



March – June 2019

The Beautyberry

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

Chapter Contacts:

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Lake Beautyberry Chapter – Spring 2019 Calendar

Program Meeting – Sunday, March 17, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

The guest speaker this month will be Kirsten Sharp-Ortega from Green Isle Gardens. She will talk about her experiences designing landscapes in The Villages, where navigating small spaces, homeowner association restrictions and varying aesthetics are the order of the day. There will be good ideas for any homeowner wanting to make different choices in their yards. 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.

Join Lavon for some Spring tidying up at our native garden at Discovery Gardens on the first Monday of the month. The next workdays will be April 1, May 6, and June 3 at 9:00 a.m. 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.

Landscape and Garden Fair – Saturday, April 13 9:00 to 4:00 and Sunday, April 14 10:00 to 3:00
Lake County/IFAS-UF Extension, Master Gardeners and staff will host this event at Discovery Gardens. There will be educational programs inside in the auditorium and garden tours and a plant sale outside. Discovery Gardens are located at 1951 Woodlea Road, Tavares, FL 32778. For further information contact by phone 352-343-4101 or the website: www.ufl.edu. Our chapter will have an education outreach table on native plants at this event. Please let Lavon know if you can volunteer at 352-223-4761 or Jeanie Colletti at 352-669-6632.

PEAR Park Open House and Plant Sale – Saturday, April 27, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Looking for native plants for your home landscape? The theme will be “The Trees, The Birds and The Bees”. The year’s sale will include a walk at 9:00 a.m. led by Lavon Silvernell to the Memorial Grove and other PEAR Park demonstration gardens, to view and learn about the best native small trees and shrubs for smaller areas and how they benefit wildlife. Gather ideas and information and then purchase some wonderful native plants at the plant sale. Directions to PEAR Park: From the intersection of CR

48 and US 27 south of Leesburg go south on US27 for 1.8 miles to the second entrance for PEAR Park at 4800 University Ave. Turn right onto University, then go about 1 mile to the park entrance. Save some time to enjoy the wonderful science center, the wildlife viewing area, the meadow walk and the river trail.

Field Trip – Sunday, April 28, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.

This is a joint field trip with our sister chapter, Passionflower. We are visiting Lake Louisa State Park, where we will take a leisurely 2 mile stroll through Pine Flatwoods along the Big Creek Loop Trail. The group will gather in the parking lot across from the Rangers Station at the entrance to the park off of US27. An entrance fee of \$5.00 per vehicle is required. We will view the native plant garden located at the station before heading over to the trailhead.

Home to eleven plant communities, bountiful lakes, an array of wildlife, habitat restoration areas, and being within the boundaries of the Green Swamp and the Lake Wales Ridge, make Lake Louisa one of the best natural places to visit in Lake County. The state park also has a beach area, allows swimming and has a playground and restrooms near the picnic area. Please bring water, snacks, sunscreen, a hat, appropriate shoes, bug spray and your sense of adventure, along with your family and friends. Contact information: for Beautyberry: April McClain aprillynn990005@gmail.com or by phone: 352-988-0374. For Passionflower: Melanie Simon melanievsimon2@gmail.com

The address to Lake Louisa State Park is 7305 U.S. Hwy 27, Clermont FL 34714. Directions: Go south on US27 about 5 miles south of Leesburg. The Park is on the west side of US 27.

FNPS Conference – Thursday, May 16 through Sunday, May 19, 2019

The 39th Florida Native Plant Society's Annual Conference will be May 16 – 19 held at Plantation on Crystal River. The theme for the Conference is "Transitions". Plan to enjoy world-class speakers, field trips, plant sales, workshops, socials and more. Go to www.fmpps.org/conference/2019 for full information and registration is now open. Crystal River is just west of Lake County on the Gulf Coast. This location is the closest to us for the conference in several years, so take this opportunity to attend. See you there!

May 19, 2019 Regular Meeting is cancelled

Since many of our members are planning to attend the FNPS Conference, it was decided to cancel the May 19 meeting. Hoping to see you at Crystal River instead.

Field Trip – Sunday, June 16, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

Celebrate Father's Day and give the gift of time spent in nature with the Lake Beautyberry and Passionflower chapters of the Florida Native Plant Society. Join us at Flat Island Preserve on June 16 at 10:00 a.m. We will hike through a hardwood hammock surrounded by the Okahumpka Marsh. Flat Island Preserve is a Lake County Water Authority property formerly owned by renowned botanists for its diversity of plant life. Expect to see lovely sprawling Live Oaks, beautiful Magnolias, orchids, ferns and much, much more.

Please bring bug spray, long sleeve shirts, pants and water to drink. A bagged lunch is also a good idea if you would like to stay for a group picnic after the hike. All parties will meet in the parking lot at 10:00 a.m. where we will gather for a brief introduction before heading out.

The address to the preserve is 2388 Owens Road, Leesburg, FL 34748. Directions: Follow US 27 southbound from Leesburg. Turn right onto CR25A. Continue north 0.5 mile, then turn left onto Owens Road, a narrow dirt road. After 0.6 mile, you will reach the preserve entrance and parking area, with its large trail kiosk and Florida Trail sign. Contact: April McClain: 352-988-0374

President's Message "What's Your Thing?"

by Lavon Silvernell

As I was trying to find inspiration for this President's Message, I went to the FNPS website:

www.fnps.org. The site contains a range of information from State and local chapter's events like the up-coming May conference at nearby Crystal River, to native plants for your landscape, to FNPS Chapter administrative tools, and much more. At the website I spotted a blog interview of Taylor Figueroa, President of Pine Lily Chapter, FNPS. One of the questions she was asked is, "What's your thing?" It made me think about the many reasons I or others are involved in Beautyberry. What is our "thing"? See if one or more of them fits you as you read down.

Native plants touch our heart and soul. They evoke a sense of place and connection with nature and its seasonal changes. The sights, smells and tastes stimulate memories: a glowing white tree of wild plum blossoms, the chocolate smell of green eyes, smilax shoots to nibble, the multi-species buzz of bees on the spiderwort, the patter of falling oak leaves ... they all mean Florida Spring and they are our respite from modern life.

Some of us love Florida native plants because we value the wild creatures: butterflies, pollinators, birds, fish, bears, even snakes and alligators. We know plants are the base of the food chain. That each link in that chain has a unique role, making it indispensable to the functioning whole. Hackberry tree to woolly aphid – to saddlebag dragonflies – to swallowtail kites. For some of us the value of native plants is their role in creating habitat for our wildlife friends. We might have started with a butterfly garden, bird feeder and nest boxes. But as we leaned more, we added native trees, shrub, and ground covers in a configuration that provides habitat for multiple species in our landscape.

Participating in fieldtrips is good exercise, fun and educational. As we ID the native plants we learn about the interconnections of those plants, wildlife, soil and water. We begin to understand the need for large tracts of conservation lands, to support populations of plants and wildlife, to protect water, allowing the movement of species to ensure genetic diversity and the connectivity to adapt to change. Conservation lands require funding for purchase and funding for management. Emails and letters to advocate for those funds is one of our FNPS goals. If you really want to get involved, participating in land management reviews can be rewarding too.

If you love details, you might find scientific names and the terms for botanical processes fascinating. It is a whole new language and enjoyable and mentally stimulating to learn. You will also find that when you understand the term that defines the intricacies of a natural function, like the word "eutrophic", you now understand how changes like too much lawn and too many nutrients can disrupt the functioning of an entire system from your Florida yard to the oceans.

The natural world is important, but many people attend that first native plant meeting because a friend invites them. They are not necessarily native plant devotees, they come back because they enjoy the people. They might find themselves bringing refreshments, or helping to weed, maybe participating in outreach activities to the community. They enjoy the fieldtrips and seeing the beauty of nature from a botanist point of view. Most importantly they form connections and make friends, they feel part of something important and something that is making a difference in the present and the future.

When I retired, I needed to feel my life had meaning and value. I needed a mission. My "thing" became, "Changing the style of landscaping for water, wildlife and the next generation". Beautyberry provides me with a forum to work toward that goal. How about you; what's your thing? Have you found a niche in Beautyberry that is satisfying to you? Keep browsing through this newsletter and you will find lots of ways to make a difference in your life, yard, neighborhood and beyond. Perhaps your mission will be to add some new ideas and energy to Lake Beautyberry, FNPS. I would love to hear from you. My email: lavonsilvernell@gmail.com.

Annual Meeting Report

After our program on January 2, 2019, President Lavon Silvernell called the Annual Meeting to order. She reported that there is \$2,165 in the treasury and outgoing Treasurer Mary Davis has prepared a Budget for 2019. Lavon also said congratulations to Mary on her recent marriage to John Nichols and their friends gave their well wishes to Mary and John as they set off on their life together.

Patricia Burgos said she had researched a new display board for outreach presentations which she described. Upon motion, second and vote, the display board will be purchased.

Lavon gave a pat on the back to our chapter for a successful Year 2018 mentioning 6 programs, 6 field trips, a successful workshop for 40 participants, the native garden at Discovery Gardens and numerous outreach events around Lake County. Regular Planning Meetings have made for a smooth year. She announced that Patricia Burgos is our new representative to the state FNPS organization and Wendy Poag is now serving on the state Education Committee.

Next Lavon presented the slate of Officers for the coming year as follows: President Lavon Silvernell, Vice President for Programs John Benton, Vice President for Field Trips April McClain, Secretary Nadine Foley and Treasurer Barbara Loudon. Incoming Officers joined hands with one another and the members present to recite the pledge to the Chapter's Mission.

Committee Opportunities: while many of the chapter's "nuts and bolts" committees have volunteers to handle chapter work there are open opportunities to advance and expand ideas that would be good to pursue. John Benton is taking on the Roadside Wildflower Project and is looking for more help for that undertaking. We could have a Landscape Committee that could offer yard surveys and assessments if we had a volunteer to lead and others to help. Land Management Reviews could be another good area in cooperation with the established FNPS State Committee. Could someone or two handle parking efficiently when we have busy Program meetings? Well, just a few ideas and the active committees could always use a few more volunteers. Be a greeter at meetings and/or fieldtrips. Fill a slot at public outreach events. Bring something for our hospitality table at meetings. (Thank you to all for that!) Please let any of the Officers know how you would like to help and contribute to the success of our chapter. Officer's contacts are on the front page. Here's to another good year – our 19th year in 2019!!

Roadside Wildflowers

At our Annual Meeting in January, our guest speaker was Lisa Roberts, the Executive Director of the Florida Wildflower Foundation. While the FWF has a broad mission of fostering wildflowers in the state of Florida, Lisa's talk was on the topic of Roadside Wildflowers in particular at this meeting. Lisa noted with 12,000 miles of roads in Florida, there is ample opportunity for vast acres to be managed for pollinator habitat, biologically diverse native vegetation and aesthetically pleasing wildflowers along our highways and byways.

FDOT spends \$15 million tax dollars to mow roads each year. An 8 – 15 foot safety strip along each road is kept mowed, but beyond that strip there is often more right of way that can be managed for wildflowers. Lake County is in FDOT District 5 and the new manager seems to be on our page of managing for wildflowers.

Lake County has adopted a resolution to encourage roadside wildflowers pointing to ecotourism values, support of pollinators and ecosystem services. The county's resolution has not as yet chosen nor designated any specific roads. About 8 years ago a pamphlet on wildflowers on certain routes was published as a guide to finding wildflowers along roads in Lake County. Beautyberry Chapter and FNPS members were involved with the search and location of those routes.

Lisa gave guidelines for establishing a Roadside Wildflower program for the roads in Lake County. First, establish a committee with a chair person. Review the present resources. Survey possible roads and pick some with existing, naturally occurring native plant communities. Use rural roads with broad shoulders. Bring these possibilities to the attention of county government.

Lisa described the program begun in 2008 and 2009 existing in 15 counties in the Florida Panhandle with beautiful wildflower roadsides. Perhaps you have seen them in your north Florida travels. They found the military lands along their roads to be wonderful to work with on this project. After forming the committee then recruit partners from farms and nurseries, garden clubs, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists (IFAS), other environmental groups, HOA's, and adjacent landowners and businesses. In closing, Lisa invited everyone to attend the Wildflower Symposium to be held April 12 and 13, 2019 in Gainesville. Registration and all details are at the FWF website: www.FlaWildflowers.org.

Lake Roadside Wildflower Project

John Benton, Lake Beautyberry Vice President, has stepped up to organize a group of interested citizens to explore the possibility of establishing a roadside wildflower program in Lake County. He has recently established a group in Google Groups for this purpose. If you are interested in joining this group or for more information, contact John at: 352-250-7847 or jbenton3@gmail.com. John also welcomes photos of native plants, home landscapes, interesting habitat, field trips and chapter activities to be posted on our chapter's website.

Overnight Trip to the Lake Wales Ridge

Some of our chapter members joined the OVAS Audubon overnight trip planned by Clyde Stephens in February. We visited Highland Hammock State Park on the way enjoying the park and the history. This park was originally constructed by the CCC boys during the depression in the 1930's. To this day the buildings are in excellent condition and in day to day use. Then, we traveled onward to the Archbold Biological Station south of Lake Placid. We enjoyed room and board at the Lodge there for two days. The second day was busy with a walking tour of the scrub habitat at Archbold in the morning. After lunch, the group drove to the nearby Buck Island Ranch for an Eco-Buggy tour of the massive and beautiful ranch which combines working ranch and agro-ecology research and conservation. A highlight there was seeing the rather rare Crested Caracaras strutting proudly about up close and personal along with many species of birds that call these ranchlands and waters home. The third day was a visit to Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Compliments of Clyde we enjoyed learning the history of that area before heading home. This is Clyde's home area and he provided recollections from his youth. So, if you are sorry you missed this trip, fear not. April is already at work planning a fall 2019 overnight to Archbold and the area, timing it for the fall wildflower peak. So plan to be a part of the next visit to this unique area of Florida, the Lake Wales Ridge.

Thank You, Barbara Grigg

At our Annual Meeting our chapter recognized Barbara Grigg for her years of service to the Lake Beautyberry Chapter. Barbara offered some information on her background. A native of Lake County she did her undergraduate work at Florida Southern in Lakeland in Biology and her graduate work at the University of Tennessee in Botany specializing in Lichens. She taught Botany in Maryland for her career until retirement in 1984 when she and Tony returned to her childhood home in Sorrento. Barbara has a special place in the history of the Tarflower Chapter of FNPS as she was a member there since 1991. She was a founding member of Lake Beautyberry in 2000. She has inspired us to learn the botanical names as well as the common names of the plants we encounter on field trips.

A prolific native plant gardener and propagator, Barbara has used her energy and skill to produce plants for Discovery Gardens, PEAR Park, LCWA Preserves and Lake County natural lands. She has

provided hundreds – OK more likely thousands – of plants to share with all of our chapter members and friends. In 2012, she received the FNPS Green Palmetto Award. Thank you so very much Barbara for sharing your knowledge and your love of our native plants.

Lake Beautyberry Chapter Representative Report

By Patricia Burgos

The Florida Native Plant Society's Executive Board, Committees and Chapter Representatives met on February 16, 2019 at The Lodge at Wakulla Springs for their annual retreat. Highlights of the meeting include the following:

- ** The Annual Conference at the Plantation on Crystal River from May 16 – 19, 2019 is scheduled and members may sign-up now at www.fnps.org/conference/2019 . Great topics and fieldtrips.
- ** Juliette Rynear, FNPS Executive Director announced that this past year there were 25,000 volunteer hours, which translates to \$617,250 and can be used as a match for grants. (Reminder to put in any hours that you volunteered for our chapter.)
- ** Membership went up 7.6% this past year and we currently have 4,290 FNPS members. For Lake Beautyberry Chapter, **94 members** according to the February numbers.
- ** FNPS has updated their handbook of all things FNPS. A link is located at the bottom of the website for any member to review.
- ** FNPS presented four goals: A. Diversifying revenues. B. Building Organizational Capacity. C. Upgrading the Website. D. Improving the Annual Conference to market to a diverse population.
- ** FNPS announced that their fundraising goals had been exceeded. Susan Carr, Society President has a match of \$5,000 that was met and an additional \$13,000 was donated.
- ** FNPS discussed compliance with FNPS Bylaws (which are getting reviewed) specifically in the areas of the GEL, charity registration, taxes, financial oversight and chapter bylaws.
- ** FNPS recommending that all chapters do their due diligence on background checks on board members at the local level to prevent any financial or legal mishaps.
- ** Discussion of three ongoing projects regarding the Warea land protection acquisition in Marion County, the Endangered Torreya Project in the Panhandle and the Southeast Legislative Policy. If chapter members want to know more, please visit FNPS Facebook Page or www.fnps.org.
- ** If any member is interested in being more active at the state level there are open positions on the Board including, Membership Chair, President Elect, VP Admin, VP Finance and two Directors at Large. If you are interested, please let Lavon or Patricia know.
- ** Help is needed on the following committees – Education, Communication and Membership. If you are interested, please let Lavon or Patricia know.
- ** Policy and Legislation Committee Priority Issues for 2019:
 1. Restore Funding for Land Conservation through Florida Forever.
 2. Responsible Management of Existing Conservation Lands.
 3. Comprehensive and Holistic Protection of Water Resources.
 4. Recognition of Florida's Extreme Vulnerability to Sea Level Rise.
 5. Research to Evaluate the Threat of Texas Phoenix Palm Decline.
 6. Funding for Endangered Plant Research.
 7. Chapter Level Outreach to legislators.
- ** Discussion at the state level on a variety of topics including developing a model Land Development Code that can be shared with counties and municipalities, finalizing FNPS Land Management Review reporting form template, developing a delegation statement template for members to use when addressing elected officials, finalizing October Native Plant Month template, inserting Florida Native Plant training modules into Master Naturalist, Master Gardener, Pesticide Applicator, Best Management Practices and Arborist trainings, and creating YouTube videos on our iconic ecosystems.

There are so many exciting things going on at the state level and a topic for everyone. If you are interested in helping, please let Lavon or I know and we can hook you up with the right person. Submitted by Patricia Burgos, 352-516-4825.

“A Planet Friendly Life and Landscape”

Last November, our President Lavon Silvernell presented a program with her ideas for living sustainably. She encouraged her audience to make a difference locally and right at home, each in our own small way. Follow the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle mantra.

Buy reusable rather than disposable.

Fill your own water bottle.

Reduce packaging waste where possible.

Keep the tote bags handy for your shopping trips.

Repair rather than replace.

Find items made from recycled materials.

Hang the clothes out on a line to dry - the original “solar dryer.

Moving on to your home landscape, Lavon said remember to provide space for habitat for the wildlife. Include Water, Food and Shelter. Use native plants to provide seeds, berries, shelter and food for insects and larva. Manage the water that falls on your yard letting it perk into the ground. If you are on a slope, use a berm and/or swale for water to slow down. Minimize impervious surfaces and catch roof runoff in rain gardens or rain barrels. There is more nitrogen in rain water and it is so good for your plants.

Retain leaves and pine needles for your own mulch.

If you have the space, grow some of your own food. Try a plant based meal every now and then. Do some creative problem solving in your own life and help our planet remain sustainable.

Editors Note: Thank you to all the contributors to this newsletter and for the planning ahead that has been done for 2019.