



Rhexia mariana ©Darel Hess 2bnthewild.com

IMPORTANT – JANUARY MEETING DATE CHANGED NEW MEETING PLACE, TOO!

We apologize, but the January meeting originally scheduled for Tuesday, Jan 11 will have to be changed to Tuesday, January 25 at 7:30pm due to scheduling problems. We hope we will still see you all at this new date at the Doyle Conner Building, 1911 SW 34th Street. Park on either side of the building and enter through the front door. Plant ID workshop will precede the program at 6:30pm. (Our meetings after this will resume on second Tuesdays of the month.) See meeting calendar printed on Rhexia or check FNPS.org website.



The Rhexia

Paynes Prairie Chapter
Florida Native Plant Society
January 2005

Rally for the Ocklawaha River: Feb. 19-20 Have fun and make a difference: Great Field Trips, Great Music, Great Pep Rally-Party, Tree Planting....all for a GREAT Cause

By Karen Ahlers

Rally for the Ocklawaha River: Come for Field Trips, Parties, and Tree Planting!

By Karen Ahlers

The **Rally for the Ocklawaha River**, sponsored by the Putnam County Environmental Council, Inc. (PCEC) is a weekend full of great field trips, a big party and the beginning of "The People's Restoration." In short, it's an opportunity for you, your friends and family to have fun and make a difference in the ongoing struggle to restore the Ocklawaha River.

Here in Putnam County, almost daily we deal with the controversy in our backyard - the dammed Ocklawaha River and the resulting Rodman Reservoir. While we understand the apprehension of local officials and the business community that fear a negative economic impact if the river is restored, PCEC has planned a fun-filled weekend event to demonstrate the positive impacts of nature-based tourism that will result from a restored river.

To make this successful, we need you! We are asking supporters from across the state to come to Putnam County February 19-20, 2005 (President's Day weekend). We've created 50+ outings to satisfy a wide variety of interests and have enlisted the help of some of the best trip leaders in north central Florida. Great birders, botanists, naturalists, outfitters, and artists will be on hand to show you what makes this area so special. Come and enjoy the field trips and tours and please, spend a little money! We're asking participants to buy gas, eat at local restaurants, do a little shopping, or

stay a night or two. We're asking you to be obvious: strap your canoes to the roof, wear your binocs 'round your neck, in other words, be conspicuous eco-tourists. PCEC will provide you with Ocklawaha restoration calling cards to leave everywhere you go and be sure to ask for and save your receipts.

Both Saturday and Sunday, you'll have the opportunity to participate in the kick-off of PCEC's "The People's Restoration" by helping us plant trees. Almost one square mile of the Ocala National Forest is flooded by Rodman Reservoir. Those lands will be exposed during this time due to a periodic drawdown for aquatic plant control and we've arranged with the US Forest Service to take this opportunity to begin the reforestation process. We'll provide the native trees and tools.

On Saturday night at 7:00 pm, join us at Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka for a free, music- and fun-filled pep Rally for the River with live music by Florida's Troubador Dale Crider and other well known Florida folk musicians. Renowned Florida author Al Burt will be our featured guest and cheerleaders from Florida's leading conservation groups will be on stage to encourage us all to achieve our goal of removing Rodman Dam and restoring the Ocklawaha River.

Remember those receipts you were asked to save? Bring them to the pep rally so we can tally them up for our report back to local officials. **THIS IS A CRITICAL PART OF OUR STRATEGY!** Concern over the local economy is one of the main reasons proponents of Rodman cite for keeping the Ocklawaha River dammed. We need your help to demonstrate that there is more to nature-based tourism than bass fishing.

Your participation will support restoration efforts by:

(Continued on page 4)

Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

The *Rhexia* is published monthly September - November and January - May by the Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society is the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. See our website at www.fnps.org.

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Nov. Field Trip Report: Morningside Nature Center

By Claudia Larsen

Thank you to Gary Paul, Program Director of Morningside Nature Center, for taking time to guide us on our November field trip. Although it was a little late for peak fall blooming we still found some interesting asters and other things that were trying to bloom as a stress response to the hurricanes.

We saw large stands of Summer Farewell (*Dalea pinnata*), an interesting shrubby wildflower and Littleleaf Buckbrush (*Ceanothus microphyllus*) which is a small lacy shrub with tiny leaves. We also visited the longleaf pine restoration site near the farm that was burned and replanted a couple seasons ago. The young pines are doing extremely well and the site is an area that can be easily viewed from the sandhill trail.

Plants identified on our walk include: Silkgrass (*Pityopsis* sp), Hammock Snake-root (*Ageratina* sp), Hawkweed (*Hieracium* sp), Rayless sunflower (*Helianthus radula*), (*Liatris* sp), Easter Silver Aster and Walter's Aster (*Symphotrichum* sp), Honeycombhead (*Baulduina* sp) and Indian paintbrush (*Carphephorus* sp).

Program Notes for Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2005 Plant Identification Workshop: 6:30-7:30pm Reid Tillery Surviving in the Wilds of Florida

Reid is a native of Palm Beach County, having grown up in Pahokee in the northernmost reaches of the Everglades area. His love and respect for the outdoors was instilled early as a result of youthful adventures throughout the great wild areas of south Florida.

His avocational interests include writing and exploring the Florida backcountry. He has authored a soon-to-be released book entitled *Surviving the Wilds of Florida*. The purpose of the book is to provide you with information you can use to fend for yourself and your companions, under both normal and adverse circumstances, in the great wild areas of our state. Reid's sincere wish is that any knowledge you gain helps bring you home safely every time. His presentation is based on this book.

January 15, 2005 Field Trip (1pm-3pm) Ardisia Removal at Dudley Farm State Park

Our January field trip has traditionally been to this wonderful state park to aid their efforts in removing exotic plants from the property. We are happy to say that the site we have been working on is showing real progress since we began removing ardisia several years ago. This removal is relatively easy by pulling up plants or cutting off ripe red berries. Long sleeves and pants and gloves are recommended. Some tools are provided but you can bring your favorite shovel and clippers as well. Please bring water and a snack to enjoy also. Dudley Farm is a unique park that is a working, turn of the century Florida farm, complete with homestead and outbuildings. Our workday will end with a tour of the facilities and information about recent happenings on the farm. Friends and families are welcome to join us.

Meet in the parking lot near the restroom. Park fee is \$4 per car.

Directions from Oaks Mall: From I-75 overpass go west 7 miles on Highway 26 (Newberry Rd.) towards Newberry. At the intersection of Highway 26 and SR 241 you are 1 mile from Dudley Farm. Look for the Dudley Farm State Park sign on your right and drive to the parking area near the entrance cabin. If you pass Canterbury Horse Farm you went too far. Questions or weather problems call Claudia 352-466-3880.

The **Public Interest Environmental Conference** is February 24-26 at the Reitz Union on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville FL. This is normally a great conference, but it will be extra special this year for FNPS, because of the native plant focus. On Thursday Feb. 24. there will be an afternoon workshop entitled **Rethinking Florida Local Government Native Plant Policy: A Model Landscape Ordinance Requiring the Use of Appropriate Native Vegetation.**

This workshop will be an opportunity for you to see the draft version of the model landscape ordinance and provide input for the final version. This is a project that the Florida Native Plant Society has sponsored and the UF College of Law faculty Tom Ankersen and law student Erica Zimmerman have written. Check the Law School <www.law.ufl.edu> and the PEIC <www.ufpiec.org> websites for more information .

Taking Extreme Advantage: *Life Lessons in Usefulness and Beauty*

By Jeri Baldwin

Every porch at my Grandma's creaked and groaned with luxuriant plants. When the porches and steps could hold no more, plants and their containers spilled into the yard: along the fence, around the porch, lining the path, around the trees. Grandma never saw a plant she didn't like, especially if "God had grown it". Her plants reached for the sun from every conceivable array of container. Anything that could no longer be used for its original purpose held a plant at Grandma's house. Pots with a hole, pans with a thin rusty spot, wooden boxes that had delivered something to her hardscrabble farm, metal plow or cultivator parts which were the least bit concave, cracked crocks which couldn't hold sauerkraut, threadbare woven baskets, a wash tub that had more *mend-its* than tub and binder's twine saved from hay bales supported climbing plants.

In the yard, old tires with slick treads, stacked two or three high, grew amazing plants: flowers, a few vegetables and herbs. Several old, upright bed springs stood about the yard with Florida roses twining and snuggling in the coils.

The clash between Grandma and today's law would have been awesome, since she believed that every plant she liked needed to go home with her, regardless of where she found it. Many afternoons she shuffled down the dirt road in front of her Citra farm with a couple of croker sacks and a broken handled shovel. She returned with a heavy sack which thumped beside the back step as she walked in for a bathroom break and a glass of sweet tea. Afterward, she tucked her plants into the containers one of her sons had filled with manure and straw from the stalls in the barn and set wherever she wanted it. She cooed and fussed over every one, giving it support and advice as she set them in, patted the soil and



Bessie Mae and Curtis Dunbar
Citra, FL (circa 1955)
Photo courtesy of Jeri Baldwin

slushed water around them.

When I learned their names years later, she had transplanted Spider Wort, Milkweed, Liatrus, Brown-eyed Susans, Beauty Berry, Boston Fern, Cinnamon Fern, Coontie, Swamp Lily, Blue-eyed Grass, Yucca, Pawpaw, Ti-ti, Passion Flower, Turk's-cap, Cardinal Flower, Coral Honeysuckle, Wisteria, Lantana and many others that I cannot remember or can't find in my plant books. I haven't been able to identify them, but I think she also brought orchids home and coaxed them to grow on slabs and trees.

Grandma thrived on neighbors and friends loving her flowers. After just one or two admiring words, folks found themselves with a small pot, a cutting wrapped in a piece of wet rag, or a handful of cut flowers. Because she so generously gave away her plants, folks flooded her in return with plants, cuttings and bouquets. She delighted in every plant anyone took the time to bring

her or gave her when she went by their place.

She could tell you who brought every plant, what day, what time, what and who they had talked about when they came. She remembered what she gave from her garden and how the plant she had given fared. She took a dim view of people who let their plant gift languish or die.

Grandma took extreme advantage of what life had given her to enjoy a porch and yard which would be the envy of any modern gardener. She lived dirt poor, but rich beauty surrounded her because of the plant world she brought into her life. No worries about containers, she loved finding just the plant for whatever had worn out somewhere else. And as much as she loved her plants, she loved more visiting and talking with the folks who stopped to admire her plants or brought some of what they had.

My Grandma taught me many things in our lives together, some she meant for me to learn 'cause she wanted me to "be a good girl" and rained words onto my ears almost non-stop to encourage that. But Grandma taught me two concepts altogether unconsciously (Although it is entirely possible she did know). But just by watching and being chief helper, I learned that nothing was ever used up, that it could do one more thing. It was her job to figure out what use. She also taught me that no matter how much money you didn't have, loveliness waited everywhere. I've learned to hope that I can inspire as much beauty and neighborliness with my plants as my Grandma.

Receiving the *Rhexia* by Email

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Ocklawaha Rally

(Continued from page 1)

- demonstrating the economic impact of nature-based tourism on the local economy;
- dispelling the myth that this is a local issue and proving that the Ocklawaha River is an important resource for all Floridians;
- reinvigorating activists and thanking those who have fought this battle for decades;
- giving legislators the evidence of public support needed to fight this battle in Tallahassee and Washington;
- educating and motivating activists state-wide; and
- strengthening local supporters who have no representation in Tallahassee on this issue.

There's more information on this event at the FNPS website at <http://www.fnps.org/pages/homepage/home.php>. Reservations for field trips are required. We will gladly send you maps, calling cards, and other pertinent information.

We need a big crowd to make this work and are counting on the support of like-minded folks that are equally frustrated over the decades we've spent working on this issue.

Hope to hear from you soon!

For more information go to www.fladefenders.org/events or contact Karen Ahlers, Putnam County Environmental Council, (352) 546-3560 or PCECRiverRally@hotmail.com

Calling all Volunteers! The 6th Annual Great Air Potato Roundup

Don't be a couch potato! Join in the fun and come help protect our conservation land. On **January 29, 2005**, from 9 am – 1 pm, we are once again taking back Gainesville's Natural Areas. As part of Invasive Plant Awareness Week, **G.E.A.R. (Gainesville's Ecosystems At Risk)**, along with the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council and other sponsors, will present the 6th Annual Great Air Potato Round Up. Last year over 1,000 volunteers collected nearly 13 tons of air potatoes and other invasive plants from 25 natural areas and neighborhoods. The event is modeled after popular litter clean-up efforts, but instead of trash, participants pick up tubers of the invasive air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*).

Participants will receive a **FREE T-shirt** for their efforts. Following the round up, a celebration festival will be held at **MORNINGSIDE NATURE CENTER** with food, live entertainment, guest speakers, and a drawing for **great prizes**. Awards will be given for the largest and the most unusual potato.

Invasive plants pose a serious threat to Florida's natural communities. Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (www.fleppc.org) estimates that invasive plants are second only to development in their impact natural areas. We are fighting for the survival of Florida's natural areas, and we need the commitment of concerned people like you to succeed. Please pencil this event in your calendar today and round up as many friends as possible. A few hours of your time on one day of the year can make a significant impact in restoring Gainesville's natural areas. Can we count on you or your organization to make the difference? Contact Nature Operations for more information or to pre-register.

Phone: 334-2231 Email: parksgr@ci.gainesville.fl.us

~ Visit our website for information about our T-Shirt design contest! ~

November Plant ID Report

by Paul Cohen

Hairy indigo (*Indigofera hirsuta* Linnaeus) grows in pastures and disturbed sites throughout the southeast and Puerto Rico. Native to northern Australia, southern Asia, Africa, and Madagascar, its introduction to the American South is uncertain - perhaps intentional, a plant for the indigo dye industry, or just an incidental traveler with the slave trade.

Farmers and ranchers found the plant useful for plowing under with the legume to improve soil for crops like melons and strawberries. Cattle gained more weight when it was part of their forage. Now hairy indigo is a distained, nuisance plant.

Nomenclature based on Richard Wunderlin and Bruce Hansen's "Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, Second Edition" (2003).

Plant ID Workshops are held from 6:30-7:30 prior to the regular monthly meeting. Thanks to all who participate.

Native Plants Identified

<i>Chamaesyce hirta</i>	Pillpod Sandmat	Euphorbiaceae
<i>Chamaesyce maculata</i>	Spotted Sandmat	Euphorbiaceae
<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	Cuban Jute, Indian Hemp	Malvaceae
<i>Paspalum setaceum</i>	Thin Paspalum	Poaceae

Non-native Plants Identified

<i>Murdania nudiflora</i>	Nakedstem Dewflower	Commelinaceae
<i>Phyllanthus tenellus</i>	Mascarene Island Leafflower	Euphorbiaceae
<i>Phyllanthus urinaria</i>	Chamber Bitter	Euphorbiaceae
<i>Indigofera hirsuta</i>	Hairy indigo	Fabaceae
<i>Indigofera spicata</i>	Trailing Indigo	Fabaceae
<i>Desmodium incanum</i>	Zarabacoa Comun	Fabiaceae
<i>Desmodium triflorum</i>	Threeflower Ticktrefoil	Fabiaceae
<i>Eleusine indica</i>	Indian Goosegrass	Poaceae
<i>Urocloua ramosa</i>	Dixie Signalgrass	Poaceae
<i>Portulaca amillis</i>	Paraguayan Purslane	Portulacaceae
<i>Oldenlandia corymbosa</i>	Flattop Mille Graines	Rubiaceae

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Monthly Meetings

Regular monthly meetings are held the 2nd Tuesdays of September – November and January – May at the Doyle Conner Building, 1911 SW 34 Street, Gainesville at 7:30pm
 Plant ID Workshop precedes each meeting at 6:30pm

- Jan 25, 2004 Reid Tillery – Surviving the Wilds of Florida
- Feb 8, 2005 David Conser – Managing Small Properties for Wildlife
- March 8
- April 12
- May 10

2005 Field Trips

- Jan 15, 2004 Ardisia Removal Day at Dudley Farm State Park
- February 19-21 Weekend to Rally for the Ocklawaha
- March 12 – Oleno State Park
- April 16 – Camp Kalaqua
- May 14 - TBA

The *Rhexia* is published monthly September-November and January-May by the Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.



Carphophorus corymbosus
 Photo by Karen Ahlers

Florida Native Plant Society Membership Form

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