

Monthly Chapter Meeting and Field Trip Information

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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

Submission deadline date for the March/April 2011 newsletter is February 26, 2011

Message from the New VP of Paynes Prairie Chapter, Joni Ellis

It's cold as I write this, I realize winter has settled in - finally. It wasn't that long ago I remember sweltering in the summer heat as I installed an acre of fence to protect our garden from deer and our chickens from predators. Balancing anthropomorphic uses of the land with the needs of wildlife, preserving native plants, and protecting the quality of our water is an ongoing challenge. My husband and I have set aside 15 of our 20 acres for wildlife habitat. We are attempting to restore 11 acres back to longleaf pine. The remaining 4 acres are hammock with creek and wetlands that we are attempting to rescue from invasive exotics. (A special thank you to Kestrel Ecological Services for their relentless work in this area.) In concert with our neighbors, we are working towards restoration of nearly 500 acres in southeast Gainesville! Pretty impressive, eh? Studies have shown that by working together we can accomplish more than by working individually.

Therefore, I want to introduce you to an idea that may, at first glance, seem overwhelming. I believe that Alachua County is one of the most environmentally aware counties in Florida. We have set the standard in many areas. We have used the creative energy of our alternative community to do miraculous things for the environment. I believe we can develop a long-range plan to identify all the native habitats across the county and encourage people to restore them one property at a time. Whew, there I said it.

To illustrate this vision, please visit [\[gionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/default.asp\]\(http://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/default.asp\) and enter a South Florida zip code such as 33169. The site tool called Natives for Your Neighborhood will present all the habitats that occur in that zip code, and when you click on the habitat you have you can see the appropriate plants for that habitat. Hence, a list of plants to take to your native plant sale and begin restoring your property to the appropriate habitat. Of course, we also have to invite our neighbors to go to the plant sale and do the same thing. I believe that if we can expand the Natives for Your Neighborhood tool of the Institute for Regional Conservation, we, too, can restore massive amounts of habitat. I have been in touch with the state NPS board and we will be looking for grants this year that will help us take steps towards this goal.](http://re-</p></div>
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If you have access to grant opportunities, please be on the lookout and forward me any opportunities that might fit.

As the new VP on the Paynes Prairie Native Plant Society board, I want to involve the membership in making a big difference in our community. What would you like to see your chapter doing? Let me know what topics would bring you out to a meeting. What field trips would get you up early on a Saturday morning? Are you willing to ask one person to become a new member of our organization? I want to hear from you, our membership. Email me at Joni@OpticsfortheTropics.org and let me know what you want from your organization.

Joni Ellis

Elderberry Rescue Remedy

Eleanor K. Sommer

'Tis the season to be under-the-weather. Even here in sunny Florida, we succumb to winter colds (brought to us from our northern neighbors, so we claim). This is also the time of year our tummies can churn with stress and anxiety or from just eating too much of all the delicious but rich foods available.

Among the abundant herbal remedies for winter challenges, some can be found right in our local habitats. Elder (*Sambucus nigra*, *subsp. canadensis*) though not as prolific this year as past, produces late summer, early fall berries that can be made into a traditional cold and sore throat remedy. The berries and the flowers of the plant are useful, although many parts are also toxic (stay away from the leaves, stems, and roots). The versatile berries can be used to make wine, cordials, jelly, jam, cough syrups, or pie, and the fresh flowers can be baked into pancakes, muffins, fritters and also made into tea or elderflower wine or "champagne." Dried elder flower tea is excellent for astringing runny sinuses, lowering temperatures (sipped cool) or as a diaphoretic when sipped warm. But you would have had to have picked and dried the flowers this summer. So make plans for next year.

You might still find some elderberries on the trees/bushes—that is, if the animals have not gotten to them first. Elderberries are high in vitamins A and C and contain a variety of minerals including calcium, phosphorus, and potassium, and traces of iron, B vitamins, and protein. Elderberry makes an effective cough syrup, is anti-viral, and can reduce fevers. To make your own elderberry syrup, pick the fruits when they are black/blue. (Never use the unripe green berries and do not use red ones, which are from a different and non-native species).



<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu>



European folklore tells us that elder is a sacred tree, probably because the more robust European species were used for everything from fibers and furniture to food and medicines. Some traditional herbalists prefer to follow the custom of asking elder for permission before harvesting, cutting, or using the tree in anyway.

Here's a recipe for making a cordial, which works just as well as a syrup, only keep in mind that it is high in alcohol, so you may want to water it down to give to children. Or alternately just mash the berries and simmer with a bit sugar, then strain and preserve with a bit of alcohol and keep refrigerated.

Elderberry Cordial

1 cup fresh (or dried and rehydrated) elderberries
2 cups (or enough to cover berries) vodka or brandy
lemon or orange peel (avoid the white part, it makes the cordial bitter), cinnamon stick broken up, and a few cloves
1 cup sugar (for second step)
1/2 cup water (for second step)

1. Let mixture sit for 6–8 weeks. Check to be sure berries are covered. If not, top off with vodka or brandy.

2. Strain through cheesecloth, squeeze out all the juice, and compost mark (berry residue). Make sugar water by dissolving 2 parts sugar in one part hot water. Add to strained elderberry infusion and let sit for 6 weeks. Bottle and store in a cool, dark place.

A Garden Intern at Kanapaha

Chelsea Proia

Interning this fall at the native plant garden in Gainesville's Kanapaha Park was a really neat and valuable experience for me. I always love an opportunity to get my hands dirty and participate in a real life project outside of school, giving me the chance to apply and expand on knowledge gained from my classes. This particular venture was especially cool for me because it allowed me a chance to work with native plants, which goes along with my desire to advocate efficient and sustainable landscape choices.

I'd say that the biggest job I completed at the garden was removing the copious overgrowth of *Bidens alba*, a feat that took longer than expected but was also way more enjoyable for me than it probably should have been. Pulling them all out was a very meditative experience, the repetitive motions giving me ample time to contemplate or, conversely, to shut my brain off completely and just relax and enjoy my surroundings. Moreover, I got a huge kick out of seeing my progress at the end of each *Bidens*-pulling session. By the time I was done removing all of those, I felt as if the garden had literally materialized in front of my eyes, no longer hidden by these monstrously tall, and annoyingly sticky, masses of plant material. I also loved snap-

ping off the tops of the pokeweed, another very satisfying task.

Working in the garden also gave me the chance to connect with nature, which is my favorite thing to do. Not only did I work with some cool plants, but I also got to observe some pretty neat wildlife. The coolest thing I saw was a wasp and spider fight where the wasp killed the relatively large spider, dragged it about 20 feet across the ground, and then scared away a lizard several times its size. I also saw many adorable little birds flying in and out of the trees and shrubs, searching around for any berries still on the plants.

One of the things I learned from this experience is that being prudent is being thorough. I needed to resist the urge to pull out a questionable plant a few times until I found out if it actually should be removed. I learned many other things too, but

what was even cooler to me was bringing a couple of my friends who aren't plant people out there to show them what I was doing. In doing that, I exposed them to a native plant garden and got them thinking about stuff they normally wouldn't have even considered, such as prop-

er plant choices and environmental impacts thereof. My hope is that more people see this beautiful little place and get inspired to plant natives.



<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu>

Spring 2011 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 18	Meeting: "The Effects of Landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrel" Karl Miller, Ph.D., presenter
January 29	Volunteer for The Great Air Potato Roundup Day
February 1 February 15	Chapter Planning Meeting Meeting: Water Resources Panel Discussion
February 18-20	Support Rally for the Rivers, Palatka
March 15 March 19	Meeting, TBA Field Trip, TBA
April 8-9	Spring Native Plant Sale, Morningside Nature Center
April 19 April 23	Meeting, TBA Field Trip, TBA
May 3 May 17 May 19-22	Chapter Planning Meeting Meeting, TBA FNPS State Conference, Maitland, FL (www.FNPS.org)

The 2011 Great Air Potato Roundup

Join in the fun and come help protect our conservation lands! You must register to participate. Registration starts on December 1st, for the 12th Annual Air Potato Roundup. On Saturday, January 29th 2011, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, join more than a thousand volunteers that will be taking back Gainesville's natural areas.

Following the roundup, a celebration festival will be held at Morningside Nature Center located at 3540 E. University Ave. until 1:00 PM, with food, live entertainment, guest speakers, and a drawing for great prizes.



To register please visit www.natureoperations.org or contact 352-334-3326.

AND, please volunteer to be a Site Leader at the 12th Annual Great Air Potato Roundup. Join in the fun while helping to protect our conservation lands! Lend your help in plant identification to the volunteers who will be removing air potatoes and other invasive exotic plants from natural areas throughout Gainesville. Site Leaders are needed at each location 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.



February 1 – Chapter Planning Meeting

Time: 5:30-7pm

Place: Greenhouse complex behind Fifield Hall on Hull Rd, Env Hort Dept, UF

Do you have an idea for a speaker or field trip destination? Please join the new board of directors to help fill our calendar or contact any of them with your suggestions. Our new officers are listed in the Rhexia. A sincere thank you to all outgoing members whose contributions have helped us with an educational and fun year in 2010, and especially our crusty but lovable ex-president Brian Quinn whose dedication to our group and love for native plants will prevail even after his term as an officer.

(p.s. We are still looking for a new president who will conduct program and planning meetings and serve as contact person for the chapter. If interested contact Claudia at micanopywildflowers@yahoo.com)



Karl Milller, Ph.D. to Speak About "The Effects of Landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrel" at the January 18, 2011 Meeting

Karl Miller, Ph.D. an Upland Nongame Bird Leader with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, will present information on the effects of landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrels. Why they are declining, where they occur in Florida, statewide monitoring, and research about their habitat needs at the local and landscape levels. Hope to see you there!

February 15 Chapter Meeting: Water Resources Panel Discussion

Join us for a community discussion about North Florida's critically endangered water resources. Senior Hydrologist Carlos Herd from the Suwannee River Water Management District will begin by showing the short film, "*Springs Heartland*", by the legendary Wes Skiles, then give an overview of some of the current issues relating to water supply planning in this time of drought and aquifer drawdowns.

Following will be a panel discussion by area activists who have been working to understand and protect this most basic and precious of our natural resources. The harm caused by over-pumping our groundwater has become steadily more evident as seen in reduced flows in our springs and rivers and in disappearing lakes, while "Priority Water Resource Caution Areas" continue to expand. There will be time for a question and answer period at the end, and suggestions on how we all can get involved in advocating for sustainable and sensible water policy.

Please join us!



Save the Date! February 18-20, 2011 Rally for the Rivers

Sponsored by Putnam County Environmental Council, this the 5th Rally for the Rivers, a most important event that aims to focus attention on the state of our local rivers, streams, and springs, and calls state and local lawmakers to action on legislation to preserve our resources.

Come join us and know that your commitment to Florida's natural resources, assistance in promotion, and attendance at this event helps build its credibility and makes the Rally one of Florida's best known environmental events, attended each year by thousands.

Florida's folk music and conservation communities have taken our message across the entire state. The public comes for the great entertainment and in the process is educated and informed, helping to spread our message to more than just our choir.

This 5th Rally will be held at Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka all three days. Plan to enjoy speakers, field trips, food, and lots of fun at the 2011 River Rally. For details visit www.pcecweb.org

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.

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Upcoming Events and Items of Interest

Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour, Alachua Audubon Society, Inc February 26, 2011 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Interested in making your yard more attractive to birds and other wildlife? The Alachua Audubon Society invites you to take a self-guided tour of several local yards that are wildlife havens. Tickets are \$10 per person and will be available for purchase beginning February 1st at Wild Birds Unlimited. Ticket holders will receive addresses and maps to each location at the time of purchase.

Each yard has unique features to attract a variety of birds and other wildlife such as possible wintering hummingbirds, orioles, finches, wintering sparrows, and other unexpected winged visitors, as well as our year-round residents. You will be inspired to maintain your own yard or green space for wildlife, whether it is one birdfeeder, one nest box, one wildflower bed, one garden path, or one natural area.

Make a difference for wildlife, one yard at a time! Join us for our first annual Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour and

fundraiser to benefit Alachua Audubon Society at <http://AlachuaAudubon.org>

For more information contact: Ron Robinson 352-322-4867

INFORMATION FOR DAY OF TOUR

- * Please wear or show wrist band for admission to yards.
- * Please do not block driveways.
- * Please walk only in designated areas.
- * Less noise and motion in the bird feeding areas will result in more wildlife viewing.
- * Sorry no public restrooms will be available.
- * Additional tickets may be purchased on the day of the tour at sales locations. Exact cash or check payable to Alachua Audubon Society needed.
- * Rain or shine. Dress for weather. Bring binoculars.
- * Self-tour may be conducted in any order.



Plant ID Workshop for November 2010

Paul Cohen

<i>Ageratina jucunda</i>	Hammock Snakeroot	Asteraceae	Native
<i>Amanita vaginata</i> ????	Grisette	Amanitaceae	Native???
<i>Apios americana</i>	Groundnut	Fabaceae	Native
<i>Aster elliotii</i>	Elliott's Aster	Asteraceae	Native
<i>Bidens laevis</i>	Burrmarigold, Smooth Beggarticks	Asteraceae	Native
<i>Helianthus simulans</i>	Muck Sunflower	Asteraceae	Non-native
<i>Poinsettia heterophylla</i> *	Fiddler's Spurge, Mexican Fireplant	Euphorbiaceae	Non-native?
<i>Rhodocybe nitellina</i> ???	none	Entolomataceae	Native???

*Dr. Dan Ward feels that *Poinsettia heterophylla* is non-native since it was unobserved in Florida prior to 1940. Wunderlin, R. P., and B. F. Hansen. 2008. Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants (<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu/>) feel that *P. heterophylla* is a native and maintain that in the most recent version of their website. Through personal observation *P. heterophylla* seems to be invasive. Taxonomy for *Amanita vaginata* was obtained from "Wikipedia" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amanita_vaginata) and that of *Rhodocybe nitellina* was obtained from the online version of the "Encyclopedia of Life" (<http://www.eol.org/pages/190044>).



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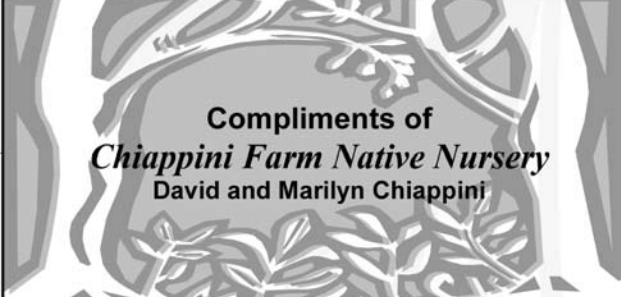
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There are two ways:
 you can receive the Rhexia digitally,
 or you can view the current issue at
<http://www.fnps.org/pages/chapters/chapterpg.php>.

To receive the digital version of the Rhexia, please contact Goldie Schwartz, who manages the member's list for our FNPS chapter, at
afn49@mindspring.com.

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 in .jpg, .tiff, or powerpoint formats only to Erick Smith at urbanforester@gmail.com. The ads cost \$100 and run from January to December 2011.

Have You Blogged Lately?

Remember to visit the new Florida Native Plant Society blog at <http://fnpsblog.blogspot.com/>

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

Next Meeting
Tuesday, January 18th
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

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 - 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.