



The Rhexia

Paynes Prairie Chapter
Florida Native Plant Society
September 2012

**Fall Native Plant Sale
Exclusive Member Only Sale
Fri. Oct. 5, 4:30—6:30 pm
(memberships available at
the gate)
General Public
Sat. Oct. 6, 8:30 am - 12:30
pm
Morningside Nature Center
3540 E University Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32641**

**Monthly Chapter
Meeting and Field Trip
Information**

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Representative
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During the Rhexia's summer hiatus some of us got together to visit each other's yards. Connie Caldwell made all the arrangements and is the author of the yard visit write-ups. On April 28 we visited Joe Durando at his farm Possum Hollow, then on May 26 we went to Gary and Sharon Dockter's place and then off to Sandi Saurer's place on June 23. Visits will continue during the year and the editor looks forward to reporting on each yard visit.



COLUMBINE, SENECIO, AND YEW, OH MY!

What better way to spend a lovely morning in April than touring Joe Durando's yard, the first of our monthly yard-sharing visits. As we gathered at the house, located on 30 acres of very diverse habitat along the edge of the Hawthorne formation, we were introduced to Joe's "Apalachicola" area. Large (imported) limestone boulders and ponds are surrounded by such species as columbine, senecio, yew, Solomon's seal, green dragon, spigelia, meadow rue, and Ashe magnolia. "It's cold here, and in this area the soil is very rich with a high pH," says Joe. Thick grapevines lace themselves through the trees, looping down to create sculptures along the ground. Joe tells us that the grapevines, when spread out among many trees, help the trees withstand high winds by "stitching" them together. Around the larger pond we see, among others, iris, lizard's tail, and needle palm. No problem with mosquitoes around the pond, thanks to the fish that eat the larvae. But there are no koi in this pond because they eat frog eggs! Twenty years have passed since Joe and his wife Trace settled on this former pasture and began planting trees (virtually all the trees that we see) and developing an organic farm. All around we see meadow filled with mostly coreopsis; also lots of phlox and spiderwort. We walk down a path beside a chestnut grove, where Joe points out a Carolina buckthorn which he highly recommends for its toughness, drought tolerance, fragrance, and fall color. He also likes the hawthorne, of which we see several examples. We see trees such as

sparkleberry and hickory planted next to large pines. We learn that the pine tree serves as a "nurse" tree, protecting its charge from the sun during its younger stages. Joe is now girdling some of the pines, to allow the others to reach their full potential.

We get in our cars and drive to the back section where the "barn" (complete with bar from the former Lafitte's, downtown next to Emiliano's) and vegetable growing area are located. Joe had burned part of the back meadow the previous month and here we see greeneyes, paw-paw, ironweed, *Asclepias' tuberosa*, brikelia, ruellia, rosinweed, bear grass, Cherokee bean, and more. Joe points out some of the many trees he has planted - bumelia, hornbeam, hop tree (one of many planted for butterfly larvae), devil's walking stick, white ash - and many more.

We wend our way back to our cars and Joe requests that before we leave, we help him with his landscape "conundrum" - whether to cut a branch of the lovely and rare taxus, or more than one branch, in order to clear a view to the pond. What would you do?

If you would like to be included in future yard visits (yes, you will have to show us your yard too!), contact connie.caldwell@sfcollge.edu. Remember, this is not about picture-perfect landscapes; it's about learning from each other and sharing what we know.

Presidents Message from Claudia Larsen

I hope everyone is ready for our fall schedule of events in the Paynes Prairie Chapter – we have more great speakers and field trips planned, as well as another big plant sale October 5-6. We are looking forward to a special program in November, that we will announce soon. That is also our annual meeting for elections, so it's not too early to start thinking about taking a more active role in your chapter. More minds mean better planning, interesting concepts, diverse newsletter articles and more planting experiences for us to rely on. Feel free to speak to me or other officers if you can contribute to our cause. It's fun and rewarding to help with organizational planning and decisions, and we need input from members at all levels of gardening/plant skills. We are all concerned about upcoming elections and the future of Florida environmental policies. Please continue to be a part of FNPS and take a little extra time to see how this special group is promoting its mission statewide to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants of Florida.

September 18 Program, "Native Grasses for your Landscape"

With the fall native plant sale just weeks away, it's time to start your shopping list for additions to your landscape. This is a great time to plant native grasses – they make a wonderful groundcover, act as fillers in a wildflower garden and have lovely seasonal flower spikes that later produce seed for wildlife.

Join us as Pete Wallace, president of Ecosystem Research Corporation, describes a wide variety of grasses. And there is a bonus, as Pete will be bringing grasses from his nursery to the plant sale in October.

New link to our FNPS Chapter Events

You can now access our chapter calendar of programs, field trips and events by visiting www.paynesprairie.fnpschapters.org. Our chapter page is a new feature of the improved www.FNPS.org website, which has been updated to show what's going on statewide for the Florida Native Plant Society. You may enjoy the new "find a native plant" feature which helps readers pick out the right native plant for their area based on zipcode. Try it out. Are you a Facebook fan? We are still looking for 2 people to moderate the chapter Facebook page. The job entails reading submitted posts and giving permission for website posting.

(Thanks to chapter Board member Karen Schneider for updating our calendar information and keeping it posted throughout the year.)

Report on May Program and Field Trip at Florida Museum of Natural History

We had a great turnout for our "alternative" program meeting at the Museum's Native Plant Butterfly Garden last May. The garden is located behind the museum and is free. Although we met in the early evening, the best time to visit and see butterflies would be on a sunny afternoon and you can check out the inside exhibit on native Florida butterflies. This garden has matured nicely and contains a great diversity of plants in both sun and shade. Besides wildflowers there are shrubs and small trees that are host plants and there are signs on most plants. We also visited the rain garden across Hull Road at the Recreation Building. Our members were surprised at the unique design that funneled rain water from the building, through channels of large rocks into the depression that was planted with grasses and wildflowers. Many of the natives had been replaced by non-native varieties of flowering plants but the concept and overall appearance of the garden was beautiful. We look forward to visiting more on-site gardens in the future for a relaxing and educational meeting.

Looking for Waterspider False Reinorchid (*Habenaria repens*)

I'm a botanist at the herbarium at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. I have some Brazilian colleagues who are working on a taxonomic/molecular study of *Habenaria*, and they have asked me to collect some population samples of *Habenaria repens*. With the long drought we have had, I have not been able to locate any in the localities I have known before. This species is often locally abundant, but spotty.

I was wondering if I could ask you to solicit help in locating populations from your members. I would not collect any material until I had permissions and permits in hand, and since we are a state institution we are careful to adhere to regulations. It's much easier to apply for permits if I have certainty of a plant's whereabouts. Any help your members could provide would be most welcome.

Sincerely, Mark Whitten

Florida Museum of Natural History, whitten@flmnh.ufl.edu



Florida Native Plant Society
Fall Native Plant Sale
at
Morningside Nature Center
3540 E. University Ave



EXCLUSIVE Members Only Sale
Friday, 5 October, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
(memberships available at the gate)
Open to the public
Saturday, 6 October, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Cash and Checks only

Lots of native plants from which to choose. Over a dozen native plant vendors, some of which do not routinely sell to the public. Proceeds help the Friends of Nature Parks.



Live Music



Guided Wildflower Walk



Free Plant Advice



Hands-free shopping with Park-a-Plant



Volunteers needed

Just one or two hours Friday or Saturday (Park-a-Plant or FNPS booth).
You don't have to be an expert! Contact Lisa Jelks at jelkslg@ufl.edu

Co-Sponsored by City of Gainesville and Friends of Nature Parks

MUCH MORE THAN A HAYFIELD!

As we arrive at Sharon and Gary Dockter's home we are greeted by Jim Jim, who gives us a welcoming gobble and struts his feathery stuff for our amusement and admiration. Around the property we see lots of young trees, many of them fruit trees, and a very healthy vegetable garden with feathery asparagus tops waving to us. Toward the back of the yard we hear chickens, and we learn that there are also rabbits. No wonder that garden looks so good!

Sharon and Gary have been on this 12-acre property for 6 years. Gary tells us they had wanted property with trees and ended up buying a hayfield, because all along two sides of the property are woods and hedge rows, and there is a great variety of habitats here. So they are planting the trees they wanted: long leaf pines, Shumard oaks, hophornbeam, magnolias, southern crabapple, red buckeye, and others. As Gary says, in the end this was easier than clearing out unwanted ones!

Much of the hayfield is becoming a meadow, and we see beehives in the middle of it! Meadow plants include volunteers from the garden such as larkspur and gallardia. We also see fleabane, a mystery purple dandelion, and *Coreopsis basalis* which had been seeded in. Sharon and Gary watch this process with great anticipation!

Jim Jim accompanies us on our tour as we pass by a hedgerow that contains toothache tree, oaks, sweet gum, a narrowleaf pawpaw (that had been hiding under vines until the vines were removed and there it was!), and oakleaf hydrangea. On the other side of the hedgerow the path opens out to a lovely view of rolling hillside of bahia grass and dock.

From there (Jim Jim is sent home) we walk through a wetland area where we see several different ferns, including cinnamon fern; also false nettle, Walter's viburnum, shrubby hypericum, button bush, ground nut (in bloom!), more devil's walking stick, star anise, and *Zamia*. Sharon points out the secret fairy garden that has a log with a rope guide that goes across the wetland.

Now we walk up a hillside to the pond, which is surrounded by sweet blackberries (yes, we can vouch for their sweetness), elderberry, Carolina willow, sagittaria, cannas, and pickerel weed. A mature sweet bay tree spreads lemony fragrance over the pond in the early spring. Peeking out among the grasses around the pond is lots of lovely pink rhexia. The mosquito fern that grows to cover the pond is pulled out regularly and it becomes great mulch and fertilizer.

We make our way back toward the house, where there is a spectacular display of gallardia, all self-seeded from one plant. We are amazed by the variety that we see. Other plants in the house garden include blue-eyed grass, salvia, dogwood, and redbud, as well as garden plants such as gloriosa lily, confederate rose, and pomegranate.

What a lovely and, yes, sustainable environment Gary and Sharon are creating here!

PLANT DIVERSITY 222

Our eyes widen as we learn that Sandi Saurers's yard contains 222 species of native plants! The diversity is evident in her suburban yard as we gaze upon numerous beds lush with happy plants. Sandi's goals are to have little or no grass to mow and to garden for wildlife, and she's well on her way after 11 years. Very little turf grass is evident, and that only where she must keep a path open to the backyard gate.

Sandi tells us that she waters in new plants for a month and after that they're on their own - no pesticides, no fertilizer, no additional water. She also talks about educating her neighbors, for example by pointing out to them that it is possible to grow wisteria provided it's the native one that behaves itself. We admire the wisteria growing on two stunning trellises that feature stained glass (yes, orange and blue) dragonflies suspended from the center of large circles.

Directly in front of us as we observe her yard from the street are stands of muhly grass, native red salvia, and beach sunflower. Beyond this bed is a line of scrub rosemary, which adds a bit of evergreen in the winter. Numerous conradinas throughout the yard add their feathery evergreen texture to the whole. Sandi points out her smoothbark St. Johns wort which has the appearance of a small feathery tree, and the red basil that we all wish was ours, but it's not readily available since it's hard to grow. Hers is now a small shrub with orange-red salvia type flowers, sure to attract hummingbirds. The beautifully shaped understory trees nearest the street are Carolina buckthorn, berries just beginning to ripen. Other streetside trees include longleaf pine (which supply lots of great mulch!), winged sumac, and flatwoods plum.

Some of the plants in the various beds (not possible to mention them all!!!) include skull cap, with its display of blue blossoms, wild pennyroyal, poppy mallow, coreopsis, rudbeckia, gallardia, yarrow, echinacea, spiderwort, liatris, Indian pinks, penstemon, milkweed, and others. Throughout the yard various grasses are inter-planted with the others - among them are coastal foxtail, dwarf and regular Fakahatchee, purple lovegrass, Elliot's lovegrass, river oats, blackseed needlegrass, chalky bluestem, and little bluestem. Some of the more unusual plants include sand cordgrass, ninebark, Dutchman's pipe, little leaf titi, scrub plum, bastard indigo, pineland privet, small-flowered paw paw, native gaura, Miccosukee gooseberry, salt bush, rusty lyonia, scaly stem aster, blue curls, ebony spleenwort, Alachua bumelia, and many species of hawthorn. Like many of us, Sandi just has to have one of each!

A hedgerow along one side of the front yard that Sandi says is a "plant it and let it go" area contains buckeye, sweet acacia, wild lime, witch alder, Hercules's club, wax myrtle, pignut hickory, snow squarestem, and others. The large bed on the other side of the yard is also a wildlife haven, with numerous shrubs and trees including Simpson's stopper, oakleaf hydrangea, scrub hickory, paw-paw, sparkleberry, downy blueberry, deerberry and beautyberry as well as a crossvine snaking up the mature long-leaf pine. Behind this bed is Sandi's butterfly meadow, with a great variety of nectar flowers.

Cont'd on page 6

Calendar of Events

Please check the Paynes Prairie chapter page at www.FNPS.org for most current information and directions to field trips. All 2012 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.

- Sept 18 Meeting: Grasses for Landscaping**
Pete Wallace
- Sept 22 Field Trip: Twin Rivers State Forest**
See info below
- Oct 16 Meeting: Proposed - Lessons from the Ben Franklin Tree**
- Oct 20 Field Trip: Burned area in Oleno State Park**

Board of Directors-Chapter Planning Meeting
Monday, October 1 at 5:30 pm—open to all
Env. Horticulture Dept. Greenhouses, UF

2013 BOD Meetings: 1st Monday in March, May, August, October

Field Trip: Twin Rivers State Forest - Blue Springs Tract

This beautiful site near the (north) Withlacoochee and Suwannee Rivers in Hamilton County contains an outstanding example of open canopy, upland pine forest on clay soils. The Florida Forest Service burns this site frequently and there is a healthy ground-cover of wiregrass and various fall-blooming asters. We will be assisting the FFS in preparing a plant species list for this seldom visited site.

Meet for carpool at 7:30 AM in the parking lot at Hitchcocks in Alachua (Highway 441, near I-75). We'll plan to leave the site around 1 PM. Bring hat, water, snacks and/or lunch. Contact Robert Freese 386-972-4489 or rcfreese99@yahoo.com for more information.

Wings and Wildflowers Festival, September 28-30, 2012

Lake County will host their inaugural festival celebrating Florida birds, insects and natural areas. There will be unique birding and wildflower programs at Hickory Point Park, including boat tours and nature walks. Keynote speaker is James Currie, host of NBC Sports Birding Adventures. To view concurrent programs and nature activities visit www.lakecountyfl.com/gowild

Volunteers needed for October 27 Bat Festival

Our FNPS chapter has been invited again to attend the 8th annual Bat Festival at the Lube Bat Conservancy. We are looking for 3-4 volunteers to sit an FNPS information table, so please contact Claudia Larsen (Micanopywildflowers@yahoo.com) or Lisa Jelks (Jelkslg@ufl.edu) if you would like to participate. The Lube Conservancy is only open once a year to visitors and the bat houses are amazing. So even if you don't represent FNPS, you should visit the festival located at 1309 NW 192 Ave, Gainesville. www.lubee.org.

Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

See our Web page at:

www.paynesprairie.fnpschapters.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

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Director

Dahlonga Peck, Dahlonga1@yahoo.com

Plant ID

Paul Cohen, paulcohen2002@yahoo.com

We proceed to the back yard - Sandi says this is where she started her landscaping endeavors after moving to Florida from the north. She tells us her front yard is about 80% native; with most of the non-natives in her landscape in the back. She points out the sweetbay magnolia and lets us know what a learning curve she was in at the time, since this is a swamp tree and her property is quite high and dry. However, the tree looks healthy and anchors a bed that contains other water-loving plants such as hibiscus, meadow beauty and canna. This is the only bed that gets regular water. As the exotics in the backyard have succumbed over the years, Sandi replaced them with long-blooming natives such as coneflower, coreopsis, passionflower and purple-eyed grass. We can all relate to the learning curve, having had similar experiences ourselves! But what joy we all get from our native plants and the wildlife that they support, and the learning process that has brought us to appreciate them. Thank you, Sandi, for sharing your experiences and for reminding us that we are all learners on this journey.



Congratulations to Board member Sandi Saurers!

Kudos to chapter Board member Sandi Saurers for her nomination for the 2012 Work of the Heart Award. This program recognizes volunteers in community activism and Sandi' is being honored for her work with FNPS. Besides contributing to Paynes Prairie program planning, she also attends quarterly meetings as our representative at State FNPS board meetings and serves on their statewide landscape committee. You may have seen her working as a cashier at every recent plant sale, and when she is finished, buying even more plants to add to her fabulous home landscape. Sandi was nominated through her company B&B Office Systems.



In Bloom

Faxhatchee Grass *Tripsacum dactyloides*

Why Grow Native Plants?

Many of our members already know why we grow native plants. Occasionally we will review these reasons as space allows. We also would like to collect a number of personal reasons from our members, that we may publish in a future issue.

Please send your "personal" reason for growing natives to Goldie Schwartz, afn49@mindspring.com.

One reason to grow natives:

Promote Biodiversity. Of course, growing native plants will preserve and promote the species you grow in your yard. But in addition, growing natives contributes to the ecological balance that developed here in Florida over the millennia. Natives perpetuate the relationships between our native plants and the many other organisms that depend upon them for their survival. Doug Tallamy in, [Bringing Nature Home](#), elaborates on the relationship between native plants and biodiversity.



Welcome new, rejoined and renewed members.

Notestein Nursery is offering a free native plant to new and renewed members who join from March 2012 through December 2012. Plants can be chosen and picked up by appointment at Jim Notestein's Nursery in Gainesville. Call 352-372-2107. Jim is a long-time supporter of FNPS and regular vendor at the spring and fall native plant sales at Morningside

Jeannie Dubois
Mia Requesens
Eric Triplett
Jack Chocola
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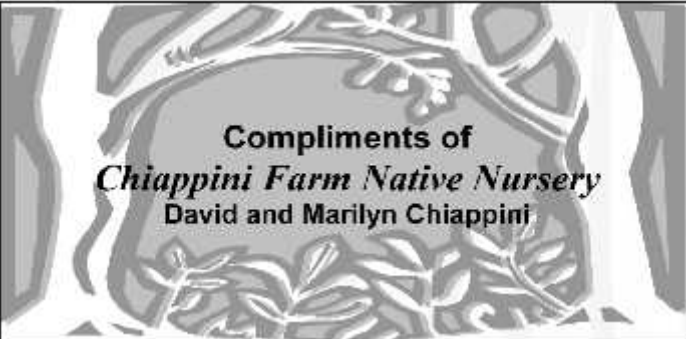
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Advertisements are now being accepted for the Rhexia newsletter! If you would like to support the Paynes Prairie chapter please send a business card size ad in .jpg, .tiff, or Powerpoint formats only to Goldie Schwartz at Rhexia@gmail.com. The ads cost \$100 and run from **January 2013 through November 2013.**

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

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. And for the chapter, we save dollars we can use 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 with "Put me on the e-mail list" in the subject line. That's all it takes! Thanks!

Florida Native Plant Society
Paynes Prairie Chapter
Post Office Box 1004
Archer, FL 32618

Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 18

7:00 p.m.

(Plant ID Workshop at 6:15)

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Avenue

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.

Rhexia Article Submissions Please!
Submit unformatted word documents
only. Submit pictures as separate jpg, or tiff
files. Send all article submissions to:
rhexia@gmail.com
**Submission deadline
for the October
2012 newsletter is
September 25, 2012**

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 ____

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| ◇ 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.