

**July – November 2014**

**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 2014 Calendar**

**Program Meeting** – Sunday, July 20, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

The program meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. for plant exchange, library, handouts, refreshments and socializing. Get your new Lake Beautyberry logo T-shirt to wear at upcoming chapter events for just \$10.00. At 2:30 p.m. our program will be presented by Lavon Silvernell, Naturalist. The topic is “Hummingbird Habitat” and Lavon’s talk will help you assess your backyard from a hummer’s perspective. She will let you know how you can help those little dynamos meet their needs for food, water and shelter at your home. An additional visual treat will be Peg Urban’s photos of native wildflowers with hummingbird appeal which will inspire you to add some of these beauties to your yard.

The meeting will be held at the Trout Lake Nature Center, Eustis. 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 public is welcome at our program meetings.

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

The next workdays will be held August 6, September 3, October 1 and November 5. Barbara Grigg and her regular helpers need a few more workers to tend and improve the native garden and the rain garden at Discovery Gardens, the Ag Center at Woodlea Road and SR 19 south of Tavares. They will be glad of your help and if you have a native plant to add to the garden, please let Barbara know at 383-3631.

**Program Meeting** at Cooper Memorial Library – Saturday, August 2, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.

The program will be “Hummingbird Habitat” by Lavon Silvernell, see above. It will be held at the Cooper Memorial Library, 2525 Oakley Seaver Drive, Clermont. Free and open to the public. Contact: Jon Pospisil at 407-448-6195.

**No Field Trip in August** – Take a break! We will be busy in October!

**Chapter Potluck Picnic and Walk** – Sunday, September 21, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

This year we will hold our potluck picnic at the home of Myra Zuclich at 15555 SE 190<sup>th</sup> Avenue Road, Weirsdale 32195 located near the Ocklawaha River. You will travel on CR 42 running between Weirsdale and Altoona. Going west, about 3 miles west of CR 452 you will cross the bridge and see Nelson's Fish Camp. Continue west to SE 190<sup>th</sup> Ave. Rd. and turn right (north), then proceed .6 mile to the cabin. If traveling east on CR 42, watch for the turn onto SE 190<sup>th</sup> Ave. Rd. about 1 mile before you get to the bridge. There is plenty of parking. Myra has 3 picnic tables and chairs, but you may wish to bring a folding chair. Bring a picnic dish to share and we will eat at about 2:00 p.m. when we are assembled. Lavon Silvernell will offer a walking tour after lunch. There are 10 acres of natural area and Myra's neighbors have graciously agreed to make their adjoining property available for walking and using their dock to view the Ocklawaha River. They are across from the dike at Sunnyhill Restoration Area. Myra's contact is 352-502-6878.

**Wings and Wildflowers Festival** – Friday – Sunday, October 3-5, 2014

Make your plans now to enjoy the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wings & Wildflowers Festival held this year at Venetian Gardens, Leesburg with many field trips around the county, workshops and educational programs scheduled. Registration is open at [www.wingsandwildflowers.com](http://www.wingsandwildflowers.com) or call 352-742-3924. Our chapter will have a native plant information table. We will need volunteers to host the table on all days. Plan to enjoy the festival and help for a few hours. Myra Zuclich will coordinate volunteers. Please contact her at 352-502-6878 in September to sign up for a day and time slot.

**Black Bear and Wildlife Conservation Festival** – Saturday, October 11, 2014 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Enjoy this chance to visit the Ocala National Forest on escorted tours or visit the exhibits in Cadwell Park, Umatilla. Vendors bring foods, crafts and wildlife related items. Speakers and music are scheduled all day. Our chapter will have native plant information to hand-out. Come to enjoy the festival and help out at our table for awhile. Call Myra to volunteer at 352-502-6878.

**Field Trip** – Friday, October 17, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

This field trip will be to the LCWA Flat Island Preserve, south of Leesburg. Lavon Silvernell is planning it as two parts. The first will be a walk at the Wildflower Meadow to visit this restoration area. Some seeds our members have collected have been planted there and we will see how this site is coming along. Next a break for a snack back at the parking area, then for those who care to do it, a longer walk to botanize and/or bird watch on the Island Hammock Trail. There is much to enjoy with upland hardwood forests and wetlands with diverse plants.

As usual for a field trip, bring water, sunscreen, insect repellent, hat and wear comfortable walking shoes. At the end we can picnic together back at the parking area. Directions to Flat Island: Go south from Leesburg on US 27 to CR 25A and turn off to the right, then right on Owens Road to the entrance. There are Flat Island signs for guidance. Lavon's cell is 352-223-4761. The public is welcome.

**Program Meeting** - Sunday, November 16, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held at the Trout Lake Nature Center, Eustis. President Peg Lindsay is arranging with speaker Deborah Green to be our presenter. More details as available. Contact Peg at 352-326-2045. The public is welcome. Directions to TLNC on page one of the Calendar.

## President's Message by Peg Lindsay

Last month I spoke at the public hearing about peat mining in Goose Prairie. The gist of my comments were: Peat has value – to the landowners and to the company that will mine the peat; The intact prairie has value to ALL of the citizens of Lake County and all of the people of Florida. I asked the Commissioners to table the vote; go and visit a site where peat mining has been completed; and go and visit Goose Prairie. And then decide if what they would get with a “yes/mine” vote has more value than this intact, pristine basin marsh. Linda Bystrak, a member of our chapter and President of the local Audubon chapter, also spoke against the mining of peat at this site.

I sat through hours of comments and learned that the company mining the peat is a local company with an excellent relationship with its employees. The owners are responsible businessmen with an excellent reputation within the community. The peat will be used locally to make a potting soil for the local nursery industry. They plan to “restore” the site after the mining has been completed – “restore” the site to a freshwater lake.

There were many speakers, both pro and con.

Charles Lee, a Director with Florida Audubon, spoke eloquently. He noted all the places in the Lake County Comprehensive Plan where Goose Prairie is mentioned as an area of special ecological significance and therefore must be preserved. He noted the name of the place is after all, Goose Prairie, not Goose Lake.

Those of us who spoke against the mining of peat at Goose Prairie are not against the mining of peat, just the mining of peat **at this site**. We thought it was protected by language in the Comprehensive Plan.

After all the public comments, County staff assured the Commissioners that the Comprehensive Plan did NOT prohibit the mining of peat at this site! The subsequent vote was 4 to 1 in favor of mining. Goodbye Goose Prairie, hello Goose Lake. (Commissioner Connor was the only “no” vote. Everyone please send him a thank-you note.)

This brings me to the moral of the story. Unless lands with special ecological significance are protected, either by outright purchase or conservation easement, anything goes. Rezoning can happen. Irreplaceable habitats can be destroyed.

We worked hard last year to get Amendment 1 on the ballot. Vote “yes” this November for Amendment 1.

**AND MAKE SURE ALL YOUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND RELATIVES WHO CAN VOTE IN FLORIDA'S NOVEMBER ELECTION ALSO VOTE “YES”.**

### **AMENDMENT 1:**

Water and Land Conservation - Dedicates funds to acquire and restore Florida conservation and recreation lands

#### **SUMMARY:**

Funds the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire, restore, improve, and manage conservation lands including wetlands and forests; fish and wildlife habitat; lands protecting water resources and drinking water sources, including the Everglades, and the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; beaches and shores; outdoor recreational lands; working farms and ranches; and historic or geologic sites, by dedicating 33 percent of net revenues from the existing excise tax on documents for 20 years.

There are excellent websites with more information. Here's one:

<http://www.voteyeson1fl.org/sections/page/amendment>

## Report on the May 2014 Council of Chapters Meeting & Conference

Dear Fellow Beautyberry FNPSers,

As I expect to be in Kansas, re-unioning with extended family during our July meeting and didn't want you to have to wait for an update on state level activities until after everything I told you would be old news, I've put together this written update.

Our Society's annual conferences are always information packed and inspirational events with so much to do that no one person can really take it all in, and in that regard, this year's Conference was no exception. However, it was also an exceptionally well organized and well run event which added a great deal to its enjoyment. We all owe a great big "Thank You !!!" to the Coccoloba chapter and to Marlene Rodak, the conference chair.

I always especially enjoy the field trips in different parts of the state a bit farther from home, places I don't get to enjoy all that often & this year's in southwest Florida were no exception. Everyone I talked to really liked their chosen experience. My Thursday trip focused on gulf coast barrier islands like Lovers Key, a new island that did not exist before the 1950's. Our guide was Dr. Tonya Clayton author of the book How to Read a Gulf Coast Beach. As we botanized along the gulf side beach, she explained the natural processes which created the island and are still adding land to one part while another part is being eaten away.

In terms of Society business, this conference was the first time the Council of Chapters met as an official body, separate from the Board. There was a little bit of wheel spinning, but our chair, Tarflower's Julie Becker had a well planned agenda. Though he was not part of the formal structure of the Council, Richard Brownscombe, President of the Broward Chapter, had over the prior few months with the help of a couple others, taken on the task of pulling together a written, Standard Operating Procedure for the Council of Chapters. We'd had an opportunity to review their efforts for a couple weeks before the conference. They were fairly general, but I thought very well done and they were quickly adopted without amendment.

Next we had to try to decide where to focus our efforts as a Council. A number of people had wanted the Chapter Council to organize itself into three regional working groups. Though that will surely come up again and may eventually come into place, as we looked at the priorities we'd set during the strategic planning process, three stood out. I'd suggested that getting native plants into home & commercial landscapes should be a priority, and not just because I've recently started trying to pick up a few extra pennies by helping people put natives into their home landscapes. We really have barely scratched the potential of what could be done in this regard and doing so would not only add healthy habitat in our urban environments ala Doug Tallamy, but increase awareness & support for our broader mission. How to do it, remains to be seen. That will be part of the future work of the Council. But this objective did garner the biggest vote of support from the group. Land Use Planning was the second area of focus, put forward by Jenny Welch from the Pine Lily Chapter. If you read the papers or are on Linda Bystrak's email list (if you're not, ask Linda to add you), then you know why they wanted help in this area – the Osceola County Commission recently repealed the entire Conservation Element from their Comprehensive Plan. The final area of concentration started out as something like "using field trips to educate children and adults about native plants," but morphed into a broader focus on Education in chapters and in schools.

But I saved what I think is the best for last. Thanks in large measure to the efforts of Linda Bystrak, FNPS has added its voice to others to try to nudge forward a re-examination of the conservation status of water lettuce. This topic was already on the radar of a number of FNPSers (one of the conference science sessions featured one of the scientists whose work Linda referenced in her remarks to our chapter) but I think Linda's letter was what really got the ball rolling.

Here's how it happened. Linda had prepared a letter to the FNPS Board seeking their assistance in pushing for a reconsideration of water lettuce. One evening she gave it to me to pass along to the right person. I was late for dinner that evening, but gave it to Martha Stuert, our Society Secretary. As most folks were already eating with groups of friends, I wandered around looking for a spot to sit down and found one close to Bill Korn, the Division of Forestry's "Mr. Land Management Review." Over the past two decades, Bill has been the spark plug on 90% or more of the reviews of state lands and was doing a lunch session on reviews for us the next day. Since I'd gotten to know Bill through the 10 or 12 reviews I'd been on, we had quite a bit to talk about. As our soon to be elected president, Anne Cox had so many people talking to her about so many things that it was quite late by the time she had a chance to get some food. She looked around and joined Bill and me, mostly I'm sure to talk to Bill, since Anne has been the real engine behind our Society's extremely successful Land Management Partners Committee. During the course of dinner, as our leadership tried to decide who should handle it, Linda's letter was passed around a few times. Finally, a little while after Anne sat down with us, someone brought it to Anne, which gave me the chance to tell her both a bit about the author of the letter and how much she does for us in Lake County, and about water lettuce and Trout Lake as an example. Thank you Linda ! Informal interactions like this are another part of what make our conferences so valuable to all who attend. I hope you will join us next year (April I think) in Tallahassee.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Pospisil

## **Benefits of Some Aquatic Plants**

At the March 16 program meeting Vice President Carol Ann Hook introduced our speaker Linda Bystrak. She said that Linda has two degrees from the University of Maryland. Linda taught Biology and Chemistry for 11 years to high school students and then Environmental Science, Aquatic Ecology, Biology and Microbiology for 11 years to college students. Before moving to Lake County, she was a naturalist at three different nature centers. Since moving here in 2002, Linda has used her knowledge serving on the Board of the Lake County Water Authority and she presently is a Board Supervisor with the Lake Soil & Water Conservation District. Linda is an avid kayaker and is the current President of the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society.

Linda gave an interesting power point program with excellent photos called “Benefits of Some Aquatic Plants”. In listing the benefits of aquatic plants in general, Linda first mentioned that plants produce oxygen both for in the air and in the water. Sufficient oxygen in the water allows fish and other life to thrive. Plants provide shelter for small species on up to alligators. They provide hunting platforms for birds even as large as herons. They also provide resting sites for small birds and insects. Aquatic plants make for camouflage and spawning areas for fish and frogs and food for animals and humans.

Manatees eat water hyacinths and their favorite plant, water lettuce. Plants are food for Apple Snails and in turn the snails are food for Limpkins and Snail Kites. Linda provided a summary of the discussion on spraying to control Hydrilla, an exotic plant species. At Lake Tohopekaligo, in a strange turn of events, there are now two exotic plants (hyacinths and hydrilla) producing food for large exotic snails which are now providing a good food source which may end up in the saving of the Snail Kite, an endangered bird species.

Over the eons, water plants have provided food for humans as well as wildlife. Wild Rice has long been harvested by mankind and is an indicator of good quality water. Parts of water plants are edible including roots of Duck Potato, all parts of Cat-Tails including pollen and spring shoots, the raw or cooked seeds of Pickeral Weed and the young leaves, too. Linda read from an info sheet prepared by Yvonne Rice some years ago on Wild Edible Plants in Lake County. These sheets are available on the handout table at our meetings.

Linda also described some aquatic plants with medicinal properties including Pennywort for arthritis and the roots of Marshmallow which have a latex sap and can be mixed with egg whites and sugar for a wound healer or as a cough suppressant.

Other benefits of aquatic plants are their important role in protecting the shorelines from erosion, as a biofuel source and filtering marshes to remove harmful nutrients. Linda mentioned Orlando Wetlands Park east of Orlando and the Apopka Marsh Flow-way which has suffered from low water levels in recent years. The Kings Bay Phyto-remediation Project uses water hyacinths and water lettuce to filter the water. The plants were held in floating corrals and became a “salad bar” for manatees.

Many plants secrete chemicals for biocontrol. This alleopathic property targets other plants thereby protecting their turf. Target species are affected by toxins in different ways. Examples of plants that use this property are Black Walnut, Sugar Maple, Eucalyptus, Sycamore and Juniper trees, also peas and tobacco. Blue-green Algae produces a cyano-bacteria which affects the central nervous system. Penicillin is a fungus which prohibits bacterial growth. Hyper-eutrophic lakes develop Blue-green Algae and in our area it does not get cold enough to kill it in winter. All lakes in our Harris Chain of Lakes are polluted and Trout Lake is the worst of all.

Linda addressed the question about Water Lettuce, native or exotic? Bartram described it, drew its picture and recorded it as existing in many waterbodies in his travels. However, the state lists it as exotic and so it is sprayed to control it. Linda planned to bring this up at the FNPS Conference. Since Water Lettuce filters the water, it may be better to let it be in water bodies. In her final remarks, Linda said another benefit of the aquatic plants are their beauty which she had amply shown in her delightful photographs.

## The Gensheimer's Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat

By Chris Higgins

On Saturday, April 12, 2014, six Beautyberry Chapter members met at 11:00 a.m. at the Greg Gensheimer's property in Montverde. While I have been attending meetings for four years, I did not know what to expect from this field trip. Greg shared a Scavenger Hunt check list with us and we were off, feeding carrots to his horse, exploring the fields and yard and looking for the various components of wildlife habitat: water, cover, food and shelter to raise young. We saw water features and brush piles, low limbs and tall grass that afforded shelter and cover. The property includes a variety of native plants that provide food for animal visitors or residents, including birds, reptiles, and mammals. And, in addition, I learned that many of the "weeds" I had identified in my yard are larval hosts, provide nectar or are actually tasty treats for us, too. Smilax shoots taste like asparagus! Most surprising is that the small divots in my sandy yard are doodle bug "traps" for ants! I left wanting to know more about Greg's water to air geo-thermal heat pump system and being inspired to nurture Florida natives in my yard.

After the Gensheimer visit, we headed to Truscott Park, a small park on the shoreline of Lake Apopka. We had lunch at a picnic table, sharing our thoughts and snacks and then walked down a boardwalk to a covered dock. Along the way, we saw a huge (exotic, invasive) Chinaberry tree and its numerous offspring. On the lake we saw a variety of birds, Osprey eating fish, an Eagle and a Double-crested Cormorant. This field trip was fun as well as educational. I feel more connected to the leaders of the Beautyberry Chapter. I was comfortable asking my naïve questions and the other participants were very generous, making me feel welcome and sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm for flora and fauna (and also their snacks). I hope you will join us on the next field trip.

### Featured Plant – Resurrection Fern

Myra Zuchich gave the featured plant presentation at the May 11, 2014 meeting. She gave a short talk on the Resurrection Fern and handed around several specimens attached to various surfaces. This fern lives on large hardwood trees, oaks and magnolias, from the tropics up to Texas. Aptly named, the Resurrection Fern can dry out to become a desiccated, shriveled brown with leaves turned upside down and then it revives to green and it re-opens when it gets water. Most plants will die if they lose 70% or so of their moisture, but this remarkable fern can lose 97% of its moisture and still revive. Look for this pretty fern growing along the rough bark on big oak branches in the company of Butterfly Orchids and Bromeliads.

### Collecting Seeds for the LCWA Preserves

Our chapter members have been collecting seeds for the LCWA Preserves for more than a year now. We hope to see some plants coming along when we visit Flat Island Preserve in October, maybe even some flowers. We plan to keep on collecting seeds again this summer and fall. Harvest when dry and mature, then place in paper envelopes, label and turn in at a meeting to Shirley Heinzelman. The following are on the wish list:

Lopsided Indiangrass	Phoebanthus	Pineland Dropseed	Pityopus
Beardtongue	Liatris (any species)	Lovegrasses	Goldenrod
Blanketflower	Rudbeckia	Palafoxia	Bluecurls
Balduina	Andropogon	Wiregrass	Bee Balm
Partridge Pea		Thank you from Patricia Burgos, LCWA	

## **Nature's Way to Control Insect Pests**

Our own Clyde Stephens, retired entomologist with the United Fruit Company presented his topic "Nature's Way to Control Insect Pests" at the May 11, 2014 program meeting. He gave an interesting power point highlighting many of the "balance of nature" techniques he employed for insect control in tropical fruit plantations.

In the tropics in earlier days, the slash and burn of natural vegetation for planting of food crops were small enough that the edges of the forest resupplied the area with natural predators in the insect world, such as the Praying Mantis, maintaining the "law of the jungle" up and down the food chain. The ecosystems were in balance.

But, in the early 1960's when Clyde went to work in Panama and Central America, the banana plantations were very large, mono-culture plantation plantings beginning in the 1950's. One pest insect was the Red Rust Thrip. They did aerial spraying with DDT which led to an exological disaster. Unknown and potential pests became rampant. Spraying with the pesticides killed off the beneficial insects as well.

Clyde described his work in dealing with the West Indian Bagworm defoliation attacking the banana plantations. He learned about the natural controllers of the prolific bagworms including the large Montezuma Oropendulas, a fascinating bird that feeds on the bagworm in the larval stage and Wasp parasites which also feed on the larvae. Clyde determined the plantation managers would have to quit using the chemicals and wait for the natural biological controls to re-develop.

Clyde came by his interest in insects early on as his father Carl raised Vidalia Lady Beetles and sent them in vials to citrus growers in the 1920's when Carl was a student at the University of Florida. Thus, Clyde had an early introduction to Natural Control vs. Biological Control manipulated by humans as he grew up a farmer's son in central Florida.

Clyde shared his tremendous collection of photos of insects in giving this program to our members. This report just scratches the surface of all the interesting information he gave to us. To sum up, though, give the insects a chance and avoid the pesticides. A good selection of native plants and trees are no doubt supporting a diverse population of insects which will lead to a balanced population through natural control.

## **We Lose Another Friend**

When our chapter organized in 1999 – 2000, two of our early members were Bob and Katherine Cook of Tavares. This Spring Bob passed away and we send our condolences to Katherine. We also recognize that they were faithful and active members for many years. They hardly missed a field trip and we enjoyed their regular, congenial company at our program meetings. It takes members like that to keep a chapter strong. Thank you to the Cook's for their help and continued support.

## **Florida Wildflower Foundation**

The Florida Wildflower Foundation is an active, statewide membership organization. They will be hosting the Florida Wildflower Symposium September 19 – 20, 2014 at Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Wales. Visit their excellent website for details at [www.FlaWildflowers.org](http://www.FlaWildflowers.org). There you will also find membership info, their quarterly newsletter "News from the Field", plant profiles, interesting blogs and info on their next photo contest. They have a program recognizing wildflower landscapes called Wildflowers, Naturally, too. Dues are \$25, Students or Seniors \$15 and if you have a Florida Wildflower license tag, membership is free.



## A Walk at Scrub Jay Pond

On June 16, fifteen lucky people got to tour this beautiful property hosted by owners Fred and Ann Hunter. Located in the Lake Katherine area east of Paisley nestled in the Ocala National Forest and other conservation lands, the 500 or so acres are preserved for their biodiversity and are cared for by the Hunters to support a wide variety of plant and animal life.

Fred and Ann greeted us graciously to their lovely home, welcoming us with a breakfast of coffee and juices, fruit and goodies. Enjoying our munchies we loved the lake view and the planted landscape around their home.

Fred soon had us out for our first walk on sandhill/almost scrub where we spotted Sand Pines, Passionflowers in bloom and fruit, Garberia, Shiny Blueberries, Yucca in bloom, Flag Pawpaw with fruit and gorgeous blooming Tarflowers. What a start! Peg Lindsay called out her sightings of Hummingbirds, White-eyed Vireos and Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers, a rabbit dashed off and Matt Baxter saw a Red Fox cross the trail.

We gradually drifted lower, nearer water seeing Slash Pine, Common Meadowbeauties and then a very clear, beautiful pond with a necklace of Fragrant Water Lilies in bloom. There were Hat Pins, Red Root sprouting up, Gallberries and at the pond's upper limit when the water is higher, a huge, spreading, old Dahoon Holly that has seen a great many years of the pond going up and down, but is still hale and hearty and loaded with small green fruits. What a feast for the birds next fall coming up. Perched nearby on Sabatia was a Golden-winged Dragonfly, a sentinel for this beautiful pond.

So, we went back to the house to cool down with brownies and cold drinks. Then onward, this time we were riding in four-wheel drive vehicles to go to the 80 acre area of white sand scrub that Fred is maintaining for the Florida Scrub Jay population on their property. Fred explained that Blue Lake on their land flows into larger Lake Akron. We stopped on the way to look at the plants at a bayhead area and found Bracken Fern, Loblolly Bay in bloom, Tarflowers in bloom again and Rusty Lyonia. Peg spotted Northern Parula and a Great Crested Flycatcher.

Then we drove into a timbered out area that Fred is maintaining for the Scrub Jays, keeping the variety of oaks and scrub plants on this St. Lucie Sand at the desirable height which the Scrub Jays prefer. We stopped in an area of open sand and it wasn't long before "Ralph" and two other Scrub Jays came when Fred called and gave us all a close up view and plenty of photo ops. Their blue color was so bright and clear in the high morning sunlight. Other plants in this Scrub Jay paradise were Gopher Apple in bloom, Rosemary, Saw Palmetto, Garberia, Prickly Pear and a variety of Oaks.

As we drove back, we stopped to munch on Shiny Blueberries and Huckleberries which were ripe. The Deerberries were loaded with fruit, but still green. As we returned, the drive in the scrub gave way to a view of Blue Lake.

We regrouped at the house, grabbed our picnic lunches and got comfy on the large decks overlooking the lake. A light shower cooled us down and just as we finished up, a Florida Black Bear ambled through the yard. How about that as a close to a great field trip!?! Thank you, Fred and Ann!

Looking Ahead: Clyde Stephens is planning the overnight trip for OVAS to Highlands Hammock State Park southwest of Sebring, then visiting and staying at the Archbold Biological Station south of Lake Placid. The dates are January 14 – 15, 2015. Contact Clyde for info and to sign up at his e-mail: [bananabyte@aol.com](mailto:bananabyte@aol.com).

Editors Note: Thank you to Peg, Jon and Chris for their fine contributions to this newsletter. If members are traveling this summer and you come across some interesting native plant areas, please write up your experience for a future newsletter and send it to me. Member submissions are always welcome.