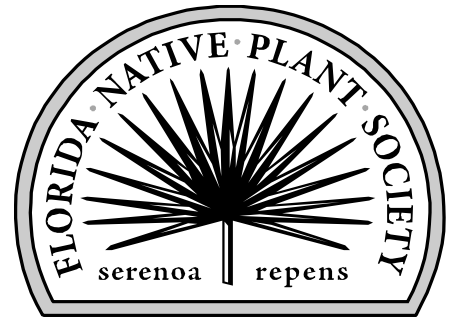




The Lily Pad

The Pine Lily Chapter of the Florida
Native Plant Society



January 2009

Mark's Remarks:

Can you believe that we began our chapter journey in 2007 and have made it to 2009? We've been challenged by space and time changes, but we have settled into a stable schedule; while providing meaningful program and networking opportunities. If you see the value of what we do to educate ourselves and our community about the significance of native plant species and communities, we need a little of your time and energy. Even if you cannot join our leadership team; your attendance at our meetings and other events can make the effort of your leaders more worthwhile. Also, when you encourage friends and acquaintances to participate you can be part of an enlightening that may support land and water stewardship efforts for future generations.

On January 15th, you'll have an opportunity to hear an eye-opening and enjoyable presentation by Jim Egan (Marine Resources Council). Next month, Stetson University's David Rigsby will share how native plants have become a significant aspect of their college campus, in Deland. Both of these programs speak to issues and information that may affect future of our community and our state. Don't miss them!

Jim has a Master's Degree in Environmental Science from Florida Institute of Technology and a Bachelors Degree in Geology, New York City University. Since 1998 he has been the Executive Directory of the Marine Resources Council, a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to the preservation of the Indian River Lagoon. He oversees the nation's second largest volunteer water quality network, MRC's Shoreline Restoration Program, Northern Right Whale Program, the Regional Land Trust of the Indian River Lagoon, the Adopt a Drain Program, Boaters for a Healthy Lagoon, the Brown Bag Lunch Educational Series, and the Library of the Indian River Lagoon. Egan has created several new mangrove shoreline planting techniques found in side by side testing to have survival rates 500% greater than conventional planting techniques. He is also Executive Director of the Indian River Lagoon Nation Scenic Byway Corridor Management Group.

Brazilian Pepper (Category 1* Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council List of Invasive Species)

Common name: Brazilian Pepper-tree

Scientific name: *Schinus terebinthifolius*

Family name: Anacardiaceae, Sumac family

Florida's natural ecosystems are being degraded by an invasion of non-native plants. This invasion is partially responsible for the declining numbers of native biotic communities throughout Florida. Brazilian-pepper tree is one of the most aggressive of these non-native invaders. Where once there were ecologically productive mangrove forest communities native tree hammocks and pine flatlands, now there are pure stands of Brazilian-pepper trees. Scrub pine and flatwood communities are also being affected by this invasion. Nearly all terrestrial ecosystems in central and southern Florida are being encroached by the Brazilian-pepper tree. Land managers and home owners now are realizing the need to remove and stop the spread of this invasive species.



Leaves and fruits of mature Brazilian-pepper tree



The tree is sensitive to cold temperatures

IDENTIFICATION: Brazilian-pepper tree is a shrub or small tree to 10 m (33 ft) tall with a short trunk usually hidden in a dense head of contorted, intertwining branches. The leaves have a reddish sometimes winged midrib and have finely toothed leaflets, 2.5 to 5 cm (1 to 2 in) long. Leaves smell of turpentine when crushed. Petals are 1.5 mm (0.6 in) long. The fruits are in clusters, glossy, green and juicy at first, becoming bright red on ripening, and 6 mm (2.4 in) wide. The seed is dark brown and 0.3 mm in diameter.

* Invasive exotics that are altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structure or ecological functions.

Burn, Burn, Burn! Fire and Florida Ecosystems by Claudia Canty

Fire has been a frequent visitor to Florida's forests for thousands of years. During spring and fall dry seasons, and even during periods of summer rain, fires ignited in grass, dry leaves, and brush at the base of lightning-struck trees. Native Americans also set fires to reduce vegetation, improve wildlife or grazing habitat, and create space for crops. Across much of historic Florida, these natural and human-caused fires maintained open park-like landscapes dominated by longleaf and other pines. Wildlife was nourished by the diversity of plants that thrived in these regular fire regimes.

During much of the 20th century, intensified fire suppression and prevention activities decreased the frequency of wildfires and the area they covered. This brought about changes in forest ecosystems. Understory brush and hardwoods became denser and both live and dead vegetation accumulated, increasing the risk of large and damaging wildfires. In the last 40 to 50 years these changes in Florida's forests have prompted a return to using fire, under carefully controlled conditions, to accomplish many of the same benefits that were historically provided by natural fires. Today, approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres is prescribed burned each year for forest management, agriculture, grazing, and ecological restoration. At the same time, problems associated with smoke in populated areas and on highways have become more prominent. For the continued use of prescribed fire, landowners and the public alike must understand the value of fire for accomplishing various management goals as well as the constraints that limit its use.

Many public agencies and some private landowners conduct prescribed burns to restore or improve natural forest conditions. Longleaf pine forests are commonly burned, but so are ecosystems as diverse as sandhill scrub and wet sawgrass or pondcypress prairies. Fire intensities vary by plant community in temperature, from very low to extremely hot, and in frequency, from one to 40 years. **In these natural forests, burning promotes seed germination, flowering, or resprouting of fire-adapted native plants and generally improves wildlife habitat.**

Carefully applied prescribed burning maintains or restores important ecosystem functions and structures, and is a cost effective method to fulfill a variety of landowner objectives. Prescribed burning also changes the composition and density of existing vegetation. In forestry operations, fire at three- to five-year intervals reduces competing vegetation under forest stands over 10 years old. In pasture and range systems, fire is used at two- to three-year intervals to reduce encroachment of shrubs and invasive exotic weeds (Alan J. Long – University of Florida, 2002).

WORKING TOGETHER: Fire has helped shape north America's wild areas for thousands of years and it's essential for the survival of many plants and animals. It's now widely recognized that we must restore fire to many areas from which it has been excluded. Wildland fires can produce both benefits and damages - to the environment and to people's interests. By working together, people can maximize the benefits of wildland fire and minimize the damages, including threats to public health (US Division of Forestry).

Some species of plants and animals that rely on fire for survival:



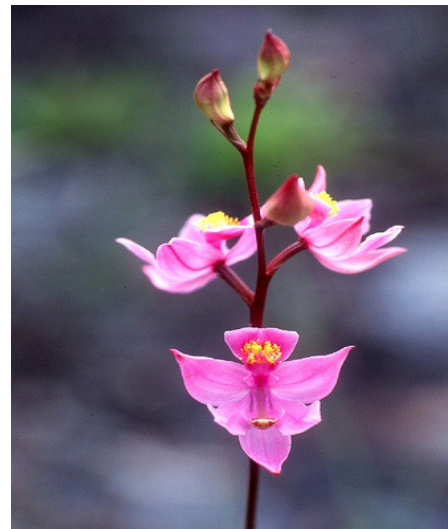
Red-cockaded woodpecker



Gopher Tortoise



Wire grass (*Aristida stricta*)



Manyflowered grasspink
(*Calopogon multiflorus*)



Florida Scrub Jay



Scrub oak (*Quercus inopina*)

Events around Town

Tibet-Butler Preserve

January 24th – Worms Eat Your Garbage!

Did you know that earth worms can help you get rid of your garbage and make your garden beautiful? Bernie Moro, Vermiculturist with Vital Earth, will tell us about this organic recycling.

January 31st – Ecosystem Hike – Pine Circle

Discover the plants and animals that inhabit pine flatwood and oak hammock ecosystems. Call the preserve to reserve your space (407)876-6696

Harry P. Leu Gardens

Camellia Show

Saturday, Jan. 17

Gardens open 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Public may enter blooms for judging 7:00 – 10:00 am

Camellia Class 9:00 am (*pre-registration required*)

Garden Tours 10:00 am & 2:00 pm

Show opens to the public at 1:00 pm

Plant Sale 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Sunday, Jan. 18

Gardens & Show open 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Garden Tours 10:00 am & 2:00 pm

Plant Sale 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Show & Gardens FREE both days

Saturday, January 17 & Sunday, January 18

Coffee with the birds

January 17, 2009 9:00 am

Join an experienced birder on a gentle hike through beautiful Central Florida woodlands identifying birds by sight and sound. Bring your binoculars and a coffee cup. No pets, please. Event is weather permitting.

Fees: \$4.00 per car park entry fee

Contact: deborah.wilson@dep.state.fl.us

Florida Natives in bloom in January:



Coral bean (*Erythrina herbacea*)

Coral bean is a beautiful native perennial in the pea family (Fabaceae). In the spring, its showy red flowers are an excellent nectar source for hummingbirds. In the fall, seed pods open to reveal red seeds. It has interesting compound leaves with three leaflets and prickles on its stems. It grows best in full sun to part shade on well-drained soil. In north Florida the stems die back in winter, but they will re-sprout in spring, and grow to about 3 feet around.

Also blooming:

Tropical sage (*Salvinia coccinea*), Painted leaf (*Poinsettia cyathophora*), Gaillardia (*Gaillardia pulchella*), Lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*)

Love is in the air...

Nesting season begins for roseate spoonbills, Florida sandhill cranes, hawks and owls.

and on the ground...

Gray foxes, bobcats and raccoons are at peak of courtship and breeding this month.



We have a diverse constituency and want to make sure we are doing our best at meeting your needs. If you have ideas for program topics, speakers or field trips, please feel free to send an email to mjohnson@ecotonelanddesign.com

Don't forget our Next Meeting is on Jan. 15th at 6:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church in Kissimmee. Located at the corner of Dakin and Church.

We are always looking for people to help make our chapter everything it can be. If you ever feel you would like to lend a helping hand please just contact any of our board members.

The Board of Directors, Committee Chairmen, and Contacts

President: Mark Johnson
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Florida Native Plant Society Membership Application

Membership in the Florida Native Plant Society enables you to receive their wonderful quarterly magazine *The Palmetto*. Joining the FNPS also entitles you to membership privileges in the Pine Lily Chapter of the FNPS and a subscription to their monthly newsletter *The Lily Pad*.

w New Member w Renewal

Name _____

Business name or organization _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

Check pertinent category

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| w Individual \$25 | w Not-for-profit organization \$50 |
| w Full time student \$15 | w Business or corporate \$100 |
| w Library subscription \$15 | w Donor \$250 |
| w Family or household \$30 | |
| w Contributing \$40 | |
| w Supporting \$250 | |

*Make check payable to: FNPS
 Detach and mail to:
 Pine Lily Chapter of
 Florida Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 278
 Melbourne, FL 32902-0278*

