



Dade Chapter

TILLANDSIA

Newsletter of the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, Inc.
- For Miami-Dade County and the Florida Keys -

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2014

MONTHLY MEETING

Tuesday, November 25, 2014, 7:30 p.m.
Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Ave. (Red Road)
Free and open to the public

Refreshments begin at 7:15 pm. Merchandise sales are before and after the program (cash, checks and credit cards). The plant raffle follows the program. **Please label your raffle plant donations** with the plant name. Your contributions to the raffle and refreshments are always needed and greatly appreciated.

**"Preserving biodiversity in a changing world:
the importance of little glass canaries in coal mines"**
– Dr. Evelyn Gaiser, Florida International University

Dr. Gaiser is Interim Executive Director of the School of Environment, Arts and Society and professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at FIU. She is an aquatic ecologist whose



research focuses on algae, particularly the diatoms ("glass algae"), that are the primary producers of oxygen on the planet. She studies how diatoms can be used to

understand ecosystem change over short and long time scales in aquatic ecosystems from lakes to wetlands.

She received a Ph.D. in Ecology at University of Georgia in 1997, and began her appointment at FIU at that time. Dr. Gaiser's research is connected in a broad context to Everglades restoration through collaborations with the Florida Coastal Everglades Long-Term Ecological Research program (FCE LTER) which she directs. She mentors graduate students and supervises the outreach program for the FCE LTER which reaches dozens of high school teachers and thousands of K-12 students. Her research program has made a significant impact in the restoration science community by building connections with federal, state and local agencies to improve environmental policy. She has expanded her algal research through cooperative research projects throughout the Caribbean, along with colleagues in the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Canada.

Do your holiday gift shopping at the November meeting. *Florida's Edible Wild Plants* by Peggy Lantz, our October speaker, is for sale along with many other books, laminated ID cards, Atlas Garden Gloves and a variety of other merchandise.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

Nov. 7-9 (Fri.-Sun.): FTBG Ramble (DCFNPS table)
Nov. 16 (Sun.): Yard visit (Kendall)
Nov. 22 (Sat.): Field trip (Juno Dunes Natural Area)
Nov. 25 (Tue): Meeting at Pinecrest Gardens

Dec. 7 (Sun.): Annual Holiday Potluck Picnic
Dec. 13 (Sat): Chapter workday, Everglades National Park
Dec. 14 (Sun): Field trip (Larry and Penny Thompson Park)

Jan. 3 (Sat): Annual Nature Lovers Holiday Party

There is no meeting or *Tillandsia* in December.

Articles in this issue:

- "Late Summer in a Residential Pine Rockland" - Leon Howell
- "Fun with Phytogeography" - Chuck McCartney

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

If the weather is very bad, call Patty at 305-255-6404 to confirm. Field trips are for the study of plants and enjoyment of nature by FNPS members and their guests. Collecting is not permitted. Children are welcome.

Time, address and directions are in the newsletter mailed to members. Please join to enjoy all the activities of the chapter!

• Saturday, November 22, 2014: Juno Dunes Natural Area, Palm Beach Co.

Steve Woodmansee will lead us through this diverse habitat which contains beach dune, coastal strand, maritime hammock, hydric hammock, scrub, scrubby flatwoods, xeric hammock, mesic flatwoods, wet flatwoods, basin marsh, depression marsh, and mangrove swamp. Palm Beach County owns 203 acres of the natural area and leases 366 more. The small "Oceanfront Tract" has a nature trail and a great view of the area from the top of a sand dune. The "West Tract" has several miles of trails.

We will start at the Oceanfront Tract, which is in Loggerhead Park, on the east side of US1. There are restrooms and a short trail. (It also houses the Marinelife Center, not operated by Palm Beach Parks.) After a short walk (and time for latecomers to catch up) we will move to the West Tract, ¼ mile farther north on the west side.

More info: <http://www.pbcgov.com/erm/natural/natural-areas/juno-dunes/> and <http://floridahikes.com/junodunes>

Difficulty: Moderate, sandy, little shade, not long distance.

Bring: Sun protection, plenty to drink as you walk, lunch (picnic on site). A walking stick might help some on sandy trails.

Lost/late? Try Patty's cell (305-878-5705), the day of the trip only, 305-255-6404 before that day.

Post-trip: If you have time, consider visiting The Nature Conservancy's Blowing Rocks Preserve, a few miles north.

• **Sunday, December 14, 2014: Larry and Penny Thompson Park pineland.**

This park is part of the botanically rich Richmond Pineland Complex and thankfully is safe from the planned development in other parts of the complex that has been in the news.

Bring: Water, sun protection.

Difficulty: Easy - paved and unpaved paths, but open and sunny.

Delayed or lost? Try Patty's cell, 305-878-5705.

YARD VISIT

Date: Sunday, November 16, 2014, 3 to 5 p.m.

Location: 9430 SW 93 Ave. Miami FL 33176 (south of Kendall Drive, near Baptist Hospital), home of Walter Stevens.

Directions: From SW 87 or 97 Ave., turn onto SW 94 Street, turn south on 93 Ave. It's the second house on the right (west).

Who is invited: FNPS members and their guests.

The 1-acre property was typical of the 1950s. The ground was scarified of all native plants except a few pine trees, which ultimately died. The owners planted *Ficus benjamina* (grew to ¼ acre size), Australian pine, ixora, even a Brazilian pepper hedge, and the neighbors shared their exotics. Fortunately, Dade County pine and Cabbage palm seedlings were encouraged at the front of the house, but the rest was a mess. In May of this year Walter and his sister, Nancy Stevens, made a complete overhaul. Out went most exotics and in came an impressive variety of native plants. It is filling in and is gorgeous! Come see how quickly peace can be restored to a ravaged land.

This visit is part of an ongoing opportunity for those who wish to know the natives in a hands-on manner and to see them in various settings, formal and informal, and to learn the property owner's successes and failures at growing them. If more information is needed, call Gwladys Scott at 305-238-8901.

Give the Gift of Natives All Year Round!

*The Gift of DCFNPS/FNPS Membership
Starting at \$35*

*Support native plant, habitat and wildlife
conservation and introduce your friends to the
benefits of FNPS membership.*

It's EASY!

Click "Join" at the top of the fnps.org home page.

DADE CHAPTER AND FNPS NEWS

Chapter workday, Everglades National Park, Coe Visitor Center, December 13, 2014, 9 a.m. – noon. Help the chapter enhance the entrance to ENP. Cold water provided; bring snacks to share if you care to. Gloves and hand tools are available.

New helpers are encouraged to come! Everyone in your car gets into ENP free after the workday. Contact Patty 305-255-6404 or ppharies@mindspring.com, if you have questions (305-878-5705 cell, for the morning of the workday). Note: Beware of the red light camera when turning right off US1 in Florida City.

Native Plant Day 2015 – March 28 at A.D. Barnes Park in the heart of Miami-Dade County! We're gearing up for plant sales, nature walks, and some of the best talks to introduce the public to native plants. If you have ideas for presenters, non-profits who may participate, or suggestions to make this our best event ever, contact Amy Leonard (aleonar74@yahoo.com, 305-458-0969). Of course, save the date and plan to volunteer or enjoy.

Broward Chapter FNPS. See www.npsbroward.org for more activities. Meetings are at Secret Woods, 2701 W. SR 84, Dania Beach. **Meeting, Nov. 12, 7 p.m.:** "Long Key, A Natural Area Park" – Park naturalist Kelly Whitney. **Field trip, Nov. 15, 9 a.m.:** Visit Long Key, 3501 SW 130 Ave, Davie.

Welcome new member Brian Brown (student) and thank you to all who have renewed their membership recently!

FNPS Awards and Grants. Submittal deadline March 6, 2015. See www.fnps.org, click on "Participate/ Grants and Awards".

- **The Endowment Research Grant program** funds research on native plants which forwards the mission of FNPS.
- **FNPS Conservation Grants** support applied native plant conservation projects in Florida which promote the preservation, conservation, or restoration of rare or imperiled native plant taxa and rare or imperiled native plant communities.
- **Landscape Awards Program.** Take photos now of your native (or mostly native) landscape or restoration at home, business, school, park ... anywhere. Your project must be at least 2 years old. If it won't qualify now, take photos for later. Be proud of your handiwork and help inspire others to use natives!

FNPS Annual Conference Research Track presentations.
The conference is in Tallahassee, May 28-31, 2015. Presented research papers and a poster session will be May 29-30. Abstracts due February 1, 2015. See www.fnps.org for details.

Sabal Minor, the bimonthly newsletter from FNPS, is available at www.fnps.org > Resources. If you did not recently receive your *Palmetto* magazine (Vol. 31: No. 2), contact FNPS.

OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

Dade Native Plant Workshop. MDC Kendall Campus Landscape Technology Center. 3rd Tuesdays at 7 p.m. See <http://nativeplantworkshop.ning.com> or contact Steve at steve@pronative.com. Bring at least three plants (especially flowering/fruited), even if they do not pertain to the topic.
• **Nov. 18 topic:** Natives and their non-native "look-alikes"
• **Dec. 16 topic:** Passionflower family (Passifloraceae). *We'll also have our Holiday Plant Party, so feel free to bring a dish or beverage to share (and maybe to identify first).*

Friends of the Gifford Arboretum annual picnic, Dec. 6, 2014. Details and directions at: www.bio.miami.edu/arboretum or 305-284-1302. Arboretum tour at 10 a.m. focusing on edible plants led Steve Pearson and Chris Rollins; picnic lunch ~ 11:30. Bring a dish if you can. Free and open to the public.

Environmentally Endangered Lands Program Volunteer Workdays. Help make a difference in protecting our natural areas. Please pre-register at EEL@Miamiidade.gov or call 305-372-6611. Info: <http://www.miamiidade.gov/environment/endangered-lands.asp>
Nov. 8: County Line Scrub, NE 215 St. east of San Simeon Way
Dec. 6: Camp Matecumbe Pineland, 13841 SW 120 St.

"Ecology and Management of Key Largo Woodrats" - November 10, 2015, 6 p.m., John Pennekamp Coral Reef Park in Key Largo (MM 102.5) – Presented by National Wildlife Refuge Managers Nancy Finley and Jeremy Dixon.
Crocodile Lake Wildlife Refuge and Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park are home to five federally endangered species of wildlife. Two are endemic, found only in North Key Largo: the Key Largo woodrat and Key Largo cotton mouse. The impending threats to their continued existence were largely responsible for the creation of these two preserves.
Removal of feral and free-roaming domestic cats has run into opposition. Euthanasia of unwanted pets is a solution no one likes, but one that publicly funded animal shelters are forced to use when they accumulate more cats than they can house. Some people have responded by establishing cat colonies for those cats they cannot provide shelter for. Cats that wander from these colonies, and those allowed to roam by their owners, create a problem when they hunt wildlife in refuges and parks, lands set aside specifically to protect native wildlife. **This program will address this issue and explain why feral and free-roaming cats conflict with the management of lands set aside for the protection of endangered species such as the woodrat.**

- Jim Duquesnel

Dade Chapter FNPS, Miami Blue Chapter NABA, TREEmendous Miami,
 *and hosted by Tropical Audubon Society* 

10th ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK PICNIC
Sunday, December 7, 2014, 12:30-3:30 pm
Rain or shine

at Tropical Audubon's Steinberg Nature Center
5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami, 33143

Bring family, nature-loving friends and your favorite dish!

RSVPs by Nov. 30 are greatly appreciated, but late/no-responders should come, too. Respond to Amy Creekmur 305-667-7337, events@tropicalaudubon.org

Please let us know the number attending, your potluck item (main dish, side/salad, drinks or dessert) email and phone number. Cash donations are also possible. You may bring beer and wine; water will be supplied. **In creating a no-waste event, be sure to BRING your OWN plate & utensils/napkin.**

Directions: From US1, turn east on SW 72 Street/Sunset Drive, go past Red Road to SW 55 Ave., turn right and another immediate right into parking lot behind a chain link fence. Additional parking along streets, at meters, in public garage/lots.
Note: Try to come on time -- the annual South Miami Parade of Elves may be that afternoon (starting later).

Take an easy nature walk through the pineland and hammock trails. Bring binoculars for bird and butterfly spotting. Take a look at the newly nationally designated historic Doc Thomas House built in 1932, utilized as the TAS headquarters.



ANNUAL NATURE LOVERS' HOLIDAY PARTY
January 3, 2015 – 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Home of Don & Joyce Gann in Redland

▶ **Mark your calendar now, put a sticky note on the wall ... there will be no January reminder.** ◀



Come one, come all: FNPS members, parks personnel, all the friends and tree-huggers you can round up!

This party begun by Mary Ann Hollingsworth Ogden Bolla, has been held for lo these more than forty years, with husband, Mark, assisting after they married, and continues in her memory.

The Ganns will provide their traditional homemade turkey soup and beverages, and you'll cover the table with your scrumptious covered-dish treasures.

Come as early as 5 p.m. to walk on a path through two acres of hardwood hammock and restored pineland transformed from what was agricultural land before Hurricane Andrew. Or come whenever ... stay till 10 or until you're weary.

Wear your walking shoes and bring a flashlight. You may drive up to the house to drop off your food, then park on the street. You'll be welcomed at one of Miami architect Alfred Browning Parker's 1960s houses, built in a hardwood hammock with only one major tree removed, designed to blend into the natural area, and to be cool without air conditioning.

Please RSVP to Joyce and get directions: phone/text 786-423-1881; 786-423-0883 (Don); joycedongann@vzw.blackberry.net

Pine Rockland for Sale

Vacant (+buildable) .9 acre - LOW taxes with EEL covenant - lovely pine forest + natives. Behind 15201 SW 272 St., 33032. For more info and photos: liztruby@bellsouth.net, 305-281-6166. LOTS more to tell about this charming acre. \$70K. Adjacent pineland is also for sale.



LATE SUMMER IN A RESIDENTIAL PINE ROCKLAND

By Leon Howell

We are lucky in south Florida to have some wildflowers throughout the seasons. Pine Rocklands are the most botanically diverse plant community in south Florida and provide the best hunting ground for wildflowers, whether borne by trees, shrubs, or small and inconspicuous herbaceous plants.

I am fortunate to live on a one acre **Pine Rockland remnant**. The property has gone through several lifetimes in my 29 years of residence given hurricanes and other events. In an effort to keep the yard from becoming an impenetrable thicket of invasive exotics, which it would do inside of a couple of years, I spend an hour or two most summer mornings thinning the understory and chasing exotic vines, mostly **Gold Coast Jasmine (*Jasminum dichotomum*)** and **Rosary Pea (*Abrus precatorius*)** these days. But many Pine Rockland plant community members are present, including some that produce colorful and easily viewed wildflowers.

As September gives over to October, I am treated to flashes of color and texture during the morning yard work. What are the plants providing the show this time of year?

- **Devil's Potato (*Echites umbellata*)** grows in several places on the property, most notably along a field fence in front of the house. Its flowers are bright white, almost two inches in diameter with slightly canted petals, like someone gave the flower a soft twist to the right. These flowers turn heads. This somewhat slow growing and fairly fragile vine is particularly at risk from line trimmers and heavy feet in a residential setting.

- A rich visual and textural contrast is provided by the flowers and fruit of the **American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*)**. The clusters of small pink flowers with pollen

tipped anthers present a vision of a pastel pink and golden mist when viewed from a short distance away. Dense and heavy clusters of bright purple fruit combined with the flowers provide a visual feast pretty near unequaled among south Florida's flora.

- Scattered throughout the yard, **Blue Porterweed (*Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*)** is offering dashes of blue complete with attendant butterflies as it has done all summer. Those plants that have volunteered in the planters along the house get cut back in late winter. The bright green and low spreading new growth is beautiful as it unfolds with increased light and moisture of the spring and summer seasons. Cutting back selected individuals seems to be healthy for the plant. After all, Blue Porterweed is naturally pruned by fire periodically in a fire managed Pine Rockland.

- Some of the **Tetrazygias (*Tetrazygia bicolor*)**, sometimes called **West Indian Lilac**, continue to present their showy white flowers, clustered at the branch ends, even though it's late in the year for this shrub / small tree to be flowering - guess these individuals didn't read the directions we wrote for them. Most Tetrazygias on the property are also adorned with small purple fruit, slightly sweet and mealy to the human palate but a bird favorite.

- Grasses are not generally known for colorful flowers but **Lopsided Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum secundum*)** is an exception. Once present in greater numbers in one of the property's former lifetimes, it persists in one of the more open areas. It lies unnoticed until this time of year when its tall, richly gold and brown flowering spikes stand out boldly against surrounding vegetation. A field of this stuff would divert the attention of a gadget dependent teenager. Just exquisite.

In addition to Tetrazygia and American Beautyberry, many other plants display fruit, adding more texture and color to the landscape as well as providing forage for many bird species. The velvety, red fruit of **Rough Velvetseed (*Guettarda scabra*)** and small black fruit lining the branches of **Myrsine (*Rapanea punctata*)** are abundant. Birds add motion and song to the visual color and texture of the forest. On several recent occasions it seemed that every Northern Mockingbird south of Orlando was visiting, lingering for hours, active and vocal.

Being an old Pine Rockland, even if altered to some degree, many other wildflowers are on display. While I've mentioned some of the most easily noted, there are many small plants - those we walk by without note or step on - which present flowers rich in shape and color. Looking for these beauties is an adventure in itself. Appreciating the full grandeur of these small fries does require some patience and a good quality hand lens. A new botanical world awaits those who enter, but we'll save that for another time, perhaps.

Given the botanical diversity of Pine Rocklands and our mild climate, we can enjoy wildflowers, wildlife viewing, or just experience the general texture and color of a rare and endangered plant community year round, whether park, preserve, or residential lot. And so it is in my yard as September fades and October brightens.

Leon Howell has been a seasonal interpretive ranger at Everglades National Park since 2005. Previously, he was in the Coast Guard and a boat captain, conducting fishing and eco-tourism trips in the Everglades. He is a member of FNPS. We visited his beautiful pineland in September 2013.

Concho Billy Trail, Big Cypress National Preserve
Dade Chapter FNPS field trip, October 12, 2014
Photo by Bill Shores



Jim Gross, Mary Rose, Richard Brownscombe

**FUN WITH PHYTOGEOGRAPHY:
 THE BEST OF TWO WORLDS**

By Chuck McCartney
Photos by the author

The fancy name for the field of botany dealing with the distribution of plants is phytogeography, and I found the subject fascinating even before I knew what it was called. I have the privilege of botanizing and photographing wildflowers in two of the most floristically rich regions in the eastern United States: my native subtropical South Florida and my adopted second home in the mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. When I leave South Florida and head for the hills, it's like blasting off to another planet -- both botanically and culturally. Still, it's fun to see that as different as the flora of these two regions are, they still share some species.

Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), of course, is ubiquitous. Ditto the often (but unnecessarily) confused **Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)**.

There are also showy wildflowers shared by the two regions, including a pair of familiar yellow composites in the aster family: **Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)** and **Silk-Grass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*)**.



(left) Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
(right) Silk-Grass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*)

Another shared composite is **Blue Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)**, which is a common wetland species in the



Everglades and Big Cypress. In the Southern Appalachians, I saw and photographed it for the first time on Sept. 4, 2013, along a creek in Cades Cove, a broad lower-elevation valley on the Tennessee side of the

Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

A fourth member of the aster family that we share is **Frostweed (*Verbesina virginica*)**. On that same Sept. 4, 2013, trip to Cades Cove, I encountered this tall white-flowered composite in bloom, my first experience with that species in those mountains. Then when I returned to South Florida a few weeks later, the species was in bloom in the backyard of my Hollywood home as well as in natural areas around the region.



On that same 2013 trip to Cades Cove, one meadow was filled with flowering plants of the same ***Agalinis purpurea*** we know here in South Florida. It is commonly called **Purple False Foxglove** because of the shape of its pretty pinkish flowers.

One of the showy midsummer wildflowers of those mountains that we share here is the beautiful orange-flowered **Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)**. In Miami-Dade County, we



encounter it in the pine rocklands all the way down to Long Pine Key in Everglades National Park. In North Carolina, my wildflower-savvy neighbors know this common roadside milkweed species as

Chiggerweed because they swear it harbors the irritating, itchy little red mites that go by that colorful name.

Perhaps most surprising of all is that these two regions where I botanize, so widely separated by latitude and altitude, even share an orchid: *Spiranthes vernalis*. Commonly called the **Spring Ladies'-Tresses Orchid**, its species name is derived from the Latin word for spring. In South Florida, that epithet is apt. Here, it starts to flower as early as February in the marl glades of Everglades National Park and blooms into April. Yet in the North Carolina mountains, it flowers in July and August – hardly “spring.” This summer, I photographed it at opposite ends of Cherokee County on July 24 and Aug. 4. The genus name *Spiranthes* means “coiled flowers,” referring to the line of small tubular white flowers that spirals around the tip of a wiry green stem.



Chuck McCartney is a former editor of the American Orchid Society's AOS Bulletin and the Awards Quarterly and was a copy editor with The Miami Herald's Broward Edition, before retiring in 2009. He has written extensively about wildflowers and orchids for numerous publications. He is a member of FNPS.

SOUTH FLORIDA NATIONAL PARKS

Big Cypress National Preserve is celebrating a BIG birthday with two events in December, 2014:

- The Big Cypress Birthday Bash at the Collier County Museum in Naples, December 5, 7 p.m. with food and drink, music and dancing. Tickets start at \$75 and include a Clyde Butcher calendar.
- The Swamp Heritage Festival on December 6, 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center with storytellers, musicians, authors, artists and more scheduled throughout the day, plus special guest Clyde Butcher. Admission is free!

All Proceeds from the Birthday Bash benefit SWAMP, the preserve's environmental education program for 6th-grade students in Collier County. Birthday Bash is presented by South Florida National Parks Trust. For info: www.southfloridaparks.org or 305-665-4769.

Biscayne National Park's Family Fun Fest beings on December 14, 2014, on the second Sunday of every month from December through April, 1 – 4 p.m. There are activities for everyone from toddlers to adults and free transportation from downtown Homestead. This year's overarching theme is “REAL Science,” and organizers have partnered with National

Park Service researchers, local universities, and even international research organizations to help make families aware of some of the many projects happening in the park every day. Each Family Fun Fest event focuses on a particular theme highlighting some aspect of the park's diverse resources. Call 305-230-7275, extension 0, visit the park website at www.nps.gov/bisc or follow the park on Facebook at www.facebook.com/biscaynenps or Twitter at www.twitter.com/biscaynenps.

Everglades National Park fee-free day. Visit the park on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2014, and skip the toll booth.

DADE CHAPTER FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

President: Kurt Birchenough (kbirc001@fiu.edu, 202-905-3921)
Vice President: Amy Leonard (aleonar74@yahoo.com, 305-458-0969)
Secretary: Gita Ramsay (gita.ramsay@gmail.com, 786-877-7168)
Treasurer: Susan Walcutt (walcutts@bellsouth.net, 305-297-7757)
At Large: Amida Frey, Devon Powell, Surey Rios, Ted Shafer, Eric von Wettberg, Vivian Waddell
Past President: Buck Reilly (buck@habify.com, 786-291-4824)

Refreshment coordinators: Cheryl & Ben Morgan (ckmorg@bellsouth.net)
Membership: Patty Phares (pphares@mindspring.com, 305-255-6404)

General chapter information: 786-340-7914
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/dadefnps>
Twitter and Instagram: @dcfnps or Dade Native Plants
DCFNPS Website: <http://dade.fnpschapters.org/>
DCFNPS e-mail: dadefnps@gmail.com
Mailing address: Dade Chapter FNPS, 6619 South Dixie Hwy, #181, Miami FL 33143-7919
Webmaster: Haniel Pulido dadefnpsweb@gmail.com

TILLANDSIA

Editor: Patty Phares (pphares@mindspring.com, 305-255-6404)
Assistant editor: vacant – please consider volunteering

Articles, announcements and news items are invited for *Tillandsia* from Dade and Keys members. Please submit items for consideration by the 15th of each month. Advertising rates from \$12 per month.

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

FNPS office: info@fnps.org, 321-271-6702
FNPS Website: www.fnps.org
FNPS blog: www.fnpsblog.org
FNPS is on Facebook and Twitter: FNPSonline
Dade Chapter rep. to FNPS: vacant

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The Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.
