The Nature Coastline

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

Nature Coast Chapter's display at Florida State Fair.

MARCH - APRIL
2019

In this issue:

Meetings/Programs

Field Trips

Green Corner
By Jan Howie

Plant Profile:
Sweet Pinxter Azalea
(Rhododendron canescens)
by Peggy Gretchen

A Message from the President

The Year of the Pollinators

As you know, the theme for the Nature Coast Chapter's exhibit at the Florida State Fair was "Pollinators" and the importance that native plants play in the whole process. Personally, I learned so much working on the State Fair Exhibit about pollination that I feel we should use every opportunity to spread the knowledge about how important it is to our existence.

So, let's make "Pollination" Nature Coast Chapter's theme for the whole year. We can show the public the importance of native plants to pollination at outreach events, plant sales and planning our own landscapes. If we can influence adults and children, perhaps people will think before they use herbicides and pesticides and maybe plant host and nectar plants to encourage native insects to pollinate.

It is amazing to learn that people know very little about the process of "sex in the garden"! Every time a beetle, moth, butterfly, or one of the over 300 species of native bees, flits from plant to plant looking for food they will pollinate another plant. Plants NEED our insects

See PRESIDENT, page 4

The Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

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.

Location:

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.

Chapter website: pasconativeplants.org
Chapter E-mail: naturecoastfnps@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/PascoNativePlants
twitter.com/NatureCoastFNPS
FNPS website: http://www.fnps.org/

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY, A FLORIDA-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH3021), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING THEIR WEBSITE AT csapp.800helpfla.com. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPR

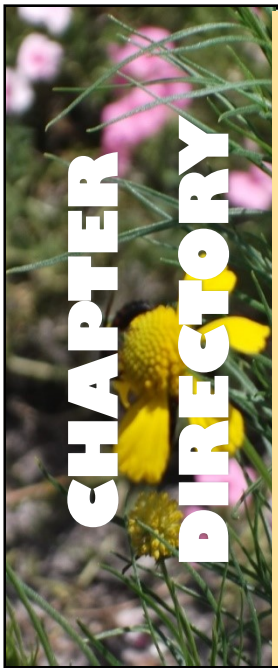
The Society fulfills its mission through:

- Support for conservation land acquisition
- Land management that enhances habitat suitability for native plants
- Education
- Public policies that protect our native flora, especially rare species
- Research on native plant species
- Encouragement of local landscaping practices and policies that preserve Florida's native plant heritage

To become a member go to FNPS.org and click on "Join/Support" at the upper right-hand corner of screen. Print form, complete, and mail form to FNPS, or call. You may also join at a chapter meeting.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
Gold $500
Patron $250
Business $150
Non-Profit $150
Supporting $100
Household $50
Individual $35
Full Time Student $15

OR BOOST YOUR SUPPORT by renewing as a Sustaining Member -- easy $10 monthly payments automatically and securely charged to your credit card. CREDIT CARD PAYMENT REQUIRED. No checks/invoicing. Sustaining membership remains in effect as long as you wish and your card number is valid.



OFFICERS:

President:	Jonnie Spitler	813.435.8143	jspitler1120@gmail.com
Vice President:	Mary Ellen Gotto	727.264.8701	mefgotoh@aol.com
Treasurer:	Peter Gonzalez	813.416.2375	petergonzalez0205@gmail.com
Secretary & Website Coordinator:	Cheryl McAloon	813.928.7724	cherylmcaloon@me.com
Chapter Representative, Field Trip Chair & Facebook Administrator:	Gail Parsons	gailpar1@verizon.net	813.920.2730

CHAIRPERSONS:

Newsletter Editor & Landscape Consultant:	Karen Watrous	813.528.2368	karen_watrous@yahoo.com
Publicity Chair:	Sandra Vanno	727.207.1853	svanno@tampabay.rr.com
Membership:	Deb Tribbey	727.857.6583	bdtrib@hotmail.com
Library Chair:	Sharon Holding	727.247.7367	shrnholding@gmail.com
Refreshments:	Rebecca Dance	813.368.9041	rstarrdance@aol.com
Conservation Chair:	Jan Howie	727.848.7689	janicehowie@aol.com
Program Chair:	Pat Kelly	352.424.2224	patriciak03@gmail.com
Plant Sale Coordinator:	Peggy Gretchen	813.991.4812	herculesmpg@hotmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator:	Jean Nixon		giginixon@gmail.com

Meetings/Programs

MARCH 12, 7PM

Keeping the BUZZ in Your Pollinator Garden

Speaker: Chris Parisi

This program will have 3 segments:

- Information about different pollinators found in the native garden - from Bees to Beetles - and their ecological and agricultural importance in Florida
- How you can provide habitat for pollinators including bee housing.
- Pollinator friendly natives that are available for the garden. Right plant, right place will be emphasized as well as milkweed as a great pollinator attractor and host.

Speaker Bio: Chris has been growing milkweeds and seed collecting for 10 years and is the owner of a small nursery that grows milkweeds for gardens and seed production. He is a member of FNPS, has a degree in Biology from Eckerd College (1990) and has worked with FANN, the Xerces Society, Crosby Arboretum in Mississippi and Cornell University.

APRIL 9, 7 PM

Restoring Our Springs: What Will It Take?

Speaker: Eugene Kelly

Many of Florida's world famous springs have been degraded by reductions in flow and dramatic declines in water quality. Restoration of our springs is regularly cited as a priority and large sums have been expended. But restoration can mean different things for different spring systems. What specific restoration actions must be implemented to restore our degraded springs? We will discuss those actions, and what measures the FDEP, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and local governments are taking to restore our springs.

Speaker Bio: Gene is a conservation biologist with more than 30 years of experience in Florida including work with the Southwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and The Nature Conservancy. Gene currently serves as Chair of the Florida Native Plant Society's Policy and Legislation Committee, and as Vice-Chair of the Good Neighbor Trail Advisory Committee. He was also a member of the Hernando County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Committee.

Field Trips

MARCH 16, 2019

Green Isles Nursery

11303 SR 33
Groveland, FL
10 AM

We have visited this large native plant nursery in the past. This is where many of our native plants come from when we have our spring and fall Plant Sales. To carpool, meet at the McDonalds on SR 50 ½ mile east of I75 at 9:15AM

Contact Gail Parsons if you plan on coming or have questions. gailpar1@verizon.net or 813-920-2730

APRIL 13, 2019

Weeki Wachee Springs State Park

6131 Commercial Way
Spring Hill, FL
10AM in parking lot

In 2001, the Southwest Florida Water Management District purchased 538 acres of property surrounding the first-magnitude Weeki Wachee Spring from the City of St. Petersburg. The acquisition was in support of former Governor Bush's "Springs Initiative," under which strategies were established for the protection and restoration of Florida's springs, including placing them in public ownership. On November 1, 2008, the District entered into a lease agreement with the Florida Parks Service for their management of the property as a state park. We will explore some of this property, looking for the endangered Curtis milkweed and then visit the attraction. Our speaker for the previous Tuesday night program, Gene Kelley, will join us. Entrance fee is $13 for adults.

Contact Gail Parsons if you plan on coming or have questions. gailpar1@verizon.net or 813-920-2730

Thanks to Lenora for taking the attached pictures of our Suncoast Native Plant Society's field trip to the "History of Conservation" at the Tampa History Museum. We are also extremely grateful to Ann Paul and Susann for their hard work and leadership in putting this outstanding display together. We owe special thanks to Karen Wright for organizing the trip.

PRESIDENT, from Page 1

and the insects NEED our native plants. And we are not talking honey bees, we are talking about Native insects. And how do our native plants relate to this? They provide the living conditions, or habitat, that insects need to do their job.

So, at every opportunity, we should use the information we learn about native plants, insects and pollination to encourage people NOT to use herbicides and pesticides. Development in itself is not bad if we learn how to reconcile our natives with progress.

And folks, this starts with us. So let's get rid of as much grass as possible, plants native plants and do not use pesticides and herbicides. Get on the band wagon and "LET'S DO IT".

Come to our March meeting and learn about pollinators. Hope to see you at our plant sale March 23rd where you can get all the plants you need for pollination in your landscape.

You are the best chapter in the state and the most fun. Thank you for being members. And if you are not a member, join us. Thank you

Jonnie Spitler

Lessons from the Landscape

By Julie Wert

As I sat in traffic recently, annoyed at waiting yet again, I noticed the median next to me was covered in white flowers. The plants were short and made a dense carpet on the normally green space. I looked closer and realized they were ***Bidens alba***, mowed to the acceptable limit for plants with enough nerve to grow in such an unfriendly place. These plants were not intimidated by human mowing machines and had adapted to bloom even at a few inches high.

Bidens alba, known to most as Beggarticks or Spanish Needles for their seeds that hitch rides on our socks, had spread to cover the usually ugly space between asphalt vehicle pathways. Even from the car window, I could see the flowers waving with visiting insects. All over the medians and sides of the roads the white flowers of the ***Bidens*** were providing a show for cranky drivers and a snack for local pollinators.

In our gardens, we usually pull these plants, thinking them too messy for our tidy spaces. But maybe we've denied them the respect they deserve. Green Deane, in his blog Eat the Weeds, talks about ***Bidens*** as a salad addition and cooked green as well as a yummy treat for horses, rabbits and chickens. I can attest that my chickens prefer the newest leaves but will stick their heads through the fence for any part available to their beaks.

Photo from: Wunderlin, R. P., B. F. Hansen, A. R. Franck, and F. B. Essig. 2019. *Atlas of Florida Plants* (http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/). [S. M. Landry and K. N. Campbell (application development), USF Water Institute.] Institute for Systematic Botany, University of South Florida, Tampa.

In Florida, ***B. alba*** is the third most common reliable source of nectar. Zebra longwings and close relatives are the only butterflies known to consume pollen in addition to nectar and the Bidens flower shows a lot of available pollen to any protein hungry insect. It's also the larval host plant for the dainty sulphur butterfly. For humans, research shows the plant to have medicinal uses, including soothing wounds and insect bites. It can be used as a tea, in making wine or smoked like tobacco.

Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami uses Bidens alba to help grow mango trees sustainably. They choke out other weeds and provide a cafeteria for native insects that help protect the trees from pests and diseases. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agr8UCAb7kc. Fairchild mows the ***Bidens*** just as the mango trees start to bloom. Bees that don't like mango blooms will visit the flowers anyway for the few days needed for fruit set.

Maybe as Florida native gardeners we can take a cue from Fairchild and from the hardy plants in our roadsides. We can do as Mary Ellen Gotto, our Chapter's VP, does and keep a patch of neatly pruned Bidens. In even the smallest yard there can be a place to show some respect for such a sturdy plant, in bloom all year, providing an important part in our local ecosystems. Be sure to cheer for them on your next trip down a road stripped of less resilient life.

Photo Bob Peterson from North Palm Beach, Florida https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Honey_Bee_and_Bidens_Alba_(8465767847).jpg

FNPS NATURE COAST CHAPTER

Native Plant Sale

Volunteers Needed
Contact Jonnie Spitler

Saturday, March 23

10 AM to 2 PM

HARVESTER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2432 COLLIER PKWY
LAND O' LAKES 34639

- Large selection of nursery-grown plants
- Native plant books, literature & nursery info
- Members on site to answer questions
- Plant profile for each plant purchased
- Carts for plant transportation
- Master Gardener information table

OUTREACH EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Spring Plant Sale
Zephyrhills Founder's Day
Rosebud Open House
Earth Day

Call or email Jonnie Spitler

109th Founder's Day &
Heritage Festival

March 9, 2019
Historic Downtown Zephyrhills

Planes, Trains & Automobiles

"This year we celebrate the huge impact transportation has had on the growth and success of Zephyrhills. "

Rosebud Continuum

SPRING OPEN HOUSE
Saturday, April 6
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
22843 Hale Rd,
Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
(corner of Collier & Hale)

A sustainability education and research center with an extensive Native Plant demonstration area.

rosebudcontinuum.org

April 11th

Pasco Hernando State College
Spring Hill Campus
450 Beverly Drive

April 27th

Crews Lake
Wilderness Park
16739 Crews Lake Drive
Spring Hill, FL 34610

9301 West Fort Island Trail,
Crystal River, FL 34429

https://fnps.org/conference/2019

Our theme this year **"Transitions"** is pertinent to the Nature Coast region of Florida in a number of ways - sea level rise, migrations of ecosystems due to climate change, and the transition zone between north and south Florida.

In this region you will also see the transition of cave system into Karst, spring flows to tannic flows, and water quality transitions.

The region also has a large diversity of plant communities and the transitions between uplands and wetlands are common, dramatic and highly visible – a great place to introduce people to Florida's diverse natural communities.

- Amazing speakers
- 2 days of awesome field trips
- Cutting-edge science
- Current issues
- Conservation, restoration and citizen science
- Climate-change adaptation
- Advocacy opportunities
- Native plant vendors

Nature Coast Chapter is hosting a field trip to Werner Boyce Salt Springs State Park on Thursday, May 16 and providing lunch for those attending.

Plantation on Crystal River

9301 West Fort Island Trail, Crystal River, FL 34429

800.632.6262

Deadline: April 21st , 2019

Reserve your rooms now at our ***special rate*** **by saying you're with the Florida Native Plant Society.** This applies to three days before AND after the conference - so make it a real vacation.

- FNPS Group Room Rate (King or Double)- $114 per night

All guest rooms have a refrigerator, flat-screen TV, and a coffee maker.

UF/IFAS Pasco Extension Programs

Butterflies and their Blooms

Saturday, March 9, 2019
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Land O' Lakes Heritage Park
5401 Land O' Lakes Boulevard
Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

Learn the 6 steps in designing a successful butterfly garden that will attract butterflies, give them a reason to stay, and create more of the "flowers that fly."

Lawn Care Made Easy: The ABC's of Florida Lawn Care

Thursday, March 14, 2019
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Centennial Park Branch Library
5740 Moog Road, Holiday, FL 34690

Caring for a lawn is not difficult, once you discover the proper fertilization techniques, water requirements and cultural care your lawn needs for Florida weather.

Registration recommended. For more free programs & to register, visit
https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/events/?location=pasco

FLORIDA WILDFLOWER FOUNDATION

2019 Florida Wildflower Symposium

April 12-13

Straughn UF/IFAS Extension
2142 Shealy Dr, Gainesville, FL 32608

Exhibitors • Field Trips • Presentations • Native Plant Sale • Workshops

https://flawildflowers.org/florida-wildflower-symposium/

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

The Florida Constitution authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to enact rules and regulations regarding the state's fish and wildlife resources.

To do this, the seven Commissioners meet five times each year to hear staff reports, consider rule proposals, and conduct other Commission business. Because stakeholder involvement is a crucial part of the process, we conduct Commission meetings in different locations across the state offering citizens the opportunity to address the Commission about issues under consideration. A meeting protocol was adopted by the Commission to guide the public in their participation.

The FWC's seven Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Florida Senate to five-year terms. Their constitutional duty is to exercise the "...regulatory and executive powers of the state with respect to wild animal life and fresh water aquatic life and shall also exercise regulatory and executive powers of the state with respect to marine life, except that all license fees and penalties for violating regulations shall be as provided by law."

Commissioners meet five times per year at various locations across the state.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to pause aquatic plant herbicide treatment while collecting public comment

Beginning Jan. 28, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will temporarily pause its aquatic herbicide treatment program throughout the state. During this pause, staff will work to collect public comments regarding the FWC's aquatic plant management program.

The FWC will hold several public meetings to gather community input about the program. Specific dates and locations of these meetings will be announced shortly. Comments can also be sent to Invasiveplants@MyFWC.com.

Invasive plants degrade and diminish Florida's waterways by displacing native plant communities. Some invasive aquatic plants pose a significant threat to human welfare and cause economic problems by impeding flood control and affecting recreational use of waterways.

Go to MyFWC.com/WildlifeHabitats and click on Invasive Plants to find out more about invasive plant management, including Frequently Asked Questions.

GREEN CORNER

This new column is to provide us with a forum to share information about products that are "green" in some way in that they are less harmful to the environment than the normal products that we use.

I got the idea for this column when Sharon Holding and I were out to dinner. I told her about non-plastic and reusable food wraps that I had and she told me about biodegradable kitchen trash bags. Both items are featured in this first column.

The idea is for us to share information about "green" items. If you have a product or products you would like to share with the membership: email Jan Howie janicehowie@aol.com or shrnholding @gmail.com

INCLUDE basic product information, such as what it is used for, where it is found, how much it costs, and advantages and disadvantages of the product.

PHOTO: If you can, send a photo of the item or items

Etee Food Wraps
submitted by Jan Howie

Etee Food Wraps are fully organic, reusable and biodegradable. So, when we use them to wrap our leftovers, we are not using one time use plastic bags or aluminum foil. They are made primarily of beeswax, but also consist of tree resins and organic cotton.

1 set contains 3 wraps of different sizes and sells for $18. A 3 pack set of 9 wraps sells for $16 per set, and a family pack of 6 sets and 18 wraps sells for $14 per set. There is no shipping charge. They are expensive, but reusable for a long while. I have had my original ones for 5 months and they are going strong.

Advantages: When using the wraps, we are keeping plastic from going into the environment. Also, I find them especially effective in wrapping quickly spoiling food items like cut tomatoes and avocados because you can totally surround the item and keep out more air. In my experience, these items last a couple of days longer than in a plastic bag. They are easy to clean and need to be rinsed out with soapy water and they dry quickly.

Disadvantages: Because they are opaque, you can't tell what is inside of your wrapped item. Also, they are not recommended for use in the freezer for over 30 days and not recommended for uncooked meat.

Order Etee Wraps online at www.Shopetee.com/Beeswax/Wrap

Full Circle Large Tall Kitchen Bags
submitted by Sharon Holding

This brand of garbage bags calls itself "Earth Friendly" and if it lives up to its claims, it certainly is. These bags are biodegradable and within 1-5 years they return to natural elements even without sunlight or oxygen. They are free of natural toxins, are not affected by high temperatures, and are recyclable.

They are available at Publix for $3.99 on special or at regular price for $5.70 for 70 bags. I found them with the other garbage bags on the top shelf.

Advantages: A biodegradable garbage bag—need I say more.

Disadvantages: They are not quite as strong as the normal commercial brands, but I have not had any disasters with them to date.

Etee Food Wraps

Full Circle Large Tall Kitchen Bags

Calendar of Events

MARCH

2 ..... **Native Plant Walk at Lettuce Lake Conservation Park** 9 AM, hosted by Suncoast Chapter FNPS, 6920 E. Fletcher Ave, Tampa. Meet at Visitor Center. $2 per vehicle fee to enter park.

Morning Nature Walk at Starkey Park 8 AM, hosted by West Pasco Audubon; 1 to 4 mile walk. Meet at Starkey Education Center 10500 Wilderness Park Blvd, New Port Richey 34655 http://www.westpascoaudubon.com/

West Pasco Audubon Seminar 11 AM "Live Birds!" Barbara Walker, President of Clearwater Audubon Society, will discuss adaptations, habitat and conservation status of each bird. Starkey Education Center 10500 Wilderness Park Blvd, New Port Richey 34655 http://www.westpascoaudubon.com/

9 ..... **UF/IFAS Seminar** 2 PM "Butterflies and their Blooms" See page xxx for details.

10 ..... **Rosebud Resilient Community Market** 4-8 PM 22843 Hale Road, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639 http://www.rosebudcontinuum.org/

12 ..... **Nature Coast Chapter Meeting** 7 PM "Keeping the BUZZ in Your Pollinator Garden" See page 3 for details.

14 ..... **UF/IFAS Seminar** 2 PM "Lawn Care Made Easy" See page 8 for details.

16 ..... **West Pasco Audubon Field Trip** Ocala National Park: Scrub Jays and Woodpeckers. Meet 7 AM Winn-Dixie parking lot on Moon Lake Rd and SR 52. Contact Mike Ranck or Mike Kell at jmike65@gmail.com http://www.westpascoaudubon.com/

Nature Coast Chapter Field Trip 10 AM, Green Isle Gardens, See page 3 for details.

20 ..... **Suncoast Chapter FNPS Meeting/Program** 7 PM, Topic TBA Hillsborough County Extension Center, 5339 County Rd 579 Seffner 33584. http://www.suncoastnps.org/

23 ..... **Suncoast Chapter FNPS Field Trip** TBA http://www.suncoastnps.org/

APRIL

6 ..... **Native Plant Walk at Lettuce Lake Conservation Park** 9 AM, hosted by Suncoast Chapter FNPS, 6920 E. Fletcher Ave, Tampa. Meet at Visitor Center. $2 per vehicle fee to enter park.

Photographer's Show & Tell and Photography Competition 11 AM, hosted by West Pasco Audubon & Pasco Fine Arts Council. All are invited to submit photos of local wildlife for the competition. Starkey Education Center 10500 Wilderness Park Blvd, New Port Richey 34655 http://www.westpascoaudubon.com/

9 ..... **Nature Coast Chapter Meeting** 7 PM "Restoring Our Springs: What Will it Take?" See page 3 for details.

13 ..... **Nature Coast Chapter Field Trip** 10 AM Weeki Wachee Springs State Park. See page 3 for details.

Rosebud Resilient Community Market 4-8 PM 22843 Hale Road, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639 http://www.rosebudcontinuum.org/

17 ..... **Suncoast Chapter FNPS Meeting/Program** 7 PM, Topic TBA Hillsborough County Extension Center, 5339 County Rd 579 Seffner 33584. http://www.suncoastnps.org/

20 ..... **Ft. Desoto Spring Migration Warblers-Orioles-etc** 8 AM, hosted by West Pasco Audubon; 1 to 4 mile walk. Meet 7 AM at the Panera Bread lot The corner of SR54 and Little Road For info contact Mike Kell at jmike65@gmail.com http://www.westpascoaudubon.com/

Suncoast Chapter FNPS Field Trip TBA http://www.suncoastnps.org/

SWEET PINXTER AZALEA

By Peggy A. Gretchen
FNPS Member
Pasco Master Gardener

Botanical Name: Rhododendron canescens
Common Name: Sweet Pinxter Azalea, Mountain Azalea, Wild Pink Azalea
Family: Ericaceae (Heath)

Type of Plant: Native deciduous shrub, usually multi-stemmed, with an open growth habit, clustered leaves, and showy, fragrant, tubular flowers.

Height: 10 – 15 ft. Width: 10 – 15 ft. Spacing: 6 – 15 ft.

How to Identify:
Bark: Thin, smooth, and brownish.
Leaves: Alternate, simple, entire, hairy (covered with soft white hairs). Elliptical to narrowed at the base and wider at the tip; 1 - 4 in. long. Borne in whorl-like clusters near the branch tips. Deciduous.
Flowers: Very showy clusters! Each bloom is tubular at the base flaring into 5 lobes;
1 - 3 in. long; pale pink to dark rose to sometimes whitish; stamens and pistil extend beyond the petals (corolla). Borne at the tips of the thin, mostly leafless branches. Open before or with appearance of first leaves. Vey sweetly fragrant!
Flowering Time: Early to mid-Spring. Late February – MARCH - April.
Fruit: An inconspicuous, hard, dry, cylindrical to elongate-ovate, reddish-brown capsule containing tiny dust-like seeds.

Habitat: Pine flatwoods, upland mixed woodlands, mesic (moist) hammocks, floodplain forests, along woodland streams, and the margins of bay swamps.
Distribution: North Carolina southward to north-central Florida (Marion County) and westward to Texas. Hardiness Zones: 6 – 9.

Landscape Use / Wildlife Benefit: Highly prized for its beautiful and fragrant pink flowers in the spring, Pinxter Azalea is an excellent large shrub for naturalistic landscapes and more formal gardens. Useful for planting in groups along woodland edges or planted at the edge of a tree canopy in your landscape where it will receive early or late sun. Also, use as an understory shrub beneath deciduous trees (ideal), in mixed shrub beds (try planting with other azaleas such as the native Florida Flame Azalea), or as a single specimen for accent. Attracts many pollinators for nectar, including a variety of butterflies and also hummingbirds. Try using in your butterfly garden for height and structure, if you have the room and the right site conditions.

Cultivation: Adapts well to most landscapes.
Soil: Organic, fertile, acidic is best.
Light: Full Sun – Partial Shade. Flowers best in full sun, but will well tolerate filtered or partial shade, but not deep shade. Needs some A.M. or P.M. sun to bloom well and thrive.
Water: Prefers moist, well-drained conditions. Tolerates seasonally wet. Do not plant in a year round soggy site with stagnant water (roots may rot). Do water well and deeply to establish during planting and then keep moist for the first year.
Miscellaneous: Fairly slow-growing. Life span to 50 years. May prune if desired to maintain a more compact shape, but do so only after flowering, in late spring, before new buds form. Achieves a more natural and attractive form without pruning. Pinxter Azalea hybridizes readily with other species of azalea. There are five Florida native azaleas. All five species make good landscape additions and can be grown well outside their natural ranges, well into Central Florida, if care is given to meet their cultivation requirements:

1) Rhododendron alabamense = Alabama Azalea. Rare in the Panhandle.
2) Rhododendron austrinum = Florida Flame Azalea or Orange Azalea. Occasional in the Panhandle.
3) Rhododendron canescens = Sweet Pinxter Azalea.

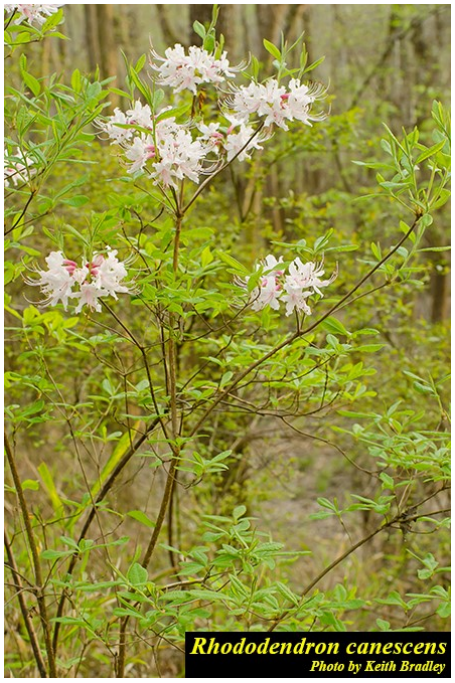
4) Rhododendron minus var. chapmanii = Chapman's Rhododendron. Rare endemic and endangered species in the Panhandle. Evergreen.
5) Rhododendron viscosum var. serrulatum = White Swamp Azalea. Frequent in North Florida to Central Florida. Blooms late spring – summer.

Propagation: By seeds or cuttings.

Availability: Florida native plant sales and Florida native nurseries.
See www.plantrealflorida.org!
All five Florida native azalea species are propagated by commercial sources and are available for home landscaping. Native azaleas are sometimes removed from the wild and commercially sold (exploited) in Florida. Please obtain yours from trusted sources and only those which have been propagated.

References:

Haehle, Robert G. and Joan Brookwell, Native Florida Plants, Houston, Texas, Gulf Publishing Company, 1999.
Huegel, Craig N., Native Florida Plants for Shady Landscapes, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2015.
Nelson, Gil, Best Native Plants for Southern Gardens, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2010.
Nelson, Gil, Florida's Best Native Landscape Plants, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2003.
Taylor, Walter Kingsley, Florida Wildflowers, A Comprehensive Guide, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2013.
Wasowski, Sally, with Andy Wasowski, Gardening with Native Plants of the South, Dallas, Texas, Taylor Publishing Co., 1994.
Wunderlin, Richard P., Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 1998.
Suncoast Native Plant Society, The Right Plants for Dry Places, St. Petersburg, Florida, Great Outdoors Publishing Co., 1997.
Taylor, Walter Kingsley, Florida Wildflowers, A Comprehensive Guide, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 2013.
Traas, Pamela F., Gardening for Florida's Butterflies, St. Petersburg, Florida, Great Outdoors Publishing Company, 1999.
Wunderlin, Richard P., Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida, 1998.



http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/photo.aspx?ID=1528 Wunderlin, R. P., B. F. Hansen, A. R. Franck, and F. B. Essig. 2018. *Atlas of Florida Plants* (http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/). [S. M. Landry and K. N. Campbell (application development), USF Water Institute.] Institute for Systematic Botany, University of South Florida, Tampa.