



Dade Chapter

TILLANDSIA

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

MARCH 2014

MONTHLY MEETING

Tuesday, March 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.

Lawnweeds and The Butterflies That Use Them - Steve Woodmansee

Steve is a biologist with his own business (Pro Native Consulting), native plant expert, teacher, chair of the Dade Native Plant Workshop, president of FNPS, and a former president of the Dade Chapter who frequently delights us as a speaker and a contributor to *Tillandsia*.



Lawnweed *Phyla nodiflora*, Frogfruit – photo by Steve Woodmansee

Steve presents this program in memory of Elane Nuehring, FNPS member and heart and soul of Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association (page 2).

NATIVE PLANT DAY – MARCH 22

See page 2

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, March 15, 2014. Everglades National Park.** Chuck McCartney will lead a trip in search of orchids at Long Pine Key, Pa-Hay-Okee, perhaps Rock Reef. This Broward Chapter field trip follows Chuck's March 12 presentation to the Broward Chapter. Dade Chapter members are invited to the program (see Other News) and the field trip.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

Mar. 15 (Sat): Field trip (Everglades National Park)
Mar. 21 (Fri): Set up for Native Plant Day – *volunteer*
Mar. 22 (Sat): 19th Annual Native Plant Day – *please volunteer and prepare plant donations now!*

Mar. 25 (Tue.): Meeting at Pinecrest Garden
Mar. 30 (Sun): Field trip (Fakahatchee Strand prairies)

Apr. 12-13 (Sat.-Sun.): Chapter display, FTBG Butterfly Festival – *volunteers needed*

Apr. 19 (Sat.): Chapter workday, Everglades National Park

Apr. 22 (Tue.): Meeting at Pinecrest Garden

Apr. 26 (Sat.): Field trip (Glancy's pineland, 4:30 p.m.)

May 15-18: FNPS Annual Conference, Ft. Myers
– registration is open!

Difficulty: Moderate, but some walking on rough rocks or wet places is possible.

Bring/wear: Long pants and sleeves, closed shoes that can get wet or muddy, sun protection, bug spray, water to carry. A walking stick can be helpful to some. Bring lunch for afterward.

Park Entrance Fee: \$10 per vehicle or park pass

Lost/late? Try Patty's cell (305-878-5705)

• **Sunday, March 30, 2014. Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park.** This trip will differ from our previous field trips to the Fakahatchee. Instead of slough slogging off the old tram trails, we will **explore the wildflowers in the prairies** east of the central strand at Roger Hammer's suggestion. Park Biologist **Mike Owen** will be our guide. What we see might depend on where burning has taken place, but we're sure to find spring flowers and interesting plants of the prairies. We'll explore for 3+ hours into the early afternoon.

Difficulty: Mostly easy, terrain is not rough. It's the dry season but, as Mike Owen notes, **these are sometimes-wet-prairies.**

Bring/wear: Water, sun protection, sturdy shoes that can get wet or muddy, and lunch if you'd like to picnic later.

Lost/late? Try Jim Gross' cell (305-562-4923) or Patty's cell (305-878-5705) on this day only.

NATIVE PLANT DAY

March 22, 2014, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Enchanted Forest Elaine Gordon Park
1725 NE 135 Street, North Miami, FL 33181

Sponsored by the Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society and City of North Miami Parks and Recreation

FREE and open to the public

For a schedule and directions:

<http://dade.fnpschapters.org/> or call DCFNPS at 786-340-7914.
The schedule will be available before the event.

Please forward this link to your friends:

<http://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/nativeplantday.php>

The park is easy to find (exit I-95 at NW 135 ST and go east 3 miles; the park is JUST before Biscayne Boulevard) -- and it's not a long drive (about 30 minutes from the South Miami area). With lots of activities it will be an informative and pleasant day under towering oak trees. Bring your friends!

Activities and things to know:

- **Huge plant sale** (commercial vendors and home-grown benefiting our chapter)
- **Merchandise sale** (books, shirts and lots more)
- **Displays and hands-on activities** for all ages
- **Plant Clinic** - bring your questions
- **Plant walks and nature and gardening talks** (including the Early Bird Walk at 8 a.m.)
- **Plant holding area** to keep your purchases while you enjoy the event
- **Food and drink** available for purchase

It's not too late to donate your plants or your time. Please support the chapter to make this important day a success by volunteering or donating:

- **Help set up on March 21 (afternoon).** Set up signs, the raffle and other areas. Contact Amy.
- **Loan butterfly larvae, potted host/nectar plants.** We often need a last-minute source for caterpillars. Contact Patty.
- **Donate to the raffle and chapter plant sale:** Contact Amy if you can't take items to the park yourself, and so we can be prepared for the items you'll bring. Raffle items can include native plants, books, gift certificates or passes, art items, gardening tools, etc. Be creative!
- **Help at Native Plant Day on March 22.** If you can help for a few hours, you'll still have plenty of time to enjoy the event. Contact Gita.

Contact information for donations and volunteers:

Amy Leonard (305-458-0969 or aleonar74@yahoo.com)
Patty Phares (305-255-66404 or pphares@mindspring.com)
Gita Ramsay (786-877-7168 or gita.ramsay@gmail.com)



Artwork by Marie Wagner

Yes, sometimes we even need the common butterfly caterpillars for display – you probably have some. Please let us know!

IN MEMORIAM: Elane Nuehring

Elane Nuehring's eyes were always on butterflies and birds. Many of us knew her as the "icon" of the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, and before that part of the backbone of the Tropical Audubon Society. She was rarely without binoculars close at hand. In recent years she organized volunteer teams for Florida Natural Areas Inventories surveys of butterflies and tirelessly tromped through forests and fields of South Florida to find every species. She was the instigator and heart of Butterfly Days at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.

But Elane's feet were planted squarely among native plants. Members of FNPS since 1984, she and her husband Ron have quietly participated in meaningful ways. They opened their lush native plant garden in South Miami numerous times for yard visits. Elane faithfully brought Miami Blue NABA to Native Plant Day, collaborated on Ramble displays, organized joint field trips with Miami Blue and DCFNPS, and occasionally contributed to *Tillandsia*. She brought neighbors into the native plant fold and taught butterfly watchers about native plants.

Elane's heart was everywhere. She embraced, supported and cherished people and nature equally. When she died on February 5, 2014, we all lost a true and treasured friend.

DADE CHAPTER NEWS

Welcome new members. Julia Gehring (FIU student, transferring from the Palm Beach chapter), Matt and Michael Munilla (Muni Farms in Homestead), Frank Schena (eco-historian and urban naturalist), Laurie Sheldon (FNPS Social Media Subcommittee chair, transferring from the Ixia Chapter)

Chapter Board of Directors. Is it *your* turn to serve?

Being a chapter board member is a great way to let *your* ideas and skills help the Dade Chapter -- and thus help native plants. The main qualifications are enthusiasm and a desire to see the chapter thrive. *You don't have to be a botanist - a variety of skills is always needed on the board.*

Nominations are being accepted **through April 30**. The President, Vice President and several Directors at Large will be elected for two year terms. A slate will be presented by the nominating committee at the May membership meeting. Please contact Buck Reilly (buck@habify.com, 786-291-4824) if you are interested or have someone to suggest.

Butterfly Days, April 12-13, 2014 – Volunteers (people, caterpillars and native plants!) needed for Dade Chapter table. This event at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden will be included in with the Spring Garden Festival and Plant Sale (www.fairchildgarden.org/Events/) and is held in conjunction with the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. **Please contact Patty Phares (305-255-6404, pphares@mindspring.com) to help tend the table for a while or to provide caterpillars, chrysalises, ova, native plants that are larval hosts or nectar sources to display.**

FNPS 34th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

May 15-18, 2013

Florida Gulf Coast University in Ft. Myers

Exciting programming and dynamic speakers on Friday and Saturday, fantastic field trips on Thursday and Sunday, affordable and fun socials, convenient on-campus housing option (or an affordable hotel), huge plant sale, exhibitors and vendors, scientific poster session, nature trail walks ... what more could you want? How about speaker **Dr. James C. Cahill**, an experimental ecologist featured in the PBS show [What Plants Talk](#)



[About](#). See details at <http://fnps.org/conference/2014>. **Register before April 14 for reduced rates.** For questions about the conference itself, contact Marlene Rodak (239-273-8945, rodakma@msn.com), or about registration contact FNPS (321-271-6702, info@fnps.org)

OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

Broward Native Plant Society. www.npsbroward.org

- **Meeting, March 12**, 7 pm, at Secret Woods, 2701 W. SR 84, Dania Beach. Chuck McCartney: "Favorite Native Orchids".
- **Native Plant Sale, April 5**, 8 a.m. at Secret Woods with Friends of the Secret Woods and local nurseries

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/fruitlet), even if they do not pertain to the topic. Beginners and old hands are all encouraged to come. Free. Join on the website (free) to receive an email reminder and to post plant photos for identification or discussion.

March 18 topic: Graminoids (Grasslike plants). Graminoids are plants that look like grasses, they include Poaceae (grasses), Cyperaceae (sedges), and Juncaceae (rushes).

Miami Dade College Kendall Campus Environmental Center. Classes of interest to native plant and butterfly fans:
- Butterfly Garden 101, (Sat. afternoon, 3/8 – 4/8)
- Monarch Butterfly Way Stations (Sat. morning, 3/8 - 4/12)
See <https://www.mdc.edu/ce/kendall/env/> or call 305-237-0905.

Environmentally Endangered Lands Program Volunteer Workdays. Help make a difference in protecting our natural areas at preserves all over Miami. Learn about native habitats and earn student community service hours. Please register at EEL@Miamiidade.gov or call 305-372-6611. Info and calendar: <http://www.miamidade.gov/environment/endangered-lands-volunteer.asp>

- 3/8 – Deering Estate, Palmetto Bay (coastal cleanup)
- 3/21/14 – Camp Matecumbe Pineland Preserve, 13841 SW 120 St. (air potato removal)

Florida Master Naturalist courses. Instructors from Tropical Audubon, Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation and Florida Sea Grant Extension are partnering to offer two special topics courses during spring break. Space is limited, so sign up now for **Wildlife Monitoring** (March 24-26, 2014), and **Environmental Interpretation** (March 27-29, 2014). Both will be held at the Deering Estate. Registration deadline is March 18. For more info: <http://www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu/about/>, <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/fmnp/> or 305-421-4017.

Friends of the Gifford Arboretum. For info on activities and Music in the Arboretum: www.bio.miami.edu/arboretum or 305-284-1302. For directions click on 'Visits'.

April 3, 2014

The 26th Annual John C. Gifford Lecture

*"Longevity in Plant Cells –
Are Palms the Longest-lived Trees?"*

Dr. P. Barry Tomlinson

7 p.m. in Cox Science Center, Room 145, Univ. of Miami
A reception will follow - Free and open to the public

Dr. Tomlinson's groundbreaking research shows how palm cells significantly differ from those of conifers and hardwoods. He is Professor Emeritus at Harvard University, and was a Research Scientist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. He is now a Research Associate of Montgomery Botanical Center and Fairchild and Crum Professor of Tropical Botany at the National Tropical Botanical Garden.

Tropical Audubon Society. For more info on these or other activities and a host of conservation issues to learn about and act on, see www.tropicalaudubon.org or call 305-667-7337. Doc Thomas House, 5530 Sunset Dr., Miami, 33143.

• **Porter-Russell Pine Rockland Walk. Mar. 30, 7:30 a.m.** Joe Barros will lead this walk through Tropical Audubon's own remnant pine rockland at SW 124 Ave and 220 St.

Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park 23rd Annual Lecture Series: "The Delicate Balance of Nature, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, MM 102.5 Oceanside Overseas Highway. Gate opens at 7 p.m. Free but seating is limited. More details: 305-451-9570 or http://floridastateparks.org/pennekamp/doc/additionalinformation/jpc-2014_agenda_-_lecture_series.pdf.

- 3/5 - Increasing Freshwater Flow in Florida Bay Mangrove Lake Estuaries
- 3/12 - The Search for the Pirate-Slaver Guerrero
- 3/19 - Dragonflies and Damselflies
- 3/26 - Scuba Diving Islamorada

The National Park Service still needs torchwood (*Amyris elemifera*) seeds to restore a larval food of the Schaus swallowtail butterfly. Keep them coming - not all seeds are viable, so it takes a lot. If you know of someone else who may have a torchwood, please pass the word along. Contact Helena Giannini, 786-249-3013, hgiannini@nps.gov.

WHAT'S A 'THOROUGHWORT'?

by Chuck McCartney

During Kristie Wendelberger's interesting program on the federally endangered wildflower *Chromolaena frustrata* at January's Dade Chapter FNPS meeting, a question came up about the derivation of its rather unwieldy "common name" of Cape Sable Thoroughwort. The "Cape Sable" part is obvious because of where it grows. However, "Thoroughwort" seems harder to understand.

The "wort" ending is easy to explain because we often see it appended to the vernacular name for herbs. It derives from the Old English word *wyrt*, meaning a root, herb or plant.

The "Thorough" part, however, required a trip to the Internet for some research, and there we learn that it appears to be a corruption of the word "through."

According to the online *Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia*, the name applies to a composite plant, *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, common in eastern North America. The entry notes: "It has a stout hairy stem, 2 to 4 feet high, with opposite leaves united at the base (connate-perfoliate), the stem thus passing through the blade (whence the name)." The definition also states: "The leaves and tops form an officinal [pharmacy-stocked] as well as domestic drug of tonic and diaphoretic [sweat-inducing] properties, in large doses emetic and aperient [laxative]. The name is extended to other species of the genus." And, obviously, it has been applied to species formerly in *Eupatorium*



Eupatorium perfoliatum Photo by Chuck McCartney

and now segregated into related genera, as in the case of Cape Sable Thoroughwort, currently placed in the genus *Chromolaena*.

Eupatorium perfoliatum does not occur naturally in Florida south of Hernando County on the peninsula's central Gulf Coast. The photo here was taken in the Nantahala Mountains of western North Carolina in August 2013.

[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.]

PUCKER UP TO PERSIMMON

by Steve Woodmansee
Photos by the author

Here in the south part of the state we tend to forget about some of the native plants typical of more northern climes. We are typically biased toward the tropical things, but many temperate species do occur here in Miami-Dade County, one such tree is the Common Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*). One can see this plant as far south as Long Pine Key in Everglades National Park, and as far north as Connecticut, and west toward Kansas and Oklahoma. In south Florida, you usually find it growing in moist to mesic hammocks, as well as on the edges of pinelands, or even in coastal strand, where I've seen it at Crandon Park on Key Biscayne.

Sometimes shrub-like, cultivated individuals of Common Persimmon typically attains heights of around 15 or 20 feet, making it perfect for smaller yards. Be forewarned though, they do tend to sucker, growing from roots and popping up elsewhere in your yard. I have never found this a problem, as unwanted suckers are easy to just trim off.

The leaves are simple and entire. Leaves become spotty as they get older, with almost a reddish hew amongst the green. This doesn't matter much as it is deciduous, possessing beautiful



yellow to red fall color come December or January for us in Miami-Dade. Leaves can become covered by webworm caterpillars in the summer, but this is a good thing, as these "delectables" are an important source of food for birds, especially when raising young. The bark on the tree is highly textured, resembling oak trees. Being a member of the Ebony family (Ebenaceae), the wood is highly sought after by cabinet makers, although

it takes a 100 year old tree to produce a worthy product.

Common Persimmon is dioecious, meaning it has male and female flowers on separate individuals. It blooms in the spring, even though the small white flowers aren't especially showy. Making up for that is that it is a marvelous attractor for bees and their kin. In fact, honey from Persimmon flowers is highly valued, where commercial Persimmon honey can be found in parts of the South and Midwest.

Persimmons are mostly known for their edible fruit, which can be awfully astringent if not fully ripe, but delicious when picked at just the right time. One can determine ripeness by lightly shaking the tree, and gathering the ripe ones after they drop.

Florida fruits are about the size of a large grape to perhaps as large as a pingpong ball, and contains several seeds. Being dioecious, if you have a tree with male flowers, you will not get fruit, and may need to place more than one tree in your yard to ensure fruiting success. Fruits can be showy, and persist in the winter on a leafless tree. These fruits have been used in making



bread, dried like dates, made into beer and brandy, and have lots of medicinal uses to boot.

So if you want a truly unusual native fruit tree for your yard, miss the fall color from up north, or you wish to support oodles of wildlife, try a persimmon.

[Persimmon will be available at Native Plant Day on March 22. Steve Woodmansee is a biologist with his own business (Pro Native Consulting), native plant expert, teacher, chair of the Dade Native Plant Workshop, president of FNPS, a former president of the Dade Chapter and frequent contributor to Tillandsia.]

The following is an excerpt from an article, dated November 10, 1964, given to me by William Atwater in 1984, when he was about 80 years old. It was first published in Tillandsia in September 1998. After becoming disillusioned as a teacher to young boys who were not appreciative of nature, he left teaching and eventually spent time exploring. He wrote several published articles about his experiences in the Everglades. We are not likely to see the morning dew on knee-high grasses at 9:30 when we arrive at the prairie on March 30, but we might enjoy the rest of the beauty Mr. Atwater experienced. - Editor

AN INTIMATE VIEW OF THE FAKAHATCHEE

by William G. Atwater

What is the lure of the Fakahatchee which draws so irresistibly into its confines the steps of the woodman, the hunter, the ornithologist, the botanist, the naturalist, as well as the fugitive from the communal stresses of today's society? No thorny tangles, depth of water, no lurking beasts will deter the course of

these, the searchers. Herewith then, is an attempt to portray briefly a word-picture of the area, to reveal to the reader some of the characteristics of the region. Once a saline slough extending inland from some ancient shoreline, it has, through the ages, developed into a cypress strand just a little larger, a little wilder, more replete with rare vegetative forms than any other strand in South Florida.

...
Of the various access routes let us consider an approach from the east, about midway the strand's fifteen-mile length. Such a course requires crossing about two miles of prairie. Early morning dew still saturates the knee-high grasses and sedges which compose the open terrain. The beauty of the prairie is enhanced by numerous small wooded islands scattered at random like mixed fleet at anchor. Some are pine islands, some are groups of *Sabal palmetto*, still others are thickets of tropical trees and shrubs. Now the spirit of the individual man is eager and alert and fails not to yield to the spell of the early morning hour. In the passing panorama he can admire the blue-printed fields of glades lobelia (*Lobelia glandulosa*), the upright stems of *Calopogon* orchids in varying shades of pink, the song of the meadowlark, and occasionally the very nest which the singer guards - a neat little cup beneath a dome of arching grass where fledglings wait in trust. There are colorful milkweeds and shining swamp lilies. And, where recent fire has darkened the prairie, may be heard the rattling call of the timorous cranes.
 ...

DADE CHAPTER FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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TILLANDSIA

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Assistant editor: vacant

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

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FNPS blog: www.fnpsblog.org

FNPS is on Facebook and Twitter: FNPSonline

Dade Chapter rep. to FNPS: vacant

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