanativebutterflies.org](http://floridanativebutterflies.org) regarding the current status of milkweed and monarchs, which is a topic we have been bantering about over the last few seasons. She in turn forwarded that to Marc C. Minno for his take on this subject. He offered quite an opinion that I feel compelled to share. Feel free to digest these thoughts any way you wish. (I do not have information on his affiliation).

From Marc: "There is a lot of misinformation tossed around and very little science being done. A few years ago, the University of Florida started advocating using only native milkweeds in gardens and to quit using Tropical Milkweed. Since UF was saying this, it was printed in newspapers and gardeners suddenly got word to tear all the tropical Milkweed out of their gardens. Due to some backlash, UF then said it was OK to still use it in southern FL. Now there is word to cut back all of the Tropical Milkweed in gardens in the fall during monarch migration."

"These are all bad ideas. Most native milkweeds are very difficult to grow, whereas Tropical Milkweed is so easily propagated. There isn't any native substitute that works well. Tropical Milkweed is a naturalized plant in southern FL. Even if only native milkweeds such as *A. perennis* and *A. incarnata* are used in gardens, the OE problem will still remain because we have a resident population. The host plant doesn't matter for OE transmission. If all the Tropical Milkweed is cut back in the fall, what will the monarchs use? Milkweeds are rare plants in southern FL."

"Lastly, Tropical Milkweed is native to Mexico where millions of migrating monarchs pass through. No one is advocating eradicating Tropical Milkweed from Mexico. So why is it OK in Mexico, but not in Florida? Bottom line is don't pay attention to these crazy ideas. Keep using Tropical Milkweed and Giant Milkweed in your gardens."

Well, that's one person's opinion and an interesting one at that. Anyone else care to chime in?

Enjoy learning about and teaching others about nature? Looking for a fun and educational way to meet like minded people? Consider becoming a volunteer with Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center at Cedar Point Park, 2300 Placida Road in Englewood.

From October through April, volunteers are need as Trail Guides to lead guided nature walks through several local Charlotte County properties. These are usually from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. To start off the new volunteers, there will be a Trail Guide Training session on Wednesday November 16 at 10 AM at Cedar Point Park. Come and learn some plants, animals and interpretive techniques that may help you lead these "walks in the woods". Call 941-475-0769 for information and/or to register.

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Bobbi  
Resource  
Charlotte Harbor Environmental Park  
Cedar Point Environmental Park  
941-475-0769  
Rodgers  
Manager  
Center  
site

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### Echinacea Purpurea (Purple Coneflower)

Purple coneflower is a bright addition to the late summer and fall gardens. It is a perennial plant that grows 3 to 5 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide. It has showy pink to purple long lasting flowers. Echinacea looks well in a mixed wildflower garden and in mass plantings.

The purple coneflower likes sandy well drained soil that is moist to dry and is adaptable to pH. It is not salt tolerant.

It is pollinator friendly and bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds like it. After blooming, birds and other wildlife eat the seeds. The states Echinacea purpurea is especially valuable to native bees. The flowers of Echinacea species are used to make an extremely popular herbal tea, purported to help strengthen the immune system.

You can see it now in a visit to the Cedar Point Environmental Center Demonstration Garden.

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Gail Finney

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### OCTOBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

President's Message  
Lois Cantwell

The calendar says we are now into the fall season, even though the weather in many parts of the country says otherwise. Leaf peeping in some areas may be a bit delayed. Regardless, we are pointing toward our October 11th meeting to kick off the Mangrove Chapter Season. Our guest speaker will be Ralph Mitchell, Charlotte County Extension Director and Horticultural Agent. He will be talking about "Beneficial Organisms in the Yard". Ralph has been involved in Agriculture, Resource Technology, volunteering in the Peace Corps, and working in Cooperative Extension Services over the past 35 years. He lives in Port Charlotte and his other interests include gardening, natural history and archaeology. If you are in Florida on October 11th, please make an effort to attend our first meeting.

An invitation to attend our season's programs has been extended to the Lemon Bay Garden Club and the Englewood Men's Garden Club. A list of our guest speaker topics and meeting dates has been sent to the LBGC president (who is our own MCNPS member, Linda Schilke) to share with these groups. An email has also gone out to Chris Parisi of Restless Natives Nursery. He had shown an interest in bringing his native nursery plants to some of our meetings this season. If he decides to attend, I will send out a broadcast email to our members so we can place orders in advance. (His "Milkweeds & Monarchs" presentation back in March overflowed our meeting room, if you recall).

## Native Plant Month

Tuesday, September 27, 2016, Charlotte County Commissioners will issue their "October is Florida Native Plant Month" proclamation. Please be at the Commission Chambers located in the Charlotte County Admin. Bldg. on Murdock Way, by 8:45 A.M. if you are planning to attend. We hope to have a large turnout.

The 2016-2017 Mangrove Chapter Calendar for this year is now available at Cedar Point and I will have copies at our October meeting.

Chapter  
October

Activities

Lois Cantwell

Oct 7: Board of Directors Meeting, 2:30 PM, Cedar Point Environmental Park. All members welcome to attend.

Oct 11: Membership Meeting, 7:00 PM, "Beneficial Organisms in the Yard", Ralph Mitchell. Preceded by social time and business meeting between 6:15-7:00 PM.

Oct 16: Myakka State Forest 30th Anniversary Celebration. We may have a booth and lead a walk. Details to follow.

Oct ??: Pond Work Day: Date and time to be announced. Two Bald Cypress have been purchased for planting.

Oct 20: Native Plant & Pollinator Garden Grand Opening and Lunch, Venice Golf and Country Club, 11:30 AM. Members Kate Borduas (941-497-2803) and Gail Finney (913-424-3027) will attend. Anyone interested or for more details, call Kate or Gail.

Oct 21: Hazeltine Nursery Fall Festival. Al Squires will do a presentation. Anyone interested in assisting, call 941-769-3633.

Oct 29: Field Trip. Little Manatee River State Park, 215 Lightfoot Road, Wimauma, FL, 33598. For directions, check with Al or Denny.

Please Note: October is designated as Florida Native Plant Month! Please promote it as much as possible.

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From Lois Cantwell

## New Tools for Volunteers (Sabal Minor, July-August 2016)

This article may not have shown up on your radar screen this summer, or perhaps you sort of skimmed it or skipped it altogether, thinking it may not apply to you. Well, it's real and we are tasked by FNPS with capturing our volunteer work hours. I had made a feeble attempt to design a reporting mechanism for this last spring, but could not successfully implement it. I will be working on this new process when I return to FL this fall. FNPS is providing a generic spreadsheet to be used in the data collection process, which can be used on either an individual or group reporting basis. Each chapter can determine when, how, and who will do the reporting. As soon as we get a game plan together, it will be shared with the membership. Stay tuned for more information. (Not being a high-tech computer user, I will have to learn how to use Excel in order to implement this, no laughing).

From the FNPS Website

We are in the heart of butterfly season. Butterflies need plants that provide both larval food and nectar. This may be especially important in areas that were recently sprayed for mosquitos, as many herbicides are not specific to mosquitos

and broadly kill butterflies and pollinators. By visiting the FNPS website section on Native Plants for Your Area, you can customize a plant list for your location (i.e. Charlotte or Sarasota Counties). This tool can also be used to find information on specific plants by entering the common or scientific name.

"Tales of Old Florida" (published 1987)

This is a collection of original articles and stories of the old Florida, circa 1886-1910, of hunters and Indians, the development of the sportsman's paradise, the vast canvas of nature prior to the coming of the condominium. Over 130 years ago, Florida was a wilderness of swamp and beach, dense forest and abundant wild game. Undiscovered, except for a few pioneer sportsmen and hearty farmers and ranchers, the state was still a frontier. There were 40 articles listed in the table of contents, mostly reports by sportsmen relating their adventures during hunting, fishing or other wild game pursuits. I had no interest in reading about the demise of tarpon, turtles, turkeys, deer, or birds, so I skipped over most of those.

One article that took my interest was "Our Florida Garden" by E. P. Powell, (1910). Like many northerners of the time, he bought 10 acres in Central Florida sight unseen. The property was covered at each end with 60-100 foot pines, the open areas consisting of "tall, rank, coarse grass, seven or eight feet high". Many varieties of oaks, as well as persimmons were understory to the pines. They grubbed out most of the oak species and grafted Japanese varieties onto the persimmons. (Dare I read on at this point?)

They pulled the moss from the smaller trees. "This moss was one of the curious features of the landscape when it hangs down in long tresses from the tall pines. It does away with the necessity for weather vanes, as it will tell you precisely which way the wind blows." (Interesting observation. Never thought of Spanish moss as a monitor of wind direction). They prepared a home site overlooking Lake Lucy and intended to clean it up and make it into a lawn "something like what we have in the North". (OMG!)

At that point they found that northern varieties of grass would not thrive there. Coincidentally, it was the time of year that wild flowers were coming into bloom. "By mid April I had made up my mind that I would rather have this wild flower garden than any lawn. Wonderful and beautiful, they make a substitute far beyond my conception of wild flowers". (Yes, they got it!) Just wishing that a greater majority of folks coming to FL over the last 100 years would have subscribed to the same philosophy!

What is Blooming in the Garden

BeautyBerry (*Callicarpa americana*)

Beautyberry is a long lived perennial shrub that grows to be from 4 to 8 feet tall and 3 to 6 feet wide. It can be used as a hedge or a specimen plant.

Beautyberry is a deciduous shrub noted for its brightly colored, tightly clustered berries that remain on the bush into winter. Beautyberry has attractive small, lavender-pink, lilac-like flowers in the spring. In the Fall beautyberry has vivid white or magenta berries. The berries are edible but not the most preferred by the birds so often the berries remain on the plant through the winter. The foliage will turn yellow for a fall.

The berries make a tasty jelly. Al Squires makes the jelly and often brings some to the monthly meetings for the raffle. Although it is hurricane wind resistant it is not salt tolerant. Beautyberry likes sun to partial shade, preferring a light shade. The plant likes a slightly acid to neutral sandy or loamy soil. It also likes a moist to dry environment. Attracts various pollinator including butterflies. Many bird species consume the showy fruit.

The Cedar Point Demonstration Garden has both a white and a purple specimen. You can see them now in a visit to the Cedar Point Environmental Center Demonstration Garden.

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Gail Finney

What's  
Advance

Reminder

Happening?  
For

Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival

As usual, we will have a booth at the annual Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival on November 19th. This means that we will need people to help with setting up, arranging plants, manning the booth, handing out literature, answering questions and general schmoozing of visitors.

Please contribute your home-grown plants to the cause! If you don't have pots, check our supply at the Demonstration Garden, or simply dig up what you can, keep the roots moist in a grocery bag, coffee can, beverage cup, small bucket, etc., and drop them off with the Garden Keepers at the garden at Cedar Point, Monday mornings between 9 and 11 AM. We will get them potted and labeled. Plants can also be brought directly to the event. Easy-peasy, no excuses. A sign-up sheet for helpers will be circulated at the November 8th Membership meeting, or simply call or email any of the BOD members listed on the 2016-2017 Calendar.

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#### News Article

POLK COUNTY, Fla. (WFLA) - A massive sinkhole on top of a Mosaic gypsum stack near Mulberry allowed millions of gallons of contaminated water to flow into the Floridan Aquifer.

The sinkhole opened up almost three weeks ago. Since then, about 215 million gallons of contaminated water have drained into the aquifer. The sinkhole is about 40 feet across. Its depth is unknown.

The water is contaminated with phosphoric acid and is slightly radioactive. Not all of it is being caught by pumps.

You wouldn't want to drink it, but so far, Mosaic engineers don't believe the water is making it to private wells.

Near the gypsum stack, Mosaic has monitoring wells. "We're confident that the wells we started up are capturing that water pulling it back," Jellersn said.

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#### CHEC

Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and the Charlotte County Natural Resource Department will be conducting the following free programs in October 2016. All programs can be found at [www.ChecFlorida.org](http://www.ChecFlorida.org)

**Saturday October 8** Join Greg Brezicki on a guided walk through the old growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre Oyster Creek/Ann Dever Regional Park in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance.

**Sunday October 16** Join Greg Brezicki on a guided walk through the old growth pine flatwoods and mangrove fringe of 125-acre Oyster Creek/Ann Dever Regional Park in Englewood. Meet at the San Casa entrance.

**Tuesday October 18** Join John Phillips on a guided walk through Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park, a 487-acre Charlotte County property of mature pines, dry prairie, marsh wetlands and freshwater ponds. Its location adjourning state lands make it an important wildlife corridor. Meet at the parking lot on US 41 at 8:30 am.

Unless noted, all walks begin at 9:00 AM. For directions or further information, call Cedar Point Environmental Park at 941-475-0769.

#### SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

##### Message from the President

The mere mention of September evokes all sorts of thoughts and phrases related to the advent of fall. Labor Day celebrations, back-to-school sales, college football, cooler nights and shorter days among others. It also brings us a month closer to a new

Mangrove Chapter season. Our website has been updated to reflect our meetings and speaker programs, field trips, and special events for 2016-2017. You can go directly to [mangrove.fnpschapters.org](http://mangrove.fnpschapters.org), or to [fnps.org](http://fnps.org), click on "Chapters", scroll down to Mangrove Chapter where our website is listed and click on that. While you are "in the neighborhood", surf back to the FNPS Home Page where there are a few articles on the latest Blog: "Landscaping and Mosquitos" should be of interest, plus "Keeping a Nature Journal". Also, "My Quest for Milkweeds", by Janet Bowers of the Sun Coast Chapter has wonderful descriptions and photos.

Planning to buy one or more reference books about "the natives" this season? Click on "Resources" on the FNPS home page, then on "Books". Review the array of recommended books among 6 categories about native plants and related topics. Click on a book image to buy from Amazon and FNPS will receive a supporting donation from them. By the way, any of your old reference books (that you are willing to part with) can be contributed to our small "library" housed at Cedar Point Environmental Park. Visitors and local residents can learn from them!

Welcome New Members

Patrick & Elizabeth Bockheim, North Port  
Thomas Hill, Port Charlotte

### Second Annual Florida Native Plant Month Announcement

The Charlotte County Board of Commissioners will present the 2016 Florida Native Plant Month proclamation on September 27th at 9 AM at the Murdock Administration Building, designating October as the official native plant month. If you are back in town by then, you are welcome to attend and represent our Mangrove Chapter membership.

### Video about Underutilized Native Shrubs

Tom Becker, of the Charlotte County Extension Service thought we might enjoy watching this short video, produced by the Collier County Extension and Chad Washburn at Naples Botanic Gardens. Their choices of native shrubs would be relevant for Charlotte County landscapes in coastal areas. To learn about "Underutilized (Seldom Used) Native Shrubs", go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndY8KK7cXbl> (published 7/28/2016)  
Plants they slow include: Bahama Wild Coffee, Horizontal Coccoplum, Golden creeper, Fiddlewood, Spanish Stopper, Seven Year Apple, and Indigoberry.

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### What's Blooming in the Garden - Gail Finney

#### Dotted Horsemint (*Monarda punctata*)

*Monarda punctata* goes by several names, Bee Balm, Spotted Horse Mint, and Dotted Horsemint to name a few. Bees, (honeybees, bumblebees, miner bees, plasterer bees), swallowtail butterfly as well as the endangered *Lycaenides melissa samuelis* (Karner Blue, and hummingbirds are attracted to the pale lavender flowers that appear in late summer and early fall in Florida. It will grow from two to five feet tall. The monarda at Cedar Point is in partial shade and grows to about 2-2 1/2 feet, in sunny areas it will be much taller, up to five feet. It has a long bloom period and may be year round in Florida. *Monarda* likes sandy soil and is salt tolerant. *Monarda* tends to grow in small colonies near each other and can easily get out of control. It is propagated by seed, cuttings and some have dug it up and replanted with success.

Horsemint makes a nice, intentionally weak tea. The Indians used it to treat colds, nasal congestion, headaches, nausea and stomach cramps. Externally it's an antiseptic, internally, in large amounts, the plant can be fatal. So, as I said it makes a nice, intentionally weak, tea.

You can see it now in a visit to the Cedar Point Environmental Center Demonstration Garden.

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Charlotte October Florida	County	Proclamation Native	on will	Tuesday Plant	September	27. be Month.
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Members are invited to come to the Charlotte County Board of Commissioners meeting on September 27th, at 8:40 am to help accept the proclamation.

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Wildflower Habitat Restoration Update (as of August 2016)

Lemon Bay Conservancy (LBC) began its \$1.17 million habitat restoration project at Wildflower Preserve this past June in the upland areas, clearing invasive vegetation in over 40 acres, so far. This is the initial phase (which continues through the summer) of an 18-month project that will also include improving the existing wetlands, adding new fresh water and estuarine wetland areas, and planting native trees and shrubs. The second phase of the project work, the wetlands modifications and expansion, is currently projected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2016, which is right around the corner. Native planting work should begin by the summer of 2017.

You can follow the restoration progress on the LBC website at [www.lemonbayconservancy.org](http://www.lemonbayconservancy.org) and on their Facebook page. An article and photos are posted on their website at <http://lemonbayconservancy.org/wildflower-preserve-invasive-removal-progress/> Please note that for safety reasons, Wildflower Preserve trails and land areas are closed while work is underway and until such time as inspections show that the areas are again safe for visitors.

Charlotte County UF/IFAS Extension Office Update (From Thomas Becker via email)

The site at 25550 Harbor View Road in Port Charlotte has recently installed native plants in a bed demonstrating Florida-Friendly Landscaping, using the best natives for both sun and shade. It is in their entrance courtyard which has a Laurel Oak canopy. Plants include: Saw Palmetto, Shiny Wild Coffee, Dwarf Wild Coffee, Soft Leaved Wild Coffee, two types of Beautyberry, Golden Creeper, Tarflower and Jacquemontia. They also have a demonstration garden area that shows some good examples of native trees, butterfly plants and native shrubs/trees/vines like Dahoon Holly, Coontie, Fiddlewood, Coral Honeysuckle, Carolina Jessamine, Privet Cassia, Sugarberry and many others. Sounds like a garden tour destination to me! (Lois here).

Another tour suggestion (from Tom): He and the other Master Gardeners do walking tours called "Parks that Teach" at Bayshore Live Oak Park in Charlotte Harbor. If some from our group are interested, they concentrate on describing the mostly native coastal plants in the park. This might give us some insight as to how they teach the general public about native plants--and we might even learn something(?)

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Guided Walk  
Hathaway Park, Punta Gorda on July 30th. 2016. Nine people took part on a very hot and humid Saturday morning.

Natural Signs of Middle to Late Summer

Article from Bill Dunson  
It is possible to judge the approximate time of year at a certain location by looking at what is flowering and what the animals are doing. The Turk's cap lily which has a spectacular flower is found predominantly along riparian zones of creeks in late July and early August. A much more common flower in our area is the beautiful ironweed, which flourishes in damp meadows and seems to be avoided by herbivores such as cows. It is a favorite nectar source of many butterflies and a tiger swallowtail is shown here. Another "weed" that graces our meadow edges is the green headed coneflower (Rudbeckia) that attracts many bumblebees and is quite striking when present in large groups. These species and others produce flowers of surpassing beauty completely without human intervention, except for us to leave them alone. A flower that appears in late July through middle August, the virgin's bower, a type of Clematis, has white flowers that are extremely attractive to bees and wasps. But the apparent bee here is actually a Tachinid fly (Trichopoda) which mimics bees as a protection against predators. The "Field Guide to Insects of North America" by Eaton and Kaufman (pages 308-309) describes this remarkable fly which parasitizes leaf, squash and stink bugs. So despite the fact that this native vine is rather invasive, it provides some great opportunities to watch insects.

During summer I am always watching for dragonflies at our ponds and on Aug. 16 was fortunate to photograph a pair of common green darners in the "wheel" position. The male (blue abdomen) first places his sperm in the accessory genitalia on the second abdominal segment. He then grasps a female by her head with the tip of his abdomen, and she curls the tip of her abdomen up to the accessory genitalia of the male, resulting in this wheel configuration. The complexity of this and other aspects of reproduction in such primitive insects always impresses me. Although most bird breeding is finished, there is still a great deal of avian activity. We are always excited to see a solitary sandpiper pass through on its annual migration from its breeding grounds in the wetlands of boreal forests in Canada to Central and South America. This bird was seen Aug. 3, 2016, and in one previous fall migration in 2014 a solitary was seen on Aug. 27. The value of even small "islands" in

ponds is shown here as the sandpiper likes to perch on some rocks in our yard pond. Although bald eagles may be seen any time of year, this bird seen July 29 along the New River in silhouette against a bright sky is apparently a juvenile, possibly about five months old. It is unclear whether it is a local eagle from a nest nearby or migrating from Florida. The young age (designated Basic 1) of the eagle is known since the ends of the secondary feathers on the back of the wings are pointed and all the same length. In the second year these feathers will be gradually molted, leading to a "saw toothed" edge, and eventually and show a smoother edge. So to identify the age of an eagle, take a photo of the extended wings from underneath. Goldfinches eating thistle seeds are a clear sign of late summer. This time of year our willow flycatchers become quiet and are often seen feeding around the edges of pastures. Grasshopper sparrows prefer our neighbor's pastures and are one of the few bird species to benefit from the harsh effects of cattle grazing. So enjoy the presence and actions of our late summer biota. Every season has its joys and it is amusing to match our predictions of seasonal changes with the actual observations.

Bill Dunson  
Galax, VA and Englewood, FL  
<http://lemonbayconservancy.org/news-blog/nature-notes-by-bill-dunson/>

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Board of Directors Meeting - September 2, 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members are Welcome to attend.

## AUGUST 2016 NEWSLETTER

President's Message: Lois Cantwell

Getting into the dog days of summer and the heat is on. Spending a little more time indoors as a result, I picked up a book I had read about 8 years ago. At that time, I was just getting involved with our Mangrove Chapter. The book was an epic portrayal of three generations of a family that pioneered old Florida, from dirt-poor Crackers to wealthy real estate tycoons. Transcending the 100+ years of "progress" from 1863 to 1968, the earliest pioneers barely survive a hostile environment, living off of available wildlife and edible plants. Finally, they are able to start a small cattle ranch, growing that into a profitable business.

At the end of the story, the last remaining member of the clan, who got wealthy in the real estate business, decries the exploitation of the land by saying that if he "could rip out the concrete and put back the woods", he would do so. "Progress isn't reversible. What's done is done forever". Scattered throughout the book were descriptions of the forests, hammocks, swamps, vast prairies and many of the native trees and shrubs. To envision what the state of Florida looked like 150 years ago, especially the river of grass that the Seminoles called "Pay-Hay-Okee", is nothing short of inspirational. "A Land Remembered", by Patrick D. Smith should be a must-read for anyone taking up residence in "La Florida". Meanwhile, as FNPS members and environmentally responsible people, we must continue to encourage the preservation and conservation of native plants, as well as their natural habitats.

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Conversation with an Anole - Lois Cantwell  
Coming eye to eye with an anole just hanging around on the side of the house is a fairly common occurrence. If you don't make any sudden moves, it may stick around for a bit. At that point I start a quiet "hi there, how are you doing" conversation (one-sided, of course), and I often get their attention, as they seem to be curious creatures, albeit a bit skittish.

Brown Anole, *Anolis sagrei*, 7 in. long, slender; short, pointed. Changes from light to dark brown. Male back has dark stripe, rows of yellow dots, pale ridge from nape to top of tail; yellow or reddish-orange throat fan with white edge (shows as white streak when not extended). Female back has yellow stripe. Habitat: below trees, shrubs. Activity: by day. Range: Tampa Bay and Palm Beach south

One peers at me and cocks its head like it understands what I am saying. Makes you wonder if there is some intelligence behind those slanting eyes. They are certainly opportunists, smart enough to stay nearby while I am digging in the garden. A little roach suddenly appears from under the leaf litter and an observant anole appears in a flash to snatch the snack. It returns to its perch and waits patiently for another morsel.

Green Anole, *Anolis carolinensis*, 7 in. long, slender; snout long, wedge-shaped; change color in response to light, temperature, emotions; brown or brown and green, occasionally spotted. This species: body, head, sides green; white below. Male has pink throat fan. Toes padded; tail long, thin. Habitat: trees, shrubs, vines, fences, walls. Activity: by day

I've been known to continue the conversation at that point until someone comes along and asks me who I'm talking to. Of course, I am partial to the native anoles that I only see on a rare occasion in my yard. I consider those bright green visitors to be in the "lucky charm" or "good omen" category. No matter what color, the anoles are a natural insect control and welcome in my garden.

Featured Flower: Liatris - Lois Cantwell  
Liatris or Gayfeathers bear tall, wand-like, showy spikes of flowers that have a fuzzy or feathery texture in pinkish purple hues. The button-like flower heads of disk florets open from the top down, lending the name "Blazing Star" to these easy-to-grow plants that are native North American wildflowers. Liking full sun and blooming from summer to early fall, various species grow in hardiness zones 3-9. They are popular with birds (seeds), butterflies, and bees. The plants grow from corms or thick tuberous roots and have grass-like leaves at the base and up the stems. Most *Liatris* species prefer well-drained soil, with the exception of *L. spicata* that will do well in evenly moist soil. Otherwise, they will succumb to crown rot. Established plants are quite drought tolerant. Deadheading is optional, as it doesn't encourage re-bloom, and should be avoided until well after the winter season so the birds can relish the seeds. Bill and Margaret have three pollinator fields at their farm in Galax, VA. They were planted in 2006, 2009, and 2012. The last one, which is in the photo, is now 4 years old and in it's prime. The Dunson's invited a local group to tour these fields on July 14th so they could see how they look and learn how they can be planted. What a beautiful pollinator-friendly habitat!! They are truly outstanding in their field!

Lois Cantwell: What's Blooming in the Garden - Gail Finney

The vanilla plant (*Carphephorus odoratissimus*)

Late summer is usually given as the bloom time for this perennial plant, with some publications stating Sept through November as the bloom time. The Vanilla plant at the Cedar Point Demonstration Garden has other ideas and is in bloom now. The small purple flower heads are on many short stalks attached to a main stem. The flower stalks will be from 2-3 feet up to 6 feet tall.

It is not a showy plant and will do best in a home garden planted in small groups at the back of the garden. The vanilla plant will do well in full sun to partial shade in reasonably moist area with 1/2 day of sun. It should not dry out in the summer months. It is hardy once established and will be a long lived perennial.

Why do you want it in your garden?

As the leaves wilt they give off a vanilla like fragrance and it attracts butterflies and other pollinators.

You can see it now in a visit to the Cedar Point Environmental Center Demonstration Garden.

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Schedule of Summer Walks - Native Plant Walks

August 27, 2016, 9 AM, Tippecanoe II Preserve, 16259 Joppa Ave, Port Charlotte, FL Join the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a slow stroll at Tippecanoe II to identify and learn about native plants and flowers. DIRECTIONS: From Rt 776 in Murdock, turn west onto Joppa Ave & follow it to the end. Call Denny Girard at 941-474-1492, or email [dennyg29@msn.com](mailto:dennyg29@msn.com). Visit: <http://www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org>. Free & open to all.

September 24, 2016, 9 AM, Alligator Creek Environmental Park, 10941 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda, FL Join the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a slow stroll at Alligator Creek to identify and learn about native plants and flowers. DIRECTIONS: From Rt 41 south of Punta Gorda, turn right onto Burnt Store Road. The park is on the right in 1.2 miles. Call Denny Girard at 941-474-1492, or email [dennyg29@msn.com](mailto:dennyg29@msn.com). Visit: <http://www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org>. Free & open to all.

Board of Directors Meeting - August 5, 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend.



John and Christine Holyland

HOW TO BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR  
GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Submitted by John Holyland

At the 36th FNPS Conference in Daytona Beach I attended a talk given by Gene Kelly, our Chairman of the Policy and Legislation Committee and Sue Mullins, our lobbyist in Tallahassee.

They want to encourage us to contact our legislators on issues involving native plants and offered this advice.

As a 501(c)3 with a budget less than \$5 million we are required to spend less than 20% on lobbying. This does not include contacting non-elected officials or entities such as DEP etc. and individual members efforts are, of course, free.

We are encouraged to always be respectful and never insulting no matter how passionately we may feel. Our purpose should be stated in the subject line of the e-mail e.g. " Please vote NO on Bill#...." Use a large font and avoid complicated language. Do not say that you are with FNPS. If you identify in this way it's possible that all FNPS contacts will be considered as one vote. Tell them that you are a registered voter in their district and that you are concerned and why.

Be aware that bills sometimes come to vote abruptly with short notice. There may be a very short window of opportunity for your views to be counted.

To learn who your representatives are and how to reach them go to:-

[www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov)

[www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find](http://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find)

If you want FNPS to advise you of upcoming issues go to:-

[www.fnps.org/news/alerts](http://www.fnps.org/news/alerts)

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## ENCHANTED FOREST SANCTUARY

Christine Holyland

This 363 acres near Titusville was the 1st property purchased by Brevard county Environmentally Endangered Lands Program. It preserves the diversity of 5 basic habitats found in the county. Temperate and subtropical species grow together in this area.

We were guided by Paul Schmalzer, Plant ecologist, NASA Kennedy Space Center, and Jay S. Barnhard M.D. Fungus specialist, up a coquina stone ridge to look down on the remains of the Ellis Canal that was never completed, a peek into the county's unique history. Along the edge of the extensive scrub area on the ridge, burned only 2 months ago, we found Red Bay with blades deformed by white insect galls, Sand Live Oak, Tough Buckthorn, Winged Sumac, Sand Hickory with red scabs on the bud, Sand Pine, Wild Lime with its winged stems, and many other plants. In the scrub area these and many other plants were just beginning to take hold. We identified Wild Olive, two different sedges, a lot of Tread Softly, Indian Plantain, and False Indigo.

In the mesic hammock area we saw Hercules Club, Calusa and Muscadine grape, Oaks, and Jack-in-the- Pulpit, Red Maple, Marlberry, Dahoon Holly, and Live oaks. We saw Pop Ash, Elm, Wild Citrus, Sugarberry and many mushrooms and ferns in the Hydric Hammock area.

This was a very diverse walk with many trees, shrubs and wildflowers to discover and easy walking trails and boardwalks.

Board of Directors Meeting - July 1, 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend

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## JUNE 2016 NEWSLETTER

### President's Message:

I would like to salute our Immediate Past-President, Al Squires, for his dedication and selfless service to our Chapter. He has been a fixture in our leadership for more than a decade, serving on our Executive Committee 5 of the last 10 years, our Chapter Representative since 2009, and leading field trips for as many years as one can remember. Beyond that, he designed and built our tri-fold display board, which he sets up at meetings, events and festivals. He built and installed our permanent sign at the Demonstration Garden at Cedar Point Environmental park. Many other "behind the scenes" type things get done that most of our members aren't even aware of. THANK YOU, Al, for all that you do for Mangrove Chapter!

Lois Cantwell, President-elect

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### Welcome New Members:

Margie Parker and Neil Sheehan

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### April 30th Field Trip to Charlotte Harbor Preserve, Rotonda

This was the last chapter-sponsored field trip that I attended before heading north for the summer. We had a super turnout for this excursion, so many that we broke into two groups. Al Squires led one and Dave Clayton served as guide for the second group. We identified many plants typical of the pine flatwoods and wet area habitats. I couldn't help photographing the largest clump of Black Root I had ever seen, plus a lovely clump of Yellow Thimbles.

One plant we encountered had our group stumped as to what it was. Many photos were taken and speculations were all over the map. We settled on a "lets-ask-Al" consensus. This mystery plant proved to be False Foxglove and it serves as an example of how some plants can be described differently in separate reference books. Denny and Al prefer to go on-line and check the Plant Atlas. I resorted to identifying this "purple flower" using two reference books that sort by color. Even though the respective descriptions were initially confusing, we did reach the same conclusions as to its identity.

Below are the descriptions that were gleaned from 2 different wildflower reference books:

Purple False Foxglove, *Agalinis purpurea*

Synonym: *Gerardia purpurea*

Family: Orobanchaceae (broomrape)

Description: Stems to 3 ft. tall or more, wiry, branched above. Leaves mostly opposite, narrow, rough above to the touch. Flowers bell-shaped, pubescent, rose purple. Yellow lines and purple dots inside throats. Calyces and corollas each are five-lobed. Stamens 4. Capsules globose, about 1/4 in. long.

Flowering time: Summer-fall

Habitat: Wet prairies and ruderal areas.

Range: Nearly throughout

Walter Kingsley Taylor, Florida Wildflowers: A Comprehensive Guide, 2013, page 386

Smooth Gerardia, *Agalinis purpurea*

Family: Scrophulariaceae (Figwort or Snapdragon)

Habit: Herbaceous annual, 0.4-1.2 m tall. Stems many-branched, smooth or only slightly rough.

Leaves: Opposite; stalkless; blades narrow, often curled, 2-4 cm long, 1-4 mm wide, often sandpapery on upper surface.

Inflorescences: Solitary, short-stalked flowers in leaf axils at stem tips.

Flowers: Pink to rose-pink to purple, 5-lobed tube, bell-shaped, 2-4 cm long, hairy, with yellow lines and purple dots inside throat of tube.

Fruit: A rounded capsule, 4-7 mm long.

Habitat and Distribution: Occasional; moist to wet meadows, woodlands, flatwoods, bogs, prairies, shores and marsh areas; panhandle FL, west to Texas and north to South Dakota, Minnesota and Nova Scotia; Mexico; West Indies.

Comment: Summer and fall flowering, Smooth Gerardia can be separated from Clusterleaf Gerardia by the smooth stems. Like Clusterleaf Gerardia it is an eye-catching wildflower in bloom.

David W. Hall, Wildflowers of Florida and the Southeast, 2011, page 54

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## Top 10 Flowers for Bees & Other Pollinators

Birds & Blooms' recent blog on this topic is worth sharing since many of them are either native species residing in your Florida garden, or perhaps in your home-state yard this spring, summer or fall. Across a wide range of hardiness zones, they provide nectar to many kinds of pollinators. The Birds & Blooms list includes: 1. Monarda or Bee Balm, 2. Phlox, 3. Cardinal Flower, 4. Aster, 5. Purple Coneflower, 6. Joe Pye Weed, 7. Blazing Star, 8. Sunflower, 9. Goldenrod, and 10. Black-eyed Susan. I have at least 7 of these in my northern gardens. Some of these photos from my Michigan yard also show pollinators utilizing these plants. Send us some of yours!

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Schedule of Summer Walks

June 25, 2016, 9 AM, Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area, Tuckers Grade, Punta Gorda, FL. Join the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a slow stroll at Babcock Webb to identify and learn about native plants and flowers. Meet at the hunter's checkout station. DIRECTIONS: 5 miles south of Punta Gorda on I-75, take exit 158 (Tuckers Grade). Turn east(left)and drive straight to pay station, then deer station. Entrance is \$3/person, \$6/car load, or over 65 is free. Call Denny Girard at 941-474-1492, or email [dennyg29@msn.com](mailto:dennyg29@msn.com). Visit: <http://www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org>. Open to all.

July 30, 2016, 9 AM, Hathaway Park, 35461 Washington Loop Road, Punta Gorda, FLJoin the Mangrove Chapter of the Native Plant Society for a slow stroll at Hathaway Park to identify and learn about native plants and flowers.Call Denny Girard at 941-474-1492, or email [dennyg29@msn.com](mailto:dennyg29@msn.com). Visit: <http://www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org>. Free & open to all.

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### 36th Annual FNPS Conference Daytona Beach

The conference this year was in Dayton Beach. I had a wonderful room overlooking the Atlantic. I always feel we have the best beaches here in Englewood and I still feel that way. There were no shells, fossils or shark teeth but lots of cigarette butts. The sand is very hard so walking was really nice. It sure is strange to see vehicles being driven on a beach. I attended 2 field trips. Both of them turned out to be at Longleaf Pine Preserve. Each trip was to a different section. It is a pine plantation that the county is restoring to a longleaf pine system. The slash pines are being logged and the money is used to replant in Longleaf. They are doing an excellent job in recreating a more diverse system than the plantation. We saw a lot of flowering plants, including at least two species of Pawpaw and several species of Pitcher plants. Each trip had very knowledgeable leaders. I only attended the Saturday night social which was at the Cici and Hyatt Brown Museum of Art. Their collection, which is huge, only features artists that have painted in Florida. The art was exquisite and beautifully displayed. I hope to go back again when I am in the area. There were 2 days of programs which are always difficult to decide which ones to attend. One of the programs was a scientist from NASA with a program on Climate Change. He gave a very interesting time line on the change in our knowledge as scientists discover new facts. We once thought the world was flat and thankfully we have evolved a lot since then. There was another speaker on Bees and their importance(as well as the other pollinators). The solitary bees which I encourage with my bamboo house are just as important as the hive types. Another program was on a project called WeDigFlPlants. This is focused on digitizing the plant specimens that are stored in herbariums. This will make all that information available to everyone, not just those who have direct access to those collections. I hope that our Chapter may be able to contribute to this project.

As always, I enjoyed the conference and look forward to the next one. I always learn so much and am able to experience natural areas in other parts of our beautiful state. Please consider going to the next one if you are able. I don't think you will be disappointed.

Linda Wilson, Treasurer, Membership & Historian

Board of Directors Meeting - June 3, 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend

Contact Information:

Email: [fnpsmangrovechapter@yahoo.com](mailto:fnpsmangrovechapter@yahoo.com)

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**Congratulations! Mangrove Chapter Members Qualify for Landscape Award!**

See the notification below that Charlie and Jayne received from Karina Veaudry, FNPS Landscape Committee.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Woodruff

April 15, 2016

The Florida Native Plant Society Landscape Awards Jury has chosen your project - Button's Garden (Restoration Category) for an Award of Honor, one of the highest awards achieved from the Florida Native Plant Society. Yours is an exemplary project and we congratulate you on receiving this award.

The landscape restoration design is beautiful, functional and above all inspirational. We truly appreciate the interest and dedication you have shown in demonstrating the visual appeal, variety and usefulness of our native plants in your project. Your plans shows residents and visitors alike note-worthy examples of the "Real Florida" that are so much more interesting and unique than the standard designs found in our communities. We commend you for your leadership and concern for the future -- demonstrated to every viewer for consideration for their own yards and public spaces.

Thank you again for the time and effort you expended in planning, installing and maintaining your insightful native landscape restoration, and especially in taking the time to collect the information required to submit with your application to our landscape award program. We hope that the rewards you have received so far will only continue to grow and multiply with time as your design matures to match your vision. Congratulations again on a wonderful native plant project.

Sincerely,

Karina Veaudry, Acting Chair

Landscape Committee

Florida Native Plant Society

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Please welcome our newest member:

Margie

Parker,

from

Englewood

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**May Meeting Addendum:** In addition to the May 10th meeting announcement particulars please bring with you anything of an environmental or nature theme that you wish to place in the Silent Auction. This is usually a part of our Pot Luck meetings in December and end of season. Always lots of fun to try to out-bid the next guy or gal for an item that you would like to take home. Plants are welcome, too.

**May Field Trip:** Join us on May 28 at 9 AM for a slow stroll at Urfer Family Park (4000 Honore Ave, Sarasota). This Sarasota County park offers playgrounds, fitness trails and a nature trail. The nature trail winds thorough pine flatwoods, and runs adjacent to herbaceous and forested wetlands. For more information, contact Denny Girard at 941-474-1492 or email him: [dennyg29@msn.com](mailto:dennyg29@msn.com). Or, visit our website: [www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org](http://www.mangrove.fnpschapters.org)

Looking Ahead-Save the Date!

Members should have received a reminder email within the last week, announcing that on-line registration is now open for the upcoming 36th Annual FNPS Conference to be held Mar 19-21, 2016 at Daytona Beach Resort and Conference Center. There will be field trips, speakers, workshops, socials, plant sales, and more! Activities fill up quickly, so go to [fnps.org/conference](http://fnps.org/conference) for details, or call 321-271-6702.

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### What's up in the Garden? - Lois Cantwell

Those little patches of blue dotting the landscape, as I stroll through the yard in springtime, accentuate many of the other plants and shrubs growing there. Especially in the early light of the morning, these ephemeral glittering sapphires bring a splash of color to the eye, popping up everywhere that they have been allowed to self-seed and establish their own domains. Guessing what they might be? The common Spiderwort, *Tradescantia ohiensis* extends from the Panhandle to southern Florida, besides occupying parts of my northern garden. I also have a white variety back in my Michigan yard, which popped up out of nowhere. I once heard Laurel Schiller remark that "you can't have enough Spiderwort in your yard". It is highly recommended for novice wildflower gardeners since the plants are nearly indestructible, pest-free, and easy to grow under a wide range of conditions. And, they attract bees and other pollinators, which is a bonus.

Simpson Stopper, *Myrcianthes fragrans*, is another springtime favorite. Cascading branches of pure white, fragrant flowers perfume the air not only in spring, but intermittently throughout the year. This extremely variable, highly ornamental small shrub to medium-sized tree with interesting flaky bark has a densely branched crown, attractive foliage, fragrant white flowers and colorful orange-red fruit. The small leaves are a rich dark green when mature and contrast beautifully with new growth, which may range in color from pale chartreuse to deep wine red. Its dense crown provides excellent shelter for birds, is a magnet for pollinators, and is as hardy and easy to grow as it is attractive. What's not to like? Bet you can't plant just one.

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### Demonstration Garden Report - Lois Cantwell

By mid-April the Cross Vine, *Bignonia capreolata* became the focal point of the garden at Cedar Point Environmental Park. Thank goodness for a very sturdy wooden arbor that supports this dense woody vine that climbs over every inch of its outer surface, clinging by means of tendrils bearing small adhesive disks (holdfasts).

#### Crossvine

A profusion of tubular flowers, 2-3 inch long, reddish-orange with yellowish insides draped the arbor in showy clusters. The trumpet-shaped flowers are irresistible to hummingbirds (if only we had some passing by), but there were swarms of bees finding their way into the flower centers seeking nectar, which was rewarding to see. The common name comes from the characteristic cross that is visible when larger stems are transversely sectioned. If you are considering adding this to your landscape, make sure you have adequate space and strong support. Its fast-growing habit makes it difficult to control in small gardens. It can cover a fence or climb high into the trees.

Our garden keepers have been keeping busy culling out a tangled mess of Muscadine Grape Vine, Smilax, various nonnative plants and dead branches from a copse of Wax Myrtle adjacent to our Rain Garden and near the Cedar Point Environmental Center education building. The Wax Myrtles were so weighed down by the dense overgrowth of vines that they are bent and misshapen, but salvageable nevertheless. One nice surprise was finding 2 small specimens of Sugarberry (or Hackberry), *Celtis laevigata* beneath all that overgrowth. This is a "new" plant to us and we have much to learn about it. It is also on our wish list for plantings for the Pond Project. We hope to plant one near the new bench, which has been recently installed just off the adjacent roadway.

#### Cedar

Point

Another garden project at our Cedar Point Demonstration Garden will include replacement of vegetation that was removed during the reconstruction of the stairs and access ramp. We had all sorts of attractive shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers growing there. Now its nakedness stands out in sharp contrast to all the surrounding planted and natural growth areas. We plan to replace the grasses as accent plants, but a bit more can be added to add contrast. Looking at a couple of photos of the front of the building, tell us what you might like to see planted there that is low-maintenance, low-growing, tolerates

poor soil, doesn't overtake the sidewalk, and takes full sun. Let the challenge begin! (This will be mostly a fall project-lots of time for suggestions)

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Board of Directors Meeting - May 6 , 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend

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## FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

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VP's Corner - Lois Cantwell

There were 42 attendees at our last meeting, as Russ Hoffman gave us his perspective of wetland and pond management, as well as lending his expertise to our questions and concerns about our adopted storm water retention pond project. (See a separate report detailing some of the talking points). It was a great turnout and we filled just about every available chair in the classroom.

At our Next Meeting, February 9th, our guest speaker will be Jim Knoy. His topic will be "Preserving Native Plants through Photography & Conservation". He is a Florida Master Naturalist, President of Peace River Audubon Society, Vice President of Peace River Wildlife Center, Sierra Club guide and CHEC volunteer. Combining his photography and knowledge of local conservation lands, we will learn more about native plants and their natural habitats. His photography can also be seen at [www.jimknoy.com](http://www.jimknoy.com).

Opportunities for Membership Participation (Contact person for the following activities is Lois Cantwell, [birderlois@hotmail.com](mailto:birderlois@hotmail.com)):

Committee Chairs: We are still in need of a Program Chair and Publicity Chair for the 2016-2017 season. Details of the "job descriptions" were in the last newsletter. Contact me with any questions you may have about these positions or with suggestions for program topics.

Yard Visit for February: We will be visiting the yard and gardens of Dave and Nancy Clayton on February 17th in Rotonda West. The email to our membership regarding this tour will go out on or about February 1st.

Demonstration Garden: Monday mornings, 9 to 11 AM, Cedar Point Environmental Park. We have acquired 2 new volunteers!! David Delgado and Carolyn Gregsak have joined our garden work group. They are both new MCNPS members who are eager to learn as much as they can about native plants and their habitats. Working in the garden is a great way to start! Join us.

Volunteer Hours: Please send me an estimate of the hours you spent during the month of January for any of the following: Special events, presentations at meetings, leading field trips, participation in work groups or projects, educational activities, executive board duties, and/or committee member responsibilities. (I will work on a data-collection sheet to simplify this).

"Plant Native" Day: A sign-up sheet will be circulated at our February membership meeting for helpers to assist with tasks such as setting up, selling plants, "floaters & greeters", parking assistants, selling books, handing out literature, serving refreshments, etc. Also, a reminder that we need contributions of your home-grown plants that we offer to the attendees for donations, as well as providing various baked goods and beverages for the refreshment table. Event Flyer

At our Next Meeting, February 9th, our guest speaker will be Jim Knoy. His topic will be "Preserving Native Plants through Photography & Conservation". He is a Florida Master Naturalist, President of Peace River Audubon Society, Vice President of Peace River Wildlife Center, Sierra Club guide and CHEC volunteer. Combining his photography and knowledge of local conservation lands, we will learn more about native plants and their natural habitats. His photography can also be seen at [www.jimknoy.com](http://www.jimknoy.com).

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Making a Garden at the Fishery Restaurant:  
If you are interested in helping "Kay", an employee at the Fishery Restaurant in Placida, contact her at morningstar52@hotmail.com. She is hoping to find someone to help set up a butterfly garden or similar planted area adjacent to the outside bar and eating section. The management is sympathetic with this plan and will have the employees maintain the garden once it is established. It has the potential to educate a considerable number of patrons and general visitors to Placida.

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Plant Native Day is coming - March 12, 2016. This is our Public Education event. Mangrove Chapter has been doing this for at least the last 15 years and it has been very well received.

You the members get to help out - without participation nothing really works.

The Chapter relies on members for our primary publicity.

Attached is a flyer for the event. (Flyer) Please make a copy or copies of the flyer and post it at work, in your club house, wherever it is allowed so people will see it. Pass along a flyer or talk about it to your friends and in groups you attend.

At the event we offer member grown native plants. Funds from this go to support the garden and the Chapter. Look around your yard and see if you can't pot up some plants. Not too soon though.

We also count on members for light refreshments. Store bought is fine. Keep it simple, nothing that requires a fork - cookies, snack bars, cheese, crackers ...

Help out, there are lots of little jobs - parking, helping with refreshments, talking to people, counting attendees at the programs. You don't have to work all the time, help out some and then attend a program. The more people that help the less any one person has to do. Sign up at the meeting, email Lois birderlois@hotmail.com or just show up.

Mark the date on your calendar if you haven't already and come. It is a great time.

Poem from Denny Girard

Branches

Walk

I and Each through  
walk note wet  
along the marsh  
these sights becomes and  
trails along up  
each the sandy  
day ay. thrill, hill.

Some Other My the  
paths trails see  
are new many  
known secrets different  
of nature  
old. hold. thongs. brings.

I There I and  
see are at other  
spiders butterflies, birds creatures  
and and  
toads and lizards that  
along squirrels that croak  
the at and  
way. play. creep, peep.

Mainly, the and with  
shrubs tiny colors  
though, and sprouts of  
plants trees that an  
take against bloom earthly  
my the and  
eye; sky, grow rainbow.

Nature as And new  
changes seasons each friends  
dress pass walk  
from and I  
gray change  
to the  
walk the  
green scene. unveils trail.

Photos but all are etched upon my mind.  
catch a glimpse of time,

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Plant Native Day  
A Free half-day Event for the Public  
Saturday, March 12, 2016  
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Cedar Point Environmental Park  
2300 Placida Road, Englewood

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On the trails again - looking for flowers at Cedar Point in December. Jane Wallace Article:

Once again we set out on our monthly trek to record plants that had flowers or seeds. Once again, being winter we didn't find many flowers. By the time we reached the bottom of the Tortoise Trail, I was beginning to wonder if I would have a flower to report. Then Barb Seibel declared the High March Trail dry enough to walk. We counted a Christmas Berry with lots of bright red berries; then success. Large masses of lanky plants with little white flowers... Smallhead Doll's Daisy, *Boltonia diffusa*. Small head describes it well; the flowers are maybe one quarter of an inch in size. The flowers may be white or lavender, these were all white. Like many of our native flowers, along they would be insignificant but in large groups like the ones we found, they definitely make a statement. Smallhead Doll's Daisy can be confused with Bahaman Aster, *Symphytotrichum bahamense*. You can tell the difference if there are seed pods. The covering over the seed pods of *Symphytotrichum* have numerous bristles while Doll's daisy has very few. Also Doll's daisies are never found far from shallow standing water.

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What's up with the Pond Project? - Lois Cantwell

So far, not much in the way of action. Mostly, the weather has been a major factor in preventing us from taking some initial steps in getting a sprayer out there to combat the "undesirables" or treat ant mounds before we can have a work group tromping around the perimeter. We do have a plant list of existing and proposed new plants (natives, of course). Now that we have heard Russ Hoffman's presentation, we have a bit more perspective on just what this project may entail.

When it comes time for planting, which is advisably not until the month of March, there are several helpful hints. Here are some of my notes from our meeting. Put 5 or 6 different species in various areas and see how they do. Go with the ones that do best and add more as desired. "Native plant people want one of everything". Keep the "bad stuff" from growing and let the good stuff come in. Be able to discern one from the other when they are sprouting.

We have lots of wedelia to eradicate. The advice is to kill it in sections, then overplant those areas with something else, and so on. It is hard to kill, so we have to keep pushing it back section by section. Doing selective removal using herbicide will cause some collateral damage. Hand pulling disturbs the soil, generating unwanted growth, so neither method is perfect. When planting trees, go small and let them mature. We will plant trees mostly at the top end of the pond as a screen (ugly building on the adjacent lot), and avoid overwhelming the pond edges so that wading birds can access the littoral areas. Of the types of Ludwegia that we have, encourage the ones with the red stems. Cattails can grow hydroponically in deeper water, which allows them to spread. Most aquatic plants are installed as bare root specimens.

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A visit to two yards in the Gulf Cove area, by Lois Cantwell

We arrived at the residence of Charlie Woodruff and Jayne Dean for a combination yard tour and lunch at their Florida-style abode, surrounded by a mostly native-planted yard. Some acquaintances from the butterfly society were also there. After fortifying ourselves with coffee and hot tea to take off the morning chill, we ventured out to the front yard, and congregated around the pollinator garden. This garden in the sunniest part of the yard, served the dual purpose of covering a leach field. It was filled with tropical sage, dotted horsemint, mistflower, pentas, tropical milkweed, Bahama cassia, scorpiontail, Stoke's aster, gaillardia, and several other species. Having formed a circle on the pine straw path that surrounded the garden, we were able to converse and ask questions. Charlie stated that, since they are snowbirds, they had to cope with control of growth that occurred while they were absent, frost damage that occurred the first 2 seasons after the yard was planted, treating pests that took over while they were away. Rampant self-seeding was brought under control through the judicious application of mulch. There was some discussion about the pros and cons of using FloriMulch, which tends to clump and form a crust-like barrier when used too thickly. From the front yard, we meandered along the pathway leading through a sturdy arbor/gate covered in cross-vine and opening into a side yard full of a variety shrubs and small trees. The back of the house and property edges on a canal. Overlooking that scenic area is a combination patio and boardwalk area including a large arbor holding coral honeysuckle. A stone bench and a couple of Adirondack chairs complete the furnishings. A row of palms and a large oak tree border the canal. We progressed around the far side of the house, passing a row of muhly and other grasses which provided a contrast to the continuous privacy "hedge" of Walter's viburnum, Simpson stoppers, wax myrtles, coco-plums and other large shrubs that edged the entire yard. Soon we were re-entering the house to enjoy a marvelous lunch served "Woodruff style", and broke out into groups for more social interaction. Then it was off to Susy d'Hont's place for a second yard visit.

Susy's yard serves as an example of how you can gradually convert a typical "commercially" planted yard into one that provides wild-life value. Many of us who come to Florida from "up north" or elsewhere, buy homes that have landscapes planted by someone else. Quoting Laurel Schiller, "many non-natives are hardy here and easy to grow, which is why they are in every big box store. However, they create lifeless landscapes. They just take up space and grow--space that could be dedicated to nurturing nature instead of displacing it". Although Susy has only been working on her native plant installations for just a year, she is well on her way to establishing a haven for the local wildlife in her South Gulf Cove yard. All 18 of us had a wonderful time! Charlie, Jayne and Susy, thank you for sharing, your hospitality and continued dedication to "the natives"!

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From Pepper-busting to Nature Trails, by Neil Sheehan

Tangerine Woods, an over 55 community in Englewood, FL has a successful Brazilian Pepper story to tell! What began in 2003 as a project to eradicate Brazilian Pepper is now a project to enhance the natural beauty of the Nature Trail area. This project was brought to the attention of our Mangrove Chapter as a request for help. In addition to being asked for advice for the selection of native plants, we also participated in an informational meeting of Tangerine Woods residents so the Nature Trail committee could determine their level of interest.

The Nature Trail which is a half mile in length was "always there" but seldom if ever used. It had the reputation of being an area filled with overgrown vegetation and many wild critters. The Nature Trail has now been transformed into a favorite route for many daily walkers. A key to the development of the Nature Trail has been the work of the Lazy Day Pepper Tree Eradication crew. These men are part of the Lazy Day volunteer group that meets weekly to act as the community's maintenance department.

The "Pepper Boys" only mission is to eradicate Brazilian Pepper. However they made some startling discoveries. In 2006, as a result of removing Brazilian Pepper a beautiful vista appeared at the end of one of their lakes. Two years later, with the removal of more Brazilian Pepper, a meadow appeared and it became clear that the Nature Trail was worthy of development. The Tangerine Woods Owners Board agreed and established a Nature Trail Preservation committee.

This committee determined there was sufficient interest and support by holding several meetings and Nature Trail walks. The response was gratifying. Last spring, financed by a CHNEP grant, a start was made to add native plants to the meadow area. Some of the native plants that were installed were: Blue Porterweed, Beautyberry, Milkweed, Cocoplum, Firebush, Beach Sunflower, and Purple Coneflower.

The committee is now working on a long range plan under the guidance of Craig Huegel. Dr. Huegel was a featured speaker at our March, 2013 membership meeting when he spoke about "Native Plant Landscaping for Florida Wildlife". Several of the Nature Trail Preservation committee members attended that presentation.

This project is ongoing and anyone interested in learning more about this Brazilian Pepper success story should feel free to contact Neil Sheehan (941) 474-5476 or email [neilsheehan00@gmail.com](mailto:neilsheehan00@gmail.com).

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Board of Director's Meeting: February 5, 2016, at Cedar Point Environmental Center, 2300 Placida Rd, Englewood, FL, at 2:30PM

Members are welcome to attend.

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## MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

### VP's Report - Lois Cantwell

At our last meeting, Jim Knoy entertained 37 attendees with at least 50 photos of "the natives", while sharing various photographic techniques and tricks to get just the right photo. He also talked about the various conservation lands and parks that provide so many opportunities to capture these beautiful gems that we see in the woods, wetlands and open meadows. Now I am even more determined to get that perfect shot of that delicate little flower in dappled shade that keeps nodding in the faintest of breezes.

On a sad note, we also learned of the passing of Mikhaila "Micki" Donnelly, who had served as our Secretary and Publicity Chair for the past 4 years, as well as one of our demonstration garden regulars. She came to us by way of Wichita, Kansas where she had been a horticulturist with the Botanical Gardens there. She was also a very talented potter and entered her works in various art shows. She found a way to use those nice large Sea Grape leaves as patterns for making decorative bowls. I cherish the 2 that I have, which she had placed in one of our silent auctions. Memorial contributions can be made to the Wichita Botanical Gardens or the American Cancer Society in her memory. Our garden group is planning to dedicate an area of the garden at Cedar Point in her honor.

Our proposed slate of officers for the 2016-2017 season includes: President, Lois Cantwell; Vice President, David Delgado;

Secretary, Marianne Owen; Treasurer, Linda Wilson. If anyone else would like to run for office, we will take nominations from the floor at the May membership meeting.

Please welcome our newest member, Joan McGowan, from Venice.

Next Meeting  
The topic for our next membership meeting, March 8th, 7 PM at Lemon Bay Park, is "Native Milkweeds & Monarchs". Discussion will be about Florida native milkweeds in the home garden and how they can help both the Monarch butterfly and a host of other pollinators. The importance of preserving local ecotypes and biodiversity will be emphasized. Chris Parisi of Restless Natives Nursery has been raising native milkweed species for seven years and has successfully grown local ecotypes of several species. He harvests and sells seeds of these species as part of an ongoing project to increase the availability of local ecotypes in Florida. Previously, he has done research and seed collections for milkweed projects with the Xerces Society. Please join us for an interesting look at the status of native milkweeds in Florida.

This 'n' That: Lois Cantwell

We are still in need of a Program Chair and Publicity Chair for the 2016-2017 season. A speaker for the October meeting has been lined up, so that leaves only 5 others. Surely there is someone in our chapter that can accomplish that. Publicity can't be that hard, either, especially if you are provided with all the contact information you need, plus descriptions of the who, what, where and when. Easy-peasy.

Join the "garden keepers" Monday mornings, 9 to 11 AM, Cedar Point Environmental Park.

We have acquired another new volunteer!! Gail Finney joined our group in February. That makes 3 of the 17 new members that our chapter acquired in 2015. Keep us growing!

Another fun thing to do at the park is to participate in the plant surveys that we do on the last Thursday/Friday of each month at 9 AM. We divide the park into 3 sections, pair up, and hit the trails using checklists to identify plants that are blooming, fruiting or both. It only takes a couple hours of your time, come when you are available, and you learn a lot.

"Plant Native" Day, March 12 is coming up fast and we still need "assistants". Please help with the following: Parking-2 "attendants"; Setting Up Friday, 3 PM-2 helpers; Setting Up Saturday, 8:30 AM-2 more helpers. Bobbi Rodgers will not be there on PND, so if you want to help with parking, let her know as soon as possible (475-0769). Volunteers (other than parking) contact Lois (birderlois@hotmail.com or 697-2756). We need contributions of your home-grown plants, as well as various baked goods and beverages for the refreshment table. One more person on the hospitality committee will also help. This is our 13th annual outreach event! Come out and support this effort as members or volunteers. It's always fun and informative. Bring a friend or neighbor! Thank you for your support.

Upcoming Field Trips

February 27, 9 AM: Myakka State Forest, 2000 S. River Road, Englewood. Main park entrance just above Winchester Blvd light.

March 26, 9 AM: Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park, 15801 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, NW corner of Zemel Rd.

For more detailed information, go to our website: [mangrove.fnpschapters.org](http://mangrove.fnpschapters.org)

## A Heartfelt Thank You from Neil Sheehan (Part 2), 2/11/2016 (Addressed to Lois Cantwell)

Thank you for including my "Pepper Busting" article in the last newsletter. Lack of space prevented me from crediting certain Mangrove Chapter members with playing a most important role in our success. Bobbi Rodgers was one of the first people we contacted to learn how best to eradicate Brazilian Pepper. She also has been very much involved in the development of the Nature Trail. Bill Dunson has played a crucial role in meeting with our committee to share his expertise on how we might best develop that area. He volunteered to lead several walks along the Nature Trail for our residents, which were very well received. Your prompt and enthusiastic response to our request as to how we could incorporate native plants and flowers in the Nature Trail area provided us with much needed guidance. The fact that you were willing to attend several of our committee meetings was significant. It was also very important that you and Bill were our main speakers at an "after Saturday coffee" meeting for a large group of interested residents. You did a great job! All expressed great enthusiasm for proceeding with developing the Nature Trail. The three of you sharing your expertise, experience and communication with us is a great example of the impact that the Mangrove Chapter, FNPS has on local projects such as ours. We want you to know we are thankful and appreciative.

Footnote: In the February 16 (Tuesday) edition of the Englewood Sun, Steve Baumann's "Life Stories" column had an article "Mission possible: Eradicate pepper". The article describes the process by which the Tangerine Woods community converted an overgrown area into a nature trail and native plant preserve. Our participation was noted in the article, as well. We can only hope that other communities will follow this example.

Note: Photos that accompany this article for the newsletter were taken by Lois Cantwell in November of 2013, shortly after most of the pepper removal had taken place. Footnote: In the February 16 (Tuesday) edition of the Englewood Sun, Steve Baumann's "Life Stories" column had an article "Mission possible: Eradicate pepper". The article describes the process by which the Tangerine Woods community converted an overgrown area into a nature trail and native plant preserve. Our participation was noted in the article, as well. We can only hope that other communities will follow this example.

### What's up in the Garden? by Lois Cantwell

This time of year, there's but a handful of blooming natives in the demonstration garden. Doing a mental inventory of the plant beds from where I sit, I see a little White Violet here and there, Blue Porterweed and Scorpiontail with their wee blossoms, abundant Beach Dune Sunflower perpetually showing off its yellow-ness, a few coral colored Cross-vine blooms dangling from the arbor, and weedy Blue Mistflower everywhere.

We have been watching progress on the re-make of the front of the environmental center. Where 3 nice plant beds full of native shrubs, flowers and grasses used to reside, there are support pillars, a handi-cap access ramp in stages of completion, the front porch being rebuilt and bare dirt underneath. Who knows what we will plant when it is done. A benefit of the construction is that somehow the drain that leads to the rain garden is working more efficiently than it ever did. With all the unseasonal rain, we actually had water in the bottom! It hadn't held water all last summer, so this is an accomplishment. And we have pictures to prove it! As you know, the rain garden functions to slowly allow water to drain out as it filters out contaminants. If it were perpetually wet, we would have to call it something else.

### People for Trees offers Southern Red Cedars

Southern red cedars are now available from People for Trees, Inc. They are valued for their evergreen nature, small, prickly needles and maintain a symmetrical shape as they mature, with their lower branches staying close to the ground. Those lower branches are what make the Southern red cedar a great choice for those wishing to have a natural wind, noise and privacy buffer around their home (but not too close).

These trees do well in any type of soil and are only available locally from People for Trees, a non-profit native tree advocacy group that has been creating awareness about the importance of protecting and maintaining our native tree canopy since 1997. The trees are in 3-gallon containers and may be purchased for \$12 each. Contact Alice White at 941-426-9752 or at

treelady12001@yahoo.com for an appointment. Delivery can be arranged. For more information, visit [www.peoplefortrees.com](http://www.peoplefortrees.com).

February was a busy month for our Chapter

There were 13 days on my February calendar that were marked for some chapter-related activity. Some of the "extras" that occupied my time and energy, besides our meetings, were the Wildflower Open House, the Yard Tour at Dave & Nancy Clayton's and the Friends of Englewood Archives Luncheon at Tringali Community Center--three events within 6 days. It was just one of those weeks. Al Squires was even busier, leading walks, working at two of the same events and then driving up to Arcadia in the wee hours of the morning on the 20th to work at the Conservation & Landscaping Workshop sponsored by CHNEP. Between that event and the open house at Wildflower, we talked to a lot of people, handed out literature, promoted our "Plant Native" Day and sold a lot of plants, earning a total of \$86 in donations. (David and Judith's tropical sage went like hot-cakes). We took in another \$7.00 for the harvested White Swamp Milkweed seeds.

We had 19 attendees at the Yard Tour, enjoying a combination of perfect weather, a beautifully landscaped native "yarden", and Dave & Nancy's hospitality. Fabulous! I was especially envious of the amount of space they had to work with to fit in all those trees and shrubs. There is something to be said about having a house on a double lot and not-so-close neighbors. Daffy-inition of yarden: a garden that fills up most of the yard (which is especially nice if it eliminates most of the turf grass). Some of the features that caught our attention were the Golden Creeper berm, Winged Elms, a swale of Blue-eyed Grass, and a number of Pitch Apples and Dwarf Cocoplums dancing in the front yard. The side yard between the outer wall of Sea Grapes and the house was festooned with all sorts of shrubs like Buttonwoods, Simpson and Spanish Stoppers, East Palatka and Dahoon Hollies, Wax Myrtle, Marlberry and Wild Coffee. Across the back yard were zones of pines, palms and a very tall cluster of Saw Palmetto. An area of newly planted trees on the other side of the house marked the final phase of planting. This is another fine example of landscaping with "the natives" that will be discussed (with photos) at our "Plant Native" Day event in March. Charlie and Jayne will also be on this panel, talking about their wonderful yard, which we visited in January.

The Benefit Luncheon was quite festive. There were tables loaded with gift baskets wrapped in cellophane for a Chinese auction, and the luncheon tables were decorated with "real" tablecloths and napkins, all sorts of cup and saucer sets, and tea was served from a vast collection of tea pots of all shapes and colors. The guitar and banjo group, "Gottfried Creek", provided continuous music throughout the event. Local historian, Diana Harris was there promoting her books, and our own Denny Girard was the official docent, going around the tables of patrons, chatting and showing pictures of what Englewood was like when he first came here. We enjoyed the fabulous open-faced sandwiches, homemade soups, salads, desserts, tea and lemonade. Our group sat together at one table, along with Lynda Citro the librarian at Tringali. We gave her the Wild Coffee plant, which was our centerpiece, to take home. A good time was had by all.

Goals and Guidelines for home landscape plan and plant selection:

This was a list of things that appeared on the back side of Dave's handout for their yard tour--excellent advice for those who are tackling a conversion to native plantings.

- Elimination of grass lawn
- Privacy screening
- Native plants to provide cover and food for wildlife
- Drought tolerant plants
- Shiny leaves, no spines or thorns (less pain for the gardener)
- Pest resistance

--Plants tolerant of possible light frost  
Discuss budget, goals, and the progress you've made since your last communication. You could also use this opportunity to spotlight a new or existing board member

Board of Directors Meeting - March 4, 2016 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend

## JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

Message from Al Squires:  
A year end note from the President

I hope that everyone had a good Holiday. We have had a good start to our Chapter's year with the adoption of the pond at Cedar Point. The Holiday get together was well attended and Denny approved of the food.

Be sure to attend our meeting on January 12th as Russ Hoffman will have some important information for us on the maintenance of our newly adopted pond.

Since our January field trip is to Lake Manatee State Park, it has been decided that we will meet there at 9:30 instead of 9:00 to give everyone a chance to travel there.

February will see Jim Knoy, CHEC Board of Directors member and naturalist, speak on Preserving Native Plants through Photography and Conservation. Our field trip will be at Myakka State Forest on the Gordon Smith Memorial Trail. This is always an enjoyable walk, even in winter.

Micki Donnelly has had to resign a Publicity Chair due to health problems. Sue Freeman has graciously stepped in to fill the vacancy on a temporary basis as the Freemans are planning to travel some more. If you are interested in becoming Publicity Chair please contact me. We have hard copy of all the information you will need to send out our publicity. All that is needed as time and a computer.

We wish Micki the best of luck with her problems and a speedy and full recovery and thank her for her excellent service as Publicity Chair.

I hope to see everyone on January 12th. Al

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VP's Report  
Lois Cantwell

We had at least 28 members attending our annual Holiday Potluck Supper and Silent Auction on December 8th. As usual, the food was fabulous and the social interaction was fun and entertaining. There were at least 4 tables loaded with contributed items for the auction, everything from art, books, pottery, nature products, jewelry, home-made preserves and candy, potted plants and more. We raised \$148 during the auction and took in an additional \$11 in donations, so thank you to all who participated in this annual fund-raiser. At our next meeting, January 12th, our guest speaker will be Russ Hoffman of Beautiful Ponds. He spoke to us last January, with his "why people don't get it" presentation regarding the psychology of the use of native plants in the landscape. This season, since we adopted the pond in front of Cedar Point Environmental Park, it is perfect timing to have a return engagement, with emphasis on "Managing Wetland Areas in our Communities". So, please join us!

Russ will also be acting as an advisor to our pond rehabilitation committee. Management will include a whole spectrum of issues like selective removal of some invasive exotics, control of regrowth, enhancing biodiversity (with emphasis on existing and additional native beneficial plants), littoral zones, aquatic plants, water quality, and erosion control. Additionally, there is a memorial aspect to our project, as funds we have received as contributions honoring the memory of Jack Lyons (\$1,670 so far) will be dedicated to the purchase of a handi-capped accessible bench manufactured from recycled plastics, including a memorial plaque. Funds will also be used to purchase native plants on our wish-list of additions to the surrounding area.

A work-day announcement for January is forthcoming, which will likely include manual removal of unwanted "weedy" species (like ragweed), "harvesting" accumulated trash and other tasks.

Jane Wallace Article:  
Recording flowers and seeds at Cedar Point in November

Remember the Stalter Brothers' song Counting Flowers on the Wall? That's the way I feel when we make our monthly trek at Cedar Point. Only we aren't counting flowers, just recording the species that are blooming, and it's not just flowers; it's seeds as well. This time of year it is more seeds than flowers. Thank you for the Hypericum that is there to show its yellow flowers and brighten up our Florida Fall. But which Hypericum? Al Squires made a key for the Hypericum of Southwest Florida. Four petals on the flowers? Yes! - that means it's either St. Andrew's Cross, *H. hypericoides*, Four Petal St. John's Wort, *H. tetrapetalum*, or St. Peter's Wort, *H. crux-andreae*. Wait a minute, We have always called *H. tetrapetalum*, St. Peter's Wort and *H. crux-andreae* has not been reported for Charlotte or Sarasota counties. Confusing? Just an example of how common names can vary for place to place. The one we saw was *H. tetrapetalum*. How do we know? Not woody like St. Andrews Cross and it has 3-4 sepals, the green part below the flower. The leaves are slightly clasping the stem, turning upward toward the flowers.

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What's up in the Garden?  
Lois Cantwell

One plant that takes my interest is the Scorpion-Tail (*Heliotropium angiospermum*), which produces tiny white flowers almost year-round. Individually, they do not attract as much attention as when you look at the plant as a whole, which gives it a certain charm. It is a fast-growing, short-lived perennial, 1 to 3 feet tall and as wide, or wider, than its height. Judicious to severe pruning helps to keep it tidy. Scorpion-Tail is an abundant self-seeder with numerous seedlings appearing in the vicinity of the mother plant. In my experience, I started with one plant many years ago and now they occupy numerous places throughout the yard. Tricky to salvage, it helps to dig the smallest seedlings if you want to pot them up or transplant to other locations, or you can try cuttings. Hardly necessary if you just let them do their own thing. Then all you have to do is selectively weed them and leave the ones that are growing where you want them to be. They like full sun to partial shade. An under-utilized plant, I think. The fun thing about leaving the garden to itself for 5 months, is returning to find them growing in all sorts of interesting places. Last season upon my return I saw several seedlings coming up at the base of two of my palms, one in the front yard and one out back. So, I left them there as an experiment of sorts. When I returned this fall after a second growing season, they had completely surrounded the palms, establishing a complete circle and looking every bit as if they had been planted by design. Just a bit of pruning brought some order to the "woody-little-shrub look." Very charming, indeed!

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From Lois Cantwell

Opportunities for Membership Participation:

Contact person for the following activities is Lois Cantwell ([birderlois@hotmail.com](mailto:birderlois@hotmail.com))

Programs:

A Program Chair or a Committee is needed for the 2016-2017 Mangrove Chapter season. Task is to identify, contact, and confirm 6 Guest Speakers for the next calendar of events (Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr meetings). Selection process for next season's speakers should take place leading up to a deadline of August 31st. Event Calendars can then be printed during the month of September. We would like to identify the new Program Chair (or Committee) before the May Annual Membership (and Election of Officers) Meeting. If no one applies, our monthly membership meetings will not have a designated educational component. Since our meetings are free and open to the public, this form of "outreach" is an important aspect of our mission. Let's make it happen, folks!

Publicity:

Our current Publicity Chair (Micki Donnelly) needs to step down for medical reasons. A temporary replacement (Sue Freeman) is in place but she cannot commit to full time due to travel plans. A master list of media email contacts and schedule for use is in place and can be provided to any applicant for this position. Descriptions of upcoming events can be sent to the Publicity Chair by the Program and Field Trip Chairs (or copied and pasted from our website. All you need is a computer and you don't have to be in FL full time. Getting the word out about our meetings, field trips and special events is extremely important to our educational endeavors as well as member recruitment-a fairly straightforward task that is greatly appreciated by all.

Yard Visits: Two yard tours are scheduled. First is at the Woodruff residence in Gulf Cove on January 24 at 10:30 AM, which will include a light lunch. The second is at the Clayton residence in Rotonda West on February 17 at 10:00 AM. Details for each tour will be announced via email to MCNPS members about 3 weeks prior to each tour.

#### Demonstration Garden:

Monday mornings, 9 to 11 AM, Cedar Point Environmental Park. Tasks include weeding, pruning, planting, transplanting, potting, cleaning beds, top-dressing and mulching beds, cleaning and refilling bird baths, raking, edging, and special projects. We are currently short-handed, so anyone interested, please come by to lend a hand. Weeders Welcome!

Volunteer Hours: FNPS has requested that the Chapters send in an estimate of their members' volunteer hours beginning with the 2016 calendar year. Therefore, if you participate in any of the following, please submit your hours on a monthly basis, beginning with the month of January:

#### Special Events

- Plant Native Day, Open House, Nature Festival, Earth Day, etc.)
- \*Presentations at Meetings (MCNPS or other environmental or local group meetings)
- \*Leading Field Trips (MCNPS, County/State Parks, or other organized group outings)
- \*Work Groups or Projects (Demonstration Garden, Adopted Pond, Parks/Preserves, etc.)
- \*Educational Activities (Yard Tours, Workshops, MCNPS Booth, etc.)
- \*Executive Board/ Committee Members (Meeting attendance, preparation time, assoc. tasks)
- \*Meeting and Field Trip Attendance: Data to be collected from sign-in sheets and head-counts.

#### Tree Facts from Beautiful Ponds website ([www.beautifulponds.com](http://www.beautifulponds.com))

Planting a tree anywhere is great for your environment. Trees along the lake shore areas frame your view, provide shade for sitting and improves wildlife habitat. Red maples, slash pine, sweet gum, laurel oaks, water oak and bald Cypress are all good trees to plant near lakes. Trees intercept rain water prior to hitting the ground. Trees along the streets and sidewalks not only make your walk more pleasant, but help reduce storm water runoff. More facts about trees:

- \*A single large shade tree can reduce air temperature under the tree by 10 degrees.
- \*Two mature trees produce enough oxygen for a family of four.
- \*Trees increase property values 5 to 20%.
- \*Trees can increase the service life of blacktop roads by 40%.
- \*Trees remove cadmium, chromium, nickel, lead, airborne particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and ozone from the environment.
- \*An acre of trees can remove about 13 tons of dusts, gases, and pollutants from the atmosphere every year.
- \*The pine tree is the oxygen factory of the south, producing more oxygen than any other tree.
- \*Cities with few trees become heat islands.
- \*Shade trees near your home can reduce energy costs by 30%.Water Matters

"The Global Crisis of Vanishing Groundwater" was the headline in a USA Today publication in mid-December. It's happening everywhere on the planet, and nationwide in the US the numbers are rather scary. Studies show water levels declining in 64% of monitored wells just in the past 20 years, reaching from 10 to as much as 100 feet below normal. Not just related to drought, water tables have fallen consistently even in relatively "wet" states such as Florida.

According to a second article in The Sun (via Fort Myers News-Press), the Sunshine State gets nearly 5 feet of annual rainfall, but a century of drainage and development has crippled freshwater flows in the Everglades, possibly even changed summer weather patterns. There is speculation that so much water runs off the landscape so quickly that there is not enough moisture in the air-during the wet season-to create daily afternoon rains. Jim Beever (Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and long-time FNPS member) was quoted as saying that "Florida was a paradise and we tried to turn it into the Midwest."

He also said that "we should be using the Florida Forever funds (generated by Amendment 1) to purchase 'groundwater recharge' areas to retain what's left of Florida's shallow groundwater aquifers, rather than using those areas to build roads and new communities." Then there is the combined specter of salt water intrusion and sea level rise, which is a whole other subject. Like a bank account, we can't keep depleting fresh water forever. Indian Proverb: "The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives."

Florida Arbor Day is January 15th! Get out there and plant something native--great time to add a new tree or large shrub to the landscape. Better yet, volunteer to help a friend or neighbor add a new native tree or shrub to their yard. Maybe we should start promoting native plants as nature's "water savers".

We Need Photos! Our Chapter participated in designing a brochure that describes and illustrates common native plants suitable for landscaping in Southwest Florida, as part of an FNPS initiative to educate the public about the natives in all 6 regions of the state. The brochures include photos of specific plants and depictions of growing conditions. Ours will also include a write-up by Craig Huegel. For the cover of the brochure, what we need to have in order to complete the project are photos of actual landscapes depicting a majority of native plants. If anyone has photos of their native plant landscapes that you can share, we can choose from the most representative ones, give credit to those who supplied the photos and submit them for the brochure. Please send photos to Al Squires, ahsquires@embarqmail.com as soon as possible.

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### Lecture on Charlotte Harbor Oyster Reef Restoration

Laura Geselbracht, Senior Marine Scientist with The Nature Conservancy, will present a free lecture at Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Road, Charlotte Harbor on January 7, 2016 at 4:30 pm.

Ms. Geselbracht will discuss the new oyster reef restoration project taking place off of Trabue Harborwalk in the City of Punta Gorda including why it was created and how it fits into the larger oyster reef restoration efforts in Charlotte Harbor. She will also answer questions you may have about oyster resources such as what type of services they provide to local residents and the value of these services.

To register, please call 941-475-0769 or email Bobbi@chechflorida.org.

This program is presented by the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center and Charlotte County Parks and Natural Resources. Bayshore Live Oak Park is an outdoor Charlotte County facility overlooking beautiful Charlotte Harbor.

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Poem		from		Denny		Girard
A		Sprig		of		Gray
I'm	not		much		right	now.
Just	a		sprig		of	gray.
Surrounded		by		brown		leaves
And			yellowed			grass
On	dull		and		barren	ground.
But	come		back	in		a
And		see		the		month
I'll		sprout		green		change.
And		push		new		lees
Toward		the		warming		growth
						sun.
Better	yet,		return		in	May
And	see	me		at	my	best.
My	rebirth		will		be	complete
My	promised		buds		will	burst
into	blooms		of		bright	hues.
You'll		like			me	then
As	I		pain		your	world
With			blazing			colors.
I'll		draw			you	near
I'll		touch			your	heart.

So forgive me now if I disappoint,  
If I am am drab and bleak.  
I the only dozing, resting,  
Until nudged of spring  
Wakes me once again.  
Denny Girard  
Branches

Board of Directors Meeting - January 8, 2016  
at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM.  
Members Welcome to attend

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DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

Welcome New Members:

Carol Nance	Abarbanell,	Rotonda	West
Kate Kenneth			Englewood
Gail			Venice
Paula	Fletcher,	Port	Englewood
Shannon	McGinnis,	Port	Venice
Barbara			Charlotte
	Sharpe,		Charlotte
			Englewood

VP's Corner: Lois Cantwell

I read a quote somewhere that referred to the passing of an elder, in the context that it's like a library burning down. As our dear friend and Mangrove Chapter member, Jack Lyons, was laid to rest in mid-November that thought came to mind. He left us too early in life and still had much knowledge and life experiences to share. My first encounter with Jack goes back to the 2007-2008 season when I signed on as a CHEC volunteer at Cedar Point Environmental Park. Having experience with exotic removal and a love of tromping around in the woods, I joined the Thursday Work Party. Jack was their leader and took me under his wing, imparting his knowledge of the park and the native plants that reside there. His enthusiasm for the work and the natural environment was contagious and ultimately I joined FNPS. A few years later, Jack was on the nominating committee in search of a new President for our Chapter. He was so persuasive, I just couldn't say no. The rest is history. Look up the definition of a mentor and you may find his picture there. I'm sure he had a positive influence on many others who crossed paths with him. I sure miss his witty repartee.

What's up in the Garden?: Lois Cantwell

Here's a dilemma. What to do when one of your native plants goes berserk and overgrows several of its brethren? And, it happens to be one that you like! Almost every season, I return from my northern retreat to find that one particular plant has over-reached its bounds. It is only expected that the self-seeders and creeping vines do what comes naturally.

This season Corky Stemmed Passion Vine (*Passiflora lutea*) was the culprit. In various parts of my yard, it climbed into and partially smothered several shrubs, including Wild Coffee, Myrsine, Coral Bean, Dwarf Viburnum, Button Sage, and Privet Cassia. I really do like the vine and its role as a larval host and food source. I mulled over whether to cut it back, try to disentangle it, or just let it be. So far, I have done a lot of "rerouting", but the Cherokee Bean is in big trouble. Of course, this shrub does lose its leaves in the winter season anyway. And there are lots of berries on the passion vines, so the birds will benefit if I leave them alone. The Cherokee Bean may do double duty as a temporary living trellis for the passion vine for a little while. My first encounter with Jack goes back to the 2007-2008 season when I signed on as a CHEC volunteer at Cedar Point Environmental Park. Having experience with exotic removal and a love of tromping around in the woods, I joined the Thursday Work Party. Jack was their leader and took me under his wing, imparting his knowledge of the park and the native

plants that reside there. His enthusiasm for the work and the natural environment was contagious and ultimately I joined FNPS. A few years later, Jack was on the nominating committee in search of a new President for our Chapter. He was so persuasive, I just couldn't say no. The rest is history. Look up the definition of a mentor and you may find his picture there. I'm sure he had a positive influence on many others who crossed paths with him. I sure miss his witty repartee.

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Opportunities for Membership Participation

As was mentioned at our last meeting, I am "retiring" as the Program Chairperson at the end of this season. I have served in this capacity for 3 seasons, served as President and VP for a total of 5 years (so far), Garden Chair for 6 years (including working in the demonstration garden most Mondays), organized "yard share" tours for 4 years and chaired or assisted with Plant Native Day for 7 years. I am now involved with the Chapter-adopted Pond Committees, which will be ongoing, as well as assisting with monthly plant surveys at Cedar Point Environmental Park for a third season. Not to mention contributing to the newsletter on a regular basis, manning our booth at various events and potting a zillion plants during my 7 years as a member. This is not about tooting one's own horn-it's about how much one person takes on when others are not coming forward to help out.

All of your Board Members and Committee Chairs perform multiple duties, having donated so much time, energy and resources to our Chapter. We are getting older and wearing out. We need to ask members to please come forward to take on some of these tasks. We have many new members who can contribute new ideas and energy to reinvigorate our Chapter. You can: apply for an open position on our Board of Directors; chair a committee; find speakers for our educational programs (or be a presenter); organize yard visits; help with publicity; send articles to the newsletter; assist with plant surveys; volunteer in our demonstration garden; volunteer in the pond restoration project; sign up to help at our booth at various events; be a helper or greeter for our "Plant Native" Day event. We have a lot of talent in our membership that needs to be tapped, so please help your Chapter in any way that you can. Okay, I'm done with my rant.

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This 'N That

For our December 8th Holiday Pot Luck we traditionally have our Silent Auction, which is our internal fundraiser, so bring items that have a "nature or natural theme" such as books related to the environment or nature, native plant reference books you are willing to part with; framed nature art or photos; objects made from natural products; or dig up a plant. Donate lots of stuff, bid high and bid often.

Speaking of books, Denny Girard has produced a second book of his poetry and essays, some of which he refers to as

"poessays". The first book, entitled "Branches" came out in 2009. His latest book is called "Falling Leaves". Signed copies are available at Cedar Point Environmental Park for \$10. (\$3 goes to the park). It would make a great stocking stuffer for a loved one (or for yourself).

We need photos! Our Chapter participated in designing a brochure that describes and illustrates common native plants suitable for landscaping in Southwest Florida, as part of an FNPS initiative to educate the public about the natives in all 6 regions of the state. The brochures include photos of specific plants, depictions of growing conditions, and ours will also include a write-up by Craig Huegel. What we need to have in order to complete the project are photos of actual landscapes which contain a majority of native plants for the cover of the brochure. If anyone has photos of their native plant landscapes that you can share, we can choose from the most representative ones, give credit to those who supplied the photos and submit them for the brochure. Please send them to Al Squires, ahsquires@embarqmail.com as soon as possible.

Poem from Denny Girard  
 Our Scrubby Oaks  
 Different than their northern kin  
 our southern oaks are an alien sort.  
 Instead of massive trunk and billowing crown  
 these varied oaks stay scrubby and short.  
 Not the subject of story or poem,  
 our stunted oaks must struggle to survive.  
 In a landscape at one sandy and dry,  
 they fight just to stay alive.  
 Still they win, these evergreen oaks  
 that eke out and enough sun to food and make  
 do on rain and for sun to produce a crop  
 of acorns for their future's sake.  
 No, not like their northern kin, but  
 our plain, stiff-leaved, stunted oaks survive.  
 Here in their own way, and in their place,  
 they not only live, but they thrive !  
 By Denny Girard  
 In Branches

Report from November Membership Meeting

Our guest speaker, Vickie Lowe, gave us an enthusiastic and informative overview of what a Master Gardener learns about "the natives" in the process of taking their classes and applying what they know to the public education component of their training. I certainly think that our members have much more insight and appreciation for the Master Gardener Program after hearing her talk. I have gotten the impression that historically, we have downplayed the role of Master Gardeners when it comes to education about native plants. I see the use of native plants in the landscape getting a much higher emphasis by Master Gardeners than most people realize. So, I hope that our attendees got that message. After all, we need all the help we can get to convince people to plant "the natives". The following is a list of the websites that Vickie was unable to share with us during her presentation:

Florida Master Gardener: <http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu>  
 EDIS: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>  
 Florida Friendly Landscaping: [www.floridayards.org](http://www.floridayards.org)  
 Gardening Solutions: [www.gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu)  
 Charlotte County Extension Website: <http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu>

During the business portion of our November meeting, Carol Leonard gave a brief presentation about The Friends of the Englewood Archives and how they may be useful to organizations like ours. The "Friends" support local community

historical groups and the Englewood Archive, which is located at the Englewood Charlotte Library in Tringali Park. Once they get up and running, we will be able to have all of our historical Mangrove Chapter documents archived, which could be accessed on-line for general public information.

As a fund-raiser, a Tea Luncheon is being planned for February 19th, 2016 and they are currently seeking co-sponsors, hence Carol's presentation. More details about the luncheon will follow. As co-sponsors, our Chapter will sell tickets, provide an item for the ticket auction and a door prize, and provide sandwich fillings, bread, and desserts (quantities to be determined). Linda Wilson will be our contact person for the planning committee. Denny Girard will be a docent/greeter, telling attendees his personal story of how he came to the Englewood area. Be thinking about how you can contribute to this effort. Also, if you are interested in joining the "Friends", reply to [info@FriendsofEA.org](mailto:info@FriendsofEA.org) or call Carol Leonard at 473-3292.

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### Jane Wallace Article: Blooming at Cedar Point

Once a month, usually on the last Thursday and Friday, members of the Mangrove Chapter survey plants at Cedar Point and record those that are flowering or have seeds. This simplified Phenology Study has accumulated over 3 years worth of data. In a comprehensive Phenology Study, the same, individual plant is observed each survey period. In our study, the same trails are walked and any species showing flowers or seeds is recorded the first time it is encountered. The information is recorded in a database for analysis. Data can be used to develop brochures or charts to show when certain plants can be found in bloom. It can also be used to challenge perceptions about changes in growth habits. If you think a certain plant is blooming earlier or later in the season you can compare it with historic data. This October, Narrowleaf yellowtops, *Flaveria linearis* was the star of the survey. Last year, a series of summer lightning strikes caused fires in several isolated area at Cedar Point. One area was out near the end of the Jeep Trail. By fall this area has been filled in with Seaside Goldenrod and Narrow Leaf Yellowtops. This October the area was again filled in with yellow tops. Life many native plants Yellowtops are pretty alone, but in mass they are spectacular and they are in mass. Worth the walk and you can see the eagles on the way to them.

Narrowleaf Yellowtops is one of two species of *Flaveria* found in this area. The other is Florida Yellowtops, *Flaveria floridana*, found only on the lower gulf coast of Florida. The plants can be distinguished by the width of the leaves, can you guess? Narrowleaf Yellowtops has narrower leaves. The true distinguishing feature is the relatively long calyculus bractlets and modified peduncular leaves of Florida Yellowtop that extend beyond the heads. Someone want to draw a picture of that and send it for the next newsletter?

More about Narrowleaf yellowtops:  
[http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Yellowtop\\_Flaveria\\_linearis.pdf](http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Yellowtop_Flaveria_linearis.pdf)  
<http://www.regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/plantdetail.asp?tx=Flavline>

Plant	ID	Walk	-	Solidago	(Goldenrod)
Lois	Cantwell,	Jean	Evoy,	Jane	Wallace

At the October meeting, Al Squires provided and reviewed a key for the local Goldenrod. In case you are unfamiliar with the concept of a plant key, it is like a flow chart of yes/no questions about the plant that leads to identification of the particular species. If only it was really as easy as it sounds.

On Tuesday, November 17, a group met at Cedar Point to put the key to use. First we reviewed the key, which lead to a discussion: If the leaves at the base of the plant are called BASAL leaves, why are the leaves on the stem called CAULINE leaves?

Then, armed with copies of the key, magnifying glasses and pictures we went off to look at Goldenrods. We began in the demonstration garden with a plant labeled *S. stricta*. Basal leaves, leaves appressed to the stem, then, looking at the flowers it got tricky, was it *stricta* or *sempervirens*? Jane was for *stricta* because she counted 5 ray flowers, but Al was afraid some might have fallen off. These two species do hybridize so maybe it was both in one. We decided to press on. Next over to the rain garden, where we found a plant that was positively *S. stricta*. Yeah! There were supposed to be *S. sempervirens* in the rain garden but either they had already died back or they didn't survive. Surprisingly, there were several *S. fistulosa*: no basal leaves, teeth on the leaves, hairy stem, leaves, especially the bottom ones, almost like sandpaper. This was a surprise because we did not plant *S. fistulosa* in the rain garden - thank you to the bird or the wind that did.

We left the garden, and went down the jeep trail in search of more species. It was quickly apparent that it would have been better to have held this walk in October when more goldenrod would have been blooming. We keyed out several more *S. stricta* and *S. fistulosa* along the trail, We also found a patch of *S. odora* var. *chapmanii*, no basal leaves, smooth margin on leaves (no teeth), smell to the crushed leaves.

In all we found and keyed out 3 of the 6 goldenrod Al had listed in his key. Still looking for *S. sempervirens*, *S. leavenworthii*, and *S. torifolia*. So the fun will continue - come join us next time.

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#### Nature walks by Bill Dunson in Nov/Dec 2015

Here are notices for four nature walks in SW FL sponsored by the Lemon Bay Conservancy which I am leading during Nov and Dec, 2015. No reservations required, meet in the parking lots, and no fees except for parking at Stump Pass. Please circulate this to your members.

Nov. 30: Edible and medicinal plants at Wildflower Preserve. 3120 Gasparilla Pines Blvd. Englewood, FL. 9-11 am. A short walk around the 80 acre restored golf course owned by the Lemon Bay Conservancy to examine the useful and toxic properties of plants and their animal herbivores and predators.

Dec. 4: Hike the Duisberg Nature Trail and the beach at Middle Beach Park. 6725 Manasota Key Rd. Venice/Englewood, FL. 9-11 am. A short hike up the nature trail and back on the beach to examine the natural history of a sub-tropical hammock, mangroves, and beach dunes.

Dec. 11: Hike about 1.5 miles round trip in Wildflower Preserve, 3120 Gasparilla Pines Blvd., Englewood, FL, to tidal Lemon Creek. This is habitat for juvenile tarpon and we will discuss the ecology of such young fish living in hypoxic mangrove waters and efforts being made to study and restore/create habitat. 9-11:30 am.

Dec. 18: Hike about 2.5 miles round trip to Stump Pass within Stump Pass State Park (entry fee), Englewood, FL. We will study the natural history of the beach, dune, back dune and mangrove areas and discuss the current efforts to stabilize and re-nourish the eroding beach, and dredge the channel. 9-11:30 am.

For information on local native plant field trips and nature walks, please visit the following websites:

Mangrove Chapter: <http://mangrove.fnpschapters.org>  
Sarasota County: [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net) (Denny & Al's walks are posted on this website)  
Sarasota County: [www.discovernaturalsarasota.org](http://www.discovernaturalsarasota.org) (For additional nature activities)  
Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center: [www.cheeflorida.org](http://www.cheeflorida.org) (Charlotte County walks led by CHEC trail guides)  
Lemon Bay Conservancy: [www.lemonbayconservancy.org](http://www.lemonbayconservancy.org)  
(for nature walks and other sponsored activities)

Monthly News & more: NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

Mangrove Chapter President's Message

Our field trip to Bok Tower Gardens and the follow up to Hickory Lake Scrub was a big success, with 16 members and guests traveling to Lake Wales. Two new members joined as part of the trip.

Our first meeting of the year included a presentation by John and Susan Davorec concerning their work as Citizen Climate Watchdogs. Denny and I then gave a presentation on the Goldenrods of the Englewood area, followed by some plants found at Hickory Lake Scrub. The turnout was very good for that early in the season.

More and more of our members are returning from the North. We welcome them and can't wait to put them to work.

The Chapter has adopted the pond in front of Cedar Point and two committees are being formed. First is a planning committee and the second is a work party group. A few have already signed up. Let me know if you are interested in helping out.

The Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival is Saturday, November 21st. We will need your home grown plants and your assistance to represent Mangrove Chapter. Plan to sign up at the November meeting.

Vickie Lowe, a master gardener will speak on "What a Master Gardener Learns About Native Plants". This should be of interest to all of us.

October's field trip is to Old Myakka Environmental Preserve. Two weeks ago Jeff Weber informed Denny that the property was closed due to flooding, but he expected it to be dried out by the 31st and he will try to join us.

November's field trip will be to Casperson Beach in Venice. Watch the next newsletter to find out if we will explore the beach side of go for fall plants in the scrub area.

Sarasota County issued a Proclamation for October is Florida Native Plant Month and included Mangrove Chapter in the Proclamation. [Link to Proclamation](#)

Monthly News & more  
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Al Squires

Upcoming Events

Meeting Announcement for November 10, 2015

Please join us for a presentation on "What a Master Gardener Learns About Native Plants". Our guest speaker will be Vickie Lowe, a northern transplant, like many of us. She and her husband grew tired of battling snow and ice storms during the winter and decided to retire to Florida. They enjoy raising dachshunds, photography, gardening, fishing and golfing. Vickie learned about native plants and acquired valuable gardening information through the Florida Master Gardener Program. She will speak about a variety of recommended native plants for the Southwest Florida homeowner that align with Florida-friendly landscaping guidelines. Learn about native ground covers, grasses, trees, shrubs and perennials that will attract birds, butterflies and other pollinators to your yard, with several gardening tips and sage advice thrown in.

Recommended Reading:  
As a powerful example of gardening with native plants, go to [fnps.org](http://fnps.org), on the first page, scroll down to Recent Blog Posts

and click on "Our Beautiful Subtropical Garden", by Mary Ann Gibbs (Posted 9/5/15 by Ginny Stibolt). Ginny has written a book on "The Art of Maintaining a Florida Native Landscape", which see listed on the side bar among other native plant books. (50% of the royalties from her book go to FNPS).

Welcome New Members: Carolyn Gregsak, Englewood and Sue Hlohinec, Sarasota

VP's Corner - Lois Cantwell

The fall season is a good time for me to evaluate my Florida yard as I return to garden beds that have taken on a life of their own during five months of neglect. I can almost sense that they are cringing from the anticipation of being pruned, weeded and plucked and whispering among themselves "she's baaack". The upside of tidying up the errant ones is that most of them get a second chance at life in a new home. Potting them up and bringing them to our booth at the Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival is a good opportunity. I hope that many of our returning members will do the same.

My big fall project will be to redesign the plant bed that runs along my north boundary. I am acquiring a new neighbor on that side and a variety of plants are encroaching the lot line. Perhaps the newcomers will see me at work and I can engage them in conversation about the benefits of planting "the natives". The project will also create additional opportunities to pot up some plants for donations, adding some specimens to our demonstration garden at Cedar Point Environmental Park, and bringing some to our meetings for our usual raffle. Hopefully, I can share some with the new neighbors as time goes by. If any members are culling out excess or unwanted plants, keep these plant-sharing ideas in mind.

A Few Facts from Waste Management

Americans throw away enough aluminum every 3 months to rebuild our entire commercial airline fleet.

Only 8% of the total plastic waste generated is recovered for recycling

Each of us generates an average of 4.3 pounds of waste per day.

Recycling 35% of U.S. trash saves enough energy to fuel 6 million homes annually, generates \$5.2 billion in raw materials per year, and reduces global warming emissions equal to taking 36 million cars off the road.

Every hour 2.5 million plastic bottles are thrown away in America.

Did You Know?

A ladybug can eat up to 50 aphids a day. Five other "bad bugs" they will eat include: mites, whiteflies, scale insects, mealy bugs and thrips.

Despite its name, there are 2 tailless species of North American swallowtail butterflies: the ruby-spotted swallowtail, found in extreme Southern Texas, and the polydamus swallowtail which can be seen in peninsular Florida. Growers of ornamental citrus regard the giant swallowtail as a pest. Its larvae feed on torchwood, wild lime and hoptree.

The average person uses over 80 gallons of water a day. A typical rain barrel can hold up to 55 gallons of water. Only 3% of Earth's water is freshwater, which is found in glaciers, underground, and in rivers and lakes.

How you can help the pollinator population: Reduce your use of pesticides. Plant native flowering plants. Tell a friend. Educate your neighbors and community about how pollinators may be in trouble. At least 75% of flowering plants depend on them for fertilization. The most common pollinators are bees, birds, bats, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, wasps and small mammals.

## Signs of Fall - by Bill Dunson

Although signs of the fall season are usually evident enough from changes in the weather, there are many clues from nature that a seismic shift in the seasons is occurring. Even if you did not have a calendar, you should be able to predict the month if you study the many signs that nature provides.

During a recent walk on our farm I picked up a handful of nuts from the forest floor. Can you identify the acorns, shagbark hickory nuts, black walnut, buckeye, hazelnut, and chinquapin? These provide a bountiful crop for wildlife to harvest and hide away for the future. Many such nuts are never recovered by rodents and germinate.

There are many soft fruits in the forest including this nannyberry. It is *Viburnum lentago* and is one of many viburnums which produce "haw" fruit which are prized by animals of all kinds. The variation in fruit color is interesting since it illustrates how plants communicate the ripeness of their fruits to frugivores. It would be disadvantageous for the fruits to be eaten before they are ripe, since the seeds are not mature, so unripe fruits are often unpalatable or even poisonous. The change in color from green to red, yellow or black that signals ripeness is easily recognized and is so familiar to us that we often fail to understand the evolutionary meaning.

Grasses are also producing seeds and I here illustrate this with one of my favorites, Indiangrass. Grasses do not have pretty flowers and they are wind pollinated so we do not always consider them to be beneficial to animals. But the seeds are eaten by a wide variety of birds and over an extended period. So it is important to allow grasses to flower and mature seeds in the fall and leave them in the fields during the fall and winter as wildlife food. Grasses can also be quite beautiful at this stage of growth.

One distinct sign of fall around our ponds is the rapid decline in insect activity and a change in the species present. For example the large common green darner migrates south and is replaced by the similarly sized shadow darner. The autumn or yellow legged meadowhawk is the last dragonfly to emerge in the north and likely the last one seen before winter. The male shown here is a beautiful red color to advertise its virility. The appearance of odonate species that specialize in cooler conditions seems to be a classic case of avoidance of competition by a temporal shift in activity.

Eastern tiger swallowtails are a common butterfly in our area but we almost never find the caterpillars which feed on black cherry and tulip poplar. This caterpillar found its way to our porch and has changed from green to brown as it approaches the time for pupation. It has two false eye spots which may confuse avian predators into thinking it is a scary snake. In addition when disturbed it protrudes an osmeterium which looks very much like the tongue of a snake. These mechanisms to avoid predation illustrate how intense the efforts of birds are to find and eat caterpillars, and how gullible birds can be when confronted by these elaborate ruses. When I see large golden garden spiders on their webs I know it is fall. These spiders over-winter as eggs or young spiders and gradually grow to an adult size over the summer. The large female builds a characteristic orb web with distinctive zig-zag patterns called stabilimenta that strengthen the web, and may attract insects and warn birds not to fly into the web.

The migration of hawks is a characteristic fall phenomenon and I recently noticed this juvenile red shouldered hawk in a tree on our farm. The juvenile plumage pattern seems to be good camouflage and signals a lack of maturity to adult hawks. We do not see red shouldered hawks during the breeding season so this must be a bird that is migrating south. They make use of rising currents of warm air or thermals to minimize their energetic cost of long distance flight.

Although the arrival of fall signals the end of the growing season for most animals and plants, it is a time of many changes in the world of natural history that are of great interest. So get out and enjoy the beauties of fall and observe how a few species wax while most others wane in abundance.

Bill Dunson

Trail Guide Training

Saturday

November

7,

2015

1

-

2:30

PM

Cedar Point Environmental Park

Enjoy learning about and teaching others about nature? Looking for a fun and educational way to meet like minded people? Consider becoming a volunteer with Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center at Cedar Point Park, 2300 Placida Road in Englewood.

From October through April, volunteers are need as Trail Guides to lead guided nature walks through several local Charlotte County properties. These are usually from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. To start off the new volunteers, there will be a Trail Guide Training session on Saturday November 7 at 1 PM at Cedar Point Park. Come and learn some plants, animals and interpretive techniques that may help you lead these "walks in the woods".

Where: Cedar Point , 2300 Placida Road, Englewood. Phone 475-0769

If interested, contact Bobbi Rodgers at 941-475-0769 or [bobbi@CHECflorida.org](mailto:bobbi@CHECflorida.org) . To learn more about Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC), go to [www.checflorida.org](http://www.checflorida.org) or visit us on FaceBook.

Board of Directors Meeting - November 6, 2015 at Cedar Point Environmental Park, starts at 2:30 PM. Members Welcome to attend