



# The Rhexia

PAYNES PRAIRIE CHAPTER  
FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
MARCH 2011

## Monthly Chapter Meeting and Field Trip Information

**Chapter Meeting, March 15, 2011: Karl Miller, Ph.D. "The Effects of Landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrel"**  
See page 4.

**Field Trip, March 19, 2011: Santa Fe River Floodplain, Gilchrist County, with Leader Robert Freese.**  
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](mailto:rhexia@gmail.com)  
**Submission deadline date for the April 2011 newsletter is March 26, 2011**

## Message from the VP of Paynes Prairie Chapter Sun, Plants, Music, and Fun

March 20, the spring equinox, is a time of equal light and dark. It brings hope of new life in the form of spring gardens. In Annapolis, Maryland, the boating community celebrates the spring equinox with the Burning of the Socks festival. Traditionally, the boaters wear socks only during the winter. A lot like Florida! As a Leo, I am supposedly "ruled by the life-giving Sun, the heart of our solar system." The sun is a central force to our psychological and spiritual well-being. And spring just makes you want to get out and prepare those new planting beds for all the native plants you will be getting at the April Plant Sale!

Mark your calendars now, April 8 and 9 are the dates of the spring native plant sale at Morningside Nature Center. Friday April 8 is for members only. New members can sign up on site, so invite a neighbor to join you.

This year, we will be trying something new. We will have maps of the county with information about soil types and the plant com-

munities they support. With this information, you can plant ecosystem-appropriate plants in your landscape to restore a bit of habitat for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife that occurs in your area. We will also have books, t-shirts, and lots of information at the Paynes Prairie chapter booth. We've also invited a food vendor and some musicians to entertain and delight your senses.



Photo by Claudia Larsen

A special thanks to Howard and Lisa Jelks for their years of service in coordinating this event and all their new creative ideas to continue making this event a suc-

cess. Thanks also to the staff and volunteers of the Morningside Nature Center and the Friends of Morningside.

Get out and enjoy the spring season, create your own ritual, burn your socks, plant a garden, or eat some chickweed. Whatever helps you acknowledge the new season and enjoy life!

Joni Ellis

# Chickweed, *Stellaria media*: Naturalized, Not Native

Joni Ellis

Chickweed is one of the most prolific garden weeds throughout the world. You can identify it by its bright green, smooth, teardrop-shaped leaves which grow in pairs. The multi-branched, trailing stems usually run along the ground rather than growing upright. At night the leaves will close around the young shoots.

In bloom, chickweed produces white, star-shaped flowers, giving rise to names such as starwort, little star lady, and starweed. The flowers close at night or just before it rains.

Fresh chickweed is a good source of Vitamin C. It also contains mucilage,



saponins, silica, minerals, vitamins A and B, and fatty acids. It has a refreshing, slightly tart flavor and is excellent in salads.

The saponins provide relief from itching. Chickweed is particularly noted for its cooling qualities, and is especially soothing when applied to skin problems presenting as hot and itchy. It is thought to be useful on wounds to reduce scarring.

Chickweed is also soothing and healing to the digestive tract. Here is a great recipe for a pesto sauce made with Chickweed:

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

## Chickweed Pesto Recipe

### Ingredients

2 cloves garlic  
3/4 cup pine nuts (or walnuts)  
2 cups chickweed leaves  
1 cup basil leaves  
1/2 cup olive oil  
3/4 cup grated parmesan cheese

The trick to a good pesto is to make sure you blend the garlic first, then the nuts. Otherwise, you'll end up with big chunks that can't be reduced once you've added the other ingredients.

Pulse your garlic fine in a food processor. Add nuts and blend until they're finely chopped. Add remaining ingredients and process until smooth.

When you've got your desired consistency stir in a pinch of salt.

This can be frozen in smaller batches for future use.

**YUM!**



# MEMBER'S CORNER – MY 3 FAVORITE NATIVE PLANTS

Sandi Saurers

MY LOCATION: Newberry

HABITAT: Dry hammock with an even mix of sun and shade

PRIMARY INTEREST: Landscaping my yard for wildlife using native plants

1. Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) – this plant is tough, evergreen, no maintenance, and is useful to bees for nectar in the spring and to all sorts of birds for berries in the fall. Speaking of berries, this small tree or large shrub really comes into its glory in the fall and winter, when the female is covered by countless small red berries which are a delight to the eye while the branches are useful for making holiday decorations (if the birds don't find them first!)



2. Red Sage (*Salvia coccinea*) – another “PEF” choice (plant, establish and forget) that thrives on neglect. This hummingbird and butterfly magnet starts blooming in the spring, flowers continually through the summer, and is still going strong in the fall right up until the first freeze. It is the last plant in my



yard to show heat stress in the summer, and needs no supplemental watering, fertilizing or pruning to look its best.

3. Flatwoods Plum (*Prunus umbellata*) – talk about 3 season interest: this small tree is one of the first to bloom in the spring, with the small white flowers emerging before the leaves, clothing it in a cloud of white. The blooms are irresistible to bees, and I enjoy hearing the buzzing hum of the industrious insects as I pass by on the way to get the newspaper. Then in the summer, the small fruits develop, and are quickly devoured by the cardinals and squirrels. Throughout the fall and early winter, the dense thicket of leaves and small pointy twigs make it a haven for songbirds trying to escape the notice of the resident red-shouldered hawk. If the conditions are right, the leaves turn a glorious yellow-gold that provides some beautiful fall color for our area. Even in the winter, the birds in my yard

use this tree for a perch, providing good views of my avian visitors as they rest on the bare branches.



Although this plum flowers a couple of weeks later than the Chickasaw Plum, it more than makes up for that delay by avoiding the suckering and spreading tendencies of its relative.

I have found all 3 of these plants to be adaptable to a fairly good range of light conditions, from full sun to part shade, and do well in average to dry, well-drained soils. They are readily available at most native plant nurseries, and sometimes at the regular garden centers as well. Varieties of the holly and salvia with different growth habits and colors have been developed to meet your fancy.



## Spring 2011 Calendar of Events

Please check the Paynes Prairie chapter page at [www.FNPS.org](http://www.FNPS.org) for most current information and directions to field trips. All 2011 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.

<b>March 15</b>	<b>Meeting</b> , Karl Miller, Ph.D. "The Effects of Landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrel."
<b>March 19</b>	<b>Field Trip, Sante Fe River Flood plain, Gilchrist County</b>
<b>April 8-9</b>	<b>Spring Native Plant Sale, Morningside Nature Center</b>
<b>April 19</b>	<b>Meeting: TBA</b>
<b>May 3</b>	<b>Chapter Planning Meeting</b>
<b>May 17</b>	<b>Meeting, TBA</b>
<b>May 21</b>	<b>Field Trip: Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area, Alachua County</b>
<b>May 19-22</b>	<b>FNPS State Conference, Maitland, FL (<a href="http://www.FNPS.org">www.FNPS.org</a>)</b>

## Urgent: Send Us Your Email!

We need your support in completing the switch from sending a printed newsletter to sending it by e-mail. Your direct benefits include: allowing more resources for activities and education, and the ability to view the newsletter photos in full color instead of black and white.

The cost of printing and mailing the newsletter monthly to the 187 people still receiving it by mail is \$220 per month. (Thank you to 187 who have converted! We are half way there.) That's about \$10 per person per year or \$1800 a year. Your annual membership of \$35 a year primarily goes to support the state organization, and only \$9 per person is returned to the county chapter.

Receiving the newsletter by mail means the local chapter uses all the funds reimbursed by the state plus a dollar just to send out the newsletter. Our mission as a service organization requires that we maximize our dollars to promote the use of native plants. Please show your support by signing up to receive the newsletter by e-mail. Just send an e-mail to Goldie Schwartz at [afn49@mindspring.com](mailto:afn49@mindspring.com) with "Put me on the e-mail list" in the subject line. That's all it takes! Thanks!

## March 15 Meeting Speaker: Karl Miller, Ph.D. "The Effects of Landscape on the Southeastern American Kestrel"

Karl Miller, Ph.D. research biologist with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, will speak on habitat requirements and conservation needs of the threatened Southeastern American Kestrel, a non-migratory falcon closely tied to sandhill habitats. Why they are declining, where they occur in Florida, statewide monitoring, and research about their habitat needs at the local and landscape levels will be discussed. Hope to see you there!



## March 19 Field Trip Information

The Saturday, March 19th Field Trip will take us to the Santa Fe River bottomlands field trip (Gilchrist County), from 9 AM - noon. This SRWMD property has spectacular displays of Atamasco lilies (*Zephyranthes atamasca*). Other highlights include hardwood swamp, interesting karst features, and sandhill restoration.



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

From High Springs, left (south) on hwy 27/ 41, right (west) on hwy 340 (Poe Springs Road), right (north) on hwy 47 to Santa Fe County Park. Trip leader: Robert Freese, cell: 386-972-4489 or [rcfreese99@yahoo.com](mailto:rcfreese99@yahoo.com)



## Florida Forever in Jeopardy

*Claudia Larsen*

A recent editorial in the Gainesville Sun by the executive director of Florida Audubon was a bleak reminder of continuing budget cuts for public facilities, parks and land acquisition programs. All members of Florida Native Plant Society concerned with preservation of the Real Florida should remind local legislators, state lawmakers and Governor Scott that public land is a wide investment for our state. Take a minute to visit [www.Supportfloridaforever.org](http://www.Supportfloridaforever.org).

## February Meeting Report Panel Discussion on Local Water Resources

Claudia Larsen

We thank member Jill McGuire for assembling a great panel to discuss current water resources in Alachua and surrounding counties. Carlos Herd from the Suwannee River Water Management District explained where our surface and groundwater originated from in northeast Florida; and the factors that influenced water movement and distributions. We need to pay attention to the increased water demand from the east coast Jacksonville area that might affect water fluctuations in our area.

The County Director of the Environmental Protection Dept, Chris Bird, and Annette Long from Save Our Rivers took a more local look at creeks, lakes and springs that provide water for our native plant communities. We need to safeguard these resources by making sure fertilizer runoff, agricultural nitrates from livestock farms, and uncontrolled septic discharge is inspected and regulated. This was emphasized by Whitey Markle, the Sierra Club's Conservation Chair who advocates contacting state legislators to complain about inadequate environmental testing and budget cutting for agencies that protect water resources.

More personal perspectives were shared by artist Margaret Tolbert and underwater photographer Tom Morris. They have lived in Florida a long time and have witnessed low water levels and water degradation in our area. Questions were asked, fears spoken about the future of our springs, and ideas suggested about personal and community conservation. What will you do to help?

For information on advocacy issues visit the Sierra Club website and contact your local legislators and tell them you are concerned about the future of Florida's water resources. Visit [www.Myflorida.com](http://www.Myflorida.com) for all emails and addresses of government officials. Here are contacts for our local districts:

**District 22:** W Keith Perry, 850-488-0887, 1301 The Capital, 402 S Monroe St, Tallahassee FL 3239 **District 23:** Chuck Chestnut, 850-488-5794, 212 The Capital, 402 S Monroe St, Tallahassee FL 32399 . **Senator Steve Oelrich,** 850-487-5020, email [oelrich.steve.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:oelrich.steve.web@flsenate.gov)



### Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

See our Web page at: [www.fnps.org](http://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

### The Spring Native Plant Sale is Just Around the Corner!

*Lisa Jelks*

Tired of looking at your brown yard? Then you're in luck because the Spring Native Plant Sale is just around the corner. With the warmer weather come thoughts of sprucing up the landscape with some color and diversity. There's no better place to get what you need than the Native Plant Sale at Morningside Nature Center (3540 E. University Avenue).

The sale, which is co-sponsored by Friends of Nature Parks and the City of Gainesville's Nature Operations, will be held Saturday, April 9 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. But don't forget, as a member of FNPS you are able to shop at the exclusive members-only sale on Friday evening, April 8, from 4:30 to 6:30. We'll have plenty of vendors selling everything from wildflowers, to wetland plants, to trees and shrubs. This is a great time to enhance your yard with beautiful, blooming natives!



On Saturday we will have a food vendor and live music. Our booth also provides personalized service in that we will walk around with shoppers helping them pick out plants for their specific needs. And if that weren't enough, park-a-plant allows customers to shop hands free (no carting your plants around; they magically show up at the loading area and someone is there to help you load your car). Cashiers are stationed inside the pavilion for a one-time payment (cash and checks only!).

City staff will lead a wildflower walk through Morningside's trails where you can view the native plants in their natural habitat. So bring the kids and enjoy a warm, spring day with your family and friends. Anyone wishing to volunteer for either Friday night or Saturday, please e-mail Lisa Jelks at [jelkslg@ufl.edu](mailto:jelkslg@ufl.edu) or call 373-3028.



### Rally for the Rivers Advocacy Campaign for Water Resources

*Claudia Larsen*

Water water everywhere, but not a drop to drink – is that Florida's future?

February's Rally for the Rivers in Palatka provided an amazing public education symposium to emphasize the area's water resources, the Ocklawaha River and St John's River, that are in need of help to save them from environmental despair. Workshop and seminar speakers were led by members of Audubon, Fish and Wildlife Federation, Earth Justice, and St John's Riverkeeper. On a sideline, the stage was beautifully decorated with dozens of native plants that were grouped to resemble a Florida woodland and the Florida Native Plant Society was recognized during the evening banquet as an important supporter of the Rally. For details of the conference visit [www.pceec.org](http://www.pceec.org).

We thank Karen Ahlers and the members of the Putnam County Environmental Council for educating us on these issues and advocating in our behalf with state legislators. Please consider supporting this group with your time and donations.

The Rally also hosted an amazing collection of over 30 musical groups and local songwriters. These folks have put their hearts and love of Florida into songs about Florida history, plants, birds and animals. Everywhere in the park there were sounds of guitars and mandolins and vocal harmonies that seemed to float upward into the trees overhead. A beautiful spring-like day under the oak trees with fantastic music was a wonderful way to spend the weekend and plan strategy for our environmental future.



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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.

**Florida Native Plant Society  
 31st Annual Conference  
 Patios Preserves and Public Spaces:  
 Making Connections  
 Sheraton Hotel North  
 Maitland, Florida  
 May 19th – 22nd, 2011**

For complete information and to REGISTER, please visit <http://www.fnps.org/pages/conference/>

Register today – space is limited!

**Would you like to see the Rhexia in color?**

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](mailto:afn49@mindspring.com).

**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, March 15th**  
**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 #: \_\_\_\_\_  
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  - 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.