



Dade Chapter

TILLANDSIA

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

SEPTEMBER 2017

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Ave. (Red Road), Miami
Free and open to the public

Refreshments begin at 7:15 pm., merchandise sales before and after the program. The plant raffle follows the program. Contributions of **raffle items** and **refreshments** are always greatly appreciated. **Please label your raffle plant donations!**

“Invasive species and vegetation management”
- Ellen Donlan Allen, South Florida Water Management District

Ellen Donlan Allen will provide an overview of invasive species in South Florida and vegetation management activities of the South Florida Water Management District. SFWMD spans 16 counties and is tasked with a variety of vegetation goals which include the management of invasive species in natural areas and maintenance of flood control infrastructure.

Ellen is a Senior Scientist at SFWMD in the Bureau of Land Resources. Since 2005 she has been managing invasive plants for the District. She works in uplands and wetlands, including the Water Conservation Areas, managing a variety of invasive plants. She is a member of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) and Everglades Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (ECISMA).



Upcoming Field Trips

If the weather is very bad, call Patty at 305-878-5705 to confirm. Field trips are for the study of plants and enjoyment of nature by FNPS members and guests. Collecting not permitted; children welcome. **Trips are in collaboration with the Broward Chapter.**

• **Saturday, September 23 at Nixon Smiley Pineland** (formerly Tamiami Pineland). This 120-acre Miami-Dade County preserve on the western edge of Miami's Rock Ridge represents the ecotone between pine rockland and rocky marl prairie. It is one of the largest pine

Chapter Activities

September

23 (Sat.): Field trip - Nixon Smiley Pineland Preserve
26 (Tue.): Chapter meeting at Pinecrest Gardens

October

14 (Sat.): Chapter workday, Everglades National Park ✨
15 (Sun.): Yard visit, home of Raul Moas, Pinecrest (4 p.m.)
21 (Sat.): Butterfly & Bird Kids Day, Castellow Hammock ✨
Miami Shores Green Day ✨
24 (Tue.): Chapter meeting at Pinecrest Gardens
Field trip: TBA - see the **Broward Chapter website**

November

10-12 (Fri.-Sun.): FTBG Fall Garden Festival/Ramble ✨
28 (Tue.): Chapter meeting at Pinecrest Gardens
Field trip TBA

December

9 (Sat.) -tentative: Chapter workday, Everglades Nat. Park ✨
16 (Sat): Field trip (date tentative) - with Broward Chapter

✨ **Dade Chapter volunteers needed** ✨

rocklands left in Miami, and is uniquely characterized by its large patches of sandy soil among the outcrops of limestone. There are numerous rare and interesting native plants at this park, as it is one of the most biodiverse sites in the county. Rare species include *Asclepias verticillata* (whorled milkweed) and *Physostegia purpurea* (false dragonhead). Fall wildflowers and grasses will be blooming.

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

Lost?: Call Patty 305-878-5705.

Parking: *Inside a closed gate -- please be on time!*

Difficulty: **Moderate.** Unpaved paths, some through brush. Some areas are very rocky but we will mostly stay near a less rocky trail.

Bring/wear: Water, sun protection, long pants. **Sturdy, closed shoes or boots are important in this rocky pineland. A walking stick might be helpful to some people where rocks occur.**

Leader: **Jimmy Lange**, field botanist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and member of FNPS

Lunch afterward: At a casual eatery nearby.

• **October 16, 2017 (tentative): Field trip planned by the Broward Chapter.** Please see coontie.fnpschapters.org/

Upcoming Dade Chapter Activities

Details TBA. Save the date!

Sunday, October 15, 4-6 p.m.: Yard visit.

Enjoy the large, interesting property of chapter member Raul Moas in Pinecrest, with ½ acre of pineland being restored after Hurricane Andrew, experimental planting of native grasses, and many other interesting native and non-native plants.

Saturday, October 21, 2017, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.: Butterfly and Bird Kids Day at Castellow Hammock Preserve and Nature Center (in the Redland area). **Volunteers and suggestions for simple activities for the DCFNPS table are needed.** Contact Patty Phares (pharespl@gmail.com, 305-255-6404).

Saturday, October 21, 2017, 3:30 – 7:30 p.m. Miami Shores Green Day. Join the Miami Shores Chamber of Commerce for this FREE community event. DCFNPS will be there spreading the word about native plants. **To volunteer for DCFNPS:** contact Amy Leonard (aleonar74@yahoo.com, 305-458-0969).

Dade Chapter and FNPS News

Welcome new members! Eliana Cordoba, Derek Gabaldon (both full-time students).

The Dade Chapter board will meet October 15 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.*

The September-October Sabal minor from FNPS is now at www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/sabalminor/sabalminor19_5_2017.pdf

Broward Chapter FNPS. coontie.fnpschapters.org/. Meets at Secret Woods, 2701 W. SR 84, Dania Beach.

Dade Chapter members are always invited!

- **September 13, 2017, 7 p.m.: Meeting.** Rose Bechard-Butman discusses the NatureScape program in Broward, especially sustainability and landscaping.
- **Field trips** – see the website for October's trip.

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SAVE THE DATE!

**The 2018 FNPS Annual Conference, May 17–20, 2018
at the Miccosukee Resort in Miami.**

Treasurer's Report FY 2016

The Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society finished its fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, with a small deficit (\$254) as in years past. We continue to maintain a healthy bank balance thanks to the bequest from Dr. Robert Kelley received in 2008, which has only been used to augment member donations to the chapter's support of FNPS Conservation Grants. Total assets are \$56,203.56. The majority of our income is from dues. Our largest expense continues to be our Native Plant Day. Raffles, merchandise sales, donations for tent rentals by other organizations and 10% of sales donations from vendors offset most of NPD expenses.

Bank statements are reconciled monthly and board members received monthly financial reports. The chapter's financial records are kept using QuickBooks. Anyone interested in more detail is welcome to contact me.

Susan Walcutt, Treasurer, walcutts@bellsouth.net

Dade Chapter FNPS Profit & Loss

July 2016 - June 2017

Income	
Donations	114.77
Festival plant sales	173.75
Monthly meetings	894.00
Native plant day	1,869.61
Membership dues	2,711.20
Other Income	36.24
Total Income	5,799.57
Expense	
Administration	679.04
Event outreach	102.34
Monthly meetings	1,679.26
Native plant day	2,418.64
Newsletter	395.46
Ramble	20.00
Merchandise for sale	738.22
Other Expense	20.85
Total expense	6,053.81
Net Income	-254.24

What Our Friends Are Doing

Dade Native Plant Workshop: *Please note the new time.* MDC Kendall Campus Landscape Technology Center, third Tuesdays, **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 are welcome.** *Join on the website (free) to receive email reminders or to post on the site.*
September 19 topic: Broomsedges and Bluestems (*Andropogon* and *Schizachyrium* genera in the Grass Family or Poaceae)
Plant Talks at FIU. You are invited to an informal lunchtime seminar by the Biology Department, Wednesdays, 12 - 1 p.m., in WC 130. Schedule: faculty.fiu.edu/~kopturs/planttalk17.html.

Of special note, on September 27, Dr. Suzanne Koptur, Professor of Biology (and Dade Chapter FNPS member) presents on a very special new book. It's a book release party!

Ant-Plant Interactions - Impacts of Humans on Terrestrial Ecosystems

Edited by Paulo S. Oliveira and Suzanne Koptur

Ants are probably the most dominant insect family on earth, and flowering plants have been the dominant plant group on land for more than 100 million years. In recent decades, human activities have degraded natural environments with unparalleled speed and scale, making it increasingly apparent that interspecific interactions vary not only under different ecological conditions and across habitats, but also according to anthropogenic global change.

Search for the title on book seller websites to learn more.

Everglades National Park Fee Free Day. Pay no entry fee on September 30, National Public Lands Day.

Biscayne National Park Gallery. Mangrove Coast: the work photographer Barry Fellman explores the unexpected beauty of spectacular mangrove habitats. Through October 15, 2017. www.nps.gov/bisc/planyourvisit/the-dante-fascell-visitor-center-gallery.htm

Gifford Arboretum, University of Miami.

www.bio.miami.edu/arboretum > visits or 305-284-1302.

October 4, 2017, 7 pm: Meeting in the Cox Science Center, room 166. UM Professor Dr. Kenneth Feeley presents on “The Effects of Climate Change on Tropical Forests.”

Florida Wildflower Symposium, September 22-23, 2017 in Orlando, presented by the Florida Wildflower Foundation. Presentations, workshops, field trips. flawildflowers.org/florida-wildflower-symposium/

Every Kid in a Park Program - volunteers needed! Are you passionate about the Everglades and want to learn more? Staff stations at Royal Palm or Shark Valley for 4th grade students. www.nps.gov/ever/getinvolved/every-kid-in-a-park-program.htm or contact 305-242-7753, Yvette_cano@nps.gov.

Adopt-A-Tree 2017. Miami-Dade homeowners may receive two free trees per year from the county, **including some natives.** See www.miamidade.gov/environment/adopt-a-tree.asp for details. **September 16**, Amelia Earhart Park, and **October 29**, Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition. 9 a.m. – noon. Contact: adoptatree@miamidade.gov or 305-372-6784.

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.

♦ “**Designing a Landscape: Natives, Exotics, and Edibles.**” September 27, 7-9 p.m. – class taught by **Wendy Saltzburg** (Landscape Designer and DCFNPS member). www.fairchildgarden.org/Education/Adults.

♦ **Bird Festival, Oct. 7-8** (with Tropical Audubon) – learn about birds, **buy plants.** www.fairchildgarden.org/Bird-Festival

Tropical Audubon Society. 5530 Sunset Dr., Miami. 305-667-7337, www.tropicalaudubon.org/. Sign up for the **e-Newsletter** for current issues and activities. **Tour** the Doc Thomas House, **go birding; volunteer at Eco-Restoration Days** at Porter-Russell Pine Rockland Preserve in Goulds and the Steinberg Nature Center at Doc Thomas House.

Hanging Gardens of Borbonia

by Jimmy Lange

Imagine my delight when I stumbled on these intricate lace cases literally hanging by a thread from the bark of a red bay (*Persea borbonia*) like so many Lilliputian Christmas lights. They belong to the Bumelia Webworm moth (*Urodus parvula*), the sole U.S. member of the genus *Urodus* whose range extends throughout the southeast from Maryland to Texas. The larvae feed primarily on bay trees (*Persea* sp.), but have also been found feeding on *Sideroxylon* (formerly *Bumelia*, hence the common name), oaks, citrus, and even *Hibiscus*. The larvae are covered in hairs called setae, and they spend their wild adolescence chewing irregular patterns in leaves, but like so many of us, there comes a time in a young webworm's life to "get a haircut, and get a real job". Perhaps in one last symbolic act of youthful idealistic rebellion, the caterpillars use their molted setae to construct a miniature masterpiece of the natural world. These baskets are then suspended by a thin thread—presumably to protect them from would be predators - until the adults emerge, drab as can be, to get on with their job of finding a mate and continuing the species.



Bumelia Webworm moth (*Urodus parvula*). Photo: Jimmy Lange

The future of bay trees in South Florida, as with the entire southeast, is uncertain with the continued spread of Laurel wilt (see: www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Agriculture-Industry/Pests-Diseases/Laurel-Wilt-Disease). The capacity for this species to shift hostplants throughout its range and maintain stable populations across the landscape is possible but uncertain. In the meantime, if you come across a bay tree or any other host listed above, look around for the Bumelia Webworm moth. And oh yeah, be prepared to look closely, they're roughly 13 x 6 mm. From what I gather, mass pupation as observed in the photo is not necessarily the norm, and pupae may be found individually, at times having moved to non-hostplants. I encourage sharing

occurrence data in the form of photographs (for all insects!) with online databases such as: Moth Photographer's Group, Bugguide, or iNaturalist. Citizen scientists can do much to increase our understanding of our microfauna which is incredibly diverse and so often overlooked.

Jimmy Lange is a field botanist with the South Florida Conservation Team at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, dedicated to in situ and ex situ conservation of the rare plants of our region. He is an active member of the FNPS and a board member of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council.

The following article is reprinted from the September 1998 *Tillandsia* (photos added).

Saffron-Plum: An Underused Native Landscape Plant

by Roger L. Hammer

Saffron-plum is an erect shrub that may, in time, mature into a small tree. It is a coastal species that can be found most commonly in the narrow ecotone where hardwood forest borders mangroves, especially in the Florida Keys. Only rarely can it be found in pineland habitat. Its Florida range extends contiguously from the Florida Keys to Palm Beach County on the east coast, and Hillsborough County on the west coast. There are also small, disjunct populations in Martin, Indian River, Brevard, and Levy counties.

Saffron-plum is a member of the *Sapotaceae*, or Sapodilla Family, and is currently referred to botanically as *Sideroxylon celastrinum*, although it will be found listed as *Bumelia celastrina* in most popular books on native plants. This nomenclature change reflects a recent revision that lumped the native genera *Bumelia*, *Dipholis*, and *Mastichodendron* into *Sideroxylon*.



Photos: Shirley Denton

In my opinion, saffron-plum deserves a closer look as a native landscape subject. The plant itself has an attractive growth habit, usually forming a tidy, compact canopy without any necessary structural pruning. The leaves are about 3/8 to 1/2 inch long and 3/16 to 1/4 inch wide. Small, white, fragrant, multi-stamened flowers are produced in spring and again in fall. The small, oblong, purple fruit are also attractive, both in appearance and to hungry birds.

I should point out that saffron-plum is exceptionally spiny - even the branch tips are sharply pointed - but this can be viewed as an

advantage if you have an area where you do not want people to tread. For instance, it would make a perfectly impenetrable barrier hedge. Its spiny character is also an attribute for nesting birds. Each spring and summer, swallow-tailed kites patrol my yard looking for snakes, lizards and - here comes the part you won't want to hear - baby birds in their nests. Over the years, I have seen kites turned away by the spines on saffron-plum while attempting to snatch baby cardinals, red-winged blackbirds, and mockingbirds from their nests tucked away inside the canopy, much to the delight of the nestlings and their parents. Nestlings in other plants in my yard don't fare as well from the sharp eyes and talons of swallow-tailed kites. I always let nature take its course, however, because I thoroughly enjoy watching swallow-tailed kites swooping acrobatically beneath the tree canopy in my yard. Swallow-tailed kites nest in South Florida too, and they are simply trying to feed their own offspring.

Saffron-plum is seldom seen in cultivation and is only offered by a few nurseries that specialize in native plants. If you are in need of a spiny plant for your landscape or the local birds, saffron-plum should fill the bill. Fairchild Tropical [Botanic] Garden has this species planted in [Plot 163] for those of you who want to see cultivated specimens.

Roger Hammer is a retired Miami-Dade County naturalist, author, photographer and native plant aficionado. He has written numerous books on Florida and wildflower identification cards for different parts of Florida. He is a long-time member and supporter of FNPS and frequent contributor to Tillandsia.

[**Tip:** Find the location of plants you would like to see at FTBG by checking the List of Living Plants: www.fairchildgarden.org/science-conservation-plant-collections/tropical-fruit-collection/list-of-living-plants]

DADE CHAPTER FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

President: Kurt Birchenough (kbirc001@fiu.edu, 202-905-3921)
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Treasurer: Susan Walcutt (walcutts@bellsouth.net, 305-297-7757)
At Large: Lydia Cuni, Janeen Feiger, Hernan Martinez, Ted Shafer, Jennifer Stine, Vivian Waddell

Dade Chapter – FNPS Council of Chapters: vacant

Refreshment coordinators: Cheryl & Ben Morgan (ckmorgan@bellsouth.net)
General chapter information: 305-985-3677

DCFNPS website & social media: <http://dade.fnpschapters.org/>

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TILLANDSIA

Editor: Patty Phares (pharespl@gmail.com, 305-255-6404)

Please contact the editor if you would like to join the Tillandsia staff!

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

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

FNPS office: info@fnps.org, 321-271-6702

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

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