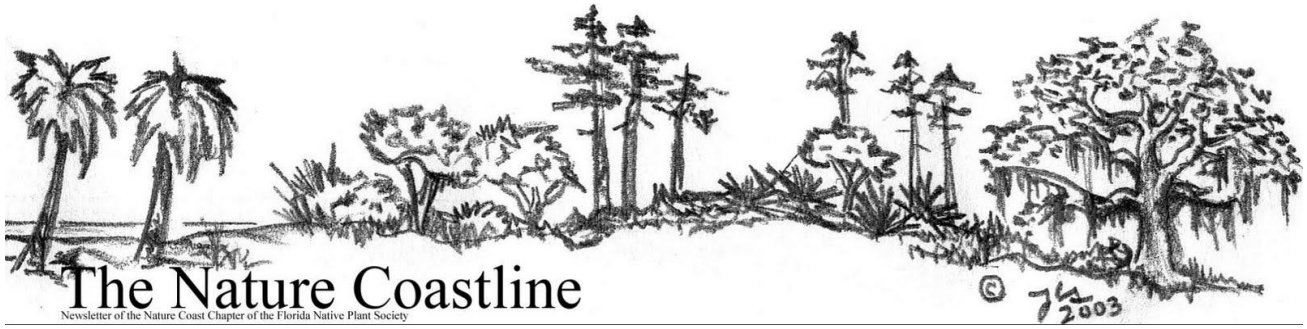

Nature Coast Chapter meetings, field trips, and activities are open to FNPS members and the public alike. Monthly meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd (US 41), Land O' Lakes, FL 34639 in the back meeting room. Entrance is off the courtyard on the south side of the building. See page 5 for contact information.

May – June 2015

A Message from the Chapter President

Everyone keeps saying "WOW" and "WOW" is certainly a great word for the very successful Plant Sale the Nature Coast Chapter held on March 28th in Land O' Lakes. We basically sold out of everything long before the 2pm closing. David Barnard of Cypress Acres Nursery and Gregg Jones of Rainbow's End both commented that this was one of the most successful sales in which they have participated, and the great variety of plants from Green Isles Nursery were also snatched up quickly. There were many requests for more of the native milkweeds from Restless Natives.

Being so successful is an indication that we are getting the word out that Native Plants are an important part of the Florida landscape. The money we earn from these sales allows our chapter to award grants to public entities to plant natives. These grant-funded projects show the public how practical and beautiful Florida Native Plants can be. The money is also used for conservation efforts on the state level. Furthermore, we are able to promote the Florida Native Plant Society and educate the public about native plants at the sale. Every interaction with a member of the public is part of the outreach we do to promote our mission to PRESERVE, CONSERVE AND RESTORE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS AND NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES.

We added eight new members to our chapter at the plant sale. This is an accomplishment that we hope to repeat throughout the year. The membership committee of the Florida Native Plant Society has made a goal to have 6,000 members by the conference of 2017. That is an ambitious goal but can be accomplished simply by ASKING people to join us.

Our next OUTREACH and sale will be on EARTH DAY, Saturday April 25th at Crews Lake Park. We will have a tent and table with our books and lots of useful information. Our local native nurseries will be represented and sell their plants. Volunteers who will talk to the public about our chapter and its mission and promote joining our wonderful chapter are needed. On Saturday May 2, there will be another opportunity to interact with the public. Our Chapter is participating in the GARDENING EXTRAVAGANZA at the Pioneer Museum in Dade City. This will be wonderful opportunity to sell native plants and reach out to the public on the east side of the county.

We have a busy spring coming up and hope everyone enjoys the comradery and participates in all the fun and worthwhile activities of your Nature Coast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

Jonnie Spitler, President

Welcome New Members:

Rebecca Dance, Karen Du Bois, John Egenes, Debra Hamilton, John Robinson & Nancy Heusted, John Robinson, Anne Jordan, Kimberly McCoy, Donald Westra

Welcome Back Renewing Members:

Rosemarie C Coyle, Suzanne Fleming, Kay Haywood, Janice Howie, Douglas and Patricia McDowell, Lee Ogden, Susan Parr, Don and Marilyn Pratt, Annie Schmidt and John Stites, Jennifer L Seney, Lucy Shaw, Karen Wright

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BOK TOWER FIELD TRIP

Sunday, February 15, 2015

Meetings/Programs

Tuesday, May 12
7:00 pm Land O' Lakes Community Center

Speaker: ***Lara Miller***
Program: ***The Benefit of Trees to Me***

We walk by trees every day, but how often do we stop to think about the value of trees to us? This presentation will explore the benefits of trees to people in a fun and interactive way. You will leave with a much better understanding of many of the ecosystem services trees provide that you might not often consider.

Bio: Lara Miller is the Natural Resources Agent for UF/IFAS Extension in Pinellas County. She is stationed at Brooker Creek Preserve in Tarpon Springs, but has countywide responsibilities. Lara works on a variety of natural resource issues with a focus on public education. Her areas of focus include wildlife, water, invasive species, backyard habitat, and urban forestry. Before starting her current job, Lara attended the University of Florida where she earned her Bachelors and Masters Degree in Natural Resource Conservation with a certificate in Environmental Education. **Contact info:** Natural Resources Extension Agent UF/IFAS Extension Pinellas County (727) 453-6905 Fax (727) 453-6801, lara317@ufl.edu, 3940 Keystone Rd., Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

Do you have an idea for a program?
Contact Pat Kelly at (352) 588-0266 or patriciak03@gmail.com

Tuesday, June 9
7:00 pm Land O' Lakes Community Center

Speaker: ***Barbara Walker***
Program: ***Florida Sandhill Crane Conservation***

Come and learn about Florida Sandhill Crane populations, their life cycles and their sensitive habitats. Florida Sandhill Cranes easily meet the criteria for a threatened species. Their population has declined 37.5% since 1997 and 2–3 times more managed land is needed, primarily in Central Florida in order to meet guideline goals of increasing the population by 10%. It all starts with us, so please come and join us to discuss this well-loved species.

Bio: Barbara Walker is the Vice President of West Pasco Audubon Society, Conservation Advocate for Clearwater Audubon Society and the Executive Director of Tampa Bay Bird Rescue. She is a stakeholder on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Florida Sandhill Crane Management Plan. Barbara has been honored as a past recipient of Audubon Florida's Volunteer of the Year award. Her current endeavors include Urban Osprey Management and she is writing a countywide Avian Protection Plan to help mitigate and limit unwanted human/wildlife interactions. The plan will serve as a model for other counties facing wildlife issues associated with growth management. **Contact info:** barbibird@tampabay.rr.com

LIZZY HART SINK FIELD TRIP

Sunday, March 15, 2015

Florida Native Plant Society Membership Application

Benefits of membership include: *The Palmetto*, our quarterly magazine, which is filled with information on native plants, gardening, conservation of native habitats, etc., Sabal Minor, our bi-monthly newsletter that will keep you up to date on FNPS news and activities, membership in the local chapter of your choice, chapter newsletter, native plant gardening and landscaping information, Speakers and field trips.

☐ New ☐ Renewing

Name _____
Biz or Org _____
Address _____
_____
City, State and Zip _____
FL County _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Chapter (assigned by location unless otherwise specified)
_____

Select Membership Category

☐ Life $1000	☐ Contributing $75
☐ Donor $250	☐ Family/Household $50
☐ Supporting $100	☐ Individual $35
☐ Business $125	☐ Student $15
☐ Non-profit $50	☐ Library $15

Make check payable to FNPS

Please detach and mail this form & payment to:
FNPS
PO Box 278
Melbourne FL 32902-0278

You can also sign up and pay with credit card at http://www.fnps.org/participate/membershipinfo

Field Trips

Brooker Creek Preserve
Saturday May 16
9:00 am

Gail Parsons will be leading us at Brooker Creek for the "Traveling Tree Walk". Various trees in the Preserve are tagged with information cards that indicate their economic value. This will tie in well with the lecture earlier in the week by Lara Miller entitled, "The Benefit of Trees". Brooker Creek Preserve, an 8,700-acre oasis in heavily developed Pinellas County, is the watershed for Brooker Creek. The creek system consists of 13 meandering channels, most of which hold flowing water only during the rainy season. Eventually the channels merge into one that flows into Lake Tarpon. The Preserve has hydric hammocks, cypress domes and swamps, oak hammocks, and pine flatwoods. An Environmental Education Center can be visited.

The trails are flat and level, but there may be wet and muddy areas after big rainfalls, so wear shoes that you don't mind getting dirty. Bring a lunch if you would like to picnic there.

Directions: Brooker Creek Preserve is located at 3940 Keystone Rd., Tarpon Springs. If you are coming from the west, Keystone is the continuation of Tarpon Ave. The entrance is well marked on the south side of the road. If you are coming from the east, access Keystone Rd. from Gunn Highway.

Weeki Wachee River Kayak Trip
Sunday, June 14
Time: Renters and owners using outfitter shuttle, 9:00 am. Kayak owners doing self-shuttle, 8:15 am at the Weeki Wachee State Park

If you have never been there, the Weeki Wachee River is a real treat. It is fed by the Weeki Wachee Spring, a first magnitude spring that pumps 112 million gallons of water daily out of the Aquifer. In most of the 5 ½ miles that we will kayak, the water is a clear aqua color and the river has a sandy bottom. You are able to clearly see many fish below you as you paddle, and the river has a pair of nesting eagles as well. Because of the strong current caused by the spring, it is fairly easy paddling. The only challenges are many twisty turns that the river makes in its' path to the Gulf. We will stop on a sandy beach part way down for a break and some snacks. This is also a good time to swim in the cool, clear water. Toward our take out at Rodgers Park, a manatee and her calf are frequently seen, but manatees can be seen elsewhere as well.

We are starting early not only to avoid the heat of the day, but also to avoid the crowds that can be on the river, especially on the weekends**. So, please don't be late, and if you are renting a kayak, it would be good if you could arrive a bit early to fill out paperwork.** As always, bring water, sunscreen, a hat, bug repellant, snacks and if you want to swim, clothes that can go in the water. If you are interested, you can join us at the Bayport Inn just down the road for lunch after our kayak.

Kayak prices: single rental-$32.50 tandem rental-$37.50
Launch fee: owner $6. $10 to use outfitter's shuttle so a total of $16.
Return shuttle for single person without kayak $5

Directions: Weeki Wachee State Park is on the corner of U.S. 19 and St. Rt. 50 on the west side of U.S. 19. The entrance is on U.S. 19, just south of Rt. 50. To get to the kayak launch, drive to the left after entering the parking lot and go down the hill to the kayak launch.

Nature Coast Chapter

NATIVE PLANT SALE

Saturday, April 25th

10am– 2pm

APRIL 25, 2015 PASCO EARTH DAY

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

9am – 3pm
Crews Lake Park
16739 Crews Lake Drive • Spring Hill, FL

We will have a variety of quality nursery grown native plants for sale, as well as books

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FROM 8:30AM TO 3PM
for set up, outreach, plant sale, and break-down.

Contact Peggy Gretchen (813) 991-4812
herculesmpg@hotmail.com

Nature Coast Chapter

NATIVE PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 2nd

10am -2pm

Gardening Extravaganza

10am-4pm
Pioneer Museum & Village
15602 Pioneer Museum Road • Dade City

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FROM 8:45AM to 4:45PM for set up, outreach, plant sale, and break-down, morning, half-day, or afternoon.

Contact Annie Johnson (352) 518-0545
annjohnson.eotrf@gmail.com

Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference

- Venue is the Challenger Learning Center in the Downtown Market area
- Evening venues at the Capital Building, Wakulla Springs State Park and Tall Timbers Research Station
- Hotel will be the Aloft, located a few blocks from the Downtown Market
- Field trips and workshops scheduled for Thursday and Sunday mornings
- Speakers and workshops will be available on Friday and Saturday

Make your hotel reservations now. The FNPS Conference rate is $94 per night. Just call the hotel directly and ask for the FNPS rate. Book now by calling 877-GO-ALOFT.

Message from Chapter Representative

Why should we go to the Florida Native Plant Conference? To answer that, think of the reason we belong to FNPS, go to meetings and participate in the activities.

Are you a gardener, interested in sustainable plantings for your yard? Are you interested in environmental issues or the ecology of our unusual state? Do you enjoy the pleasure of being in Florida's wild places? Do you enjoy the company of like-minded people, with the pleasure of others interested in similar things? Some or all of the above?

Whatever the reason, the chance to immerse yourself in experiences related to all these things is possible for a few days at the annual Florida Native Plant Society Conferences.

As a gardener, I've learned how our gardens could be links to form connections in corridors that have ecological functions that support life. I've learned about plants and design processes that are new and even radical to traditional gardening. Phrases like "we can do better than beautiful" from a landscape designer and books like "Bringing Nature Home" changed the way I thought of gardening.

As a person who loves being in the wild places, I had a chance to see a privately maintained pine flatwoods with the beauty and diversity possible when a wild place is allowed to function with fire as the natural defining evolutionary factor. I had a chance to walk in the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve with the man who knew where all the ghost orchids were hiding.

As an environmentalist, I've had a chance to hear from the most knowledgeable people in many subjects concerning issues we hear about daily. I've learned how the ecology of our state affects our human lives, and how plants were used by people through time. The concept that the earth had rights and nature as property to be exploited changed the way I thought of the place of humans on the planet.

I've seen the beauty of Florida transformed into art, learned about plant blindness, heard about all the great things that have been accomplished in land conservation here in Florida and enjoyed the company of people interested in all these things. Most of all, it was fun!

I hope all the Nature Coast members will grab the opportunity to experience exciting possibilities at the Conference to be held this year in Tallahassee May 28 – 31. North Florida is beckoning! Go to the Conference home page and plan your enlightening trip! http://www.fnps.org/conference/2015.

Julie Wert

Cypress Acres Nursery

Growing 1-gallon native flowering plants and butterfly favorites.

SALE June 13th and 14th

9am-2pm

All 1 gallon pots will be $3.

8632 Ehren Cut-Off • Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
813-388-3111 • dbarnard5@tampabay.rr.com

WHOLESALE ONLY • OPEN TO PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT

Karen's Wildflowers

Florida Native Flowers, Shrubs & Trees
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT & AVAILABILITY

21930 Carson Drive ◆ Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
(813) 528 2368 ◆ karen_watrous@yahoo.com

Update on Amendment 1:

In case you missed it FNPS sent out an action alert, more strongly worded than usual, because of the urgency of the situation. Some of it is reproduced below and you can read the full text, as well as a list of contacts with emails is at http://www.fnps.org/

No Funding for Land Conservation is a Legislative Insult to Voters

The Senate budget currently proposes to allocate $2 million to purchase conservation easements. The more "generous" House budget would spend $10 million to purchase conservation easements. Neither chamber proposes to allocate ANYTHING for the purchase of lands that would add to our system of state parks, state forests and wildlife management areas.

Don't be fooled by smoke and mirrors, like the proposed allocation of $20 million to purchase lands along the Kissimmee River in order to complete restoration of the river. It's a good project that has been in progress for years and deserves to be funded. But it has nothing to do with Florida Forever.

Amendment 1 requires, in simple-to-understand language, that 33% of annual documentary stamp tax revenues must be dedicated to land and water conservation. Most of us interpreted that to mean a substantial amount of the funding would support the protection of natural areas through the purchase of land. Those revenues are projected to total well over $700 million in the first year alone. Both the Senate and House propose to spend millions to cover existing agency operating costs and fund expensive water supply projects, and NOTHING for Florida Forever.

If you are insulted by the Legislature's unwillingness to heed the will of the voters, which was clearly expressed by the overwhelming passage of Amendment 1, please contact the House and Senate leadership this week and tell them so. Contact information is provided below. If you can, please take the time to contact your own representative and senator as well. Tell them:

* The first year of Amendment 1 spending should allocate at least $350 million for the acquisition of approved Florida Forever projects. That amounts to less than half of first-year revenues!

* The time for debating whether the people of Florida support additional land purchases has passed. You knew what you were voting for when you voted to pass Amendment 1.

* Amendment 1 was called the Water and Land Legacy Amendment for a reason. Sewage treatment plants and water supply projects are important, but they aren't the legacy for future generations that we had in mind on election day. Rivers and springs clean enough for swimming and fishing; parks and forests where people can recreate and enjoy nature; beaches where our children can play. THAT is the kind of legacy we want to enjoy for ourselves and leave for those who come after us.

Submit suggestions, articles, or photos by June 1 to Karen Watrous (813) 528-2368 or karen_watrous@yahoo.com.

Correction: In the January-February 2015 newsletter, this was identified as Palafoxia integrifolia, Coastal-plain Palafox. According to Craig Huegel it is actually, Dalea pinnata, Summer Farewell. Thanks, Craig.

CHAPTER DIRECTORY

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Plant Sale: Peggy Gretchen	813.991.4812	herculesmpg@hotmail.com
Landscape/Garden Consultant: Annie Johnson	352.518.0545	annjohnson.eotrf@gmail.com

Chapter website: pasconativeplants.org
E-mail: naturecoastfnps@gmail.com
www.meetup.com/Nature-Coast-Native-Plant-Society/
www.facebook.com/PascoNativePlants
twittter.com/NatureCoastFNPS

Landscape/Garden News

HAPPY MAY INTO SUMMER.
It's large brimmed hats & SPF 75 full spectrum sunscreen time!!!!
I get long sleeve cotton shirts at a thrift store. After they become too worn, because they are cotton, they can go into the compost pile.

Thanks to everyone who attended our plant sale! Are your plants still in pots? Want to weed the bed before planting? Good news: weeding is over-rated.

Sometimes when we weed, the seeds from the previous weeds are stimulated into growing. Get the big stuff out, but don't sweat the small stuff. Plant the plants, water well, place thick layers of newspaper around the plants, without being up against the plant. The newspaper will shade out the weed seeds. Water the paper to keep it from blowing away. It can be covered with cardboard. Mulch with the best mulch = oak leaves, or unsprayed grass clippings. The trees absorb the nutrients in the soil, which goes into the leaves, which fall to the ground to replenish the soil. Mulch after planting. If done before, mulch falls into the hole. It will form air pockets where roots can't grow, and it uses the nutrients in the soil to break down.The new plants need the nutrients. Barks do not break down easily; as they do, they use the nitrogen (plant nutrient) in the soil to decay. Do NOT use cypress mulch, or that colored stuff, which is half cypress. This may seem redundant. It is because of conversations with some people.

If things are coming out in your garden, that's great: flowers, butterflies, pollinators, birds, etc. If those little black with yellow side stripes grasshoppers are climbing up the muhly grasses, spiderworts, or anything tallish, it is time for THE BUCKET O' DEATH. Those little black grasshoppers are the nymph stages of the giant yellow "two bricker" eastern lubber grasshopper, *Romalea microptera*. The nymphs go through 5 stages before becoming adults. Good news is they don't have chewing mouth parts, unlike the adults which will devastate a garden.

Early morning or evening is the best time to use the bucket o' death. Some people use soapy water, I use ammonia solution. It doesn't have to be a strong solution. Wear gloves as the nymphs have a sticky, stinky body fluid. Their exoskeletons are soft. The bugs drop when disturbed, so try to put the bucket under them. Squish or knock the bugs into the buckets. Julie and Richard have used a hand vacuum to catch the creeps, then dump the trap into the bucket o' death. Birds don't even like eat the nymphs, so that is not a natural solution. Get 'em while they are young.

There is a side benefit to being out in the morning & evening. After you have knocked the bugs into the bucket, and are waiting for the second batch to climb back up the plant, get some weeding done. As the I-Ching says, "perseverance follows".

Two bricks are required to kill the adults. If you are quick, cut off the heads with garden clippers. If nothing else, it will entertaining for anyone watching you hop around the yard trying to catch the durn things. *Annie Johnson*

Congratulations

Mary Ellen Gotto recently received recognition from the Florida Wildflower Foundation's Wildflowers, Naturally! Program This was the culmination of a significant amount of effort. To see more photos, visit the program website http://flawildflowers.org/wildflowers_naturally.php

Mary Ellen Gotto, 2015

TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE FOUNDATION, YOUR LANDSCAPE MUST:

- Display spring-, summer- and fall-blooming native species from trusted sources, such as members of the **Florida Association of Native Nurseries** and the **Florida Wildflower Growers Cooperative**.
- Provide food, water and shelter for wildlife.
- Contain no more than 25 percent of non-native plants.
- Contain no invasive exotic species
- Contain a diversity of species appropriate for your region.
- Be identifiable and distinct as a wildflower landscape.
- Be at least 50 square feet.

RED BAY by Peggy A. Gretchen

FNPS Member
Pasco Master Gardener

Botanical Name: Persea borbonia
Common Name: Red Bay
Family: Lauraceae (Laurel)

Type of Plant: Native medium-sized evergreen tree; shrubby to erect, single or multi-trunked, dark-brown furrowed trunk and a broad, densely leafy, rounded crown.
Height: 20 – 60 ft. Width: Up to 40 ft.
Note: There are two varieties of Persea borbonia in Florida: Persea borbonia var. borbonia and Persea borbonia var. humilis = silkbay. Silkbay is an endemic species, usually a shrub or tree with coppery to brownish lower leaf surfaces in central and south Florida's sand pine – oak scrub. A very similar related species is Swamp Red Bay, Persea palustris, which is smaller and occurs in swamps, bayheads, wet flatwoods, and wet hammocks. Leaf undersides and stems have reddish hairs, and are less prone to leaf galls.

HOW TO IDENTIFY:
Leaves: Alternate, lanceolate to oblong, leathery, shiny deep-green above, grayish below; 2 - 4 in. long. Evergreen. Aromatic (due to oils) when crushed. May be used as a substitute for true bay laurel leaves in cooking. Prone to leaf galls due to a tiny insect, which deforms the leaves (curled edges). Leaf galls do not harm the overall health of the plant and do not require treatment.

Flowers: Tiny, inconspicuous, borne in greenish-yellow clusters.
Flowering Time: Spring – Early Summer (May – June).

Fruit: A rounded ellipsoid drupe (fleshy, one-seeded); 1/3 – 1/2 in; Green, turning dark purplish-blue or black when they ripen in early fall.

Habitat: Uplands to include mostly dry, sandy hammocks (woods) and maritime woods. Sometimes found in moist to wet hammocks. Also in sandhill, scrub, and coastal dunes.

Distribution: Frequent nearly throughout Florida. Coastal plain from Delaware south throughout Florida and west to Texas.
Hardiness Zones: 7 – 10.

Landscape Use / Wildlife Benefit: Works well as an evergreen background or specimen tree, especially in naturalistic settings, with great wildlife benefits. Provides good cover and nesting for birds. The fruits are eaten by birds and many wildlife, including turkey and quail. Larval plant for Palamedes and Spicebush Swallowtail butterflies.

Cultivation: Extremely adaptable and easy to grow!
Soil: Sandy, well-drained. Acidic preferred, but adaptable.
Light: Full sun – partial shade.
Water: Dry to moist. Drought-tolerant once established.

Miscellaneous: Moderate growth rate. High salt-tolerance. No maintenance required. Note: Red Bay and the entire Laurel family is in danger from Laurel Wilt, a fungal disease spread by the non-native ambrosia beetle (Xyleborus glabratus) which leads to eventual death of the plant. To date, no effective strategies have been identified to prevent infection.
Propagation: By cuttings or seeds. Sow seeds in fall immediately upon ripening.
Availability: See www.plantrealflorida.org!

References:
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Wunderlin, Richard P., Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 1998.
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Become a member of the
NATURE COAST CHAPTER of the Florida Native Plant Society today.
Individual membership is only a $35 donation.

Join to **protect** the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.
Support science-based **conservation** of our floral heritage and of the species that depend upon it.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- ***The Nature Coastline***, the bimonthly newsletter of the Nature Coast Chapter
- ***The Palmetto***, our quarterly magazine, which is filled with information on native plants, gardening, conservation of native habitats, etc.
- **Sabal Minor**, our bi-monthly newsletter that will keep you up to date on FNPS news and activities
- Native plant gardening and landscaping information
- Local plant sales
- Speakers and field trips
- Annual Conference discount
- Publications (10% discount)

Newsletter Publication
Nature Coast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society
21930 Carson Drive
Land O' Lakes Fl 34639

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