



# Florida Native Plant Society Pine Lily Chapter

News & Notes

August 2020

## Next Chapter Meeting September 24, 2020

6:30pm

In-Person meetings have been changed  
to online meetings until further notice

Join by clicking the link below  
at 6:30pm on Thursday, September 24:

<https://youtu.be/9fE0yjVk1WY>

**Speaker: Juliet Ryneer: Executive Director of  
the Florida Native Plant Society**

**Topic:** The Florida Native Plant Society: Our Mission in  
Action

Learn about some of our projects across Florida in  
support of our mission. You will hear about our efforts to  
preserve natural lands from development, conservation  
of rare native plant species and about a few major rescue  
and restoration projects.

### Native Plant Nursery

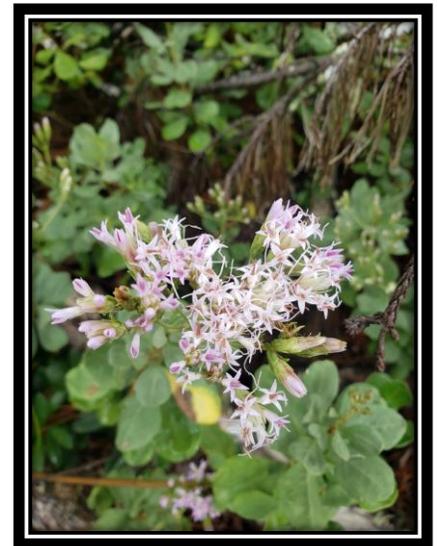
[Green Isle Gardens Native Plant Nursery](#)

11303 FL-33

Groveland, FL 34736

(352) 396-6831

## Garber's scrub stars (*Garberia heterophylla*)



Garberia  
in Split Oak Forest

Photo by  
Valerie Anderson

This low shrub is native to Florida and attains  
a height of 4 to 8 feet. It is also known as *Garberia  
fruticosa*. *Garberia* has dull grayish, viscid foliage  
that is quite distinctive. The obovate leaves are  
alternately arranged on the stems and are held  
vertically. The showy, late season flowers appear in  
terminal corymbs of lavender pink heads and are  
followed by small inconspicuous fruits; the fruits  
are achenes. Flowers literally cover the plant.  
*Garberia* is an attractive plant useful for planting  
alone as a specimen or in groups to mass its  
colorful show in late summer and fall.

More details (pg. 5) on this beautiful plant  
native to and found only in Florida. It is but one of  
the native plants (and species) threatened by the  
proposed roadway which will cut Split Oak Forest  
down the middle.

## Meet Our Speaker

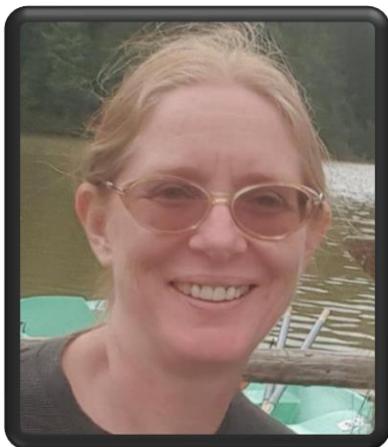
### Juliet Rynear

Juliet Rynear is the Executive Director of the Florida Native Plant Society and previously served as the Society's Conservation Committee Chair for 6 years.

Juliet's work has focused on the conservation of the genetic diversity of Florida's native plants and the restoration of native plant populations and plant communities. She has extensive experience managing projects that include population introductions, population and community rescue, habitat restoration, and habitat monitoring.

She received a Master of Applied Science in Environmental Policy and Natural Resource Management from the University of Denver and earned a Certificate in Applied Plant Conservation from the Center for Plant Conservation.

Juliet has enjoyed a lifelong love of plants and seeks to inspire others to experience the transformative power of our natural world.



## Message from the President

I hope everyone remains safe and well.

**On December 17<sup>th</sup>**, we will have a membership online meeting to have social time, view a native wildflower presentation set to the music of Yoyo Ma and gain member comments on what action issues the chapter should focus on in 2021. Plan ahead and provide input or listen to the happenings of the chapter.

Please contact me at any time if you have a comments or suggestions.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, reading "Karina Veaudry".

Karina Veaudry, President  
Pine Lily Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society  
(321) 388-4781



# Member Highlights

## Mark Johnson

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Mark Johnson, a founding member of the Pine Lily Chapter, has had a profound impact in Osceola County and in the State of Florida related to the Florida Native Plant Society's mission. Originally from Waycross, Georgia, Mark moved to Florida many years ago. He and his wife, Amy, have two adult children. Mark was the Chapter's President from 2012 to 2015 and has served in other capacities since then providing education and assistance at events and programs. He also serves as an advisor to the current Board of Directors. Amy Johnson has also been instrumental in the success of the chapter through consistent volunteering.

Mark promotes the planting of native plants and teaches about the importance of native plants through both the chapter and in his professional capacity as a Landscape Architect. He founded the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Sustainable Sites Committee and served as chairman for several years. The committee gathered for years later and led to the publishing of a state document that is now used nationally. The Sustainable SITES Initiative is a set of comprehensive, voluntary guidelines together with a rating system that assesses the sustainable design, construction, and maintenance of landscapes. It is used by landscape architects, designers, engineers, architects, developers, policymakers, and others to guide land design and development.

Over the years In Osceola County and the Central Florida area, Mark has been involved with ASLA Parks & Recreation Professional Practice Network, FL-ASLA Design Awards Committee, the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals, Central Florida Smart Growth Alliance and the Osceola County Greenways and Trails Team. His prolific involvement in Florida is greatly appreciated by many. Mark also served as an adjunct Professor at Rollins College teaching Environmental Studies.

# Coontie (pronounced kün-tē), Seminole bread, Florida arrowroot (*Zamia pumila* syn. *Zamia floridana*)

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The coontie is a Florida native that is a Cycad -- a "living fossil." These primitive plants were a dominant form of plant life during the time of the Dinosaurs and are a larval food for the rare Florida [Atala](#) butterfly. (Note: There is some disagreement to the correct botanical name; while many older University of Florida publications use *Zamia floridana*, others, including [The Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants](#), use *Zamia pumila*.)



Atala Butterfly  
Photo by Patrick Coin

Coontie



When the Seminoles moved into Florida in the 1700s, they used this plant as a food source. The Indians would cut up pieces of the stems and pound them into a powder which they would wash in water several times to form a starch paste. The paste was fermented, dried and used as flour. **Don't try this yourself, though**—the stem is toxic unless prepared properly. The Creek (Florida dialect) word kontí· roughly means "flour root".

In the 1800's several factories in Florida produced starch from the coontie. The plant grows very slowly -- it can take 30 years to grow a plant that might have a large enough stem to weigh five pounds. So, between the starch factories harvesting them and development in Florida, wild coontie was almost wiped out!

Coontie is not a plant for the water-wise gardener as it prefers rich, moist, well-drained soil. In the wild it grows in Florida hammocks and pinelands. It grows to a height of 3', spreading to 6' or more. It works well for use as a slow growing, low maintenance ground cover. Coontie will grow in full sun but prefers partial shade. **It is a protected species -- do not collect from the wild.** Great for use as a slow-growing, low maintenance ground cover. Deep tap roots make *Zamia* difficult to transplant from established planting; propagation is accomplished by seed. **NOT EDIBLE! Are parts of coontie contain the toxin cycasin.**

# Garber's scrub stars (*Garberia heterophylla*)

By Peggy A. Gretchen

**Type of Plant:** Native evergreen, densely foliated, fall-flowering, woody perennial shrub. Endemic to Florida. **Listed as a threatened species due to loss of our sand scrub habitats.**

**Distribution:** North and central peninsular Florida, and Martin County in South Florida. **Endemic to Florida – found only here and nowhere else in the world!** Found in all the counties surrounding Pasco; however, according to Walter Kingsley Taylor, *Garberia* is not found in the wild in Pasco County. Nonetheless, it is suitable for use as a landscape plant here! Hardiness Zones: 8b to 9, and 10a.

**Landscape Use:** Useful as a freestanding accent shrub or in mixed shrub beds or mass plantings. Excellent low to medium hedge or border. Ideal for difficult dry, sunny areas. When not in bloom, the gray-green foliage provides contrast in the landscape. When in bloom, primarily in the fall, the showy, fragrant, pink to lavender flowers are quite attractive, and provide nectar for butterflies and other pollinating insects. Try one or more in your butterfly garden!

## **Cultivation:**

**Soil:** Sandy, very well-drained, acidic. Avoid placing near concrete foundations or infrastructure, as the associated alkaline soil may harm it.

**Light:** Full sun (best) to light partial shade.

**Water:** Needs well-drained, drier sites. Irrigation not required; in fact, irrigation may be detrimental. Survives on natural rainfall and extremely drought tolerant once established.

**Miscellaneous:** Low to medium salt tolerance. Do not fertilize or only fertilize very lightly (native scrub species have low nutritional requirements). Prune after flowers fade to keep it dense and compact. Moderately long-lived: 25 – 50 years.

**Propagation:** By seeds or cuttings. Best to plant seeds on site, if possible, in pure white sand and scratch into surface. Alternatively, seeds may be started in containers, using sand as growing medium. Do not over water.

**Availability:** Some native plant nurseries, such as Environmental Equities in Pasco County.



Photo by Loret Thatcher

## Pine Lily Chapter Leadership Team and Volunteer Opportunities

- 🍃 Karina Veaudry – President
- 🍃 VACANT – President Elect
- 🍃 Tayler Figueroa – Chapter Representative
- 🍃 Stephanie Gaspar – Interim Secretary
- 🍃 VACANT – Treasurer
- 🍃 Valerie Anderson – Policy & Legislation Chair
- 🍃 Eleanor Foerste – Education & Outreach Chair
- 🍃 Sandy Webb – Conservation Committee Chair
- 🍃 Jennifer Adams – Membership Committee Chair
- 🍃 Irene Paino – Newsletter Editor
- 🍃 VACANT – Publicity & Social Media Coordinator
- 🍃 Membership Committee Members – Mary Nesler, Penny Dickerson

## Upcoming Meetings / Presentations

Links to online meeting presentations are sent via email.

- 🍃 **Thursday, September 24: Virtual Chapter Meeting 6:30pm**  
*The Florida Native Plant Society – Our Mission in Action* – Juliet Rynear, Executive Director, FNPS
- 🍃 **Thursday, October 22: Virtual Chapter Meeting 6:30pm**  
*Monarchs and Milkweed* – Scott Davis
- 🍃 **Thursday, December 17: **Something Special****  
Online social time including native wildflower presentation set to the music of YoYo Ma

**NOTE: Field Trips have been temporarily canceled until January. Beginning in January we will resume field trips using the (6) foot social distancing guidelines. More information coming in the next several months for field trip locations.**

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## Support Pine Lily Through AmazonSmile

Please consider choosing **Florida Native Plant Society Pine Lily Chapter Inc** as your charity when placing Amazon orders through [AmazonSmile](#). Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the Pine Lily Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

**Thank You!**

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## Let's keep in touch!

Click the icons below to visit Pine Lily Chapter Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages



Pine Lily Chapter E-mail:  
[fnpsinelily@gmail.com](mailto:fnpsinelily@gmail.com)