



July – October 2019

The Beautyberry

Lake Beautyberry Chapter of the
Florida Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 88 Umatilla, FL 32784

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Lake Beautyberry Chapter – Summer/Fall 2019 Calendar

Program Meeting – Sunday, July 21, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

John Benton has planned a program on “Aggressive Plants: How to control them in your landscape.” He will be joined by Ben Gugglioti from the Lake County Water Authority. They will lead a presentation and a discussion on plants that can take over everything. Bring a sample of a problem plant (well bagged, of course) that you may want some advice about to the meeting. The meeting will be at Trout Lake Nature Center in Eustis. There will be a social time at 2:00 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 2:30 p.m. Directions: Take SR 19 north out of Eustis to the intersection with CR 44E and turn right at Winn-Dixie and CVS Pharmacy, then go ¼ mile to the nature center entrance on the right. The meeting is open to members, friends and the public.

Discovery Gardens Workdays – First Mondays of the month at 9:00 a.m.

Enjoy our chapter’s native garden at Discovery Gardens and help Lavon and others on the upcoming work days: August 1, second Monday on September 9, due to Labor Day, October 7 and November 4. The native garden is located in the back south-west corner of Discovery Gardens at the Ag Center, 1951 Woodlea Road, south of Tavares off SR 19. To let Lavon know you are willing to help at the garden, call her at 352-223-4761

Field Trip to Alexander Springs – Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.

Please join Cuplet Fern and Lake Beautyberry chapters on August 17th at Alexander Springs! An RSVP is required so please email cupletfern@gmail.com with your day-of cell phone number (for emergency purposes only) and your party size. Reservations are limited. Alexander Springs is located at 49525 CR 445 Altoona, FL 32702. Directions: Go north of Umatilla and then Altoona on SR 19 and continue north 2 miles, then turn right onto CR 445 at the sign to Alexander Springs. Then go about 2 miles to the Park entrance on the left. Please arrive by 8:00 a.m. before parking gets filled. You will need to pay the entry fee to the springs on site which is \$5.50 per person. **To Car Pool:** Meet at the Winn-Dixie parking lot at SR 19 and CR44E north of Eustis at 7:15 a.m. Contact: April McClain at 352-988-0374.

There are only 27 first-magnitude springs in Florida (flows of greater than 1000 cubic feet per second). Of them, Alexander Springs is the easiest to access. You will join author of “Botanizing with Birds”, David Rakes, ecologist, on the Timucuan Trail surrounding the springs. It is an easy 0.9 mile trail that has it all from hydric hammocks to sand pine scrub, from buttressed cypress, climbing vines and ruby crowned kinglets to saw palmetto and hermit thrushes. Habitat diversity means plant, insect and bird diversity as well and as you walk with David, you will learn about the interconnections from a naturalist’s point of view.

On the wetland section of the boardwalk, visitors will see many of the rare plants you would see at Morman Branch, plus you can keep your feet dry. There are a number of plants like Atlantic white cedar and vine wicky that are at the southern limit of their range. Many other plants found here are anise, viburnum and hollies which are plants you might recognize from your own landscape.

Bring water to drink, hat, binoculars (if you have them), sunscreen, insect repellent and your curiosity! If you would like, you can jump in the spring to cool-off after the walk. There are changing rooms at the park. Afterwards, we will be having a networking lunch at another well-known establishment, Tony's Pizza at 2760 E. Orange Ave. Eustis, FL 32726, where we will be pairing good food with good company. RSVP today before we reach capacity!

Master Gardener Program – Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 10:30 a.m.

The Lake County Master Gardener's have invited Lake Beautyberry members to a program they are hosting presented by Dr. Mary Lusk. Dr. Lusk's research investigates how landscape management practices influence the storage, transport and fate of constituents that may lead to water quality degradation. The primary goal of her research is to develop science-based and stakeholder relevant programs that help Floridians enhance and protect the state's water quality, quantity and supply. The program will be held in the IFAS Auditorium, Ag Center 1951 Woodlea Road, Tavares.

Program Meeting – Sunday, September 15, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

The Beautyberry Chapter is pleased to welcome back Dr. Marc C. Minno, renowned butterfly expert, biologist and author of "Florida Butterfly Gardening". At this program Marc will talk about his scientific trips to Cuba and about the Cuba/Florida connection of biota. He led a trip to Cuba in June and is scheduled to go back in August, if possible. Marc's presentations are always a treat.

The meeting will be at Trout Lake Nature Center in Eustis. There will be a social time at 2:00 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 2:30 p.m. Directions: Take SR 19 north out of Eustis to the intersection with CR 44E and turn right at Winn-Dixie and CVS Pharmacy, then go ¼ mile to the nature center entrance on the right. The meeting is open to members, friends and the public.

Fall Wildflower Festival – Saturday, September 28, 2019. All Day.

Beautyberry and Passionflower Chapters are working together planning a fundraising day held at Green Isle Gardens. Expect native plants on sale, plus speakers, demonstrations and exhibitors. The festival location is at 11303 Hwy 33, Groveland 34736. Go 3 miles south of SR 50 on Hwy 33 and watch for the gardens on the right. Expect more information as plans are set, but save the date now.

Festival of Flight and Flowers – Friday, Saturday & Sunday, October 11 – 13, 2019. All day events.

The Festival of Flight and Flowers will be a 3-day weekend Celebration of Nature in Lake County. Headquarters will be downtown Eustis with field trips around Lake County. There will be experts like Marc and Eliana of Birding by Bus, Jaret Daniels, lepidopterist, Craig Huegel, ecologist and our own Lake County Big Year Birder, Gallus Quigley, plus numerous local birders and naturalists who know Lake County's hot spots. All these folks will be leading the way during immersive field trips and programs allowing you to learn about and experience **Real Florida**. The centerpiece of the weekend will be a Festival at the Eustis Community Center with exhibitors, vendors, birds, butterflies and reptiles, as well as programs and presentations all day on Saturday.

Many of our members will be engaged in helping with these activities. We will also need volunteers to man our chapter's table providing native plant education materials. To offer your help at this event, please contact Jeanie Colletti at 352-669-6632 or Lavon at 352-223-4761.

President's Message

By Lavon Silvernell

Even in the Summer Heat, Nature soothes, and Lake Beautyberry keeps on Working!

Even though it is hot and dry, the bumble bees are making the yellow flowers of Alicia on their long slender stalks dance. My favorite iridescent green and red Bumelia Beetle is buzzing around what was its namesake tree, until the tree was changed to Sideroxylon tenax and the beetle declined to change his name. Ha! I planted out some of the wildflowers I grew in pots, thinking summer rains had started. And, now I am, guiltily, watering to keep them alive. It is surely hot enough that those thunderstorms should be booming in, and they are, but they roll around me. The weatherman says tomorrow.

I must admit, I spend most of my time inside in the air conditioning working on the computer. There are always projects to make that a valid excuse. I know my native plant friends, Beautyberry and Passionflower, are staying busy this summer on a variety of projects some hot and sweaty outside, some cool but needed inside. Some of the work accomplished and in progress is as follows:

** Planning, leading, enjoying a fieldtrip to Flat Island preserve. Lots of plant diversity and SHADE. And as the group enjoyed an end of hike snack around the picnic table, the birth of a new project.....

** A Fall Wildflower Festival at Green Isle Gardens, September 28th. Passionflower and Beautyberry Chapters are working together planning speakers, demonstrations, exhibitors and of course native plants on sale. Plus, it will generate funds for Chapter projects.

** The next month October on the 12th, volunteers will be at the Festival of Flight and Flowers, telling folks about native plants and the Society. We have planned two trips especially for botanizing, Yearling Trail and Scrub Point.

** Weeding Natal grass at the Seminole State Forest Warea tract. Lot of fun, camaraderie, plant ID, millipedes and curious insect larvae. Plus bags of natal grass to carry out.

** Replanting plants rescued from a sandhill site onto public lands where they should be safe to grow.

** Planning enjoyable and informative programs and events, via email, over picnic tables and at Board Meetings.

** Roadside Wildflowers, getting dizzy watching the scenery flash by during roadside wildflower surveys. Attending an optimistic meeting with Public Works. Hopefully some real progress.

** Discovery Gardens, "WE". I am excited because it is a "we", have been weeding, dead heading and making plans.

** Some folks are staying cool inside posting information to Facebook or our webpage and answering questions via email.

** Partnering with other groups like CISMA, Audubon and IFAS Master Gardeners.

** And native plant folks are working in their own gardens and sharing their love of native plants and the creatures they support with neighbors and friends.

** There is a joint activity with Cuplet Fern to Alexander Springs coming up in August. A great time to invite friends to enjoy many of the native plants that could grow in their yards, in their natural habitat.

All these activities are fun, many are informative, some are good exercise, some remove toxins from your body via perspiration, but all are good for the planet and even good for the busy volunteer. I think you will enjoy joining us, either in an air conditioned meeting or on the hot and sweaty trail.

GEL Compliance

Okay, what the heck is this "GEL" we keep hearing about anyway. Hopefully the following will answer the mystery. Excerpted from the Beautyberry Planning Meeting Minutes of April 15, 2019:

"Because Treasurer Barbara Loudon has been working with the FNPS Group Exemption Letter (GEL) and the GEL Financial Report and the Income Statement, she asked for time to go into detail on her progress. Attached to these Minutes are copies of the items she brought up for discussion and they should be considered as part of these Minutes. Barbara asked for approval by vote on two items. The first was her motion to accept the revised Balance Sheet and to rename the Balance Sheet as the Income Statement henceforth. It will be

reconciled monthly in the future. Patricia (Burgos) seconded the motion and the members reviewed the items under consideration, then they voted to approve the motion unanimously.

Next Barbara went through the Chapter Checklist in the GEL application. Members reviewed the Chapter Description and upon Barbara's motion, seconded by John (Benton), the group voted unanimously to accept the Chapter Description and for Barbara to proceed with the application process. Concerning Fund Raising, the committee ran through how contributions are used which Barbara is reporting. There was discussion about the value of having the GEL including having liability insurance under the FNPS 501©(3) umbrella. Barbara went over the 2019 Budget with the group. She was thanked warmly for all of her diligent work in going through this process so our chapter can function in compliance with FNPS in this new format. Barbara asked that volunteer hours be reported to her and she will forward the information to the appropriate FNPS person."

Recently, Barbara reported that the FNPS Group Exemption Letter (GEL) application from our chapter was accepted by FNPS and we have received our State Sales Tax number and we are registered with the state as a charity. Kudos and many thanks to Barbara for her diligence and the hard work she has put into this GEL application process. Thank her when you see her!

Roadside Wildflower Committee Report

John Benton and Lavon Silvernell had a productive meeting with Jeff Johnson and Gretchen Bechtel of Lake County Public Works concerning roadside mowing schedules on certain roads with existing wildflower populations in Lake County. Committee members have been surveying possible roadside areas. Other subjects discussed were mowing heights, signage possibilities and the existence of the Wildflower Map published some years back by the county which had several suggested driving routes for observing wildflower blooms.

This project is underway and moving along. Thank you to the active members who have been participating in the surveys.

"Trends in Landscaping"

At our March program meeting, John introduced Kirsten Sharp-Ortega who presented her program on "Trends in Landscaping". Kirsten does Habitat Design and Consulting at Green Isle Gardens, a native plant nursery near Groveland. Her interesting topic included photos and descriptions of many of her projects converting home landscapes to ones featuring native plants. A native of South Africa, she has a horticulture degree and serves on the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN) Board.

Kirsten has done more than 30 conversions for residents in the Villages and the positive results were easy to see in her before and after photos. The native landscapes attracted pollinators, they reduced water use and maintenance work, reduced pesticide use and provided corridors for wildlife as neighbors linked properties side by side.

Examples she showed were a Scrub/Pine Hill habitat with 200 species of plants, a large, level diamond shaped lot filled with blooms galore, a terraced slope planted with flowering shrubs and a hidden garden with a tall hedge and plants that brought in birds and butterflies.

After her presentation, the audience asked many questions and Kirsten was generous with her advice. She said as long as you maintain and take care of the garden, then the change doesn't bother the neighbors. To keep a landscape aesthetically pleasing off season, add some plants that bloom year around and add evergreens to the mix. Generally, she said she is finding more acceptance of native plants in home landscapes.

Lake Beautyberry Chapter Rep Report

By Patricia Burgos

Highlights of FNPS Progress and Accomplishments at the Annual Meeting:

Reported by Patricia Burgos, with excerpts from FNPS Minutes by Jackie Rolly, FNPS Secretary and “On the Vine” recap by Wendy Poag, FNPS Education Committee Chair.

** FNPS has overhauled its accounting and financial reporting systems resulting in society’s looking good. Revenues from membership are on course for 2019 and revenue from non-membership contributions are up. This reflects an increase in major gifts and donations.

** FNPS is at an all-time high of 4,300 FNPS members. This is an increase of 300 members since last year. The FNPS Board is almost fully populated with 3 new people added in 2019.

** FNPS is revising the bylaws and new FNPS policy statements were approved in 2018 – fiscal management, conflict of interest, employee and contractor policies, etc.

** The FNPS Board is trying to strengthen chapters in the areas of legal and regulatory compliance (e.g. Group Exemption Letter (GEL) compliance.) Note: See the report on this regarding our chapter’s progress elsewhere in this newsletter.

** With two new FNPS staff members, fundraising has increased, grant writing has increased and there has been a strong attempt to improve communications by updating the website, videotaping meetings, increasing presence on social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

** Executive Director Juliet Rynear has applied for more than \$200,000 in grant proposals. Challenge grants to membership have been successful.

** Forging new partnerships with government agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Forest Service, and Florida Natural Areas Inventory. FNPS has a new corporate sponsor in Duke Energy and a new partnership with Atlanta Botanical Garden centered on citizen science and recovery efforts for the Federally Endangered Florida *Torreya*. Another emerging partnership with The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service centered on land protection for the Federally Endangered *Warea amplexifolia*, in addition to FNPS “s long-term partnership with the Putnam Land Conservancy.

Ongoing Project Highlights: More details at www.fnps.org

1. Land protection for Clasping *Warea* in Marion County – in process of purchasing 12.5 acres as a preserve for *W. amplexifolia* and the endangered Florida Sand Skink. Working with Duke Energy on conservation management of greater *Warea* Area within their powerline easement.
2. *Torreya* Keepers Project: Citizen science (inventory and protection) centered on recovery of the endangered *Torreya taxifolia* in the wake of Hurricane Michael. Partners include Magnolia Chapter and Atlanta Botanical Garden.
3. Science based inventory and demographic data collection for several imperiled and highly endemic shrubby mints in Central Florida.
4. Very active advocacy program in support of conservation and legislation related to native plants and habitats. FNPS lobbyist representing organization’s interest during legislative session, numerous “Action Alerts” from the FNPS Policy Committee.
5. Southeast Chapters Initiative for Advocacy – Regional program centered on grass roots advocacy and outreach to lawmakers. Partners include five Chapters in SE Florida.
6. Sustainable Landscaping and Development – New FNPS program centered on sustainable and conservation oriented development guidelines for city and county governments. Development of a team and grant proposal for Model Conservation Oriented Land Development Codes.
7. Land Management Partners – Coordinating program with state agencies to represent Florida native plants and habitat in ALL reviews of land management plans for Florida’s public lands.
8. Stewardship Brochure – Education Committee (Chair – Wendy Poag) is working on designing and producing a brochure which inspires Florida citizens to be stewards of the land and water.

Check out FNPS website (<https://www.fnps.org/conference/2019recordings>) for educational presentations from the 39th Annual Conference in May 2019, including:

- ** Audio files of many of the conference presentations
- ** A presentation for chapter field trip leaders on “How to Lead the Best Field Trip Ever”.
- ** A presentation on the FNPS mission in, “Mission Related Projects of the FNPS.
- ** The presentation “FNPS Seed Collection, Rescue and Restoration: An Overview”.

Highlights of FNPS Committee Reports:

- ** Science Advisory Committee - FNPS Directors awarded 4 research grants to students. Grants were funded by contributions from Tarflower and Sea Rocket Chapters, FNPS Endowment and a returned research grant. Fourteen oral papers and 4 posters were presented at the annual conference. Two scientists who had received FNPS grants have recently published papers.
- ** Education Committee – The Field Trip report form and “How to Lead the Best Field Trip Ever” checklist and presentation will be modified/uploaded to become educational tools for rookie and seasoned trip planners who are involved with local or state events. Committee Chair has reached out to FNAI as a partner with FNPS to create/narrate reference ecosystem videos, but has not received any further communication. Has first draft of topics/talking points for the stewardship brochure.
- ** Conservation Committee – at Lake Wales Ridge State Forest there was some damage to the cutthroat seepage slope areas due to salvage logging and the Committee Chair discussed damage with forest staff. FNPS member brought a concern to the Chair about underbrush clearing at Wekiva Springs State Park and the chair promptly contacted the Park Biologist to discuss the matter. Committee Chair has scheduled a *Dicerandra modesta* monitoring event in the fall at Lake Marion Creek WMA.
- ** Communications Committee – Members are working on FNPS organization coordination and planning in regard to membership management, websites, web hosting, credit card processing and other electronic tools. FNPS is still having issues with people wanting to change the logo and where chapters are speaking as if they are speaking on behalf of FNPS rather than just their chapter. Committee Chair is trying to work with chapters to better use their calendars and consider sharing events with neighboring chapters. Report gave update on every chapter’s website and status of the website. The Lake Beautyberry website complies with FNPS recommendations/policies, is mobile friendly, but is not using the calendar.

Highlights of Council of Chapter Meetings: (Excerpted from CofC Chair, Kara Driscoll report.)

- ** Current CofC goal is to standardize communication within the Council and make the flow of information more efficient. Chair is trying to come up with a Chapter Rep report template.
- ** Another goal is to update the Council’s Standard Operating Procedures and ways to achieve the goals of the Council as outlined in the FNPS Bylaws.
- ** CofC had a roundtable discussion regarding communication improvements and members came to the consensus that Google Drive is the best way for chapters to store and share chapter activities within FNPS.
- ** There is a request to have Chapter Reps report on their Chapter’s conservation activities and to report any local major conservation concerns to the Conservation Committee.
- ** Chapter Reps need to find meeting proxies.
- ** Plant rescues are still a topic of discussion and FNPS is providing direction on this topic.
- ** Cuplet Fern is seeking other chapters that want to participate in the emergency fund to assist any chapter in the future that is hit with a natural disaster.
- ** FNPS is requesting folks that can give presentations at the next conference in Jacksonville to let the chapter rep know so the planning committee can be aware of possible topics.
- ** Discussion topics included improving attendance of students/young people at the conference and if any chapters have student or general conference grants.
- ** Mentorship and what are chapters doing to mentor their members and how this can be improved.

The Fortieth Annual Florida Native Plant Society Conference will be held in May 2020 in Jacksonville

Beautyberry Planning Meeting Report – July 15, 2019

As you can see from our busy summer/fall calendar, your officers have been actively planning ahead for the next events. Just this week further decisions were made about support for the September 28th Fall Wildflower Festival fund raising event and large plant sale.

This is also to inform our members of three proposed challenges that will be put to a membership vote at the September 15, 2019 meeting. These challenges are as follows:

Challenge 1. This is a challenge to other chapters to raise \$300.00 each to send a student to the FNPS conference and pay for their hotel/meals/field trips. FNPS may provide free conference registration for their grant winners, but it is the other items that prevent students from attending. We can make the challenge at a Council of Chapter meeting and formally announce it at the state meetings. So, if approved by vote, Lake Beautyberry would raise \$300.00 on our own to send a student.

Challenge 2. This is a challenge to the Marion County, Villages, Passionflower and Tarflower Chapters to join Lake Beautyberry to raise \$5,000.00 together (\$500.00 - \$1,000.00 each) in 2019-2020 to help purchase an acre of property protecting the warea plants as part of the overall Warea acquisition project going on in Marion County. We would need to coordinate with FNPS of course to see about the logistics of this. The project is underway and donations from the Fall Wildflower Festival could go toward this purchase.

Challenge 3. This is a challenge to Passionflower to help us raise \$650.00 (\$325.00 each) in 2019 to help fund a contractor to herbicide at the Warea Tract to control Guinea grass, Praxalis and Natal grass. Our volunteer efforts can only go so far and Florida Forestry Service has indicated that they do not have the money to stay on top of the invasive plants at this important property. If we raise that amount with Passionflower we can then see if FNPS will match resulting in 2 herbicide treatments at least for the property in 2019 for a total of \$1,300.00.

If our members accept issuing any or all of these challenges, then Chapter Rep Patricia Burgos will present the challenges at the next FNPS Council of Chapter meeting.

The Planning Committee also agreed to work with Cuplet Fern Chapter on the idea of an emergency fund for any chapter hit by a natural disaster emergency. We would be willing to fundraise or donate should such a problem arise.

FNPS Annual Conference Report

Elsewhere in this newsletter our FNPS Chapter Rep Patricia has given her report on all the various business accomplished at the May Conference. This will report on some of the lighter side. Members of our chapter that attended the conference were Patricia Burgos, Wendy Poag, Lavon Silvernell, John Benton, Nadine Foley and Jan Kolb. There must have been about 300 in attendance and of that, 125 people were there for their first conference.!

The accommodations were comfortable and the weather was sublime allowing for excellent field trips on Thursday and Sunday and for alfresco dining on the grassy grounds of the Plantation on the Crystal River each evening of Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Delicious dinners each day and so nice to share the time with old friends and new acquaintances as the sun went down and the full moon came up. The lawns also provided ample space for all the native plants brought for sale.

Indoors were the areas for book sales, exhibitors, silent auction and handy pick-up of our lunches which also were enjoyed outdoors at mid-day break. The main speeches and full meetings were in the large meeting room and nearby were the breakout session rooms.

“Transitions” was the theme of the conference and that theme was kicked off nicely by Jack Putz, Ph.D. speaking on Rising Seas, Retreating Forests and other Rapid Transitions in Florida Coastal Ecosystems. Tom Hctor concluded the first day of presentations on Friday with a rousing call for Florida regional landscape conservation. He said we need to protect our green infrastructure for the ecosystem services and the biodiversity. And we need to protect small isolated special tracts and the large connected corridors.

Saturday morning was opened by Susan Carr, Ph.D., FNPS President calling the annual membership meeting to order and announcing Plant ID Contest winners, FNPS Palmetto Awards, Landscape Award winners and Science and Conservation grant winners. Officers for the next year were elected. Then, on to another busy day where other transitions were described. Nash Turley, Ph.D. described a new nationwide movement to create pollinator friendly wildflower habitat: “Lawns to Wildflowers”. Now there’s a transition we can all embrace! Nash is a researcher at UCF and John has already been in touch with him for a program at our chapter early next year.

So much more was offered at the conference such as Reed Noss’s fascinating talk on why Florida and the Coastal Plain is so rich in biodiversity. Now those transitions over millions of years have produced our endemic plant species and surely they deserve to be treasured. Plan now to attend the next conference in May 2020 in Jacksonville.

Looking Back Twenty Years – by Nadine Foley

In the summer of 1999, I had been a member of FNPS for a couple, maybe three years, but was assigned to a chapter in Marion County which disbanded, then to one in Gainesville – too far to attend meetings, so I had never attended any actual gatherings of members. Somehow, I did not know about Tarflower in Orange. So, I thought how about we start a chapter in Lake County. I found out the basics from FNPS and I wrote a letter to 90 people I thought might be interested inviting them to a meeting at Trout Lake Nature Center to explore the possibility of forming a local FNPS chapter. Imagine my surprise and delight to have 34 people show up at the meeting and they agreed to pursue the formation of a local chapter. In addition, 13 others responded by mail that they were interested, too, but just could not make it to the initial gathering.

And so as the saying goes, the rest is history. In fall we held further program meetings and began our field trips. We chose our name mainly because we were beginners, but we did know the American Beautyberry and it is a fool proof plant if there ever was one. We had some nice newspaper coverage by Mike Archer who at that time wrote commentary in the “Lake Sentinel”. And Gene Packwood was the editorial cartoonist for the “Daily Commercial” and he designed our distinctive and colorful chapter logo for us pro bono. What a guy!

In early meetings we elected Officers and wrote our ByLaws and began the application packet for membership in the state society. This account of the formation of our chapter will be continued in our next newsletter in November. Then get ready for a little celebration early in 2020!