# *Tillandsia*

**Newsletter of the Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society**
**For Miami-Dade County and the Florida Keys**
***Mission:***
***To conserve, preserve, and restore Florida's native plants and their habitats***

**SEPTEMBER 2026**

## Chapter calendar

See https://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/ for activities of the Dade Chapter (and all FNPS)
**Sept. 22 (Tues.): Monthly Meeting** at Pinecrest Gardens
**Oct. TBA (Sat.): Chapter Workday** at Everglades National Park
**Oct. 6 (Tues.): Special online presentation**
**Oct. 25 (Sun.): Field trip**
**Oct. 27 (Tues.): Monthly meeting** at Pinecrest Gardens
**Nov. 24 (Tues.): Monthly meeting** at Pinecrest Gardens
Additional Fall field trips, workdays and other activities to be announced
(Note: There is no September field trip)

## In this issue:

September meeting / Special online presentation
Message from the Chapter President
Chapter Volunteer Opportunities
Dade Chapter news
Other News and Activities
"The Tropical Monoculture Trap (and How We Got Out of It)" - By Sarah Noppen
Thank you to our Business and Organizational members

## DADE CHAPTER MEETING

**Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 7:30 – 9:00 PM**
**Pinecrest Gardens, 11000 SW 57 Ave. (Red Road), Miami**
**Free – all are invited**

*Come early or stay late to enjoy refreshments, socialize and browse the merchandise and raffle tables. Plants for sale might also be available. The raffle follows the program. The program is also recorded on YouTube. Check out our online store and this newsletter in advance for plants, shirts, mugs, tote bags and other merchandise, and pick up pre-orders at the meeting.*

### "South Florida's remarkable flora, and a look back at some recent success stories"
### Jennifer Possley, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Jennifer will provide a brief overview of why Miami's flora is so exceptional, and then she'll take a look back at what she sees as some of the biggest successes (and perhaps some of the challenges) on the part of Fairchild's plant conservation efforts over the past 40+ years. This will include a retrospective of the team's rare plant reintroductions and seed banking efforts, the development of the Native Plant Network, and a few stray observations about efforts that, in hindsight, really paid off.



Jennifer Possley is the Director of Regional Conservation at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami. She moved to Miami in 2001, thinking she was accepting a six-month position at Fairchild as a field technician, but she fell in love with the region's flora and decided to make it her home. She became Fairchild's Conservation Program Manager in 2016, and the Director of Regional Conservation in 2024. Fairchild's busy conservation program aims to reduce the extinction risk of the rare flora of South Florida and the Caribbean. Jennifer and her dynamic team have dozens of ongoing projects, including conserving rare ferns of Miami and Puerto Rico, banking seeds of pine rockland endemics, and curating a collection of the rare cacti of South Florida.

• **Refreshments:** You are invited to bring light finger foods and to help set up and clean up afterwards. Questions? Contact Karina, 305-490-1677 or kmgxoxo@me.com).
• **Raffle contributions**: Thank you for your native plants or plant-related items!

***PLEASE LABEL EACH PLANT* with at least the common name written on paper, tape or stake** (more info is encouraged).

• **Program recording:** Meeting programs will no longer be live-streamed. Barring any difficulties, a recording of this program will be available at https://www.youtube.com/@dadefnps/streams. **Click Videos** or **Live** for all available recordings. The link is also on the DCFNPS home page.

• **Questions:** DadeFNPS@gmail.com

## ONLINE PRESENTATION - Tuesday, October 6.
## by **Sofia Bond from Miami Waterkeeper**

Save the date for this evening presentation**.** Details will be sent to members in a separate email and posted online in social media and https://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/.

## MESSAGE FROM THE DADE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Finally, we're getting some much-needed rain and everything looks greener. It's been an incredibly hot summer with record temperatures, and you're probably looking forward to cooler weather. We'll be spending more time outdoors again, enjoying our amazing natural world. We invite you to join us for field trips and yard visits, and we encourage you to attend our monthly meetings in person and feel free to invite guests. There are several good reasons, besides the interesting talks: you can learn more about native plants (and win some rarities at the raffle), get to interact with friendly, knowledgeable fellow members, and maybe even make new friends, all while enjoying delicious nibbles.

Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society: *"To conserve, preserve, and restore Florida's native plants and their habitats through science-based education, research, advocacy, horticulture, landscaping, and engaged participation by our members and communities."*

Are you interested in helping us further our mission? The more involvement we get from members, the more we can achieve together. How about advocacy, outreach (tabling), public speaking, social media, newsletters, gardening …? Please contact me at DadeFNPS@gmail.com - I'd love to chat with you!

Next time you're outside when it starts raining, pay attention to the earthy smell, when rain drops begin falling on dry soil - it's called petrichor https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/escambiaco/2023/08/02/weekly-what-is-it-petrichor/

And then, onwards!

Daniela Champney
President, DCFNPS

## CHAPTER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**DCFNPS Nursery and Online Plant Store assistance**
In just over two years, the DCFNPS Online Plant Store has provided thousands of difficult to find native plants to the community. As demand increases, we are looking at ways to expand our footprint. **We could use more hands to help in all the steps needed grow and distribute plants**. This could include helping care for plants at the nursery, assisting in managing orders, and more – **any involvement that you might care to offer**. To find out more about participating in this worthwhile effort, please email Raul Moas at moara.crot@gmail.com, or text to 305-812-6999.



**Photo: Volunteers at Camp Matecumbe Pineland**

**DCFNPS Native Plant Conservation & Restoration Team**
Assist in local native plant restoration and maintenance projects at some interesting and important sites you might not otherwise be able to access, including Miami-Dade County preserves and even privately-owned sites. **Would you like to join the team or learn more?** Please contact Scott Sutherland (scottsuth@aol.com) or Carmen Ferreiro (info@carmenferreiro.com), co-chairs of the team. The entire chapter membership will be notified of activities known far enough in advance, but team members are notified on short notice. Most workdays have been on weekdays, but sign up for notifications in case an opportunity arises on short notice on a date when you can attend. **You'll find this is one of the most rewarding activities worth sweating for!**

**October, 2026 (date TBA – Oct. 3, 10 or 17): Everglades National Park Coe Visitor Center workday.** Help weed, prune and clean up the landscape we began installing in 2001. We also answer questions from visitors and enjoy our fellow volunteers. Knowledge of native plants is not a prerequisite. The work is not difficult but is greatly appreciated by ENP! Afterwards you can enter the park for free. **If you are a potential new volunteer:** Please contact Patty (pharespl@gmail.com) for details, questions and to be added to our volunteer list to receive email notifications. Non-members and students are also welcome and encouraged. Workdays are held every other month on a Saturday morning.

## DADE CHAPTER and FNPS NEWS

**Our monthly meeting programs will no longer be live-streamed**. However, they **will still be recorded** (if the speaker agrees and the technology works) and can be viewed on our YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/@dadefnps/streams. **Also check out dozens of recordings of informative talks over the past 6 years.** Look under Videos for the very first recording from May 2020, "Everglades Fire Management" with Michael Gue and Maya Tupaj. We were overjoyed to gather virtually for the first time during the pandemic for such an interesting presentation!

**Welcome new members – we're so glad to have you on board!** Ana Zanetti, Jennifer Bayatzadeh/ Jason Gill/ Penelope Gill household, Natasha Schenfield, Trevor Lafargue, Denise Sirois, Donald Herrmann

**Thank you to all who renewed recently!** We greatly appreciate your continued support, interest and participation. **If your membership is due for renewal or to update contact information,** go to your membership portal at https://fnps.app.neoncrm.com/login. **If you have difficulties with online renewal or prefer to pay by check or over the phone**, please email FNPS at info@FNPS.org. The chapter cannot provide membership services.

**Dade Chapter Plant Store at** https://store.dade.fnpschapters.org/ **is constantly expanding and replenishing out-of-stock species.** Check the site often for new species from more varied habitats! Pick up plants at the nursery in Pinecrest or at a meeting, or arrange delivery. You can also return the square pots from past purchases. We may have a small selection of plants available for purchase at meetings.

**Chapter branded merchandise**, **Butterfly posters**, **Books:** Shop for **chapter shirts, mugs, and tote bags** with artwork by Kim Heise and also **butterfly posters** to pick up (or buy) at meetings**.** Check out the separate **online bookstore** from Bookshop.org with a selection curated just for us. See our **Linktree** (https://linktr.ee/dcfnps) for links to shopping and engaging with the chapter, FNPS and beyond!

**Save the dates. The October 25 field trip and October 27 meeting program** will be with **Jimmy Lange**, Research Botanist with the Conservation Team at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Details will be provided next month and at https://dade.fnpschapters.org/events/ when available.

## OTHER NEWS and ACTIVITIES

**Miami-Dade County Adopt-A-Tree.** See details and pre-register here for **Sunday, September 13** at Zoo Miami. This program provides single-family and duplex homeowners with up to two free trees every year. A selection of free native and fruit trees will be available.

**Dade Native Plant Workshop.** See https://nativeplantworkshop.ning.com/. **Tuesday, Sept. 15, 5 PM**. The summer evening field trip workshops are now over, and workshops resume at Miami-Dade College Kendall Campus. Old hands and new learners are encouraged to come – and it's free! **Topic: Fruit classification** led by Dr. Theresa Chormanski, Landscape & Horticulture Technology Director at MDC. See details on the website.

**Everglades National Park free entrance day** (for US citizens and residents): **Thursday, September 17,** Constitution Day

**International Coastal Cleanup Day 2026, Saturday, September 19, 9-11AM. Register now!** This global effort brings together volunteers to remove litter from beaches, shorelines, waterways, and underwater habitats (all native plant habitats) while collecting valuable data on types and sources of marine debris. It's not just a morning at the beach - there are also inland sites from which debris could find its way into the ocean through waterways. Check out the 65+ options included in Miami-Dade, from Homestead Bayfront Park to North Miami Beach, and **register for your chosen site here**.



**T-shirts** with this year's marine animal theme, the Humpback whale, are available for purchase. It might be too late to receive your shirt before the cleanup, but you can order the cool shirt anyway.

***** Support some of our favorite environmental entities by joining the mangrove cleanup team at Deering North with the county's EEL Program and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. See you there (or at another site)! *****

**Explore & Restore with the Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program.**
Check https://mdc-eel-program-mdc.hub.arcgis.com/ to see if the 2026-27 calendar has been posted, or in the meantime email eel@miamidade.gov for more information. Upcoming Explore & Restore events in early October include:

- **Friday, October 2** - Dolphin Center Addition, 9am to noon
- **Saturday, October 10** - Event with EEL, Tropical Audubon and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Celebration of birds and their habitats at AD Barnes Park, 9am to noon

**Coral Reef Park prescribed burn by The Institute for Regional Conservation – check out the result!** In partnership with the Village of Palmetto Bay, Willowcreek Fire Company and the IRC conducted a successful prescribed burn in July in the small pineland at this urban park in South Miami-Dade. Careful stewardship of the now-rare pine rocklands is more important than ever, including for small remnants. Visit this fall to see fresh green growth and hopefully a variety of wildflowers emerging! The pineland is at the intersection of SW 80 Ave and SW 148 Street, in the NW corner of the park (north of SW 152 Street).



**Pine Rockland Working Group Conference: Science-backed management in a changing landscape. November 8-12, 2026.** This five-day conference includes a full day of virtual sessions, a full day of in-person programming at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, an evening social and poster session, and three days of field trips. **Registration is open!** See www.pinerocklandworkinggroup.org for conference information and registration. This conference is **free** and open to all who are interested in pine rocklands.
[Logo: Bartram's scrub-hairstreak life cycle watercolor by Kim Heise]

## THE TROPICAL MONOCULTURE TRAP
## (and How We Got Out of It)

### by Sarah Noppen, Dade Chapter FNPS member

I had a unique childhood in Ohio. Weekdays in Columbus suburbia, while weekends were spent in the country exploring the woods and streams at my grandmother's home in Southern rural Ohio. A love of nature naturally followed that when it came time to create a garden space of my own it was key that we do so with environmental sustainability in mind.

Being a transplant to South Florida made this effort significantly harder, since all my plant knowledge was rendered useless. As part of the process while building our home in Pinecrest, we hired a professional landscaper. We tried to do our due diligence in planting drought-tolerant, native plants to minimize water usage and help us achieve a LEED platinum designation (the highest tier of green building achievement awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council). While we did manage to add several native trees and gorgeous slash pines, much of the rest of the garden was the typical tropical mono-culture that defines many Miami-Dade gardens.

Our hearts were in the right place, but we were not particularly well informed despite efforts to hire knowledgeable landscapers and underscore our preference for native plants. It was only after learning about Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens' Native Plant Network that we began to learn more.

Since finding more appropriate online resources and organizations dedicated to native plants, it has become easier to intentionally seek out and select native replacements for our current tropical species. Still, there are several issues working against homeowners, with the main problem being access to native plant materials. Big box retailers do not carry native plants and a limited number of nurseries carry a larger selection, most of them located in the Redland area.

Over the last five years we have created a pine rockland planting that continues to expand in both size and variety. This little patch has attracted more birds, bees and butterflies than we ever could have imagined. We have also replaced much of the front yard with native options that complement the tropical plants that remain.

We are dedicated to this effort because our garden is just one small way we can help support wildlife by providing food, shelter and nesting areas and enhancing biodiversity, while reducing the need for additional water, fertilizer, and maintenance. The goal is to continue the process of transitioning the garden to either edible or native plants. It will always be a work in progress, but it is such a rewarding endeavor especially when we are gifted with a new bird or butterfly visitor.

**Back yard before and after**





**Side yard before and after**





## THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

**and other businesses who support FNPS and DCFNPS at a higher level.**

The interest of our Business and Organizational members in native plants and their extra financial support are much appreciated and very helpful to the mission of FNPS and the chapter. They may also promote FNPS and contribute in other ways through event participation, presentations, articles, field trips, donations and more. Thank you from all of us!

**Florida Butterfly Botanicals** floridabutterflybotanicals.com/
**Institute for Regional Conservation** www.regionalconservation.org/
**Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Gardens** www.keywest.garden/
**LandscapeDE** www.landscapede.com/
**Miami Native Plants**
**NaMa Native Landscapes** www.namaprojects.com/ and **Flora of Miami Garden Cen**ter floraofmiami.com/
**Native Tree Nursery** www.nativetreenursery.com/
**Susan Casey (Casey's Corner Nursery)** www.plantrealflorida.org/professionals/detail/16
**The Invoka Group** (website in progress)

Follow us on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **YouTube**, and **X**.
Check out the **DadeFNPS** website and our **Online Plant & Merchandise Store**.
**Linktree/dcfnps** has all our links (plus some for FNPS) conveniently in one place.

**Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society - For Miami-Dade and the Florida Keys**
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**Board members and team members:**
**President:** Daniela Champney **Vice-President:** Karina Gomez **Secretary:** Carmen Ferreiro **Treasurer:** Susan Walcutt
**At Large:** Joey Basna, Riki Bonnema, Sebastian Fernandez, Harley Guerra, Dania Otero-Perez, Charlie Reverte
**Past President:** Steve Woodmansee
**FNPS Council of Chapters representative and volunteer hours reporting:** Riki Bonnema

**Newsletter editor:** Patty Phares **Mail Chimp and Social Media:** Karina Gomez
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***Tillandsia* Newsletter**
**Please contact the editor if you might like to join the *Tillandsia* staff or contribute an article or news item.**
**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 communication**: info@fnps.org, 321-271-6702, https://www.fnps.org
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***The Florida Native Plant Society's mission:***
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