



Dade Chapter

TILLANDSIA

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

JULY - AUGUST 2017

Monthly Meeting

(No meeting at Pinecrest Gardens this month)

Annual evening yard visit and social meeting
Saturday, July 29, 2017, 5-8 p.m.
Home and nursery of Richard Lyons

FNPS members and their guests are welcome. Rain or shine.

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

What to bring:

- Dish to share (drinks provided)
- Chairs, if possible (relatively few are available)
- Raffle donations (**please label your plants with the plant name**. Non-plant items are also welcome.)
- Mosquito repellent

Come enjoy a beautiful setting and delicious dishes, learn about native landscape plants, and get to know your fellow chapter members!

Chapter workday-Everglades National Park
Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center
July 29, 2017, 9 a.m. – noon.

*Help the chapter enhance the entrance to our favorite backyard: ENP. We will do pruning and weeding. Cold water provided; bring snacks to share if you care to. Gloves, hand tools, bug repellent and mosquito head nets are available if needed. The Visitor Center is always available for a cooling off break. **New helpers are encouraged to come.** Everyone in your car may enter ENP free after the workday. Contact Patty if you have questions (305-878-5705, pharespl@gmail.com). *Come to the workday, then relax later at the evening yard visit and social!**

Inside this issue

- News and announcements
- How to Obtain the Air Potato Leaf Beetle
- Wanted: Sightings of New Guinea Flatworm
- Weed or Wildflower? Common ragweed, *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* - by Martin Roessler
- National Moth Week

Dade Chapter and FNPS News

Chapter Activities

July 29 (Sat.): Annual Evening Yard Visit & Social meeting
Chapter workday, Everglades National Park
Aug. 27 (Sun.): Chapter board meeting
Sept. 26 (Tue.): Chapter meeting at Pinecrest Gardens
No newsletter, meeting or field trip in August.



• **Welcome new members!** Joe Bolton, Connie Caldwell, Craig Wheeling

• **The Dade Chapter board will meet August 27** in Coconut Grove. Please contact chapter president Kurt Birchenough (kbirc001@fiu.edu, 202-905-3921) with your thoughts, suggestions, concerns, offers of help. *Be an active contributor to the chapter's mission and activities.*

• **Thank you to Eduardo Salcedo**, Environmental Resource Project Supervisor, Miami-Dade Parks Natural Areas Management, who stepped in at the last minute to present at the June 27 chapter meeting. His program was about a collaborative project with the USDA testing biological control methods of the non-native invasive air potato.

See page 3 of this newsletter for more information about air potato and how to obtain the beetles which are used as a biological control.

We hope to reschedule Craig Morell in the near future.

• **The July-August *Sabal minor* from FNPS** is now at www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/sabalminor/sabalminor19_4_2017.pdf

Update on pineland restoration at Zoo Miami supported by a Conservation Grant from FNPS and Dade Chapter members.

Dr. Frank Ridgley of Zoo Miami writes:

"[On June 28] we were out doing surveys for the Florida duskywing butterfly at the site. The area is looking great with almost all of the plants surviving and thriving. But the greatest thing we saw was five federally endangered Bartram's hairstreak butterflies out utilizing the plants at the site and females ovipositing on the pineland croton that you all and the volunteers made possible. That is the most Bartram's that we have ever seen in one place at the zoo. How is that for turning a 70 year old fill mound of invasives into functional habitat?" (continued)

Here is a little clip of a female laying her eggs: <https://youtu.be/VRqDKMNVKhM>

Read about the Zoo Miami pineland restoration in the March 2017 *Tillandsia* on the chapter website. www.dade.fnpschapters.org/pastnewsletters/2017/03.pdf



Bartram's scrub-hairstreak (*Strymon acis bartrami*) on **Pineland croton** (*Croton linearis*) in Larry and Penny Thompson Park. **Photo: Leah Laurel**

The tails near the red eye (a false eyespot) look like antennae, but the antennae are actually hidden at the lower left!

See a nice at discussion and photos of all stages of this butterfly at www.nps.gov/ever/learn/nature/bartrams.htm

Read about Pineland croton at regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/plantdetail.asp?tx=Crotline

What Our Friends Are Doing

- **Dade Native Plant Workshop:** *Please note the new time of 5 p.m. for now, unless a new location is found or things change. Contact Steve if you have suggestions.*

MDC Kendall Campus Landscape Technology Center. 3rd Tuesdays at **5 p.m.** See www.nativeplantworkshop.com or contact Steve Woodmansee at steve@pronative.com. Bring at least three cuttings (especially in flower/fruit), which need not pertain to the topic. **Novices and experts alike are welcome.** *Join on the website (free) to receive email reminders or to post on the site.*

Upcoming topics: July 18-Palms; Aug. 15-Submerged aquatics

- **Miami Blue Chapter, North American Butterfly Association.**

(www.miamiblue.org; 305-979-9623).

August 6, 2017, 1-3 p.m.: Quarterly meeting at Castellow Hammock Park, 22301 SW 162 Ave., Miami, 33170.

Program: Andrea Salas studies the relationship between parasitoids (wasps) and sulphur caterpillars in urban and suburban areas. She will talk about the role parasitoids play in Miami, their relative abundance, and their use as biological agents in agricultural settings.

- **Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition** - "Save it, Don't Pave it".

Keep a watch for upcoming events

at www.facebook.com/events/906872479455425/

See MiamiPineRocklandsCoalition.org for resource information and to download the coloring book "Get to Know Florida's Pine Rockland Critters."

- **Tropical Arborist Guild invites new members.** Bob Brenan

was the arborist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden for many years. He was also the chairman of the Tropical Arborist Guild (TAG). One of his wishes before he passed this year was that the TAG continue. The intent of the guild is to promote integrity in arboriculture throughout South Florida. **You do not have to be an arborist to join, only an interest.** Meetings are held the last Friday of the month at different locations. Please contact Bob Ashby (305-495-4118, bob.ashby27@gmail.com), or Ian Wogan (305-905-9244, Ian@truetreeservice.com) for more information.

- **Livablecutler restoration project needs pineland plants.** Pine rockland, rockland hammock and coastal wetlands are being restored at **SW 184th Street east of Old Cutler Road** by volunteers with Livablecutler. For information and future restoration events, see www.facebook.com/livablecutler/. **In the meantime, donations of pine rockland species would be welcome, especially grasses and ground covers.** Donations will be acknowledged on Livablecutler. Contact Eduardo Varona at livablecutler@gmail.com.

- **Broward County Parks activities** at Secret Woods, 2701 W. State Rd. 84, Dania Beach, FL 33312

- * **Go Native in South Florida Plant Sale.**

Saturday, August 12, 2017, 9 a.m. - 1p.m.

- * **Dig It! Summer Home Landscape Series 2017.**

Thursdays, July 13-August 10, 7 to 8:30 p.m

www.broward.org/Parks/ThingsToDo/Pages/Summer-Home-Landscape-Series-2013.aspx

The Broward Chapter FNPS will be at the sale with information. Several vendors attend this event.

- **Everglades National Park Fee Free Day.** Pay no entry fee on Friday, August 25, in celebration of the National Park Service birthday (101 years). Admire how nature has repaired the damage of Hurricane Andrew 25 years ago August 24th.

Wanted: Sightings of New Guinea Flatworm

The New Guinea Flatworm (*Platydemus manokwari*) is an invasive non-native predatory flatworm, considered **one of the world's top 100 most invasive species**. It was first confirmed in Florida in 2015 and is now killing imperiled native tree snails in large numbers in natural areas and on private properties. Initial baseline research on tree snails and *Platydemus* flatworms is currently underway, but your help in reporting sightings is needed.

See the "Platydemus quick fact sheet" on the DCFNPS website (dade.fnpschapters.org) under **Announcements** – **"Wanted: Sightings of New Guinea Flatworm"**

(The fact sheet is by Alície Warren, Miami-Dade County PROS Natural Areas Management, nam@miamidade.gov.)



From the fact sheet:

- * Shiny black/brown body
- * Thin lighter stripe on top midline
- * Pointy "nose" and tail
- * Can grow up to 5 inches

(continued)

You can report from your phone or computer at www.eddmaps.org/florida/index.cfm or 1-888-IVEGOT1 (1-888-483-4681). It's easy to **register** and then enter reports of any invasive species. **Be sure to report with photos and GPS coordinates if possible (at least an address).** You might try out entering a report (and then not submit it) so you'll be prepared when you see something important. Note that you can zoom in on the map to locate any address, like your own yard. Once you have registered, you can also see a list of reports by other people.

Get Your Own Air Potato Leaf Beetles

The bane of your backyard might be the exotic vine, Air potato, *Dioscorea bulbifera*. Our June speaker discussed a program in which high school students were involved in rearing the air potato leaf beetle, *Lilioceris cheni*, a biological control.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Florida Department of Agriculture and the University of Florida are rearing the beetle for release on public and private lands. It may be obtained by applying with a form found at bcrc1.ifas.ufl.edu/airpotatofiles/airpotatofoms.shtml.

This site provides interesting reading even if you don't need air potato leaf beetles. **Did you know that air potato twines left to right?** This is one feature for distinguishing air potato from five other yams (the family *Dioscoreaceae*) in Florida.



Leaf damage by air potato beetle (Photo by Gwen Burzycki)

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Weed or Wildflower?

Common ragweed, *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* by Martin Roessler

Common ragweed, *Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, was named by Carl Linnaeus. *Ambrosia* refers to the food of the gods from Greek legends. The species name *artemisiifolia* is based on the resemblance of the leaves to those of the wormwood *Artemisia*.

The genus *Ambrosia* is a member of the family Asteraceae. There are about 30 species of *Ambrosia* in the world and about 22 species in North America. In Florida, we have *A. artemisiifolia* (common ragweed), *A. hispida* (coastal ragweed) *A. psilostachya* (western ragweed) and *A. trifida* (giant ragweed). In South Florida, we are likely to encounter coastal ragweed on sandy beaches and dunes and common ragweed in disturbed sites. *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* is widespread in North America, South America, the larger islands of the Caribbean and is an invasive introduced exotic in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and many of the Pacific Islands, including Hawaii. *Ambrosia hispida* is found in South Florida, the Bahamas, the Caribbean and Central America.

Common ragweed is an agricultural weed that can lower production of crops if not controlled. Several herbicides are useful, but strains resistant to glyphosate are present in the U.S. The ragweed beetle found in Italy and Switzerland will attack common ragweed and completely defoliate plants. This annual plant is wind-pollinated and produces 2-4 mm inverted, cone-shaped green to brown fruit. It produces an average of 2,500 seeds per year, and the seeds can lie dormant for 40 years. The seeds are rich in oil and provide a good source of winter nutrition for several songbirds and upland game birds. Voles also eat ragweed seed. Cottontail rabbits, grasshoppers and other insects feed on the leaves, and numerous small animals seek shelter in the dense foliage.



Claims have been made that ragweed has medical properties including: antiseptic, astringent, emetic, emollient, and febrifuge. Native Americans used a poultice made from the leaves to relieve swelling and prevent infection. They used a root tea as a laxative. Herbalists use a root tea for nausea, fever, and menstrual disorders. Crushed leaves are used to soothe insect

bites and poison ivy rashes. The pollen has been used as a homeopathic treatment for hay fever symptoms. Ragweed has also been used in phytoremediation by removing heavy metals such as lead from contaminated soils.

On the down side, the rather large spiny pollen granules are strong allergens and cause hay fever.

In addition to the usual book sources, I depended on: commonsensehome.com/weekly-weeder-7-ragweed/ and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambrosia_artemisiifolia for information on the uses of common ragweed.

Dr. Martin Roessler is a retired environmental consultant who has spent about 60 years in Florida and worked from Pensacola and Jacksonville south to Key West. He is an original member and a former president of the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

National Moth Week

July 22-30, 2017

“There are actually about 10 to 15 times more species of moths than butterflies” says nationalmothweek.org/.

In 2012 we celebrated the first National Moth Week with a collection of short articles by DCFNPS members: “*Native Plants and Moths... There's more than birds, bees and butterflies.*”

Read the complete selection at dade.fnpschapters.org/pastnewsletters/2012/07.php including these, for which excerpts are included (to tantalize you into reading the whole article!):

◆ **Black Witch** (*Ascalapha odorata*), the largest lepidopteran, perhaps the largest insect, north of Mexico, with a wing-span up to 7 inches. *Senna* and *Pithecellobium* species are host and nectar plants.

◆ **Fiddlewood leafrollers** (*Epicorsia oedipodalis*) larvae eat leaves of **Fiddlewood** (*Citharexylum spinosum*). They are actually pretty cute. They have bright orange heads with lemon yellow bodies covered with showy black and white spots.

◆ **Pluto Sphinx moths** (*Xylophanes pluto*) hover in front of flowers like hummingbirds, but they mostly feed at dusk, or after dark, when hummingbirds are settled in for the night. Their larvae feed on the leaves of **Firebush** (*Hamelia patens*).

◆ **Ornate Bella Moth** (*Utetheisa ornatrix*) Have you ever walked through a pineland, or the back dunes of the beach, and seen flashes of pink fluttering about? Chances are that you happened upon the sweet little Bella moth. **Dwarf or Low Rattlebox** (*Crotalaria pumila*) and the lovely diminutive **Rabbitbells** (*C. rotundifolia*) are host plants.

Here's the entire section for one last moth species:

◆ **Half-blind sphinx** (*Peregonia lusca*).

Biting the hand that feeds you? - by Suzanne Koptur

The beautiful flowers of the **rough-leaved velvetseed**, *Guetarda scabra*, open mostly in the late afternoon, sometimes pried open by eager flower flies, but really ready for action once night falls. The flowers are white or pale pink in color, with long tubes that contain nectar, and they are very fragrant (to some, the nicest scent of any flower in the pine rocklands!). Rough-leaved velvetseed flowers are visited by an array of **hawkmoths**, including *Peregonia lusca* (**Half-blind sphinx**).



Half-blind sphinx (*Peregonia lusca*) moth and caterpillar on **Krug's Holly** (*Ilex krugiana*). Photos by Suzanne Koptur.

These moths also lay their eggs on the new leaves of velvetseed, and the caterpillars munch the leaves at night, hiding along the leaf midribs during the day, where their little tails are all that gives them away. Whenever I see munching on velvetseeds I look for hawkmoth caterpillars, though sometimes the leaves have been devoured by echo moth caterpillars (those guys are known to eat a wide variety of plants). Actually, the caterpillars of *Peregonia lusca* are also found eating **Krug's holly** (*Ilex krugiana*) in Everglades National Park. Hawkmoths are more specialized than many moths, but this hawkmoth utilizes hostplants in at least two different plant families throughout its range (from Florida and Texas down through Central and South America).

DADE CHAPTER FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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TILLANDSIA

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Staff needed for general assistance or co-edit. Please contact the editor.

Articles, announcements and news items are invited for *Tillandsia* from Dade and Keys members. **Advertising rates** from \$12 per month.

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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FNPS website, blog, social media: <http://www.fnps.org>

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