



the Tarpaper



The Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Volume XX • October 2013

OCTOBER 1 PROGRAM

Our Best Native Vines & Groundcovers and the Butterflies They Attract presented by Jon Pospisil

Have you ever thought, "I'd like to replace some of my St. Augustine lawn with a native plant landscape that will attract more butterflies"? Or maybe you've thought, "That fence is unsightly! If only it was hidden by a pretty flowering vine!" Many of our Florida native vines and groundcovers not only provide lovely blooms that draw butterflies, but also are easy to grow without pesticides or irrigation!

Come spend an hour to learn which of our wonderful native plants will work well in your yard and how you can successfully use them in your landscape. FNPS member Jon Pospisil has prepared a special program featuring many photographs of our native plants and flowers used in the landscape. These are the very plants that let you reduce your use of water, pesticides and fertilizers while supporting our birds and butterflies with their lovely leaves, blossoms and seeds. Many of the featured plants are easy for beginners to enjoy and some will be featured in this month's plant drawing.

Growing up in south Florida, Jon was an organic gardener in his teenage years, but got away from Florida and from gardening for college and career. Upon moving back to Central Florida, he fell into conventional landscaping for his home as something that he could do quickly and with little thought. Realizing how much water his lawn needed and disliking the chemicals he was putting on it, Jon wanted to transition his yard to one in which the turf grasses were to be the condiment rather than the main course. As he explored alternatives, he was elated to learn that there was a native plant society that could help him along in the process. Among the many rewards from transitioning his landscape has been the delight of seeing half a dozen zebra longwing butterflies dancing around each other in a shaft of light peaking through his trees. Now he shares what he's learned from his own successes and failures with groundcovers and vines as he continues the transition, along with hints from others he's picked up along the way.



Our Best Native Vines
& Groundcovers and
the Butterflies
They Attract

OCTOBER 12 Wekiva Basin BioBlitz (in lieu of a field trip)

Note: A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the October 1 meeting for participation in this event.

The BioBlitz planning team, including Randy Mejeur and Jay Exum, is preparing for the fall BioBlitz at three Wekiva Basin state lands: Wekiwa Springs State Park, Seminole State Forest, and Rock Springs Run State Park. Many Tarflower Chapter members participated in the 2012 spring Bioblitz and I am sure we will be well represented, along with Seminole and Lake County FNPS Chapters, on the one long Saturday this fall. The BioBlitz, as the name suggests, was organized in order to document the overall biodiversity of the Wekiva springs and river basin, to highlight the sensitive and diverse natural communities that are contained within this area.

In addition to plants, teams will search out birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish. All teams welcome those with a good eye to help document species from all these taxonomic groups. **You don't have to be an expert to participate—just inquisitive and a little field hardy.** If you are interested in looking for various creatures, you can certainly forego plant team participation and join one of the other teams. If you were not able to participate last time, we had a very fine time in the field! There are many knowledgeable biologists, so if you are new to identifying plants or animals, please know that we need all the eyes we can get and you will see and learn about many new species.

A list of plants for the basin is posted on the Tarflower website (<http://tarflower.fnpschapters.org>) and includes those species that have been documented or are expected to occur in one or more of the parks. Those plants that we found in the spring at Wekiwa Springs State park are noted—we found 386 species! Let's add to that with all the fall bloomers, particularly the grasses and asters. You can look at the www.plantatlas.usf.edu website and search by Orange and Lake Counties to see lists of species that have been documented with voucher specimens for those counties and review photos of potentially occurring plants. We will bring books in the field and will likely need to spend some time the following day keying out whatever species we may not be certain of in the field. (The organizers will acquire the necessary permits for the plant team leaders to collect specimens for later identification.) Plant checklists will be available on the day of the event; or, you may choose to print one in advance to study up a bit.

Sabal minor mailing clarification

FNPS would like to clarify some misinformation that has been floating around regarding the distribution of the *Sabal minor*, its bimonthly newsletter. For at least a couple of years now, FNPS has automatically opted in members to receive the *Sabal minor* via email as long as they have a valid email address on file and have not specifically requested paper delivery. A link to the online *Sabal minor* is emailed bimonthly to all current members with email. FNPS will send paper copies via snail mail to those members who have requested it or who do not have email on file. About 25% of our membership continues to receive paper delivery of the *Sabal minor*.

Report upland snake sightings!

Florida Fish & Wildlife Services are now collecting sightings of three upland snake species: Florida pine, short-tailed, and Southern hognose snake. This project is to determine the current distribution and status of these species, all of which have been petitioned for federal listing. They are primarily interested in observations from 2000 to present. They will also be conducting road surveys and drift-fence surveys in areas without recent observations. Report sightings online at <https://public.myfwc.com/fwri/rareSnakes/>. The website includes photos for identification, and maps showing recent and historical sightings of each species, so you can see how significant your observations are. If you have questions, please contact Kevin Enge (352-334-4209) or Anna Farmer (352-334-4220).

UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SEP 24 BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY DAY PLANNING MEETING

Please join us for our FINAL planning meeting where we will be reviewing the details for the event.

Where: Mead Botanical Garden, Picnic Pavilion

When: Tuesday, September 24, 6p.m.

OCT 4-6 2ND ANNUAL WINGS & WILDFLOWERS FESTIVAL

Field trips, exhibitors, presenters and more—all highlighting Central Florida's butterflies, wildflowers and birds! Bring family, and friends—there will be plenty to do for all ages and interest levels.



Where: Hickory Point Recreational Park, Tavares

For more information, visit www.WingsAndWildflowers.com or www.facebook.com/WingsandWildflowers.

OCT 5 MEAD GARDEN WORKDAY

Meet at 9a.m. at the newly planted sandhill area. We will then move to the Denning Dr. native planted area next to the community garden. For more information, contact Catherine Bowman at garberia08@gmail.com. Or just show up if you'd like to help!

OCT 12 WEKIWA BASIN BIOBLITZ!

Fall BioBlitz at Wekiva Springs State Park, Seminole State Forest, and Rock Springs Run State Park. See article in this issue for details.

OCT 26 BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY DAY

Tarflower Chapter will host its first Backyard Biodiversity Day at Mead Garden to celebrate Central Florida's native flora and fauna!

When: Saturday, October 26

Where: Mead Botanical Garden

1300 S. Denning Dr., Winter Park, FL 32789

See article in this issue for details. If you would like to get involved, please contact Catherine Bowman at garberia08@gmail.com.

FEB 8-13 2014 67TH SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL MEETING, TECHNICAL TRAINING AND TRADE SHOW

This year's theme is "From Dusty Trails to Waning Wetlands" to bring drought and water management, a problem we are all so familiar with, to the forefront of the meeting.

Where: Caribe Royale Hotel, Orlando

For more information and to register, visit <http://rangelands.org/orlando2014/>.

Backyard Biodiversity Day at Mead Botanical Garden

Note: A volunteer signup sheet will be circulated at the October 1 meeting.

The event planning team—including exhibitors, speakers, hike leaders, and plant sellers—are putting the finishing touches on preparations for this great event! Backyard Biodiversity Day is just the sort of educational event that can advance our Society's mission of promoting the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Now we need your help. We have received some sponsorships (both money and in-kind) and continue to seek others; however, at the October meeting, the planning team will need your vote to approve up to \$2,000 (we are whittling this figure as you are reading this) in order to cover the expense of hosting the event, primarily renting port-o-lets, doing some advertising to get people to the large (think Leu Gardens' Tarflower booth) plant sale, and printing schedules and event maps for posting before and on the day of the event. The chapter is fortunate to have an amount in our bank account that can accommodate this kind of expenditure. We do expect to make money on the plant sale; however, as you will recall, we set out to not only provide public education with this event, but to generate some funds which will be earmarked for use in expanding the native plantings at Mead Garden. This event is designed by us to get out the message of native plants and reasons to plant them.

See the latest event schedule on the Tarflower website at <http://tarflower.fnpschapters.org>. There will be exhibits, speaker, hikes including those by Orange Audubon Society, Orange County Environmental Protection Division, Seminole County Natural Lands Program (native herp exhibit and hike), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Commission with a Healthy Soils exhibit, Florida Wildflower Foundation with native wildflower seeds for sale, AND MANY MORE, along with food trucks and bluegrass music!

The next planning meeting will be at Mead Garden in the picnic shelter on Tuesday, September 24 at 6p.m. We need your help to make this a good first annual event. Please support the expenditure of the necessary funds and please volunteer with us to talk to the public, sell plants and promote the native plant society, Florida's natural communities and their continued diversity. Please contact Catherine Bowman at 407-761-7109 or 407-637-5883 for more information.

Shop talk with Randy Mejeur by Amanda Martin

One of the easiest ways to identify a plant is to point and ask aloud, what is that?! If you happen to be standing next to Randy Mejeur, Senior Ecologist at AECOM, he will offer the botanical name, and then the common name accompanied by a short description of its usual habitat or place in nature.

The second best method for identification is to have a few pictorial identification books in your pack. If you have been able to narrow down the habitat you are standing in, Florida authors have done an excellent job of matching photos, drawings, and full plant descriptions that can affirm your inquiry.

Some of the books I like to carry are *Florida Wildflowers and Roadside Plants* by Ritchie Bell and Bryan Taylor; *Florida Wildflowers in Their Communities* and *A Guide to Florida Grasses* by Walter Kingsley Taylor; and if I'm in more aquatic areas, I like to have *Florida Wetland Plants: an Identification Manual* on hand. During this workshop I focused on using *Botany in a Day* by Thomas Elpel, *Plant Identification Terminology* by James and Melinda Harris, and of course, *Guide to Vascular Plants of Florida* by Richard Wunderlin and Bruce Hansen.

General growth habits are the first step for identification. Are you looking at a tree, shrub, vine, terrestrial herb, aquatic herb, epiphyte or parasite? These are the most common terms for distinguishing growth habit. Next, being able to recognize leaf arrangement, leaf type, shape and style of margin will continue to narrow down the possible genus as well as give clues to the species. The most certain way to correctly identify a plant is by its flowering parts. The floral arrangement, form of the flower and general color are all characteristics to look at.

With the Tarflower chapter, I've been able to visit about a dozen natural areas around Central Florida. Walking through these areas and listening to the other members I get to see firsthand what these native plants look like in their natural habitat. The chapter field trips take us to various state forests and natural properties throughout the four seasons, allowing us to see the same plant in all stages of development and environmental conditions. If there are any questions about identification, we work together to locate photos or key out a species, making the task of figuring out taxonomy a lot more fun.



Sandhill Restoration at Mead Garden by Cecilia Catron

On Sunday, September 1, Tarflower volunteers planted Chickasaw plum, turkey oak, pine, palmetto, gopher apple, greeneyes, blazing star, bluestem, and young *Yucca filamentosa* in a pre-selected plot in Mead Garden's upland area. These species were selected to restore a sandhill ecosystem, once common but now uncommon throughout Central Florida. Catherine Bowman and Ron Blair gathered plants from native plant nurseries: Green Isle Gardens (Groveland), The Natives (Davenport) and Green Images (Christmas). Marge Holt provided pineland dropseed (*Sporobolus junceus*), a sandhill grass, and other plants came from local Tarflower plant salvage projects.

Some volunteers spent their time pulling up *Richardia brasiliensis*, stink vine* (*Paederia foetida*) and other well-mowed but not less invasive exotics, well known to Mead Garden but unsuited to a native plant ecosystem. (*In my yard it is called stink vine, but is also known as skunk vine.)

Catherine and Ron plotted each plant's position on a map. As a result, planting went quickly. Ron and Catherine oversaw the volunteers who, armed with spades and shovels, easily planted about 160 specimens in just over an hour, which is good since the summer temperature rises quickly and the air can become aggressively moist for a worker after 10a.m.

A week later, all the plants were still green. It's been warm and rainy and Ron watered on non-rainy days. The turkey oaks have new buds, even if losing their leaves. Blazing star may bloom purple spires this season, and in the spring, Chickasaw plums will produce prodigious sprays of white. It will be pretty when the plants take hold and thrive. Turkey oak, the keystone species of a sandhill ecosystem, can be an understory tree beneath longleaf pine, such as

are found in Mead Garden. It ranges along the eastern coastal plain from Delaware to Florida and along the Gulf west to Louisiana. It reaches its southern limit in southern Central

Florida. Turkey oak grows slowly compared to the ubiquitous laurel and live oaks found throughout the Orlando area, but it grows on acidic soils that other oaks cannot exploit. It will be a pretty, native addition to Mead Garden, and a part of the area's heritage.



Catherine waters in a turkey oak while volunteers plant grasses and gopher apple



planting *Liatris* and gopher apple



What's Blooming?—A Farewell to Summer by Catherine Bowman, photos by Ron Blair

Our preparation for planting sandhill species at Mead Garden has included frequent trips to the sandhills at Wekiwa [Wekiva] Springs State Park. During the past month, we observed the summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata* var. *pinnata*) getting taller and, more recently, some of the first clusters of small white flowers were open. In a couple of weeks, it will be a lovely display in an easily accessible area, if you have an opportunity to drive out there or are planning to participate in the BioBlitz. Blazing star (*Liatris* spp.) should be opening as well.

To reach a good viewing spot for the *Dalea*, turn left (where the road to the springs parking area) and continue uphill on the main road until you are past the entrance to the campground, where you will see an expansive mass of summer farewell. This population appears to be the variety *pinnata* given that there are 5 to 9 filiform leaflets in each compound leaf. *Dalea pinnata*, with three varieties, has been documented throughout Florida, in counties generally north of Lake Okeechobee, and occurs in sandhill and scrub communities throughout the Atlantic coastal plain.

Another sandhill and scrub *Dalea* that Tarflower members have encountered recently is Feay's prairie clover (*Dalea feayi*). Those of you who participated in the Pine Ridge Landfill plant salvage at the end of August will recall this species in bloom there. We also saw it blooming in profusion in open sunny areas of scrub in the Ocala National Forest while on the September field trip.

The *Dalea* genus is in the pea (Fabaceae) family, of which there are three subfamilies that are based on the flower shape. The Mimosoideae subfamily includes genera of the familiar "puff" flowers such as *Mimosa* and *Acacia*, with their actinomorphic (radially symmetrical) flowers. The Casealpinioideae subfamily includes species such as the orchid tree (*Bauhinia* spp.), as well as sensitive plants (*Senna* spp.) and partridge pea (*Chamaecrista* spp.) which have zygomorphic (bilaterally symmetrical) flowers. *Dalea* belong to the subfamily Faboideae (Papilionoideae). This subfamily includes those plants that we typically think of as "peas" such as cowpea (*Vigna luteola*), the listed sweetscented pigeonwings (*Clitoria fragrans*), and the non-native hairy indigo (*Indigofera hirsuta*). *Dalea* flowers vary from the well-known pea flower shape in that the five petals are generally free and do not form wings that are opposite a broad open banner.

So, gather your camera and hand lens and go have a look at these delicate beauties of late summer!



Summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata*)



Summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata*),
Wekiva sandhill



Feay's prairie clover (*Dalea feayi*)



Feay's prairie clover (*Dalea feayi*),
Ocala National Forest

Tarflower Chapter meetings Chapter meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at HARRY P. LEU GARDENS (1920 N. Forest Ave., Orlando. For directions, call 407-246-2620, option 1). The next meeting is Tuesday, October 1 at 7pm. See you there!

Tarflower website <http://tarflower.fnpschapters.org/>

The Tarpaper online Current and past issues of *The Tarpaper* can be viewed online by accessing the Newsletters tab of the chapter website at <http://tarflower.fnpschapters.org/>.

Contribute to The Tarpaper Send your articles, event listings, photos and suggestions to Stacey Matrazzo, Editor, at stacey@impactpress.com. (Please do not reduce or compress photos before sending; a size of 3x4 at 300dpi is preferred.) **The submission deadline for the November 2013 issue is October 17.**

Tarflower Chapter Executive Committee meetings The next board meeting will be Tuesday, October 8, 2013 at 6pm. For more information, contact Amanda Martin. Members are welcome.

Tarflower Chapter Executive Committee members

President Amanda Martin (ajm.fnps@gmail.com)

Vice President, Programs Kay Hudson (407-432-2364; Kay@americanbuilders.com)

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

OCT 1 – Jon Pospisil presents Our Best Native Vines and Groundcovers and the Butterflies they Attract

NOV 5 – Green Deane’s Edible Revenge

DEC 2 – Holiday Social with Native Plant Jeopardy

JAN 7 – Florida’s Naval Stores presented by Marty Hale

***Important: December meeting date change**

Due to our previously considered change in meeting venues, we lost our December 3 spot and are **moving the meeting to Monday, December 2**. All other meetings will be held as usual on the first Tuesday of each month unless otherwise noted.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

OCT 12 – Wekiva Springs BioBlitz

NOV 9 – Edible field trip with Green Deane

RECORDING FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD AND OTHER GROUP MEMBERSHIPS

With Family/Household and higher level memberships, it is now possible for FNPS to record multiple names, phone numbers, email addresses and other information for the multiple members in a single household or at a single organization (everyone must be at the same physical address). So if you know of husbands, wives, partners and colleagues that we should be tracking, let us know and we’ll do it. You can see this information using the online Chapter Membership Tools.

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

or call 321-271-6702.

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