



Dade Chapter

TILLANDSIA

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

JUNE 2015

MONTHLY MEETING

Tuesday, June 23, 2015, 7:30 p.m.
Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Ave. (Red Road)
Free and open to the public
(It's the 4th not the last Tuesday!)

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. Contributions of **raffle items** and **refreshments** are always greatly appreciated.

“How You Can Help Conserve the Pine Rocklands of Miami”

**- Devon Powell, Connect to Protect Network Outreach
Coordinator, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden**

Launched in 2007, the Connect to Protect Network (CTPN) is a program designed to reduce the effects of fragmentation on rare plant populations in the globally critically imperiled pine rockland ecosystem by encouraging the local community to create pine rockland corridors and stepping stone gardens on their property. By doing so, we expect that birds, bees and butterflies will utilize these stepping stones to make their way from fragment to fragment bringing with them seeds and pollen, thus reducing the isolating effects of fragmentation. Public and private property owners living on or near the historic range of the Miami Rock Ridge are welcome to participate in CTPN.

Devon grew up in South Florida and while studying for her bachelor's degree at FIU, she learned the about the beauty and diversity of Florida native plants in a South Florida Ecology course. That eventually led to her career at Fairchild where she started as the Nursery Horticulturist and then moved to the South Florida Rare Plant Conservation Program. She currently serves as Conservation Horticulturist and Connect to Protect Network Outreach Coordinator. She is also a board member of the Dade Chapter FNPS.

Upcoming: July 25, 2015, 4-7 p.m. Save the date for our Annual Evening Yard Visit and Social meeting at the home of Gwladys and Gene Scott. Bring a pot-luck dish and enjoy seeing and learning about a very special yard that has both Hardwood Hammock and (formerly) Hydric Hammock (karst topography). This property has an EEL covenant with the county. Details will follow in the July *Tillandsia*. There is no regular member meeting at Pinecrest Gardens in July or August.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

June 13 (Sat): Field trip, Anne Kolb Nature Center
(hosted by the Broward Chapter)
June 20 (Sat.): Chapter workday, Everglades National Park
June 23 (Tue.): Meeting at Pinecrest Gardens

July 25 (Sat.): Annual Evening Yard Visit and Social meeting (Palmetto Bay)
July-August: Chapter workdays and field trips TBA

Inside this issue:

- Announcements and news
- FNPS Research Grants
- “Willow in the Rough” by Ralph J. Ferrer

UPCOMING FIELD TRIP

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!

We will join the Broward chapter's trip to Anne Kolb Nature Center in West Lake Park. See www.npsbroward.org for more description and a plant list. First a walking introduction of the park by park staff and then a walk to see some of the many native plants there, especially on the new trails on the south side of Sheridan. Anne Kolb Nature Center is a nearly 1,501-acre coastal mangrove wetland, home to a wide variety of plants and animals including many birds.

Bring: Sun protection, water, lunch if you want to picnic before heading home. Exhibit hall entrance is \$2, if you want to enjoy that as well.

Difficulty: Easy.

Note: Afterward, you might also want to visit Hollywood North Beach Park with native dune vegetation on the other side of the Intracoastal.

DADE CHAPTER NEWS

Everglades National Park DCFNPS workday, June 20, 2015, 9 a.m. - noon. Help the chapter enhance the entrance to our national park. A jug of cold water will be provided; bring snacks to share if you care to. Gloves and hand tools are available but you may prefer your own. *There may be some mosquitoes. We have spray and a few head nets, but bringing your own net is best if you are concerned. Buy them online or in some sporting goods stores.* New helpers are encouraged to come. Everyone in your car gets into ENP free after the workday. Contact Patty if you have questions (305-878-5705, pphares@mindspring.com).

Welcome new Dade Chapter members: Daniel Calzadilla (student), **Quinby Dobbins.** Thank you to all who rejoined recently. Your support helps conserve Florida's native plants and native plant communities.

Annual Chapter Meeting, May 26, 2015 Election of Board Members

The following slate was presented and approved:

Secretary: **Gita Ramsey**
Treasurer: **Susan Walcutt**
Directors: **Jennifer Stine** (new)
Vivian Waddell
Eric Von Wettberg

Continuing in the second year of two-year terms are: **Kurt Birchenough** (president); **Amy Leonard** (vice-president); **Devon Powell, Surey Rios, Ted Shaffer** (directors at large); and **Buck Reilly** (past president).

There was no additional old or new business.

We will introduce Jennifer to you in a later issue, but in the meantime, welcome to the newest board member!

FNPS NEWS

Broward Chapter FNPS. See www.npsbroward.org. Meetings are at Secret Woods, 2701 W. SR 84, Dania Beach, FL 33312.

• **June 10, 7 p.m.: Annual Broward Chapter Potluck**, meeting to elect the board and discuss the year ahead, and the traditional "Plant Jeopardy" game or the sort. Come and enjoy!

• **June 13, 9:45 a.m.: Field trip, Anne Kolb Nature Center** (Dade Chapter joins in). See Field Trip announcement above.

FNPS Landscape, Conservation and Research Awards.

Awards for several projects in South Florida were announced at the FNPS Annual Conference in May. The Dade Chapter has donated to the conservation grants for the past 3 years.

Below are descriptions of the **research grants** for work in South Florida. A landscape award and a conservation grant were both awarded to the **FIU Nature Preserve** and will be described in a later issue. Congratulations to all!

▪ **Barbara Whitlock, University of Miami, Department of Biology.** "A DNA barcode to identify native species of air plants"

Abstract: I propose to develop a DNA barcode that can be used to identify species of Bromeliaceae that are native to South Florida. Several of these species are formally listed as endangered or threatened by the State of Florida. Many are difficult to identify when they are seedlings or small juvenile plants. DNA barcoding is a method to identify species that cannot be identified by more conventional means. A standardized region of these plants' genomes will be identified for which each species has a unique DNA sequence. Here, I will first develop a DNA barcode that can accurately identify native species of Bromeliaceae. I will then explore two approaches for streamlining this procedure that will reduce costs per sample and allow for quicker identification of cryptic species. Once an accurate barcode is developed, it can be used on ecological studies on seed germination and seedling establishment.

▪ **Sebastian Palmas-Perez, University of Florida, School of Forest Resources and Conservation.** "Growth rings in Florida's hardwood hammocks: Can X-rays precisely estimate the age and growth rates of trees in South Florida?"

Abstract: Tree age and growth rates are necessary variables to understand tree ecology for the preservation, conservation and restoration of species. Age and growth rates are usually based on growth rings in northern trees. Due to lack of marked climatic seasons that produce distinct rings, this common practice is less applied in south Florida trees. Nonetheless, tree rings can be quantified using technologies such as X-Ray computed μ CT scans. This research will analyze samples of Gumbo limbo, Pigeon Plum, Inkwood, Wild Tamarind, Sapodilla, Poisonwood and Canistel trees collected from southern Florida State Parks. The samples will be scanned through an X-Ray scanner to obtain peaks of high and low wood density that delimit the growth rings. This research aims to determine growth patterns for different hardwood species found in south Florida subtropical hammocks using X-Ray scans. The research aims to increase our knowledge of the climatic conditions that hinder or promote growth of these native Florida species.

Susan M. Hangge (1942 - 2015)

Long time Miami resident and FNPS member Susan Hangge died on May 10, 2015. Susan had a 50-year career as a structural engineer and was a member and volunteer in many plant-related organizations. In addition to the Dade Chapter FNPS, she was active in the Gifford Arboretum, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and the Native Plant Workshop. She attended monthly DCFNPS meetings, participated in Native Plant Day, and was always willing to help out when needed. She is survived by her daughter Lauran Hadden, son Samuel Hadden V, and grandson Samuel VI.

A few memories:

• "Susan was a great neighbor. When we moved into our house she brought us a Spicewood tree for our yard, and after the birth of my daughter she brought over some wonderful beef stew." (Gita Ramsay)

▪ "I was by myself and just trying to get out and do something. This really nice, perky, friendly woman came up and started asking me questions – she just had this way about her that little by little drew you in. She was so nice, kind, and really there at a difficult moment for me." (Lillian Shin).

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 cuttings of plants (especially flowering/fruited), even if they do not pertain to the topic. **June 16, 2015 topic: "Trees at the southern end of their native range." These would typically be temperate (as opposed to tropical) species.**

Tropical Audubon Society. For info on TAS activities and conservation issues: <http://tropicalaudubon.org/> or 305-667-7337. 5530 Sunset Dr., Miami, 33143.

- **Check out the new TAS website!** (Some details are still being filled in.)

- **June 20, 8:30-noon:** Help TAS maintain the native plantings at the Doc Thomas House and learn at the same time. See the website for more opportunities to help or have fun!

- **Follow pine rockland preservation** news with TAS and the Miami Pine Rockland Coalition. (<http://miamipinerocklandscoalition.org/>).

In Deep with Diatoms Botanical Illustrations Exhibit at Biscayne National Park Gallery, June 5 to August 16, 2015.

Artwork by the Tropical Botanic Artists featuring single-celled algae known as diatoms is at Biscayne National Park's Dante Fascell Visitor Center Gallery. The display is in conjunction with scientists at Florida International University. **The public is invited to a free opening reception to meet the artists and participate in a discussion on Sunday, June 14 from 1-3 pm.** The Gallery is located at 9700 SW 328 St., 9 miles east of Homestead. The show is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5p.m., and admission is free. For more details see www.nps.gov/bisc.

Diatoms are responsible for at least one-quarter of the oxygen we breathe. Diatoms can also be used to assess water quality, and even serve as a record of sea level rise, work now going on in the laboratory of Dr. Evelyn Gaiser at FIU.

(Note: Dr. Gaiser presented a program on diatoms at the DCFNPS meeting in November, 2014)

Butterflies as Pollinators – or not!

At the May 3 meeting of the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, speaker Dr. Suzanne Koptur began with a quote from the book *Wildflowers of the Llano Estacado* by Francis L. Rose and Russell W. Strandtmann: "Flowers are a plant's way of saying 'Hi'."

Suzanne points us to the U.S. Forest Service website to learn more about butterflies and other pollinators.

From <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/index.shtml>:

"Butterflies are very active during the day and visit a variety of wildflowers. Butterflies are less efficient than bees at moving pollen between plants. Highly perched on their long thin legs, they do not pick up much pollen on their bodies and lack specialized structures for collecting it.

"Butterflies probe for nectar, their flight fuel, and typically favor the flat, clustered flowers that provide a landing pad and abundant rewards. Butterflies have good vision but a weak sense of smell. Unlike bees, butterflies can see red."

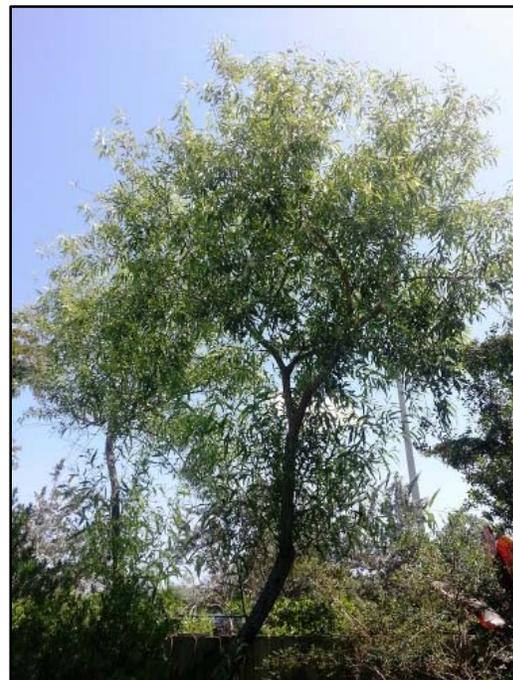
WILLOW IN THE ROUGH

The tale of an inconspicuous native species that can provide a distinctly stunning look to the South Florida landscape

By Ralph J. Ferrer, MLA, Assoc. ASLA, FNPS Member

As a designer and native plant enthusiast I sometimes desire a certain look, a certain plant, a certain character that I know just doesn't do well here in South Florida. So to find a native that offers a distinctly different and graceful look that other natives do not provide is quite thrilling. This thrill comes from the *Salix caroliniana*, commonly known as the Coastal Plain or Southern Willow. This wonderful small to medium sized tree is typically found as a multi-stemmed shrub/tree on the edges of ditches, ponds, lakes, and low-lying areas. In its natural state in the Everglades it's the dominant species of the Willow-Head and is found right on the edge of freshwater wetlands with a 0 to 4 month hydroperiod. It is very capable of use along these wetland conditions to create and restore natural plant communities. Left alone it will be bushy and shrubby, and can be a rather unassuming vegetal mass from a distance. However, when it is pruned and trimmed up as a standard, it really shines and sparkles as one of the most magnificent trees that South Florida has to offer. And that is the thrill... the ability to insert this unique gem of a native species (the only Willow that grows down here) into our landscape and provide a magnificently textured flowing trunk, leaf type, form and character.

For me the thrill started with a cutting several years ago. She was on the FIU campus, swooping over a retention pond with all



her radiance... a full grown *Salix caroliniana*. She was a beauty, leaning over the water's edge displaying a weeping canopy of lance-shaped leaves that swayed as pleasingly as the breeze that ignited them. I was told by my professor that I could cut off a few branches, place them in a bucket of

water and once they had roots I could stick them in the ground (ideally in a low spot or on a lakeshore). So sure enough I did just that. I had taken multiple cuttings from the mother and bunched them together to ensure that I had the numbers to make it work. After a couple of weeks in the bucket of water, to my delight, they were loaded with roots. Filled with anticipation I

DADE CHAPTER FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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TILLANDSIA

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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
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FNPS is on Facebook and Twitter: FNPSonline
Dade Chapter rep. to FNPS: vacant

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eagerly got them in the ground in a low spot I was desperate to fill. As a couple of dominant trunks began to emerge I would cut off the lesser ones as a gradual beauty began to reveal herself. As the dominant trunk continued to develop I would clean off any new growth as she rapidly matured. Today, I have a unique and graceful medium sized tree rarely seen in the South Florida landscape showing off in my garden. She has a fluid canopy that sways with the breeze, a fabulously furrowed bark that rivals an Oak, and leans forward with the character that only nature can provide. This is our Willow... stunning, graceful, underused, and practically unknown in this form.

I cannot overstate the fact that this is truly a great native and ornamental landscape tree, evident in the following qualities... It

boasts a somewhat weeping canopy with elegant light green drooping lanceolate leaves with a finely serrated margin and whitish underside. At times its foliage can resemble bamboo. When the breeze ushers in, it appears as if it's dancing with the wind. The bark and trunk are the perfect complement to its greenery, furrowed with gray roughened ridges while leaning and gnarled with the character that so many landscape architects crave. It pairs wonderfully with Ferns (especially Sword and Boston) and



provides a perfect canvas for attaching orchids and other epiphytes. In addition to all these desirable traits, this deciduous dynamo displays unique catkin flowers and silky white cotton-like fruit in the spring after it loses its leaves. Furthermore, this beauty is not demanding as it has low nutritional requirements and is easy to grow. And, while mainly happy in low wet areas, it is versatile and tolerant to a wide range of hydro conditions that include uplands. In my own garden it grows in the low point of a swale, however I am aware of it growing in a parking lot and a typical front yard at higher elevations. These facts make it very compelling to experiment and have a little fun trying this wonderful tree in different places to learn and see how adaptable it can be.

So make no mistake, this is not just an all-around great native, it's an all-around great tree that could enhance the South Florida landscape as a sensational accent or feature. Unfortunately, it is not readily available in Miami-Dade or Broward area nurseries at this time. So as a result, I have begun to propagate it myself!

For more information on our Willow, visit <http://www.fnps.org/plants/plant/salix-caroliniana>



Scenes from our May visit to the home of Lloyd Wruble

