



March-April 2011

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 7:30 p.m. at St. Marks Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall located at 7922 State Road 52, Hudson, 34667. The hall is one mile west of Little road on the south side of State Road 52 next to St. Michael's Catholic Church. Parking for the Fellowship Hall is at the rear of the property. Executive Committee meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday at 6 p.m. at the New Port Richey Library, 5939 Main St. in New Port Richey, 34652. Executive Committee meetings are open to all members; ask at the circulation desk for room location.

Upcoming Meeting and Events

March 8th: "Gardening for Native Pollinators: Butterflies and Moths" presented by Tracy McCommon founder of Nature Wise, Inc. whose mission is to "improve the environment through educational television and video." She will enlighten us about the work of Nature Wise, the importance of native pollinators and show us her latest program that includes an interview with past NCC President Mary Horan. Books on butterfly gardening will also be for sale as well as light refreshments and a plant drawing.

March 13th: Field Trip: Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, Lake Maggiore, St Petersburg (Sunday) Carpools meet at 9am. Tour is 10am. Boyd Hill Nature Preserve and the Lake Maggiore Environmental Ed Center, 1101 Country Club Way South, St Petersburg, FL 33705, encompass 245 acres of unspoiled land with 3 miles of trails and boardwalks (contd. p3)

April 2nd: NCC Native Plant Sale at Land O'Lakes Community Center - Sat. 10am-2pm (see p.2 for details)

April 12th: Metting: Katie MacMillen's "Botany Basics" "Naw, Latin's Not That Hard; Clever, Quick and Fun Ways to Understand Botanical Latin." (contd. p3)

April 16th: Field Trip: Chinsegut Nature Center, 23212 Lake Lindsey Rd, Brooksville, 34601 - Saturday - Carpool 9am - Tour 10am.

Carpooling: West coast will meet at the corner of US19 & SR52 at the Sav a Lot. East Coast will meet at the corner of SR41& SR54 in the Big Lots parking lot by McDonald's. **Directions:** SR41 North to CR481 (Snow Memorial) for 1.7mi, right on CR476 (Lake Lindsey Rd) for 0.4mi. (contd. p3)

April 30th: NCC Native Plant Sale at Earth Day at Crew's Lake Park- Saturday 9:30am - 2pm (see p.2 for details)

Chapter contact information

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Chapter Representative: Marilyn Smullen (727)868-8151

CHAIRPERSONS:

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Government Affairs Coordinator: Peggy Gretchen (813)991-4812 herculesmpg@earthlink.net

Program Coordinator: (open position)

Chapter website: pasconativeplants.org



Nature Coast Chapter Spring Native Plant Sales

1) Land O'Lakes Community Center

Saturday April 2nd from 10am - 2 pm

5401 Land O'Lakes Blvd./US 41, Land O'Lakes, 34639

We are excited about this new location for a chapter plant sale and hope to really get the word out to residents in the center and east side of the county. Now they can purchase native plants closer to home for their yards that are better able to survive cold, heat and drought conditions. The Pasco Master Gardeners will join us with a free information table and be available to answer all your gardening questions. There will be books for sale and plant profiles for each plant help buyers to put the right plant in the right place! We look forward to making new friends!

Volunteers needed! Please sign up at the next meeting or contact Coordinator Peggy Gretchen at 813-991-4812 or email her at: herculesmpg@earthlink.net

2) Earth Day at Crew's Lake Park - Saturday April 30th from 9:30am - 2pm

This is a great family day with many activities for the kids both fun and educational plus opportunities to win a free native plant. We are a part of this wonderful environmental day offering seed kits for kids and age appropriate free literature. We will offer many varieties of Florida native plants for purchase as well as books, especially those exciting ones about butterfly gardening! **Be a volunteer; sign up at our meeting or contact Coordinator Mary Horan at 727-849-2335 or email her at: horansmo@earthlink.net**

Meetings and events contd..

(Mar 13 field trip contd.,)

that meander through the hardwood hammocks, pine scrub, pine flatwoods, willow marsh and Lake Maggiore shoreline. There is a small aviary featuring hawks and owls, butterfly garden, and a tram for those who prefer riding (\$2extra). There is a \$3 admission charge (well worth it). Tom Fumaro, who will be our guide, catalogued and photographed the native plants found in the preserve. His album is in the center for use in naming the plants. He is eagerly looking forward to leading a group of like-minded people. The same day as our tour there will be an Environmental Festival at the site with booths and a plant sale. This should be interesting as well. **Carpooling:** Since Boyd Hill is about an hour away, we will have 2 carpool locations. Those on the West coast near US 19 will meet behind the Burger King at US19 and Moog Rd. Those on the East side of the county will meet at the corner of SR41 & SR54 in the Big Lots parking lot near Macdonald's. Boyd Hill Nature Preserve is located at the south end of Lake Maggiore. From I-275, take exit 17, Turn East onto 54th Ave South, left on Dr MLK jr St South. Country Club Way South is 4 blocks on the left at the light.

(Apr 12 talk by Katie Mac Millen contd..)

"Naw, Latin's Not That Hard – Clever, Quick and Fun Ways to Understand Botanical Latin." Scholars began to use Latin within the English language after the Renaissance – it acted as the universal language of research in Europe. As a result, plant names in Latin often confuse people. Getting to know Latin vocabulary can be as easy as linking botanical terms to English words we already know. This talk will focus on the most common plant families of west-central Florida, taking an example from each and explaining what the Latin descriptors mean – with an eye towards better field observations. We'll kick it all off with a brief tribute to Burt Reynolds!

(Apr 16 field trip contd..)

Q: Where did the name **Chinsegut** originate? A: Colonel Raymond Robins, who owned the tract of land in the mid 1800s, christened the area Chinsegut. An Alaskan Inuit word, Chinsegut means "spirit of lost things." Robins expanded the translation to "the place where things of true value that have been lost may be found again." Chinsegut Nature Center is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Annemarie Hammond has been kind enough to gear the event that day to our interests. The event will be lead by Sid Taylor, an expert in the area, emphasizing native plants in the preserve. We may end up walking Big Pine rather than Chinsegut if Sid feels there will be more for us to observe, but we will begin at Chinsegut. There will be less hiking and more viewing and naming plants. The center is beautiful and rustic consisting of a 408 acre wildlife environmental area. Check out the calendar of events for Chinsegut on-line. They have many varied themed events from a birding hike to a campfire sing-along.

Plant profile

TRAILING BLUE PORTERWEED

by Peggy A. Gretchen, FNPS Member, Pasco Master Gardener

Botanical Name: *Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*

Common Name: Blue Porterweed, Trailing Porterweed, Prostrate Porterweed

Family: Verbenaceae (Vervain)

Type of Plant: Native, cold-tender, semi-woody perennial wildflower / groundcover with a prostrate, trailing habit. It is more woody and shrub-like in South Florida. Reseeds, once established, in open, sunny areas. Height: 1 – 2 ft. in Central Florida, up to 4 ft. in South Florida. Width: Spreads to 5 ft.

How to Identify:___

Leaves: Opposite, toothed edges, ovate, lanceolate, or elliptic. 1 – 3 in. long, dark green. The woody, brown lower stem may be single or multi-stemmed; newer branching stems are smooth, green, and square (4-angled).

Flowers: Showy spikes of small tubular, 5-lobed blue or purple flowers; opening several at a time, usually in the A.M., then closing. Flowering Time: Year-round in South Florida, spring to frost in Central Florida.

Habitat: Coastal dunes, shell middens, and disturbed sites.

Distribution: Central and South Florida. Hardiness Zones: 9 – 11.

Landscape Use / Wildlife Benefit: This native wildflower makes an excellent groundcover for open, sunny, well-drained areas due to its prostrate, trailing habit. It has a long blooming season and attracts many butterflies, both large and small, who favor its nectar. Bumblebees like it, too! Plant with other butterfly-attracting wildflowers such as blanketflower or tropical sage. Useful in coastal areas due to its salt-tolerance. It is cold-tender and will die in freezing temperatures. Plant in protected areas or remove dead plants and allow new seedlings to establish themselves each spring.

Cultivation:

Soil: Any well-drained. Slightly acid to neutral to slightly alkaline.

Light: Full sun best to light partial shade.

Water: Dry to moist. Drought-tolerant once established.

Miscellaneous: Salt-tolerant. Use little to no mulch – it will reseed more readily. Grows better with little care!

Propagation: By seed or cuttings.

Availability: See your AFNN (Association of Florida Native Nurseries) Directory!

Comment: The non-native porterweed (*Stachytarpheta urticifolia*), larger and upright with blue or red/pink flowers, is native to the Old World tropics. It has, on rare occasions, escaped cultivation in Dade County. This porterweed is the one commonly seen in non-native nurseries.

References:

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

Taylor, Walter Kingsley, The Guide to Florida Wildflowers, Dallas, Texas, Taylor Publishing Co., 1992.

Trass, Pamela F., Gardening for Florida's Butterflies, St. Petersburg, Florida, Great Outdoors Publishing Company, 1999.

Walton, Dan and Laurel Schiller, Natural Florida Landscaping, Sarasota, Florida, Pineapple Press, Inc., 2007.

Wunderlin, Richard P., Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 1998.

Chapter announcements:

We still need a Program Coordinator! Please consider making a modest donation of your time to our chapter and volunteer to do this important job.

The Florida Native Plant Society's **31st annual conference** has been announced. The dates are May 19-22 at the Sheraton Orlando North, Maitland. More Conference Information including a preliminary schedule and field trips is available now at:

<https://www.fnps.org/pages/conference/> or check the bulletin board at our meeting.

Some money talk from Nature Coast President Julie Wert:

Conference Scholarship: Don't forget to submit your name for a scholarship, worth \$150, to the annual FNPS Conference on May 19-22 in Maitland! To be eligible you must be a member of our chapter and be willing to pay for your hotel accommodations and other meals. It's not necessary to stay at the same hotel as the Conference venue. Lunch is included in the registration fee for Friday and Saturday. Any social event or field trip, if there's a charge, you choose to attend will also be extra.

We will have a drawing for the scholarship at the March 8 meeting. To enter your name, you can drop it in the jar at the meeting in February or March. Or you can call or email chapter officers listed on the website or in your newsletter. If you haven't been to a Conference, this is your chance to find out what an informative, fun and exciting experience you've missed. It's also a great place to find plants from vendors all over the state. Check out all the speakers, field trips and events at <http://www.fnps.org/pages/conference/>.

Chapter Grants: As part of an ongoing effort to fulfill the mission of FNPS, Nature Coast Chapter of the FNPS is offering grants of up to \$500 per approved project. Projects must be within Pasco County and meet the objective of the FNPS mission statement. Teachers, park or preserve staff or volunteers, youth group leaders, or any interested party may apply. Projects must be implemented on school grounds or other public places, such as parks or public right-of-ways and demonstrate one or more of the following: the value of native plants for wildlife, the threat of non-native, invasive plants, the increased value of the site for the environment, or the value of native plant landscapes in preserving biodiversity.

For a copy of the grant guidelines, contact Jan at 727-848-7689 or janicehowie@aol.com



Thanks new member Rita Grant and renewed members: Jonnie and Robert Spitler, Thomas Crennan, Judy Gregory, June Long, Karen Gruenhagen and Susan Vaughn

Special speaker profile: Katie Mac Millen is an environmental educator who works for Pasco County's ELAMP, the Environmental Lands Acquisition and Management Program. She holds a M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana and a B.A. in Geology and English from Carleton College. She has worked as an English and geology teacher, recreation leader, technical editor and writer and volunteer coordinator. Katie hails from Palo Alto, CA, where she was raised with Anna's hummingbirds, banana slugs, ceanothus, Coast Range newts, dusky-footed woodrats, marsh dodder, pickleweed, shooting stars, sticky monkeyflowers and toyon. She is still trying to adapt from western species to southeastern species.

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
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Nature Coast Chapter of
the Florida Native Plant Society
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