



TILLANDSIA

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

SEPTEMBER 2022

MONTHLY MEETING

Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 7:30 PM
Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Ave. (Red Road), Miami
(Also live-streamed on YouTube)
Free and open to all!

Come early or stay late to socialize and browse the merchandise and raffle table. The raffle follows the program. (Refreshments are still on hold.) Thank you for your contributions of raffle items (native plants, non-plant items such as books, etc.)!
Please label each of your raffle plant donations – with at least the common name, but more information is welcome, including the donor’s name. A slip of paper or piece of tape will do.

Special Flora, Fauna and Places Seen on Recent Chapter Field Trips - Lydia Cuni

Chapter field trips give us the opportunity to experience natural areas first hand, examine rare or cool plants up close, catch glimpses of wildlife not seen at home, share information, and enjoy the company of fellow plant lovers. But it's also informative to look back and examine photos, recounting the story and potentially seeing more than the first time. Lydia Cuni will share our finds from some trips she led or attended over the past years and discuss some of these treasures. Plus, just

recently, chapter member Joe Montes de Oca created an iNaturalist project to collect/organize the observations seen while on Dade Chapter field trips. This presentation will also draw upon that iNaturalist project.

Lydia spends a lot of time outdoors as a Field Biologist with Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden Conservation Team where she works to map and monitor rare plants and insects of South Florida. She is secretary of DCFNPS and of the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, with whom she also spends more time outdoors, attending or leading field trips and conducting butterfly surveys.



Calendar

<https://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/>

- Sept. 24 (Sat.): Chapter field trip – Kendalwood Park
- Sept. 27 (Tue.): Chapter meeting
- Oct. 25: (Tue.): Chapter meeting
- Oct. 29: Chapter workday at Everglades National Park

Other September events of interest

- Sept. 14: Broward Chapter FNPS meeting
- Sept. 18: Castellow Hammock Nature Center Open House
- Sept. 20: Native Plant Workshops in Dade and the Keys
- Sept. 24: • Miami-Dade Adopt-a-Tree (free trees!)
• National Public Lands Day events at National Parks

Inside this issue

- ◆ Native Plant Day returns
- ◆ Pine Rockland for sale
- ◆ “Member Highlight: Interview with Wes Brooks, Florida Chief Resilience Officer” by Steve Woodmansee
- ◆ “Some Like it Hot - Native Peppers” by Roger Hammer
- ◆ More news, announcements, things to do

Oct. 25: Diagnosing Your Landscape Problems - Adrian Hunsberger

Nov. 22: Pine rocklands and the Connect to Protect Network – Daniela Champney, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Online viewing: Live-streamed and recorded on YouTube. www.youtube.com/channel/UCmassuC5-OsAX2KsRYQ6X5A

Note: You will see only the computer-based portions of the meeting (on-screen announcements and presentation), not the raffle and other input from the room. **Chat will be enabled.**

Questions? Email DadeFNPS@gmail.com, text 305-985-3677

Past presentations: Use the YouTube link above or from DadeFNPS.org. Click the **Videos** tab for all recordings available, including June’s: “Beekeeping and Pollinators” with Daniel Calzadilla of Bee Wranglers.

FIELD TRIP: Kendalwood Park Saturday, September 24, 2022

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

This will be a short field trip, but a lovely walk. Kendalwood

Park is a quiet neighborhood park nestled against the Don Shula Expressway (SR 874) and managed by Miami-Dade County. You may pass by never knowing it exists. It contains 122 taxa, primarily hammock with a few wetland affinities. (See The Institute for Regional Conservation plant list [here](#).)

- **Leader:** Steve Woodmansee
- **Difficulty:** EASY, along unpaved, wide, mostly-shaded trails
- **Bring/wear:** Binoculars suggested – there are bound to be migratory birds. Water is always a good idea!
- **Notes:** No pets are allowed on our walks. No restrooms.

Do you have suggestions for field trip destinations, leaders, activities? Email Steve Woodmansee: steve@pronative.com!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dade Chapter FNPS - Year Ending June 30, 2022

Once again, the chapter revenues and expenses were impacted by the COVID pandemic. Expenses were lower without Native Plant Day, four months of in-person meetings, or significant merchandise purchases. On the income side, FNPS paid about \$500 of Membership Dues Income for January to June 2021 to the chapter in August of this fiscal year. So although income from merchandise sales and raffles at meetings and events was reduced, we ended the year with a profit.

We maintain a healthy bank balance thanks to the bequest from the estate of longtime member Dr. Robert Kelley received in 2008. These funds are used for special expenses rather than ongoing needs and are not listed with our regular income.

This year we again donated \$1500 to FNPS for Conservation Grants honoring chapter founders, the late Don and Joyce Gann. Our main source of income continues to be membership dues. Dues paid to FNPS and donations paid directly to DCFNPS are 100% tax deductible (if you itemize). **Give Miami Day (November 17, 2022)** and **Amazon Smile** are other ways to donate. If you buy from Amazon, register with Amazon Smile and indicate Dade Chapter FNPS as the company to receive the donations.

Susan Walcutt, Treasurer DCFNPS, walcutts@bellsouth.net

DCFNPS Profit & Loss July 2021-June 2022

Income

Donations	1,694
Educational	757
Membership Dues	3,478
Other income	<u>20</u>
Total Income	5,949

Expense

Administration	651
Conservation	1500
Education	1717
Membership	37
Merchandise for sale	<u>121</u>
Total Expense	4026
Net other income/expense	<u>-46</u>
NET PROFIT (LOSS)	<u>1877</u>



DADE CHAPTER and FNPS NEWS



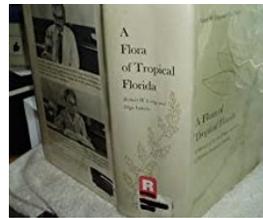
Welcome new members (or welcome back!): Marcella Arnesen (student), Lina Castaneda, Laura Champion, Jeannette Fresnedo and Andre Dominguez, Giselle Jordan, Margie and Nick Pikarsky, Sherry Sierveld; and Barbara Soliday, Kristin Soliday and Diana Santangelo.

FNPS publications

- **Sabal Minor newsletter.** Find the **March-September** issue at <https://www.fnps.org/home> under [resources](#). (The link was emailed recently, but some members may not have received it due to breaking in a new FNPS membership database system.)
- **Past issues of the beautiful *Palmetto* magazine** are [here](#).

The Broward Chapter FNPS meets at Secret Woods Nature Center, second Wednesdays. broward.fnpschapters.org/.

Sept. 14: Joe Montes de Oca presents on iNaturalist, in-person and on Zoom.



Thanks to John Shaffer for his generous donation of a used hardcover edition of *A Flora of Tropical Florida* by Robert Lang. **It will be for sale for \$50 at our September 27 meeting.** Amazon has the same book listed at \$147 (hardcover) and used at \$75.

Save the date!

25th ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT DAY - March 25, 2023
Elaine Gordon Enchanted Forest Park in North Miami.

The Dade Chapter's signature event has been missing for three years, but we're starting up again in the location planned in 2020. The day will be full of programs, nature walks, educational tables by organizations and agencies, plant and merchandise sales, raffles, activities for all ages, and plenty of time to meet up with old and new friends.

If you have suggestions for presenters, organizations, vendors, etc., **or would like to help with the preparation**, please contact DadeFNPS@gmail.com.

PINE ROCKLAND FOR SALE

Amazing opportunity to save a pine rockland!

Total of 10 acres (can be divided into two 5 acre lots), located in Redland. On half of the property is the rare "Old Florida vibe" 3/2 home (ca. 1950's, needs TLC) plus huge workshop. Yard with many Dade-County pines, lots of native plants, fruit and flowering trees, and a palm garden.



The other 5 acres are pine rockland with an NFC designation. Mostly well-maintained, outstanding ecological value due to completely undisturbed substrate, incredible plant diversity (including a federally listed and many state listed species).

For serious inquiries please contact Daniela at d_champney@yahoo.com

MORE NEWS and THINGS TO DO

Castellow Hammock Nature Center Open House, Sept. 18. Volunteer event at 9am. Open house: 11am-3pm with tours of the butterfly garden, hikes of the hammock, live bluegrass music, and crafts. FREE. If you'd like to RSVP (encouraged) and for more info, scan the QR code or click [here](#) (select EcoAdventure Events).



Dade Native Plant Workshop - at the MDC Kendall Campus. nativeplantworkshop.ning.com/. This free public workshop meets every 3rd Tuesday, led by Steve Woodmansee. Novices and experts alike are welcome! Follow Steve on Twitter to receive workshop reminders (<https://twitter.com/hobobotanist>). **Sept. 20, 5:00 PM:** Solanaceae (Nightshade Family)

Florida Keys Native Plant Workshop (virtual meeting). **Sept. 20, 5:30 PM:** Cynthia Guerra presents Dennis Giardina's presentation on invasive exotic mangrove species in South Florida. For more info, email: FKNPW@outlook.com.

Miami-Dade County Adopt-a-Tree event, Sept. 24, 9 AM-noon at the Moss Cultural Arts Center, Cutler Bay. Miami-Dade County single-family and duplex homeowners can receive up to two free trees per year. Natives at this final event of 2022 include locustberry, Jamaican caper, crabwood and firebush. Details [here](#).

Celebrate National Public Lands Day, September 24:

- Biscayne National Park's Convoy Point Jetty trail reopening and other activities. Details [here](#).
- Everglades National Park: entrance fee free day and Bioblitz all over the park. Details [here](#).

Redland GrowFest, Oct. 15-16, at the Fruit and Spice Park. This year's theme: The Hidden Life of Soil. Learn about the wonders of the soil microbiome beneath our feet. This year's beneficiary is Miami Seed Share, which established Miami's first Public Seed Library promoting native and heirloom plantings and providing growing resources for teachers and residents. See details at <https://RedlandGrowFest.com>

Pine Rockland Working Group, Oct. 31-Nov. 5, 2022. Virtual symposium, in-person field trips. Save the dates and see [here](#) for registration and more info.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Interview with Dr. Wesley Brooks Florida Chief Resilience Officer and Dade Chapter FNPS member

By Steven W. Woodmansee

On Friday, June 24, 2022, Wes and I talked over the phone to discuss his position as Florida Chief Resilience Officer (CRO). The CRO position was originally created on August 1, 2019, and Wes came on in November 2021. Recently, the Governor signed a new law that created the Statewide Office of Resilience (SOR). Taking effect on July 1, 2022, this newly created Office, to be headed by the CRO, will remain as part of Florida's executive branch in perpetuity.

Wes grew up in Kendall, and joined the Dade Chapter FNPS while in high school. Wes is a dedicated FNPS member, maintaining his membership with our chapter for 21 years, despite having moved to several states while in college and work. He holds a PhD in Ecology from Rutgers University.

I asked Wes how the Statewide Office of Resilience's (SOR) mission overlaps with the FNPS mission to conserve, preserve, and restore the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. He responded that the primary mission of the SOR is to enhance resilience to Florida's communities and citizenry from any potential flood events including from storms and sea level rise, anywhere in Florida (not just coastal). SOR will provide guidance to existing state agencies such as the Florida Department of Transportation in enhancing existing ecosystem functions on public lands and right-of-ways to reduce flooding along roads and nearby homes/businesses. The SOR will also expand on the Chief Resilience Officer's ability to perform outreach and support local communities (cities, counties, etc.) in their own efforts to enhance flood resilience through a diversity of mitigation and adaptation projects including plant community restoration.

Through the new Resilient Florida program out of the Department of Environmental Protection, the State of Florida provides 50% of the financial support necessary to enable the best/most important projects. A project to help restore a natural buffer between tidal swamp and Old Cutler Road in the Town of Cutler Bay was recently awarded \$250,000 in funding through this program. This program can also support wetlands acquisitions, and Wes mentioned that the State of Florida recently funded the purchase several tracts of hundreds of acres of coastal wetlands and historic sloughs in southern Miami-Dade County that will help support the Biscayne Bay and Southeastern Everglades Ecosystem Restoration (BBSEER) project. Over \$1.2 billion (including local match funds) has been committed to 189 resilience projects in the first year of the Resilient Florida program alone – an impressive start to a long-term effort to increase Florida's resilience to flooding events.

I asked Wes where he is these days, and he said he is currently splitting time between Washington, DC (where the state maintains a federal relations office), Tallahassee, and conducting "regional resilience tours" across the state, but he and his family will likely move to Tallahassee in the near future. I asked him if he would update his chapter membership to become a Longleaf Pine Chapter



member. Wes assured me that his heart will always be in Miami-Dade, and that he would maintain his Dade Chapter membership regardless of where he ends up.

Steve Woodmansee is the vice president of DCFNPS and frequent contributor to Tillandsia. (He's a lot of other things, too, but for this article he's not wearing all his botany hats.)

SOME LIKE IT HOT

Native Peppers By Roger L. Hammer

Many native plant enthusiasts might be surprised to learn that there are two species of hot peppers native to Florida. The most common species is the quaint little bird pepper (*Capsicum annuum* var. *glabriusculum*) and the other less common species is the tabasco pepper (*Capsicum frutescens*). In South Florida both of these peppers range from Lee and Martin Counties south into the Florida Keys with scattered populations north of that range.

The heat in peppers is ranked in Scoville units with the well-known jalapeno pepper ranking rather low on the heat scale from 3,000 to 7,000 Scoville units. The Habanero pepper comes in at around 500,000 units, and the pepper with the ominous name, Grim Reaper, tops the charts at 2 million Scoville units. Our native peppers are somewhat civilized with the tabasco pepper measuring 30,000 to 50,000 Scoville units and the tiny bird pepper measuring 90,000 units. The name bird pepper comes from birds, especially mockingbirds, that pluck the ripe peppers off the bush and swallow them whole, therefore being unaware of the heat that they pack if they were to bite into them.

I have encountered tabasco peppers growing wild in Florida only twice in all my travels around the state. The first time was with my dear friend George Avery (1922–1983) in a Miami-Dade County hammock in Coconut Grove, and the second time was in a Hillsborough County oak hammock.

But the one I like is the bird pepper. Places to see the native bird pepper are along the nature trail in Matheson Hammock and along the Snake Bight and Rowdy Bend trails in Everglades National Park.



Bird pepper (*Capsicum annuum* var. *glabriusculum*)

The bird pepper can reach 6' tall and bear many dozens of 3/8" peppers that not only attract mockingbirds, but can also be used to spice up chili, stews, spaghetti sauce, and other dishes. If you like hot peppers, you'll love the bird pepper.

I once entered the Homestead Chili Cookoff Contest held at Harris Field Park many years ago. My chili had no beans, just diced beef, water, and spices, but I included way-too-many bird peppers cut in half to make it overly spicy. It took second place but I'm still waiting on fame and fortune.



Tabasco pepper (*Capsicum frutescens*)

Roger L. Hammer is a professional naturalist, author, photographer, and a member of FNPS. His most recent book (2018) is "Complete Guide to Florida Wildflowers." He lives in Homestead with his wife, Michelle.

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Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society
For Miami-Dade and the Florida Keys
Chapter communication: DadeFNPS@gmail.com, 305-985-3677
DCFNPS website & social media: www.DadeFNPS.org/
Mail: Dade Chapter FNPS, 6619 S. Dixie Hwy, #181, Miami FL 33143-7919

Board members (2022-2023):
President: Brian Diaz
Secretary: Lydia Cuni
Vice-President: Steve Woodmansee
Treasurer: Susan Walcutt
At Large: Joey Basna, Riki Bonnema, Gwen Burzycki, Janeen Feiger, Jeanne Rothchild, Jennifer Stine
FNPS Council of Chapters representative: (open)

Newsletter editor: Patty Phares
Webmaster: Haniel Pulido Jr., dadefnpsweb@gmail.com

Tillandsia Newsletter
Please contact the editor if you might 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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