



# the Tarflower

The Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

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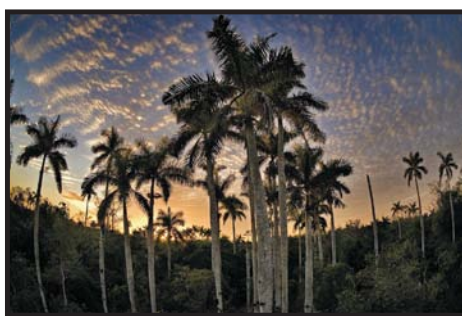


## DECEMBER 7 PROGRAM —

### A Year in the Life of Fakahatchee with Dennis Giardina

In Collier County is found the “Amazon of North America” and the largest State Park in Florida, the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve — a linear swamp forest, about 20 miles long by 5 miles wide and oriented from north to south. It has been sculpted by the movement of water for thousands of years and clean fresh water is the key to its existence. Beneath a protective canopy of bald cypress trees flows a slow moving, shallow river or slough that is warmer than the ambient temperature in the winter and cooler in the summer. The buffering effect of the slough and the deeper lakes that punctuate it shield the forest interior from extreme cold temperatures. This fosters a high level of rare and endangered tropical plants. Fakahatchee hosts a wide array of habitats and forest types, from wetter swamps and prairies to drier islands of tropical hardwood hammocks and pine flatwoods. Its groves of native royal palms are the most abundant in the state and in places, bald cypress trees and royal palms share the forest canopy. It is the orchid and bromeliad capital of the continent with 46 native orchids and 14 native bromeliad species. It is a haven for wildlife. Florida panthers still pursue white-tailed deer from the uplands across the

wetlands. Florida black bears and Eastern indigo snakes, Everglades minks and diamondback terrapins can still be found there. In spite of the ecological damage visited upon the Fakahatchee Strand in the past by clear-cut logging, road building and drainage, it has recovered remarkably well and remains a fairly intact and functional natural system.



Fakahatchee Strand Preserve Preserve



ghost orchid

For over 20 years, Dennis Giardina’s career has focused on endangered species recovery and exotic species control. He began his biological career in 1989 with the US Forest Service at the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico, working on the Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Project. From 1991 to 1996, he worked at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, restoring long leaf pine ecosystems and from 1996 to 2005 he worked at Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. From 2005 to 2008 he was the Park Manager of Fakahatchee Strand Preserve. In January, 2008, Dennis accepted the newly created position of Everglades Region Biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Dennis’ presentation will chronicle the year leading up to his departure from Fakahatchee, including images of the plants and animals he encountered.

## HOLIDAY MINI BAZAAR



Come to the December meeting ready to shop! Pick up some great holiday gifts from some of our favorite local vendors: *Winter Park Honey, Cards by Peg and Peg, Birdhouses by Richard Poole, “Rustables” Garden signs, worm fertilizer products* and we’ll also have *plenty of books and seeds available for purchase.*

**Come early! Shopping begins at 6:30pm!**

### FUTURE PROGRAMS

**JANUARY 4** Landscape maintenance tips from Troy Springer of Springer Environmental

**FEBRUARY 1** Catherine Bowman presents “To Pull or Not To Pull”

### UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

**DECEMBER** No field trip.

**JANUARY 8** Day trip to Weedon Island Preserve, St. Petersburg: Mangroves and Native American History Museum

**FEBRUARY 12** Isle of Pine Preserve: Orange County’s Newest Wilderness Preserve

## FIELD TRIP TO WEKIWA STATE PARK, SAND LAKE AREA by Pete Dunkelberg



Our group gathers in the Sand Lake Parking lot

us a short introduction to the ecology of the area right in the parking lot. Then we walked slowly around Sand Lake with Deborah pointing out interesting things every few steps. On many of our field trips, we pay attention mostly to what's blooming; but as Deborah ably demonstrated, it is much more informative to recognize plants by their leaves and other characteristics and notice how plant communities relate to the physical environment.



Deborah explains some environmental features to the group



poison sumac  
(*Toxicodendron vernix*)

One of the most important things we learned is that there were quite a few poison sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*) plants growing right on the edge of the lake. The plants are easy to spot at this time of year because of their bright reddish-orange foliage, so this is a good time to learn their general look — but don't touch! Poison sumac can be more irritating than poison ivy. According to Gil Nelson's *Trees of Florida*, poison sumac is "A slender sparingly branched deciduous shrub or small tree to about 7 meters..." The compound leaves with reddish petioles, well spaced leaflets, and inequilateral leaflet blades

We met at the Sand Lake parking lot at 2pm in the afternoon — a nice change from our usual morning trips. Right off, we were pleased to see quite a few first timers. Deborah Green, our excellent naturalist guide for the afternoon, gave

set this tree apart from all other wetland species in northern Florida." So now you know.

Just a little away from the lake there are plants that grow with less moisture. We saw rusty lyonia, blueberry and a few deerberry and huckleberry. Deborah noticed one or two small bushes of dog hobble, and later we saw lots of dog fennel and false hoarhound. Both of the latter are quite attractive with their numerous white flowers; I don't know where those doggone names come from.

Another attractive plant in flower was *Garberia heterophylla*. This species is endemic to our area and has no common name other than its generic name, garberia. Its flowers are attractive to bees, butterflies and humans.

After going most of the way around the lake, we continued our walk on woody trails and went a little deeper into the woods than originally planned. There we met a hungry black bear, and I'm afraid we interrupted its meal just a bit. It must take most of the day to get a bear-sized meal from scattered berries. The bear was quite obliging in posing for pictures. Back in that area we also saw some wild azalea and tarflower. We finally found our way back to the parking lot around 6pm.



false hoarhound  
(*Eupatorium rotundifolium*)



garberia  
(*Garberia heterophylla*)  
(Photo: Paul Eisenbrown)



hungry black bear  
(Photo: David Carrazana)

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Do you have a story you'd like to share with other Tarflower members? Is there an upcoming event you'd like to promote? Or maybe there's something you'd like us to cover in a future issue. Send your articles, events, ideas and suggestions to Stacey Matrazzo, *Tarpaper* Editor, at [stacey@impactpress.com](mailto:stacey@impactpress.com). The deadline to submit an article, event or announcement for the January issue is December 15.



## SAM HOPKINS GRANT ANNOUNCED

The Florida Native Plant Society has established a grant honoring Sam Hopkins, founding member of the Society and Tarflower Chapter. Sam served as the initial vice-president and later as field trip chairman. He gave many talks on identifying native plants and for many years presented a segment entitled "What's Blooming" at the Tarflower monthly meetings.

Members of the Tarflower chapter and friends of Sam Hopkins are encouraged to help fund this grant by sending donations to the Florida Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 278, Melbourne, Florida 32902-0278 and designating Sam Hopkins Grant, Account# 15340 on the check. In order for this grant to be awarded at the annual state conference in May, all donations must be received by February 1, 2011. All donations to this fund are tax deductible.

## UPCOMING SCRUB LUPINE PLANTINGS

The Scrub Lupine Planting Partners will be planting scrub lupines in December at the following locations:

**DEC 17 at Mackay Gardens and Lakeside Preserve in Lake Alfred (Polk County)** — We will begin at 9:00am and will have about 400 seedlings to plant.

**DEC 18 at Lake Blue Scrub Ridge Ranger workday** — Volunteers will be helping with site maintenance and seed sowing for the next round of in situ germination trials.

Mark your calendars and spread the word to anyone who may be interested in helping. Please contact Alice Bard at 407-884-2000 or Juliet Rynear at [jrynear@boktower.org](mailto:jrynear@boktower.org) or 863-676-1408, ext. 2241 if you plan on attending.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR 2011 FNPS CONFERENCE!

The 2011 FNPS Conference, *Patios, Preserves and Public Spaces — Making Connections*, will be held in Maitland and will be co-hosted by the Tarflower chapter. Volunteers are needed to assist in the Chapter booth, with registration and field trips and with the youth program. Photographers and A/V room monitors are also needed. For details including time/shift commitments, please contact Jenny Welch, 2011 Conference Committee Chair at [mwelch@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwelch@cfl.rr.com) or Phyllis Gray, 2011 Conference Committee Vice Chair at [psgray@mactec.com](mailto:psgray@mactec.com). The next meeting of the conference committee will be held on Saturday, December 4, 2010 at 10am at MACTEC (4150 N. John Young Parkway, Orlando, FL 32804).

## FNPS 2011 ENDOWMENT GRANT RESEARCH AWARDS AND CONSERVATION GRANT AWARDS

The Florida Native Plant Society maintains an Endowment Grant program for the purpose of funding research on native plants. These are small grants (\$1500 or less), awarded for a one-year period, and intended to support research that forwards the mission of the Florida Native Plant Society "to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida."

FNPS Conservation Grants support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida. These are small grants (\$1500 or less) awarded for a one-year period. On-the-ground native plant community restoration, land acquisition and habitat enhancement projects are examples of projects that this grant is intended to assist. To qualify for a Conservation Grant, the proposed project must be sponsored by an FNPS Chapter.

Application guidelines and details are on the FNPS Web site ([www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)). Questions regarding the grant programs should be sent to [info@fnps.org](mailto:info@fnps.org).

Application deadline for the 2011 Awards is March 4, 2011. Awards will be announced at the 2011 Annual Conference in Maitland.

### CALL FOR SCIENTIFIC PAPERS AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS FOR FNPS 2011 CONFERENCE

The Florida Native Plant Society annual conference will be held at the Sheraton Orlando North, Maitland, Florida, May 19-22, 2011. The Research Track of the Conference will include presented papers on Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21. Posters will be on display on Friday and Saturday and the poster session will be on Saturday afternoon.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida including preservation, conservation and restoration. Presentations are planned to be 20 minutes in total length (15 min. presentation, 5 min. questions).

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as an MS Word file by email to Paul A. Schmalzer at [paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov](mailto:paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov) by February 1, 2011. Include title, affiliation, and address. Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

## 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, December 7 at 6:30pm**. See you there! (For directions, call 407-246-2620 option 1).

**Executive Committee** — The next board meeting will be **Thursday, December 9, 2010 at 6pm**. For more information, contact Catherine Bowman. Members are welcome to attend.

**The Tarpaper Online!** — Current and past issues of *The Tarpaper* can be viewed online by accessing the chapter website at [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org). Click on Chapters -> Tarflower and follow the instructions to *The Tarpaper!*

### BECOME A MEMBER

Make checks payable to:

Florida Native Plant Society  
P.O. Box 278  
Melbourne, FL 32902-0278

To join online or for more information, visit [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org) or call 321-271-6702.

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