



Florida Native Plant Society

Pine Lily Chapter

News & Notes

April 2021

Next Chapter Online Meeting

April 22, 2021 - 6:30pm

Join by clicking the link below
at 6:30pm on Thursday, April 22nd:

<https://youtu.be/AwzF4nKgeTM>

Chapter Elections

A code will be provided by e-mail for all Pine Lily Members to vote on our slate of officers during the May 27th meeting.

Speaker: Scott Davis

Topic: Milkweeds of Florida

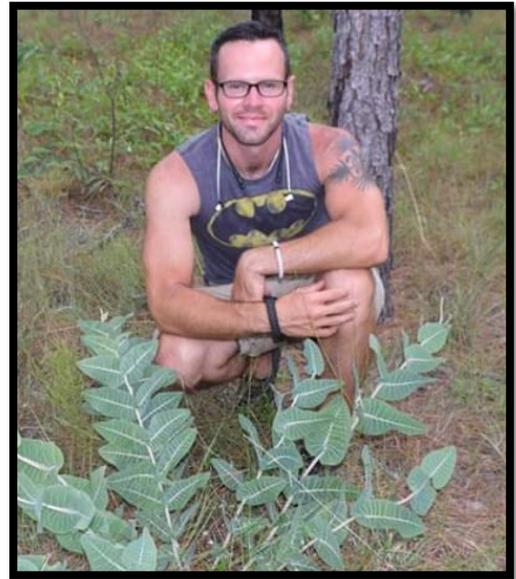
Essential for Monarch Survival. Learn which ones are best for your landscape.

Description: Monarch butterflies are vanishing. Recently, the United States federal government determined that listing the monarch as a protected species was warranted but was unable to officially list the species for protection. Migratory and resident monarch butterflies depend on Florida's native milkweeds for their survival and passage through the state. Virtually all of Florida's native milkweeds are declining statewide.

What species of native milkweed exist? Where are they found? What do they look like? Why are native milkweeds vanishing, and how do we stop the decline? Learn the answers to these questions and so much more!

Scott Davis is a professional botanist in the southeastern United States, with extensive experience as a field ecologist and biologist, listed species, wetlands, environmental regulations and permitting, rescue and translocation of native plants, environmental horticulture, and natural resource management.

Meet Our Speaker



Scott Davis is a foremost expert on Florida's native milkweeds and their habitats. Scott developed the Monarch-Milkweed Initiative, which FNPS has partnered with for the last five years. Scott has surveyed every nook and cranny of Florida in search of milkweeds, having made many important discoveries and breakthroughs for monarch-milkweed conservation. Through his tireless efforts, countless milkweeds have been saved from development, road-widening projects, and land mismanagement. Scott has worked hard to bring people, agencies, and organizations together to save Florida's native milkweeds.

Learn everything there is to know about these amazing plants, how to help, and which ones are best for your property.



FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
40TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

40th Annual Florida Native Plant Society Conference (Virtual this year)

**Register now for the annual
conference at**

<https://www.fnps.org/conference>

The \$35 fee covers everything

Gopher Tortoise Day Report

Gopher Tortoise Day went off smoothly at Split Oak Forest on April 10th. Pine Lily Chapter Members Mary Nesler and Jr McGovern led guided hikes. Jennifer Adams (Pine Lily) and Kay Hudson (Tarflower) manned the FNPS booth. Tayler Figueroa picked up 10 different native species that were gopher tortoise edible from Green Isle Gardens. These were used as demonstration plants in the booth to educate the citizens that came out that day. We were visited by Sheldon, gopher tortoise species ambassador and Mayor of Gopher Tortoise Day 2021 and had an educational update from his handler Kimberly Titterington of Swamp Girl Adventures (a reptile rehabilitation non-profit). Sheldon stole the day when he munched down on some of our demonstration native plants (most notably Blue-eyed Grass, *Sisyrinchium angustifolium* and Deer Tongue, *Carphephorous paniculatus*).

Mark April 10, 2022 on your calendar for next year's Gopher Tortoise Day. We hope to build on our momentum to get more folks out to the event to learn about the tortoises and the native plants that sustain them.

Meet Our New Conservation Committee Chair, Acaica Dunkley



Acaica Dunkley has a passion for gardening and learning to grow different species of native plants.

Her interests lie in researching and reporting on the Conservation issues in Osceola County and will perform these duties as the new Conservation Committee Chair for the Pine Lily Chapter.

She will be joining veteran Pine Lily Chapter and Osceola County Conservation Activist, Sandy Webb, who has championed many conservation initiatives and led discussions in County meetings that brought attention to many projects and ameliorated several including talks centered upon the amount of conservation that should take place on the Large Desert property.

Acaica will be working with other Board of Directors members, putting forth conservation initiatives, and writing Eco-alerts to keep our Chapter members informed.



Asclepias curtissii: Endemic, State Endangered.

Photo: © Tayler Figueroa

Plant Profile: *Amorpha fruticose* (False Indigo Bush)

By Loret Thatcher



Photo: © Jennifer Anderson @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Bastard False Indigo is a deciduous, perennial, multiple stem shrub in the Fabaceae Family. It has purple blooms appearing in late spring. It was brought to my attention by Susan Parent while shopping this past week at Maple Street Natives, the native plant nursery in West Melbourne, FL. According to the USDA database, it has a slow growth rate with a mature height of 15 feet. It prefers moist, well-drained sandy soils and has a medium drought tolerance so will tolerate short periods of drought once established.

It does best in full sun to light shade and provides food and cover for wildlife. It is a butterfly larval host plant for both the Silver-spotted Skipper (*Epargyreus clarus*) and the Southern Dogface (*Zerene cesonia*) and a nectar source for countless others.

Resinous pustules on the plant contain amorpha, a contact and stomachic insecticide that also acts as an insect repellent (Huxley 1992). Desert false indigo also contains some indigo pigment that can be used to make blue dye. It has a symbiotic relationship with certain soil bacteria. These bacteria form nodules on the roots and fix atmospheric nitrogen. The growing plant utilizes some of this nitrogen but other plants growing nearby can also use some (Huxley 1992).

Sources: USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center; and <http://regionalconservation.org/>

Plant Profile: Native Milkweeds

By Marti Wolf



Asclepias incarnata

(Swamp Milkweed)

Swamp milkweed is most commonly found along the edges of flooded plains, waterways, or other wet areas. It grows best in very mucky clay soils and can

grow in neutral to slightly acidic pH soil. In addition to requiring high amounts of water, it likes sun to part-shade.

These environmental conditions align very closely with some of the more marsh-like areas of Florida, making Osceola county a perfect place to grow swamp milkweed. They are easy to grow from seeds and bloom from June to October.

Their pink, purple, or white blooms are very attractive to butterflies, hummingbirds and bees. Swamp milkweed is a larval host for Monarch and Queen butterflies, meaning the entire plant is essential for caterpillar growth and development.



Asclepias perennis

(Aquatic Milkweed)

Although this plant is an important food source for pollinators, all parts of it are toxic to humans.

Aquatic milkweed is also deer-resistant. This means they are less likely to be eaten by deer than typical plants.

Aquatic milkweed is found in hydrated soils along floodplains, waterways, swamps, and other wetlands. It is best to grow this species in moist, wet soils or soils that are regularly irrigated. They require sun to part shade, making them ideal for central Florida.

The blooms of aquatic milkweed are white and pink. They bloom between May and September and can be propagated by seeds. The conspicuous flowers of aquatic milkweed make them ideal for attracting

pollinators like bumble bees and honey bees.

They also support conservation biological control, meaning they attract predatory insects that consume pests.

Aquatic milkweed is attractive to Monarch butterflies, who consume its nectar. The caterpillars of Monarchs and several moth species feed on the foliage, seeds, roots, and juices of the plant.

Asclepias obovata (Pineland Milkweed)



Pineland Milkweeds, as the name suggests, grow best in the sandy soil of pine and oak forests. Pinelands are also known as Pine Rockland forests and often take root in the exposed limestone substrate of south Florida.

These forests are canopied almost entirely by slash pine (*Pinus elliotii* var. *densa*) but have an incredibly diverse understory of endemic species that grow only in the local area. Pineland Milkweed is one of those species.

They require moderate levels of water, thriving in dry to moist soil, but they are fairly drought and heat resistant. This milkweed does well in acidic soils with a pH below 6.8.

The blooms of pineland milkweed are orange, yellow, and green, appearing between May and September. This species is a perennial, cutting down on the work of planting and allowing for a consistent habitat for local fauna every year.

The interesting foliage of the Pineland Milkweed attracts Monarch butterflies for nectar. This plant also acts as a larval host for Monarchs. In addition to supporting the butterfly population, this species of milkweed is good for native bees and predators that control the pest population.

Continued on Next Page -

Milkweeds Continued -

Asclepias verticillata (Whorled Milkweed)



The whorled milkweed grows in sandy, clayey, or rocky soils. This species prefers dry soil, meaning it doesn't require a significant amount of watering. It does well in part shade and sun. Whorled milkweed would be a good species of native milkweed for those living in drier regions of Florida.

The blooms of this species are white and green, appearing between May and September.

All parts of whorled milkweed are poisonous for humans, but they also pose a risk to livestock. In areas where animals graze, this species of milkweed is considered a weed. However, whorled milkweed is valuable to Florida ecosystems. The conspicuous flowers are important for attracting butterflies and the plant is a larval host for Monarchs. Native bees like bumble bees and honey bees are drawn to this plant, so whorled milkweed is helpful for supporting local pollinators.



Osceola's Plume, *Stenanthium densum* Photo © Scott Davis

Senate Resolution 109 was passed by the United States Senate on March 25th declaring April as National Native Plant Month! Read more here: [Florida Native Plant Society Blog](#).

Field Trip Report

Lake Lizzie Preserve – North Loop

By Jennifer Cobb Adams

On March 27, eight Pine Lily members and their friends and family met with Chris Kincaid, Osceola County Urban Forester, to hike the North Loop of Lake Lizzie Preserve.

Taylor and Jose Figueroa and their sons Roen and Sagan joined Jennifer Adams, Valerie Anderson, Glenda Bowling and Barbara Hinderman on the hike. Lake Lizzie Preserve was formerly used in cattle operations and turpentine production, and slash pines and saw palmetto are plentiful.



Rusty Lyonia, *Lyonia ferruginea* in bloom

Both shiny lyonia and rusty lyonia were in full bloom, as were some of our native blueberries, particularly shiny blueberry. Deer moss, yellow hatpins, netted pawpaw, wild pennyroyal, and yellow rockrose were notable plants during our visit.

Chris Kincaid noted the importance of prescribed fire in maintaining parts of Lake Lizzie Preserve, but that needs to be done with care given nearby homes. Though we were hoping to see a gopher tortoise in the sandy scrub area, they were obviously hiding in their burrows that day! In total, the hike took a little over 2 hours. Jose Figueroa filmed parts of the hike so that we could share this experience with our Pine Lily membership at a later date. We tentatively plan to hike the South Loop trails at Lake Lizzie in late June, hoping to see other interesting and potentially rare plants in bloom. More information on the June field trip date will be in the May newsletter.

Pine Lily Chapter Leadership Team

- Karina Veaudry – President
- VACANT – President Elect
- Tayler Figueroa – Chapter Representative
- Stephanie Gaspar – Secretary
- VACANT – Treasurer
- Valerie Anderson – Policy & Legislation Comm. Chair
- VACANT – Education & Outreach Coordinator
- Acaica Dunkley – Conservation Committee Chair
- Sandy Webb – Conservation Committee Vice Chair
- Jennifer Cobb Adams – Membership Comm. Chair
- VACANT – Newsletter Editor
- Mark Gaspar – Website Manager
- VACANT – Publicity Committee Chair
- VACANT – Social Media Coordinator

Note: If you are interested in serving in a role that is currently vacant, please contact Karina Veaudry at kveaudry@nflandscape.com or (321) 388-4781.

Upcoming Meetings & Presentations

Links to online meeting presentations are sent via email to members and can be found in the newsletters.

- **May 14-16** – *FNPS Annual Conference* (Virtual this year)
- **May 27** – Zach Prusak, The Nature Conservancy
 - Biodiversity Through Pyrodiversity. Learn about unique ecosystems.
- **May Field Trip** (date TBD) – Disney Wilderness Preserve - Learn about the native plants we will walk by from a The Nature Conservancy expert.
- **June 24** – Chuck O'Rourke, USDA
 - Understanding the Role of the Soil and Water Conservation District
- **June Field Trip** (date TBD):
South Loop of Lake Lizzie Preserve
 - Visit an area of rare native plants with an expert ecologist



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Thank You!

Let's keep in touch!

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



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Pine Lily Chapter Website:
Pinelily.fnpschapter.org