



the Tarpaper

The Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society



Volume: XVIII January 2006 ISSUE

JANUARY PROGRAM:

The Naval Stores Industry in Florida and the Southeast

The era of wooden ships brought about a worldwide demand for tar and pitch, obtained from the resin of conifers, to seal the hulls and rigging. As soon as Europeans set foot in our country they realized the vast wealth in the conifer forests of the southeast.



Georgia Agrirama
Turpentine Still

This made us the leading producer in the world of naval stores and turpentine. Florida was part of this history and is what we will explore in the program. How was it extracted from the trees, prepared and shipped? What was a turpentine camp like? What impact did it have on our forests, particularly the longleaf pine? These are but a few of the questions to be answered.

Paul Eisenbrown, a Tarflower member and the current field trip coordinator, will give the program. He enjoys the outdoors and has done a lot of hiking and exploring throughout the state. Knowing something about the history of a place you visit enhances the experience. He's always appreciated the hardships of those who came before us.

JANUARY 7, 2006 FIELD TRIP

We're going to visit the Florida Aquarium in Tampa on January 7, 2006. At the aquarium, we will follow the path of water as it passes through 8 different habitats. Plan to carpool. Entry fees are \$17.95 for adults, \$14.95 for seniors 60+ and \$12.95 for children ages 3-12. We will eat lunch as a group. Meet in front of the Goodings at the Crossroads Shopping Center in Lake Buena Vista at 8:00 a.m. Take I-4 west and get off at the Lk. Buena Vista/535 exit. Turn right and the Crossroads is the next light. Turn right just in front of the

McDonalds. Goodings is on the left a short ways in. Don't eat too big of a breakfast as we will stop at a Cuban bakery for pastry in Tampa before going to the aquarium. Check out the website:



Florida Aquarium
Tampa, FL

<http://www.flaquarium.org/> Contact Paul Eisenbrown at 407-876-5191 if you have any questions.

Christmas Party *Jean Vasicek*

The Christmas Party at Rick and Pam Ehle's home was a great success. Thank you Rick and Pam for a great day!



Events and Opportunities - Daniela DeBiase

Saturday, January 21st – Workday at Oakland Nature Preserve. We will continue to work on the Tarflower chapter plot. Since most plants have entered a period of dormancy, this might be a good time to direct attention to some invasive trees that are growing in the preserve. They're still saplings and quite manageable. Wear layered clothes, hat, and sunscreen. Bring water, a snack, shovel, clippers, and perhaps a saw.

What Else is Happening

Thursday December 29th – Between the Holidays Walk, at Lake Norris Conservation Area. This Lake County event will begin at 9:30 AM, The Lake Norris See "Events" page 2.

Events *continued from page 1.*

Conservation area is 2,352 acres and was acquired by the St. Johns Water Management District to help protect the hardwood hammocks along the western shore of the lake, and Black Water Creek. Recreation on the property is managed by the Lake County Water Authority and recreational opportunities include hiking, camping, biking, horseback riding, canoeing, and nature study. This leisurely naturalist led walk will be about a mile from the parking lot to the lake and then of course a mile back. For more information call 352-343-3777.

Sunday, January 22nd – Jean Varicek, “the honey lady”, will present a program on honeybees for the Beautyberry Chapter of FNPS. She will show a DVD "Tales from the Hive" which will run 60 minutes. After the video she will answer questions about her experiences as a beekeeper. Then there will be a honey-tasting party. The program will be at Trout Lake Nature Center in Eustis. A Plant exchange/social starts at 1:30pm. The program begins at 2. For more information, please call Lavon Silvernell at 352-357-7536

Friday - Sunday, February 17 - 19th – Putnam County Environmental Council, Inc presents *Rally For the River*. Here is a brief example of what's in store! Friday, February 17, 2006: SMART GROWTH SUMMIT 9:00 am – 5:00 pm at Palatka's Riverfront Inn. Smart Growth leaders will be featured in this FREE workshop. For more information, call Margy Bielling at 352-685-2434.

Saturday and Sunday, February 18-19, 2006: FIELD TRIPS Here's a chance to explore some of Putnam's beautiful places on field trips led by noted experts. Most trips are free but outfitters are available for guided canoe or kayak trips and pontoon boat tours. For field trip list, call David Zeigler at 352-546-4715 or send email to davidpzeigler@aol.com Call me at 407 423 3554 for more information on this event.

Looking Ahead

Saturday, February 18th – Orlando Wetland Festival. For the past few years we've had a booth at this event.

Saturday, March 4th – Tibet Butler Preserve's annual environmental festival takes place on March 4th, 2006, from 9-4pm. This year, the event will focus on educating home owners on how to create a backyard habitat; that is having areas on their property that invite wildlife and celebrate the values and beauty of Florida's natural communities. People should walk away with an understanding of how this preserve benefits the community. Mark your calendar for this one

because Tarflower Chapter will have a table at this event with a display on how to use native plants in the urban landscape.

Saturday and Sunday, March 25th and March 26th – Harry P. Leu Gardens' Annual Spring Plant Sale. Mark your calendar! This is our big fund raiser for the year.

How to Catch a Swarm of Bees Jean Vasicek

I'm about to capture my first swarm of bees. The swarm is on a low branch. It should be easy to force the bees into a box. Yeah, right. I've got ½ million bees staring at me and I've got to take them home with me....just me. I put my suit on. I'll make it look like it's really dangerous. A large crowd has gathered to watch. So, I wrap myself in a plastic cocoon. Oh, it's soooo hot in here. And just look at all of those bees. Yep, there must be a million of them! (Probably only about 50,000, but it seems like a million.) My smoker....is it smoking? I'm ready. I'm sweating...it's a thousand degrees...and.....I think I'm going to pass out.

So, I take the plunge. One more check for smoke. The box is in place. Snippers...where are my snippers. I can hardly see with the veil in the way and oh I'm so hot. There are the snippers. I grab the branch and with one quick snip the branch is free. It's free. I've got 1 million bees in my arms....then....oh no....the branch, it's falling. I've dropped it. I failed beekeeping 101! You are NOT supposed to drop the branch. Now there are bees everywhere. They're in the bushes. They're on the ground. And everybody's watching. It's a good thing they're all petrified. They're too far away to really see.

Quickly, quickly....grab the bees. With what? My hands, all I've got is my hands. So scoop by scoop I grab the bees with my hands. Just get enough bees in the box to convince the queen that she has a new home. But, it's so hot...and there are bees everywhere. They're bouncing off my veil. They're in a frenzy. I've disturbed their nest. A little smoke, that should get their attention. Pretend to burn their house down. They'll have to do something. And it works, every bee goes in the box.

My audience has dwindled....the show is over....

But, what about when I get home? The bees have got to go from the box into their new home. Bees can't live in a cardboard box. Bees need structure. For a beekeeper to effectively extract honey, bees must live in a manmade hive. The hive consists of a hive body with supers stacked on top. The hive body is where the queen lays eggs or brood. In between the super and the hive body, there's a queen excluder. The excluder prevents the queen from wandering out of the hive body

and laying eggs in the supers. It's always a relief when extracting honey to know that the queen is nowhere around.

A hive body can contain several brood boxes. A brood box is roughly 15"x19" and contains exactly 10 or maybe 9 frames. A frame is like a picture frame. Frames can be made of wood or plastic, but instead of framing a picture, a frame encloses a honeycomb structure. The structure gives the bees a head start on the comb formation for honey and brood storage.

The bees in my cardboard box had no structure. They had been flying wild and free for several days. It was time for them to settle into a regular home. And, every beekeeper knows there is exactly one way to introduce bees into a new hive, and every way is different. I've listened to beekeepers ramble on for hours....and hours. Beekeepers love to talk. But it's different when you're in the moment with 50,000 bees in your arms. How do you make the bees move in to their new living room? How do you tell them that the wooden shelter with preformed honeycomb "furniture" is more perfect than the cardboard box you've just given them?

I felt like I was hanging from a rock half way up Half Dome at Yosemite with no good hand holds in sight. Eventually, you've got to take the plunge. Right or wrong, you've got to do something. You can't hang there forever. I took my cardboard box full of bees, lifted the lid on the hive, and tossed the bees into the void. I slammed the lid shut and to my surprise they stayed inside.

Then, I had another problem. The bees were in the hive, but they had empty space. To make room for all of the bees and not smash them against the frames during the toss, I had placed an empty brood box above the bees new home. The idea was that I would wait a few hours for the bees to settle and then remove the empty box. The rains came before I could get the box. Bees don't like rain. Rain makes bees angry. It rained for 3 days.

Bees don't like rain and they don't like empty space. If bees have empty space inside their hives, they fill it up. They spent 3 rainy days trying to fill up that space. When the rain stopped, I opened the box and found a maze of honeycomb attached to the lid of the hive.

This had to be fixed, but how? Every time I tried to shake the bees down into the hive, they'd just fly back up to the lid. Bees were flying everywhere and some of them were getting smashed. I really didn't want to smash the queen.

The internet. I had to consult the internet. Everything can be fixed with a consultation on the internet. Florida has a great beekeeper society. I sent out the alert to the beekeepers society and received the somewhat hostile reply, "you should never, NEVER, leave empty space

in a bee hive." Well, I hadn't planned on the rain. The bees were already in the box. They had had empty space for over 3 days. What was I supposed to do now? The bees had attached their comb to the lid of the box. Their "cement" wasn't working and every time I lifted the lid, parts of the comb would fall out, bees flying everywhere.

I had to force the bees to move into the lower hive body and evacuate the empty box. I was going to have to



Hive body lid with comb attached. Bees are crossing bridge to hive, left (not shown), to rejoin their queen.

build an entrance platform and the platform would need a bridge to the hive. Improvising, I designed my first bee expressway with 2 cement blocks and an extra hive body lid. The lid, placed on the blocks, formed a nice platform leading directly into my beehive's front door. I was ready, and the next part had to happen fast. I pulled the lid, loaded with bees and honeycomb from the hive, shook the bees and the comb onto the "expressway", removed the empty box and ran for my camera. Before I could fire off 2 photos, all of the bees had sped into the hive leaving behind their old comb. The rest was simple. I took the comb and wedged these pieces in between my prefabbed frames, and closed the lid on the box.

Several weeks later the hive was full of young brood, baby bees. Thousands of little, white, "worms", or brood, were individually wrapped in beeswax. The queen was alive and laying eggs. Success!



Bees walk the plank. (Action Photo, out of focus!)

Don't Do This at Home! Daniela DeBiase

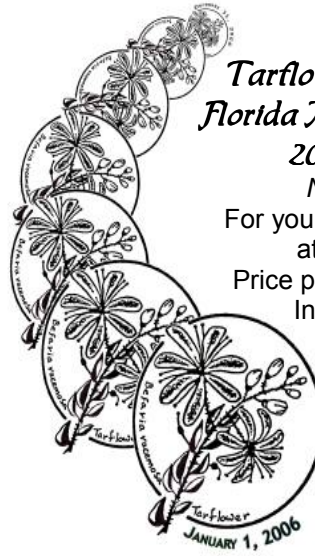
Who did this just weeks before our scheduled Cady Way workday?! Obviously someone who needs to learn proper palm pruning techniques! Though Tarflower Chapter did a general weeding and pruning in this native plant garden at Cady Way last December, it didn't save these established silver saw palmettos from a hack job.



BEFORE



AFTER



Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society 2006 Calendar

Now available.

For yours, call Dani DeBiase at 407 423 3554

Price per calendar: \$15.00 Includes shipping

- \$25 Individual - \$30 Family
- \$50 Non-Profit
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- \$15 Full-time Student
- \$15 Library or School

Make Checks Payable to:
 FNPS
 Florida Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 278
 Melbourne, FL 32902-0278
 Phone: 321-271-6702

SOCIETY NEWS:

Chapter Meetings

Chapter meetings are held the first Tuesday each month at **HARRY P. LEU GARDENS**, (1920 N. Forest Avenue, Orlando). The next meeting is **Tuesday, January 3** at 7:00 P.M. Refreshments & Bazaar at 6:15. See you there! (For directions, call 407-246-2620 option 1)

Executive Committee

The next board meeting will be TBD. For more information contact Rich Ehle. Members are welcome to attend.

President - Rick Ehle 407-349-0502
 Vice President (Program) - Liz Block 407-963-6344
 Vice President (Events) - Daniela DeBiase 407-423-3554; evybaby@juno.com
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