



# TILLANDSIA

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

## JULY-AUGUST 2021

### EVENING YARD VISIT and SOCIAL

Saturday, July 24, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

**\*\* Registration required, space limited \*\***

We are excited to announce our first social event in over a year and look forward to seeing you in person again! Hosting is Jeff Wasielewski, our April speaker on "How to Build a Backyard Paradise". (Watch at <https://youtu.be/5ZYok6qMSMQ?t=485>.) Jeff is the Commercial Tropical Fruit Extension Agent for UF/IFAS Extension Miami-Dade. We will tour his verdant home landscape with expertly blended native, Florida-Friendly, and fruiting plants. Many thanks to Jeff for allowing us to unwind and share our passion for native plants in his beautiful garden.

**When:** Saturday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

**Where:** 11325 SW 108 Court, Miami, FL 33176

**Registration:** To keep the event both fun and safe, **attendance is capped at 30 and limited to Dade Chapter members.** Please register at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/july-yard-visit-2021-tickets-161221514891>

**COVID safety:** You are encouraged to wear a mask if it's your personal preference or if you have not received a vaccination.

**Refreshments:** *Please do not bring food to share.* DCFNPS will provide drinks (water, sodas, etc.) but you may also bring your own. Alcoholic beverages are ok to enjoy responsibly. We will provide disposable cups but encourage you to bring a reusable cup from home.

**Dogs:** Jeff's three friendly dogs will be around, but **please do not bring yours.**

**Mosquitoes:** It's a summer evening in a leafy garden. Be prepared!

**Parking:** Park on the grass between the sidewalk and the road at Jeff's home as well as the neighbors to both sides and directly across the street. Jeff's front lawn can also be used. Space is limited, so carpooling is strongly encouraged.

**Questions?** Email [DadeFNPS@gmail.com](mailto:DadeFNPS@gmail.com), or text 305-985-3677

We hope to see you there. In the meantime, happy gardening!  
– Brian Diaz, Chapter President

**Watch past programs** on the DCFNPS [YouTube channel](#) (or at [dadefnps.org](http://dadefnps.org), click the YouTube button at the bottom).

**Sept 28:** Dade Chapter meeting: Dr. Sam Purkis, University of Miami - "Understanding the Geology Underlying Miami and What it Tells Us About the Past and Future Sea Level"

### Calendar

<http://www.dadefnps.org/events>

(No chapter program meetings in July or August)

**July 10 (Sat.):** Chapter workday at Everglades National Park

**July 24 (Sat.):** Evening yard visit (registration required)

**Aug. 7 or 14 (Sat.):** Chapter workday at Everglades Nat. Park

**Aug. 15 (Sun.):** Field trip – Florida City Pineland

**Sept. 28 (Tue.):** Dade Chapter meeting

### Other events of interest

**Through Sept. 12:** "Diatomaceous Dreams" art exhibit at BNP

**July 17 and 24:** NABA butterfly surveys

**July 20, Aug 17:** Dade Native Plant Workshop (walks)

**Aug. 1:** Miami Blue NABA meeting (online)

**Aug. 4 and 25:** Free Entrance days at Everglades National Park

**Aug. 17:** Florida Keys Native Plant Workshop (online)

### In this issue

- July Evening Yard Visit
- August Field Trip to Florida City Pineland
- Dade Chapter and FNPS News
- More News and Things to Do
- **Native Plants and Moths** – in celebration of **National Moth Week July 17-25, 2021**

### FIELD TRIP

**Florida City Pineland Preserve (South Dade)**

**Sunday August 15**

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

This County-owned preserve is almost 24 acres of mainly pine rockland. It burned earlier this year and is full of wildflowers and interesting plants. 196 native plant species have been recorded for the preserve, many of which are threatened or endangered. One rare species has made a new appearance here, *Astraea (Croton) lobatus*, which is known for germinating after fires.

This could be a really fun botany-focused field trip. Participants are invited to bring a copy of the preserve's current plant list from IRC's website; we'll attempt to find as many as possible, maybe even finding another new one for the list!

<https://regionalconservation.org/ircs/database/plants/ByConsArea.asp?SiteID=338&SN=Florida%20City%20Pineland>.

Butterflies encountered on the field trip will also be pointed out.

**Leader:** Lydia Cuni, new DCFNPS Board Secretary (and Secretary for Miami Blue Chapter of NABA) and Field Biologist

for Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. A mini bio of her is in June's newsletter.

**Difficulty:** Moderate, hiking through recently burned pineland, weather should be warm.

**Face masks:** Recommended for those without vaccination.

**Bring/wear:** Face mask (if unvaccinated for Covid-19), long pants, sturdy shoes, bug spray (just in case), sun protection, and water for drinking. A walking stick may be helpful to some for extra stability. Binoculars are handy for viewing wildlife.

**Notes:** There are restrooms at businesses nearby. Field trips are for the study of plants and enjoyment of nature; collecting is not permitted. Children are welcome.

**Pets are not allowed on field trips.**

## DADE CHAPTER and FNPS NEWS

**Welcome new member!** Natalia Herrera-Blitman (student)

**Everglades National Park workdays.** Help with our habitat restoration/landscaping project maintenance at the **Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center**. **Upcoming dates are July 10 and August 7 or 14 (TBD)**, 9 a.m. -noon. Workday team members will be notified of dates when scheduled. **New volunteers** should contact Patty ([pharespl@gmail.com](mailto:pharespl@gmail.com)) for details and one-time advance paperwork required by ENP. *Please join our team!*

**Florida Native License Plates will support FNPS.** Show your pride for Florida's unique and beautiful native plants today by purchasing a Florida Native License Plate for your vehicle! This official state of Florida license plate was designed in a distinctive camouflage pattern using all native species.

**Revenue from the sale of the plates will go directly to FNPS to**

**fund our work, grants and scholarships to protect and restore Florida's native plant communities.** *We must presell 3,000 plates via a voucher system before the state will start printing our specialty license plate, so buy your voucher now for you or a loved one.* They make for one-of-a-kind gifts, and help spread the message and appreciation for Florida Natives! Visit <https://www.fnps.org/support/license> or <https://services.flhsmv.gov/VirtualOffice/> to buy a voucher now for your Florida Native License Plate!

**Do you need 4" pots to grow native plants?** Start seeds or pot up volunteers to share with friends, or in anticipation of sharing at in-person meetings and events. Please contact Patty ([pharespl@gmail.com](mailto:pharespl@gmail.com)) if you need a few pots.

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## MORE NEWS and THINGS TO DO

*Learn about, enjoy and help native plants and natural areas.*

**Dade Native Plant Workshop. July 20, 5 p.m.** Walk at Ludlam Pineland Preserve. Details at [nativeplantworkshop.ning.com/](http://nativeplantworkshop.ning.com/). All are welcome. **Join on the website** (free!) to post photos for ID, share, and receive reminders.

• **August 17:** Check the blog for location and details.

## Florida Keys Native Plant Workshop virtual meeting.

No July meeting. **August 17, 5:30 - topic TBA.** For email notification with the Zoom link, questions:

[FKNPW@outlook.com](mailto:FKNPW@outlook.com).

## Miami Blue North American Butterfly Association meeting

**(online). Aug. 1, 2021, 1 PM.** "*Here, There, or Everywhere? Comparing butterfly species diversity in butterfly gardens and nearby natural areas in Naples, Florida*" - Andee Naccarato (President, Naples Chapter FNPS). See <http://MiamiBlue.org/> for registration. Also see the website for info about **butterfly surveys at Shark Valley and Loop Road on July 17 and 24.**

**Past meetings:** See videos at

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_QdWye7iPUSr-SwAdxVSug](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_QdWye7iPUSr-SwAdxVSug)

**Art exhibit: *Diatomaceous Dreams*** at Biscayne National Park, Dante Fascell Visitor Center Gallery **through September 12, 2021, 9AM-5PM daily.** These found-object assemblage sculptures by Rick Cohen are inspired by **diatoms**, which are single-celled aquatic algae. Rick is a longtime member and supporter of DCFNPS.

Also, watch "**Why Diatoms Matter**", an associated virtual presentation on June 14 by Dr. Evelyn Gaiser of FIU.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XOQyLFX3QDcGhPr-yxdcJaeykSvOcTt/view>

For more information and directions:

<https://www.nps.gov/bisc/planyourvisit/the-dante-fascell-visitor-center-gallery.htm>

## Free entrance days, Everglades National Park!

**August 4** – Great American Outdoors Act anniversary

**August 25** – National Park Service Birthday

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## NATIVE PLANTS AND MOTHS ...

**There's more than birds, bees and butterflies.**

### National Moth Week, July 17-25, 2021.

In the June 2012 *Tillandsia* newsletter we celebrated the first-ever National Moth Week with short articles on native plants and moths from several Dade Chapter FNPS members. Two are reprinted here. Learn more about the plants from the Institute for Regional Conservation's Natives For Your Neighborhood. <https://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfynd/default.asp>

### The Beautiful Bella Moth - by Steve Woodmansee

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.



Bella Moth caterpillar and adult on Low Rattlebox (*Crotalaria pumila*).

Photos by Steve Woodmansee.

About an inch long, this showy, pink moth is also known as the Rattlebox moth, since its host plant are members of the Rattlebox plant genus *Crotalaria*, of which two species are native to Florida, the Dwarf or Low Rattlebox (*C. pumila*), and the lovely diminutive Rabbitbells (*C. rotundifolia*). Both can be quite common in mesic to dry pinelands as well as coastal strand habitats throughout the Florida peninsula. This moth is special in that it is diurnal, and active during the day, like most members of the Tiger moth Family, to which it belongs. Caterpillars are black and orange striped, with long stingless awns projecting from the body.

### Firebush and the Pluto Sphinx - by Roger Hammer

Back when I was gainfully employed as the manager of Castellow Hammock Park, with a phone available to the general public, each year I'd get two or three phone calls with reports of small hummingbirds visiting the flowers of firebush (*Hamelia patens*).



Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) - Photo by Roger Hammer

And then I'd have to explain to the homeowner that they were pluto sphinx moths, not hummingbirds. Admittedly, they do hover in front of flowers like hummingbirds, but they mostly feed at dusk, or after dark, when hummingbirds are settled in for the night. The **pluto sphinx moth** (*Xylophanes pluto*) is mostly green, with a pointed abdomen and gold patches at the base of the hindwings.



Pluto sphinx moth (*Xylophanes pluto*), larvae and adult.  
Photos from <http://www.whatsthatbug.com>.

When resting, their wings are swept back at an angle. Not only do the adult moths nectar on the flowers of firebush, the larvae feed on the leaves, so if you see large 2-toned brown larvae (with a pair of fake eye spots toward the head) feeding on the leaves of your firebush, leave them alone and they'll turn into beautiful pluto sphinx moths.

### About the authors:

**Steve Woodmansee** is Vice President and Field Trip Coordinator for DCFNPS. He is a botanist and owns Pro Native Consulting, which specializes in plant research, conservation and native plant horticulture.

**Roger L. Hammer** is a professional naturalist, author,

photographer, and survivalist instructor for the Discovery Channel's reality TV show, Naked and Afraid. His most recent book (2018) is "Complete Guide to Florida Wildflowers."

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### Membership and email

- FNPS sends printed membership renewal notices (postal mail) only to members with no email address on file.
- If your membership lapses, you will receive one printed notice and monthly email reminders for up to a year until you renew.
- Help ensure that you receive email from FNPS and the Dade Chapter: move FNPS or DCFNPS email from junk/spam/promotions to your inbox, and add those sender addresses to your email contacts.  
**Think you are missing email (FNPS or Dade)? Let us know!**

### Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society

For Miami-Dade and the Florida Keys

Chapter communication: [DadeFNPS@gmail.com](mailto:DadeFNPS@gmail.com), 305-985-3677  
DCFNPS website & social media: [www.DadeFNPS.org/](http://www.DadeFNPS.org/)  
Mail: Dade Chapter FNPS, 6619 S. Dixie Hwy, #181, Miami FL 33143-7919

#### Board members (2021-2022):

<b>President:</b> Brian Diaz	<b>Vice-President:</b> Steve Woodmansee
<b>Secretary:</b> Lydia Cuni	<b>Treasurer:</b> Susan Walcutt
<b>At Large:</b> Joey Basna, Janeen Feiger, Alan Franck, Sanna O'Sullivan, Jeanne Rothchild, Jennifer Stine	
<b>FNPS Council of Chapters representative:</b> Kurt Birchenough	

**Newsletter editor:** Patty Phares

**Webmaster:** Haniel Pulido Jr., [dadefnpsweb@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:info@fnps.org), 321-271-6702

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

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**Look for the July-August 2021 *Sabal minor* FNPS newsletter (Volume 23, Number 4) in your inbox soon, or see at [FNPS.org](http://FNPS.org) under Resources.**