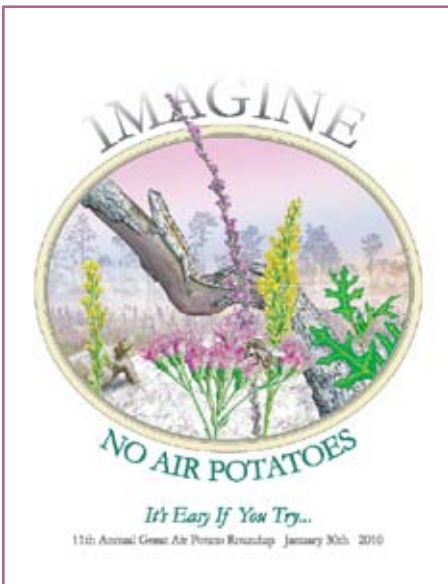


Imagine No Air Potatoes!



Imagine no air potatoes... It's easy if you try! And with the help of hundreds of volunteers during the 11th Annual Great Air Potato Roundup Gainesville's natural areas will be closer to being air potato free. During the Air Potato Roundup on January 30, 2010, which is modeled after a litter clean up, volunteers will

be dispersed throughout Gainesville to pick up air potatoes and other invasive, exotic plants that threaten biodiversity. Air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*), native to Asia and Africa, is a vine that jeopardizes Florida's natural communities by engulfing native vegetation. The rapidly growing vine produces aerial tubers (hence the common name "air potato") that fall to the ground in the late fall and winter and produce new vines that sprout in the spring.

Because air potato is extremely invasive and difficult to eradicate, the city's Nature Operations Division of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs has over the past ten years called upon the community to help eliminate it. This call has been met with great glee and gusto; volunteers have removed over 152,937 pounds of tubers from natural areas! In addition to volunteers, community sponsors such as the

Payne's Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council help make this event possible.

Pre-registration for this event is required. Volunteers are assigned to various sites to gather air potatoes on January 30 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. At 11 a.m., volunteers head back to Citizens Park (located in the 1100 block of NE 14th Street in Gainesville) to enjoy food, music, and pick up t-shirts and prizes. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

To register or for more information about the Great Air Potato Roundup go to www.natureoperations.org. If you don't find what you need on the Nature Operations website, please call 352-334-3326

Monthly Meeting & Field Trip Info

Meeting: January 19, "Wildflower Research at the University of Florida," Dr. Hector Perez, see page 4.

Field Trip: Saturday, January 23, Prairie Creek Preserve, see page 4.

Rhexia Article Submissions

Please! Submit unformatted word documents only. Submit pictures as separate jpg, tiff, or pdf files. Send all article submissions to:
rhexia@gmail.com

Deadline date for February newsletter submissions is January 25th.

Rounding Up Invasives in my Backyard

By Bern Holthuis

On a pleasantly chilly Saturday afternoon, I squat in a patch of arrowhead vine (*Syngonium podophyllum*) on our backyard slope, pulling up the plants and throwing them in a large plastic tub. It's satisfying work, watching the patch of plants shrink and my tub fill. And peaceful, being a bit away from the house and noisy activity therein. As far as chores go, removing invasive plants is a pretty enjoyable one.

Our backyard is part of a hill known locally as "Dead Man's Drop" (truly a case of topography-deprived Floridians making mountains out of molehills). Our portion of the drop comprises less than ¼ of an acre, but supports a native flora of at least 24 tree species, a few shrub species, and several species of vine and perennial herb. The number of tree species is especially striking to me now, having spent last summer on the coast of Washington State. While there, I frequently referred to *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast* (by Pojar and Mackinnon, eds., 1994), a guide covering 17 degrees of latitude (from south-central Alaska to central Oregon) and altitudes from sea level to over 14,000 feet. The number of trees in this volume? Twenty-three species (note: the book is effectively comprehensive for native trees). And we've got 24 in our backyard here. Topography-deprived, yes, but we make up for it in tree diversity...

With the exception of a Christmas tree (red cedar: *Juniperus virginiana*) that we released back there, we've planted nothing on our hill. The trees were all there when we moved in eight years ago, though the small ones were thin, scraggly, and overgrown; the native understory was effectively non-existent. Since we've moved in, the small trees have filled out and grown and numerous understory plants have become established – with a bit of encouragement from us in the form of exotic plant removal.

Because co-existing on the hill with all those native plants was an abundance of non-natives, including at least 14 invasive species.



Twelve of these were category 1 invasives, "altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives" (Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council): we've had the infamous air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) and coral ardisia (*Ardisia crenata*) as well as species that

have received less press: arrowhead vine, Mexican petunia (*Ruellia brittoniana*), and glossy privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*). And we've had a few exotics, such as English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Glorybower (*Clerodendrum bungei*) that, though not officially recognized as invasive in Florida, have nevertheless been troublesome in our yard.

My husband Gustav and I have worked fervently (albeit highly sporadically) at removing the non-natives on the hill. We've successfully eliminated most individuals of several species, and have been rewarded with the appearance and/or expansion of a number of natives in response. With the playground bullies out of the way, the mild-mannered kids have come out of hiding and asserted themselves.



Thus, where a patch of heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) stood is now a tall stand of strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*). And a year after I cleared out an area of coral ardisia, a small Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) emerged; with occasional monitoring of the site, it has expanded to a meter in diameter. I spent some time eradicating most of our small-leaf spiderwort (*Tradescantia fluminensis*), and now have an extensive spread of southern shield fern (*Thelypteris kunthii*) in its place.

The trees have also benefited from our efforts. Our removal of Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) and English Ivy revealed a number of seemingly struggling trees beneath the vines. And when we cut down (and cut down, and cut down again) the glossy privet and lantana (*Lantana camara*) bushes, we found more small trees half-buried in their midst. Finally, we removed the largest invasives – mainly flamegold (a.k.a. golden rain: *Koeleruteria elegans ssp. formosana*) trees – letting the sun shine down on the smaller natives. The latter – stiff cornel dogwood (*Cornus foemina*), rusty viburnum (*Viburnum rufidulum*), winged elm (*Ulmus alata*), and others have responded by filling out and growing tremendously in the years since.


The task is never entirely over, though, as exotic plants periodically reappear. The arrowhead vine has proven to be our

continued on page 3

most persistent invasive: half a year after I've eradicated it from an area, digging down to remove (as far as I can tell) every last cell of the plant, it emerges again to blanket the place. Under different circumstances (say, I was living in Costa Rica where the vine is native), I could admire its tenacious ability to survive our repeated assaults.

For the most part, though, with very infrequent monitoring, we can keep the exotics under some semblance of control; even the arrowhead vine patches are becoming less dense with

each re-appearance. And in any case, I enjoy the occasional afternoons spent pulling out weeds on our hill.

As my bemused neighbors watched me through their window, I imagined their conversation: "Look at 'er now; she's pulling out all of that beautiful ground cover. And geez, she's gone after the big bush again; every time it starts to look good, she hacks it down to the ground. And what the heck? Now, she's ring-barking the rain tree!" (Actually, I only do the ring-barking when I'm sure no one is looking...) 

Rally For the Rivers, 2010

By Karen Ahlers, President of the Putnam County Environmental Council, Inc.



The Putnam County Environmental Council invites you to show you care about Florida's rivers, lakes, and springs by coming to the Rally for the Rivers Valentine's Day weekend, February 12 to 14, 2010. The Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society will be a rally financial sponsor and also provide an educational booth and tree sale on Saturday, February 13 at Riverfront Park in Palatka.

Friday, February 12: Participate in a workshop and learn the latest information about current water policy, scientific updates on the rivers, and information about plans for diverting water from northern Florida rivers to serve unsustainable urban areas to the south. Location: Quality Inn Riverfront in Palatka.

Saturday, February 13: An all-day celebration on the banks of the St. Johns at Palatka's Riverfront Park with music by outstanding Florida folk musicians; presentations from the Florida Storytelling Association and Florida authors and artists, and the Florida Heritage Experience; conservation workshops, activities, and displays; native plant sale; free rides on the river with St. Johns Riverkeeper Neil Armingeon;


great food from Blue Water Bay; and an evening fundraising dinner and concert.

Saturday will also provide an opportunity for you to get ready for the Florida Springs Rally in Tallahassee on February 16. You can sign up to take action by writing a letter, making a sign, or contacting your legislator—all ways to participate even if you can't go to Tallahassee. You will also be able to participate in "Hands Across the Sands," a state-wide demonstration to show opposition to off-shore oil drilling.

Sunday, February 14: Celebrate the Ocklawaha at Rodman Dam. Paddling workshops and field trips, hikes, cultural and historic displays, free rides on the river, food, music, and more!



Rodman Dam on the Ocklawaha River, Google Earth

The PCEC has reserved a block of rooms at the Quality Inn Riverfront in Palatka for this event. Call 386-328-4686 for reservations. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for fun that makes a difference! Watch for more information coming soon to www.pcecweb.org! 

2010 Calendar of Events


Please check the Paynes Prairie chapter page at www.FNPS.org for most current information and directions to field trips. All 2008 meetings will be held at the United Church of Gainesville, 1624 NW 5th Ave, Gainesville, 7:00-8:30pm. The plant ID workshop prior to the meeting begins at 6:15.

January 19	Meeting: "Wildflower Research at the University of Florida," Dr. Hector Perez
January 23	Field Trip to Prairie Creek Preserve
January 30	Air Potato Roundup, City of Gainesville
February 2	Chapter Board and Planning Meeting, Environmental Hort Dept. Greenhouses, UF Campus, 5:30pm
February 16	Meeting: TBA
February 20	Field Trip to Tallahassee
March 16	Meeting: TBA
March 20	Long Leaf Flatwoods Reserve
April 16-17	Spring Native Plant Sale, Morningside Nature Center
April 20	Meeting: TBA
April 24	Field Trip to Tusawilla Prairie - tentative
May 4	Chapter Board and Planning Meeting, Environmental Hort Dept Greenhouses, UF Campus, 5:30pm
May 18	Meeting: TBA
May 22	Field Trip Prairie Creek Ranch – tentative
May 20-23	FNPS State Conference, Tallahassee, FL

January 19, 2010 Chapter Meeting Speaker Information: "Wildflower Research at the University of Florida," Dr Hector Perez, Environmental Horticulture Dept., UF


Hector Perez and his wife Kelly attend many FNPS meetings and serve efforts for Florida conservation and sustainable landscaping with talks and papers presented statewide. Dr Perez teaches Plant Propagation; Environmental Plant Identification and Use; and is co-developing a graduate level course in Plant Materials for Conservation and Restoration. Hector is one of the founding members of the Plant Restoration and Conservation Horticulture (PRCH) research consortium who work collaboratively to research the

applications of horticultural technologies to conserve and restore plant diversity in ecosystems.

The Florida Wildflower Foundation has awarded Dr. Perez 3 grants involving wildflowers. The grants cover propagation, production and landscape evaluation of native wildflowers in west, central and south Florida and also the development of an education wildflower meadow and research plots on the University of Florida campus. Please join us January 19 to hear about these exciting programs. 

Saturday, January 23, 2010 Field Trip Information: Alachua Conservation Trust's Prairie Creek Preserve

This will be a walking tour beginning at 9:00 a.m. that could cover as much as 3 miles if the group is inclined and should take about 2 1/2 - 3 hours. We will tour a pine flatwoods restoration area, Prairie Creek, as well as four wetland community types: Floodplain swamp, bottomland hardwood forest, pond cypress dome swamp, and a few examples of depression marshes. Long pants and rubber boots/old tennis shoes are the recommended attire. The meeting location is a grass parking lot next to the Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail at the corner of County Road 234 and County road 2082 in Rochelle.

Directions: From Downtown Gainesville, drive east on University Ave. and then SR 20 (Hawthorne Rd) for 6 miles, pass Powers Park County Boat Ramp on your left and over Prairie Creek. Look for green "ROCHELLE" sign and take a right onto County Road 2082. Parking area mentioned above is one mile down on the right at the intersection with CR 234. For questions, contact Ivor Kincaide 377-6253. 

Roundup Site Leaders Needed

Be a Site Leader at the 11th Annual Great Air Potato Roundup and join in the fun while helping to protect our conservation lands. On Saturday, January 30th 2010, more than a thousand volunteers will be removing air potato and other invasive exotic plants from natural areas throughout Gainesville. We need site leaders at each site to introduce volunteers to invasive plants and their impacts on natural areas. Site Leaders serve a key role in getting the message out to the public about non-native invasive plants. Just one Saturday morning can help make a difference for Gainesville's natural areas! To sign up as a Site Leader or for more information, contact the Nature Operations Division at 352-334-2227.

Upcoming Events of Interest

Santa Fe Audubon Society's Upcoming Events

- January 16-17, MLKing Weekend – Overnight trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. See thousands of ducks, shorebirds, and wading birds in this spectacular refuge near Cape Canaveral. Call Jim Swarr at: 352-475-1999 for more information.
- January 30, Sat. – Yesterday's Festival, Gold Head Branch State Park
- February 6, Sat. – Field trip to Paynes Prairie. Meet at Melrose Historic Park, 7:30 a.m. to carpool. Jan and Bill Bolte, Leaders.
- February 12-14, Friday through Sunday -- The Putnam County Environmental Council's Rally for the Rivers
- Saturday, Feb. 20 – Birding field trip at Santa Fe Swamp, then tour and lunch at the Teaching Farm, Hampton (FL Coalition for Peace & Justice). Meet in parking lot at McDonald's, Hitchcock Plaza, Hwy. 100, at 7:45 a.m. For more info, call Joyce King, 352-475-1999, or sjoyceking@comcast.net.
- Saturday, Feb. 27 – Birding field trip to Caravelle Ranch. Plans are tentative; call Joyce King for update after Feb. 1.
- Tuesday, March 2 – Annual Meeting and election of Officers/Directors. Join us to celebrate our 1st Anniversary. Special speaker and events to be announced.

For more information on any of these events, please contact Joyce King at: 352-475-1999/sjoyceking@comcast.net



FNPS Chapter Board Meeting Tuesday, February 2, 5:30-7:30pm

Environmental Horticulture Dept greenhouse complex (behind Fifield Hall), Hull Rd, UF Campus. All FNPS members are invited to join current officers and Board members to help plan upcoming programs and field trips. Your comments are also welcome by emailing any officer. For directions call Claudia at 352.846.1070 Pizza will be provided!

Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

See our Web page at: www.fnps.org



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

The Rhexia is published monthly
September - November and January - May.

2010 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President

Brian Quinn/386-454-4340/bpatquinn@hotmail.com

Vice President

Paula Russo/352-495-5611/Prusso52@netzero.com

Secretary

Erick Smith/352-380-0648/urbanforester@gmail.com

Treasurer

Joe Durando/386-462-5455

Chapter Representative

Heather Blake/352-225-1381/butterflygirlh@yahoo.com

Membership

Goldie Schwartz /352-495-3983/afn49@mindspring.com

Field Trip Coordinator

Ivor Kincaid/352-377-6253/eyevor@gmail.com

Newsletter

Mary Santello/352-378-3098/santellom@gmail.com
Eleanor K. Sommer/eksommer@bellsouth.net

Plant Rescue

J. Barichivich/352-375-1972/jamie_barichivich@usgs.gov

Publicity & Media

Vacant position

Director

Debbie DeLoach/debbiedeloach@cox.net

Director

Ellen Thoms/352-333-3814/emthoms@dow.com

Director

Eleanor K. Sommer/eksommer@bellsouth.net

Director

Claudia Larsen/352-466-3880/micanopywildflowers@yahoo.com

Director

Jill McGuire/352-475-1567/mikejillmcguire@earthlink.net

Plant ID

Paul Cohen/paulcohen2002@yahoo.com

Views From Your Garden

Purple Coneflower, Red Tropical Sage, Elliott's Lovegrass, Pigeon Pea, St John's Wort, St Andrew's Cross.



Black-eyed Susan, Blanket Flower, Tropical Sage, Spotted Bee Balm framed by Mulhy Grass, Elliott's Bblueberry, Carolina Buckthorn, Red Mulberry, Tough Bumellia, Rusty Blackhaw, Black Cherry.



Redbud and Dogwood trees, native Wisteria vine, Narrow-leaf Sunflower with Pigeon Pea in the background.



Submitted by Sandi Saurers
Newberry, Florida
2009

Views From Your Garden, continued



Rud lanciniata at the USDA garden.
Submitted by Brian Quinn



Wisteria at Harn Museum patio.
Submitted by Claudia Larsen



Advertisements are now being accepted for the Rhexia newsletter!
If you would like to support the Paynes Prairie chapter please send a business card size ad to Erick Smith at urbanforester@gmail.com.
The ads cost \$100 and run from October 2009 to September 2010.



Micanopy Wildflowers

Wholesale and contract growing of perennial wildflowers for landscape and restoration sites

Open by Appointment April-September
Claudia Larsen 352-466-3880
micanopywildflowers@yahoo.com



Kestrel Ecological Services, LLC

- Invasive/exotic plant surveys & control
- Native plant restoration
- Tree surveys & hazard tree evaluation
- Biological inventories
- Residential and Commercial

Erick D. Smith
urbanforester@gmail.com
(352) 380-0648
Certified Arborist FL 5376A

Michael Meisenburg
ecomike@ufl.edu
(352) 339-0701

We are State Licensed Commercial Herbicide Applicators with Natural Areas Weed Management/Aquatic Weed Control Certifications


PAIS LANDSCAPES

*Florida Native Horticulture
Design and Consulting
Landscape Contracting
Ecological Restorations*

Post Office Box 14933
Gainesville, FL 32604

John David Pais
ISA Certified Arborist
FL Certified Landscape Designer
FL Certified Landscape Contractor
FL Native Plant Specialist

352-395-7289 Office
352-215-5452 Cell
352-475-37 Fax
jdpais@earthlink.net
www.paislandscapes.com



**Compliments of
Chiappini Farm Native Nursery
David and Marilyn Chiappini**

Hart's Nursery
Native, Wildlife, & Blooming Plants

Come visit us at the
Alachua County Farmer's Market
441 North - Stall #6
Saturdays from 8:30 - Noon
(386) 462-2752



Greg and Linda Hart



The Otlier Shop, Inc.

House Carpentry * Painting * Woodworking
Jill & Mike McGuire
P.O. Box 1206, Melrose, FL. 32666 USA
Phone: (352) 475-1567 Cell: (352) 219-5779

Florida Native Plant Society
Paynes Prairie Chapter
Post Office Box 110670
Gainesville, FL 32611

Next Meeting
Tuesday, January 19th
7:00 p.m.
(Plant ID Workshop at 6:15)
United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave.
Gainesville, FL

FNPS Paynes Prairie Chapter Meetings
are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month
September - November and January - May
7:00 p.m., The United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave., Gainesville
Plant ID workshops precede each meeting
and start at 6:15 p.m.

Florida Native Plant Society Membership Form

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____ County: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
Business Name: _____
Total: ____ Check Enclosed: ____ Please charge my credit card ____
(VISA/MasterCard only) Card type and #: _____
Exp. Date: _____ Name on Credit Card: _____

- Check Pertinent Category:
- Individual \$35
 - Family or Household \$50
 - Contributing \$75
 - Not-For-Profit Org. \$50
 - Business or Corporate \$125
 - Supporting \$100
 - Donor \$250
 - Library \$15
 - Student (full-time) \$15

Please mail completed form to: Florida Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32802-0278

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendations by the state.