

The Nature Coastline

Newsletter of the Nature Coast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Nature Coast Chapter meetings, field trips, and activities are open to FNPS members and the public alike. Monthly meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd (US 41), Land O' Lakes, FL 34639 in the back meeting room. Entrance is off the courtyard on the south side of the building. See page 7 for contact information.

January – February 2015

A Message from the Chapter President



Hello Nature Coast Native Plant Society Members,

I am very pleased to be the newly elected President for 2015. We have an experienced and enthusiastic Executive Committee this year! **Julie Wert** has stepped down from the presidency to accept the important position of Chapter Representative of the Florida Native Plant Society, which

means she is still on the executive committee but involved at the State level and reports to our Chapter on FNPS issues. Her knowledge will be invaluable to our chapter and help move us in the right direction. **Mary Ellen Gotto** is our newly elected Vice President. Mary Ellen also volunteers as a Master Gardener. **Steve Joyce** is staying on as Treasurer. He does a wonderful job keeping track of our finances and handles Chapter Media, which includes Facebook, Meetup.com and our website, as well as volunteering on many projects. **Sharon Holding** is also staying on as Secretary. Sharon is currently involved in planting native plants at Lake Lisa in New Port Richey using a Grant from our Chapter. The executive committee meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Upper Cotee education center in Spring Hill. Everyone is invited to join us.

One of our goals this year is to encourage NEW chapter membership and aim toward ZERO lapsed membership. We need individuals from our Chapter to keep in contact with our members and lapsed members and to help out at meetings encouraging visitors to join our chapter. Let us know if you have an interest in helping out.

On another note: 2015 has arrived and hopes to be an exciting year for the State of Florida. Amendment 1 passed with flying colors and should be an indication to lawmakers that Floridians care about their environment. Our job does not stop with a winning vote. As Florida Native Plant Society members, our mission is to conserve, preserve and restore Florida Native Plants and Native Plant Communities and we should be aware of how our lawmakers are distributing these newly acquired funds in that capacity. We are fortunate to have **Jan Howie** as our Conservation Chairperson, who participates on the Pasco County ELAMP committee. She votes on land acquisitions by Pasco County as well reporting to our chapter on environmental issues on the state level.

All in all, we expect to have a great year with successful Plant Sales organized by **Peggy Gretchen**, and great programs coordinated by **Pat Kelly**, as well as exciting field trips organized by **Jan Howie**.

Come to the meetings and participate.



Jonnie Spittler, President

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Meetings/Programs

Tuesday, January 13
7:00 pm Land O' Lakes Community Center

Speaker: **Leslie Newman**
Program: ***The Economic Benefits of Land Preservation***

Leslie will start with the narrative of the Land Trust's 23 year history - how it started, some of its notable successes, and what is being done now. She will then talk about The Economic Benefits of Land Preservation, and finally give some guidance about starting a Land Trust.

Bio: Leslie is a self-employed, professional artist who relocated from New York City to Aripeka, Florida, more than two decades ago. She discovered her love of nature and began painting scenes inspired by her natural environment.

She also became a committed citizen activist, working with others from her local community who facilitate the preservation of pristine wilderness. During the past 22 years, the Gulf Coast Conservancy has been instrumental in protecting over 16,000 acres of coastal lands in Hernando and Pasco counties.

She and her fellow land conservationists continue to negotiate with both private and public agencies, advocating for permanent, connected corridors and greenways.

Tuesday, February 10
7:00 pm Land O' Lakes Community Center

Speaker: **Deb Hamilton**
Program: ***Ornamental Grasses for Home Landscape***

This talk will include many grasses that are suitable for Florida's climate, some of which are native, and some not. She will be highlighting native grasses, and bring examples, but will include as many of the ones in commerce as possible. There are some non-native grasses that aren't good choices, so it's important to know why.

Bio: Deb is a native of Indiana and now lives in Wesley Chapel. She has lived in several Midwest states where grasses are an important part of renovating native prairies that have been lost to agriculture. She became a Master Gardener in Iowa and has been a Florida Master Gardener for 11 years, as well as a Certified Arborist.



Photo by Karen Wright, 2014

Can you identify this plant?
From the Tillis Hill field trip Nov 16, 2014
See page 7 for answer.

Field Trips

Circle Bar B Preserve

Saturday, January 17

9am at carpool location, 10am at Circle Bar B Preserve

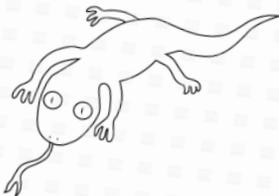
The Circle Bar B Preserve was acquired by the Polk County Environmental Land Program and Polk County Parks and Natural Resources Division to protect the flood plain of Lake Hancock located there, and to restore the Banana Creek marsh system. Extensive restoration was completed to restore much of the hydrologic function of the land, and as a result, Circle B is home to a tremendous bird population that includes a variety of wading birds, waterfowl, ospreys and bald eagles. In the winter months there are also large populations of migratory birds. Since most of the birds are in the marshes, they are close by and easy to see. **This is an amazing place, so try not to miss it.** It is probably how much of Florida looked years ago before human population took over much of the birds' habitat. There is also a discovery center with exhibits that display the environmental and hydrological functions of Florida's natural resources.

We will be walking on some of the trails, none of which is long, but we will be out for a couple of hours or more. The trails are flat, and our pace will be slow as there are so many birds to see. There is little shade, so bring a hat, water, binoculars, a camera, and bird identification books. Also bring a picnic lunch to eat there.

Directions:

Those who want to carpool can meet at Duncan Donuts at SR 56 and I-75. From 56 East, turn left onto Cypress Ridge Blvd. and left onto Willow Dr. Duncan Donuts is on the right.

To go directly, take I-75 south to I-4 to the Polk Parkway (Toll Road). Go south /east on the Parkway and take the 98 exit and head south at the light (turn right). Once on 98, immediately get into the far left hand lane. Turn left (east) at the first light onto Winter Lake Rd. (540). Follow that road to the entrance on right (south side) a couple miles down. It is pretty well marked.



Bok Tower Rare Plant Conservation Program

Sunday, February 15

8:30am at the carpool location. 10:30am at Bok Tower

Glen Bupp, a rare plant curator at the Bok Tower Rare Plant Conservation Program, spoke at our Chapter Meeting in 2014. We will have a great opportunity to go behind the scenes of this program, as Glen will give us a tour of the conservation facility, and explain the propagation techniques that are used to save rare and endangered plants. Among other functions, the rare Plant Program performs rare plant rescues, researches the basic biology of plant species, and reintroduces plants into the wild.

After this enlightening experience, we will have time to walk some of the short trails, viewing restoration areas, many different Florida habitats, and endangered plants. Bring a lunch or there is a snack bar to purchase one if you prefer. It would be a good idea to bring water and a hat.

After lunch, we can either return to Pasco County or if we still have energy, we can walk in some of the grounds and more formal gardens. Bok Tower Gardens is a National Historic Landmark founded by Edward Bok, a snowbird, who loved the view from the Lake Wales Ridge. Famed landscape architect, Frederick Olmsted Jr. created a 50 acre garden here, centered by 60-bell carillon. There is also a Mediterranean style mansion built in the 1930's that can be toured as well. Admission to the Garden is \$12 or \$18 if you wish to tour the mansion.

Directions:

For carpools, we will meet at I-75 and SR 56 at the Dunkin Donuts. From 56 East, turn left onto Cypress Ridge Blvd. and left onto Willow Oak Dr. Dunkin Donuts is on the right.

To go directly, take I-75 south to I-4 east. Merge onto Rt. 570 east at exit 27 towards Lakeland/Winter Haven. Take Exit 14 to 540/Winter Lake Rd. toward Winter Haven. Turn left onto US Hwy 17/540 and turn right onto Cypress Gardens Blvd. Then turn right onto Highway 27, left onto Mountain Cutoff Rd. and left onto Boughas Rd. The Garden is ahead. The address of Bok Tower is 1151 Tower Blvd., Lake Wales. Glen will meet us at the entrance and we will walk to the conservation area.

WE DID IT!!!



November 4, 2014

As I am sure that you already know, Amendment 1, the Water and Land Legacy Amendment passed by a landslide, 75% for and 25% against. This is a much higher percentage than any politician or the other proposed amendments received. WOW! I also have to think that many of the no votes were not because voters were against the issue, but rather against the citizen initiative amendment process. All who collected signatures and spoke to their friends and family about it should feel very proud of this achievement.

So, what does this mean? It is clear that a huge majority of voters care about the environment and the future of Florida. This was a bipartisan victory, a very rare thing in

Florida or the nation today. To me it is a mandate for action to save our springs and aquifer, develop wildlife corridors, preserve environmental lands, and keep our air and water healthy and unpolluted.

So what's next? Unfortunately, the struggle is not over. We now have to start phase 3, which is getting the legislature to pass legislation to implement the provisions of the amendment. In the past, the legislature has sometimes taken several years to implement amendments, and we must always be vigilant to make certain that the Water and Land Legacy Amendment money is not diverted for other things. But with so much of the population in favor of Amendment 1, the pressure is on them to do the right thing.

Jan Howie, Conservation Chairman

Chapter Representative News



Message from your Chapter Representative Julie Wert.

The Florida Native Plant Society began the process of implementing the strategic

plan for the future in 2013. Central to this plan was the redesign of the governing structure, which had become unwieldy and slow to adapt and grow. We now have a Board of Directors consisting of elected officers, standing committee chairs and three Council of Chapter leaders.

The Council of Chapters is made up of a representative from each Chapter. The representative is to "communicate and coordinate between local and state efforts to preserve, conserve, and restore the native plants of Florida". My new job is to be the Chapter Representative for Nature Coast to the FNPS.

As part of the Strategic Plan the Council of Chapters (CoC) has chosen initiatives to work on. They were correlated to our Society Mission and whittled down from

five initial priorities into three Council Initiatives. These three are the focus for the Council this first year. Annually, the Council must review its Initiatives so that they evolve with the strategic plan of the Society and change based on the success of the prior Initiatives.

The initiatives are promoting landscaping with native plants, enhancing educational field trips and developing strategies & advocacy for land use planning to address habitat loss.

The initiatives are promoting landscaping with native plants, enhancing educational field trips and developing strategies & advocacy for land use planning to address habitat loss. Chapter Reps may choose an initiative to work based on the interests of their Chapter. Although I'm currently assigned to the Land Use Planning group, I'd love to hear your

thoughts on what would benefit our Chapter and mission.

You can review the initiatives and the exciting work already being done from the CoC new website <http://council.fnpschapters.org/>. I plan to let you know more about this work in progress in the future and I look forward to hearing from you!

LOBLOLLY BAY

by Peggy A. Gretchen
FNPS Member
Pasco Master Gardener

Botanical Name: *Gordonia lasianthus*

Common Name: Loblolly Bay, *Gordonia*

Family: Theaceae

Type of Plant: Native evergreen large tree; straight trunk with a dark brown to grayish bark and deeply furrowed at maturity; columnar form with a pyramidal crown; showy white flowers in an extended blooming season over several months.

Height: 30 – 60 ft. (champion 84 ft.) **Width:** 20 – 30 ft.



How to Identify:

Leaves: Dark evergreen, leathery, alternate, elliptic, 2 – 5 in. long, bluntly toothed along the margins. A few older leaves turn red and drop now and then during the year, especially in the fall.

Flowers: Showy! Five white petals surrounding a yellow center of stamens. 3 – 4 in. wide, fragrant. *Gordonia* starts blooming when very small. **Flowering Time:** Spring – Summer. May – September. Extended bloom throughout the summer.

Fruit: An ovoid ½ in. woody capsule, containing winged seeds, which ripens in the fall.

Habitat: Wet habitats to include bayheads, swamps, and wet woods.

Distribution: Virginia southward to south-central Florida (upper two thirds of Peninsula), west to Louisiana.

Hardiness Zones: 7 – 9B.

Landscape Use / Wildlife Benefit: A most attractive evergreen, long-flowering tree. Useful as a canopy, understory, or specimen tree. Also, well-suited to lake and pond margins and to beautify retention ponds. May be grown with Sweet Bay (*Magnolia virginiana*) – likes similar site conditions.

Cultivation:

Soil: Needs moist, acidic, fertile. May adapt to drier, sandy sites, but is likely very short-lived and susceptible to nematode damage and disease in such situations.

Light: Full sun – partial shade. Will tolerate a fair amount of shade.

Water: Moist – wet. Needs consistent moisture. Should be watered frequently during first year to establish, then moderate watering to maintain. Not drought-tolerant.

Miscellaneous: Low salt tolerance. Slow growth rate. Relatively short-lived under cultivation, especially if not consistently moist, unless perfectly situated. Under natural conditions, may live to 100 years or more. Does not transplant well – resents root disturbance.

Propagation: By greenwood cuttings or by stratified seed. Additionally, fresh seed may be soaked in lukewarm water for 2 days, air dried, and sown in a light mix. Seed germinates over a 2 month period.

Availability: See your FANN (Florida Association of Native Nurseries) Directory or www.plantrealflorida.org!

References:

Haehle, Robert G. and Joan Brookwell, *Native Florida Plants*, Houston, Texas, Gulf Publishing Company, 1999.

Nelson, Gil, *Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants*, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2003.

Osorio, Rufino, *A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants*, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2001.

Wasowski, Sally, with Andy Wasowski, *Gardening with Native Plants of the South*, Dallas, Texas, Taylor Publishing Co., 1994.

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Thanks to our New and Continuing Members!

New Members of 2014:

**Brian Delaney, Charlotte Haulenbeek, Katherine Meotti, Lee Ogden,
Sheila Turner, Carol Wade, Renie Ward, Karen Wright**

CHAPTER DIRECTORY

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www.meetup.com/Nature-Coast-Native-Plant-Society/

www.facebook.com/PascoNativePlants

twitter.com/NatureCoastFNPS

Cypress Acres Wildflower Nursery

David M. Barnard, Owner

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and butterfly favorites.*

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www.fnps.org

Answer to Tillis Hill plant
(from page 2):

Palafoxia integrifolia
COASTALPLAIN PALAFOX



Newsletter Publication
Nature Coast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society
5218 Eagle Island Dr.
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The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society is the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. FNPS Website: www.fnps.org