



April – July 2020

The Beautyberry

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

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<http://lakebeautyberry.fnpschapters.org/>

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Lake Beautyberry Chapter – Spring/Summer –April – July 2020 Calendar

Yard Tour – Had been planned for Saturday April 18, 2020. As with so many plans this Spring, due to the coronavirus, the yard tour was cancelled. However, to the rescue came Gina and Ken Skillings, who had done much of the planning for the Yard Tour. They submitted a virtual tour of their home landscape and it is now posted on our chapter's website: <http://lakebeautyberry.fnpschapters.org/> showing their beautiful landscape featuring native plants in all their glory. Be sure to check it out and thank you Gina and Ken.

Earth Day – Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Take a moment or an hour and commune with our dear Mother Earth on this special day, the 50th year of celebrating Earth Day. The date in 1970 saw 20 million Americans in the streets to express their desire for clean air and water. In the decade that followed, 28 critical environmental laws were passed including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. Now, we need to confront climate change and guard our environmental protections which regularly come under attack. Please see elsewhere in this newsletter for places to visit in Lake County to enjoy our local natural areas.

Program Meeting – Sunday, May 17, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Since the Florida Native Plant Society had to postpone the Annual Conference, we will tentatively plan a meeting in May on our regular meeting day, May 17. April McClain will plan a speaker for the program. Check the chapter's website and local advice on group gatherings as we get closer to that date.

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 general public.

Insect Study at Ellis Acres – Saturday, June 6, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Lavon Silvernell has planned this Field Trip for our chapter and she sends this information to all. Cross fingers, life will be back to normal by June 6th and you can join Lake Beautyberry, FNPS, for a field trip to Ellis Acres Reserve, led by Wendy Poag, Recreation Coordinator, Lake County Parks and Trails. This trip will focus not just on native plants but on native insects as well. Typically, gardeners are not too fond of insects but for native gardeners, insects are one of the reasons to grow native plants. Native insects and plants are adapted to live and thrive together. Plants and bugs can have a balanced relationship while providing food for birds and other wildlife, which in turn helps to keep both populations in check. Many insects are beautiful and fascinating and a delightful addition to our wild landscapes in their own right.

So join us at Ellis Acres Reserve, with Wendy, one of Lake County's best Naturalists, to enjoy and learn about Native Plants and Native Insects. This activity will be fun and educational for attentive listeners of all ages. For more information, to confirm that we will be able to gather for this activity and to reserve a space, you may call during regular business of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday at 352-253-4950 or e-mail parksandtrails@lakecountyfl.gov. Ellis Acres address: 25302 County Road 42, Paisley, FL.

Program Meeting – Sunday, July 19, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Our guest speaker for our July meeting will be Brook Moffis, on “Garden Design” Brook is the Horticulture Agent at the University of Florida's Extension Office (Ag Center) at SR 19 and Woodlea Road south of Tavares. 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. For directions, please see page 1 of the Calendar.

Save the Date – Saturday, October 3, 2020. All Day at Green Isle Gardens, south of Groveland.

Looking ahead: The Wildflower Festival will be held at Green Isle Gardens on October 3, so mark your calendar now for this fun event. More details will be in the August newsletter and on the Website, but to be in on the planning, let Pres. John Benton know how you can help at 352-250-7847.

President's Message by John Benton

“...One type of oak, for example, is not the same as another. Wildlife are not that simplistic either. Each has its own unique habitat needs and unless you have a great many acres to play with, you have to target your planting efforts to those species you most want to support.” Craig Heugel – <https://werenofences.blogspot.com/2018/12/native-plant-landscaping.html>

I recently found Craig Heugel's excellent blog posts, where he describes his journeys in the various chapters of his life and gardening (<https://werenofences.blogspot.com/>). You can go back to his early posts through the archive. I recognize many of the topics that he writes about. What struck me most upon reading his posts is his declaration of intent in his garden. It is not simply a replacement of landscape standard plants with natives, but a creation of a few specific biological functions and selecting the best plants for that purpose. In Craig's instance, he is focusing on butterflies over the range of their life cycles.

I think about my own yard and how I have had some successes along with more than a few failures in replacing St. Augustine turf, removing camphor trees (big ones over the years and always the little ones), and moving toward – well, something better. And it is better, but wildlife and I would both be

better served to settle on a particular pathway – be it birds, butterflies, pollinators in general, etc., and make intentional selections and actions toward those goals. In increments, to be sure. I do not have the time or resources to do an instant anything, but that’s okay too.

There are many ways we can promote and celebrate native plants in this area, region and state. As a chapter, we have declared our intent to focus our support on a few things this year: contributing to the maintenance of the Warea Tract, funding acquisition of more conservation lands, supporting students and young professionals in their work and career paths with Florida plants and creating more rewarding involvement for our chapter members. We had an uplifting and energizing start to this new year with the January “Taste of the Future” meeting and some wonderful opportunities are coming along (after we can do social things once more). We will continue to do things that we have done successfully for the past twenty years, but as we make choices and add activities, let’s focus on our selected chapter priorities. I ask for your assistance and support in these efforts. And we will have some fun along the way, too.

Lake Beautyberry Annual Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2020 at TLNC, Eustis FL by Sec. Nadine Foley

Before the Annual Meeting, members and guests had the opportunity to buy native plants as they entered, then were welcomed at the sign-in table where they could obtain native plant information, FNPS information and gather the Theme of “A Taste of the Future” for our 20th year celebration. Gina Skillings had a display table of books and information on eating a more plant-based diet. Nadine Foley had a table of memorabilia from our chapter’s earlier days.

By 2:00 p.m. the refreshment table was laden with plant-based refreshments and native plant teas provided by our members and President Lavon Silvernell welcomed all to the meeting and invited everyone to sample the various refreshments and sit down and enjoy each other’s company at the tables decorated with native plants and flowers.

At 2:40 p.m. the refreshments were pronounced as very tasty and thanks were given to all who provided new and delicious plant-based recipes. Then, Lavon called the Annual Meeting to order. In recognition of our chapter’s 20th Year celebration, she called on Nadine to tell of the founding of our chapter. Nadine gave a summary similar to what she had written in the two previous newsletters about our founding days in late 1999 and early 2000. Then she added her thanks to all those who became members of FNPS in late 1999 and specifically to Barbara and Tony Grigg for their early encouragement as continuing Tarflower members bringing knowledge and a scientific approach as the new members began their native plant education. Programs and field trips rapidly expanded the new group’s appreciation for the role of Florida native plants.

Also, Patricia Burgos and Wendy Poag were thanked for their sharing of their professional knowledge in habitat and land management and Lavon Silvernell for her contribution in education efforts through Trout Lake Nature Center and general public outreach. In closing, Nadine said that the final benefit of the chapter’s formation was the bringing together of a group of wonderful and caring people and the finding of many new friends with common interests. So, onward with new people joining in as we launch into another decade for our chapter.

Next, Lavon led several members in a Toast to Nadine as our founding “Big Sis: with good natured anecdotes. Peg Urban had prepared a rotating slide show of photos of our chapter’s activities over the years. Lavon asked Treasurer Barbara Loudon for her report. Barbara had written copies of both her year end December 31, 2019 Report and her January 19, 2020 Annual Meeting Report available at the welcome table and copies of these reports are attached to these Minutes for the files. In summary, she

said we have \$4,144.18 in the bank to carry into our new year and to meet the Three Challenges we have set for our chapter in 2020.

Lavon and John Benton reported on the Roadside Wildflower project which is moving forward. The official power point is approved by the County and read for presentations.

Next Lavon moved to the Election of Officers for 2020 part of the Annual Meeting. The nominated slate of Officers was presented to the members as follow: For President, John Benton, for Vice President, April McClain, for Treasurer, Barbara Loudon and for FNPS Chapter Rep, Patricia Burgos. Lavon said the position of Secretary was open and asked if someone would be willing to serve. Neta Villaboso, a FNPS member and recent transfer to our Chapter volunteered to be Secretary. She was greeted with thanks and Lavon asked for a motion to accept the nominated slate. Cookie Wright made the motion and it was seconded by Peg Lindsay. There was no further discussion, Lavon called for the vote and the nominated Officers for 202 were elected unanimously. The new Officers and members joined hands and led by Lavon recited the pledge to serve Lake Beautyberry Chapter and FNPS in our mission to preserve, protect and restore the native plant communities of Florida.

Our new President John Benton guided a discussion on looking ahead to a new year saying there will be a planning meeting February and members will be notified as to date and time. Officers and Committee members should attend and all members are welcome to send in ideas or attend in person. He asked Nadine to describe Public Outreach, which she did and she asked for new volunteers to help at community events. If folks are new to it, she assured them that they would have an experienced person with them to show them the ropes at the event and that attending the events is fun in itself.

Next John said the next Field Trip will be to Saw Grass Preserve on February 29, 2020. Details to follow by e-mail and website. Then he called on April for a report on ideas for Member Special Events under consideration at present. She said ideas are being explored for overnight camping in tents or cabins, with canoeing or kayaking. Locations being considered are Lake Norris or Flat Island Preserves. She asked for input from members on such plans. Also, she suggested visiting small special habitats with unique plants. Another idea that can be planned is a visit at Green Isle Gardens with a bon fire gathering. She is open to ideas from the membership, too.

Next John asked Gina Skillings to report on planning for a Yard Tour/Progressive Dinner. She is thinking about a three-stop tour and is looking at routes in various areas of Lake County. She, too welcomes suggestions and volunteers for Host Yards. Then Patricia Burgos made suggestions for special activities for FNPS members only, such as a workshop at Ellis Acres or an identification of plants for Sustaining Members in their home landscapes.

The Annual Meeting formally ended at 4:20 p.m. Everyone joined in to cut the celebration Carrot Cake with four past Presidents: Nadine, Patricia, Peg Lindsay and Lavon and our new President John doing the honors.

Sawgrass Island Preserve Field Trip

By Neta Villalobos - Bell, Secretary

At the February Field Trip, attendees new to a native plant “hike” were forewarned this was more a leisurely “meander” in the woods than a hike. Sure enough, after 1 ½ hours, we were only 1 mile down the 3 mile trail. But, what a great “meander” it was. Trip leaders, Ben Gugliotti, Land Resource Director, LCWA, and Lavon Silvernell, Florida Naturalist, shared their combined knowledge about all things native from plants to animals, and scat (cougar and bobcat poop!) We tasted new growth tender-

tipped Greenbriar leaves (*Smilax spp.*), as well as seeds from a bare branch of Winged Sumac (*Rhus copallinum*) which was supposed to taste like lemon, after all another common name for it is the Lemonade Tree.

Just a few of the many Florida native plants identified were: Slash and Longleaf Pine (*Pinus elliotti* and *Pinus palustris*), Gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), Loblolly Bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), St. Andrew's Cross (*Hypericum hypericoides*) and St. Johns Wort (*Hypericum spp.*) Dahoon Holly (*Ilex cassine*), Broom Sedge (*Andropogon virginicus*), Hatpins (*Syngonanthus flavidulus*), Glades Lobelia (*Lobelia glandulosa*), Beggar-ticks (*Bidens mitis*) and Spanish Needles (*Bidens alba*), Chalky Bluestem (*Andropogon virginicus* var. *glaucus*), Saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), and much more.

Identification tips were dispersed: Cinnamon Fern has little tiny red hairs on the rachis.

- Chalky Bluestem has a chalky film on its leaves.
- Wax Myrtle has a thin waxy coat on its berries.
- And the favorite: Sedges have edges, rushes are round, And grasses have joints, when the cops aren't around.

Please join us on the next Lake Beautyberry field trip. One can always learn something new. See the Calendar for the Field Trip on June 6th to Ellis Acres for Insect Study.

Enjoy Some Nature Therapy

By Lavon Silvernell

No need to be trapped at home, get out and enjoy a little Nature Therapy. I am sure you are spending time enjoying the flowers, birds and insects in your own yard, but many of Lake County's natural resources are available too. Good for physical and mental health. Below is what is available as this newsletter goes to press. For updates on changes in Lake County visit:

<https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/COVID-19/> or some of the sites listed below.

- Lake County Water Authority properties are not open.
- **Lake County Parks and Trails** are open. The best source to visit for information on parks to visit is: <https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/offices/parks-and-trails/public-lands-management/acquisitions.aspx>
- **Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive:** The driving loop on the Orange County side is **closed**. The Lake County side of the Lake Apopka Loop Trail is **open** and can be accessed from the **Lake Apopka Loop Trail: Clay Island** entrance is **open**. This website gives you a nice preview of what to expect and directions: <https://floridahikes.com/clay-island>
- **Lake Apopka Loop Trail: Green Mountain Overlook** is **open**. This website gives you a preview and directions: <https://floridahikes.com/green-mountain>
- **Trout Lake Nature Center** is open their regular hours with some restrictions: <https://www.troutlakenaturecenter.com/>
- **Ocala National Forest. All recreation sites are closed.** But if you are adventurous you might try a day hike on some of these hiking trails. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/ocala/recreation/hiking/recarea/?recid=32318&actid=50>

Stay healthy mentally and physically. Get outdoors in your yard or on a trail.

March Program Meeting – Reported by Barbara Loudon

The March 15, 2020 meeting was held using social distancing principles. The planned speaker Nash Turley had to cancel as he had to adhere to the rules and work obligations as an UCF faculty member. We hope to schedule him again. In the business part of the meeting, 15 persons were in attendance, but

not a quorum of members so no business was conducted. Treasurer Barbara Loudon reported \$4,647.38 is in the treasury with the Three Challenges money carried over from last year.

Vice President April McClain presented “Florida Native Host Plants and the Butterflies that Use Them”. Her very interesting program defined “Native Plant” and “Larval Host Plant”. She listed most of the common butterflies in Florida and listed the host plant for each. At the close of her program, there were several host plants available for interested people.

Locally Produced Educational Materials

Our hard working and talented chapter members continue to amaze us. Patricia Burgos, FNPS Chapter Rep and Wendy Poag, FNPS Education Committee Chairman have each risen to the challenge of producing educational materials reflecting our local habitats, native plants and wildlife which is being encouraged by FNPS statewide.

Patricia has planned, written and developed an eight-page folded brochure called “Mow Less...Provide More! Homeowner’s Guide to Practicing Sustainability in the Landscape”. Her educational message is concise, factual and full of information. The brochure is graced by the detailed plant and wildlife drawings by Gene Packwood.

Wendy Poag has produced colorful and informative book marks featuring the artwork by Ray Grayford on one side. His environmental artwork is on kiosks at entrances to Lake County Public Lands. And the backside of the bookmark features local eco-systems and the native plants found there. The idea behind these projects is to have our chapter’s and FNPS’s information on each educational handout and ultimately to share the content digitally. Production costs are being considered by our Board presently. Hopefully we will soon have some for our members and to share with others.

Report from Foley Meadow & Glen by Nadine Foley

“Hunkering In” does have its advantages. Early on in the staying-at-home period, I took a walk out to the far north east corner of my acreage. It was early in March and I wondered if I would find the Sky Blue Lupine out there in spite of dry weather. Oh! Joy! There it was! All in bloom in their circles of lovely blue on that white, sandy hillside. As I walked and enjoyed that beauty, I saw the Prickly Pear Cactus was all budded up for their bloom. Good news for all the Gopher Tortoises out there. They will love the fallen fruits later this spring. Meanwhile, they are busy with spring cleaning of their burrows. When we finally got a nice rain in April, the Prickly Pears burst into their bright yellow blooms. Also, the young growth on the Silver-leafed Golden Asters portends a lovely bloom next fall out on the sandy hillside.

I walked west then and enjoyed seeing the mighty Oaks in their fresh, spring-green leaved finery. What a gorgeous color! I am so glad I planted those small, bare-root slips back in 1990. Mercy! But nature is grand.

Down along the shore of Peanut Pond, in early spring, a pair of Sandhill Cranes courted for days. All is quiet now. I am hoping that means I will see a couple of young ones walking with the folks before they learn to fly, maybe yet in April. The Limpkin is also in silent mode now, too. There are new piles of empty Apple Snail shells though so it may be that young ones are being well fed.

Take care everyone and stay well. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our newsletter. Nadine