



Sea Rocket



Newsletter of the North/Central Brevard Sea Rocket Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Summer 2007

The Florida Native Plant Society was organized in 1980 to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida, primarily through education.

Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's 22nd Annual Symposium "Invasion of the Habitat Snatchers, The Seed is Planted"

Submitted By: Judy Gregoire

I was fortunate enough to have an opportunity to attend one day of the 2007 FLEPPC Symposium in Cocoa Beach recently. The morning was spent at the Holiday Inn Oceanfront in various sessions that focused on exotic plant risk assessment as a means to prevent new exotic plant species from entering the United States. Biologists can predict the potential that a proposed plant introduction has for becoming an invasive species by answering a series of questions about the plant. Talks focused upon an Australian weed risk assessment that has been in use for several years and how this tool can be modified to meet the needs of Florida's plant import industry. For every \$1.00 that is spent on prevention, \$17.00 can be saved in exotic plant eradication! The second half of the morning sessions focused upon the FLEPPC Database, a useful tool for Land Managers and interested citizens to provide information that can be used on a large scale to detect the migration of exotics throughout the state. If you are aware of invasive exotics in Brevard County, I would encourage you to visit the database and enter the information that you have about the plant (<http://www.fleppc.org/EDDMapS/>). Click on "Report Infestations" and register (which I found quick and easy). Once you are logged in, you can choose from a dropdown menu of invasive plants in Florida, list the date and location of your observation, and even include photos of the plant. The website is user-friendly, and your input can help to detect the spread of invasive plants throughout Brevard County.

My afternoon at the Symposium was spent on a unique, behind-the-scenes tour of the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. The main focus of the tour was Brazilian Pepper control techniques; the trip leaders treated several adjacent plots with a variety of herbicides and techniques several weeks before the field trip. We were able to observe the short term effects of the various control techniques on the pepper plants. The Air Station's Natural/Cultural Resource Manager also provided a great deal of insight into the land management practices throughout the site, including exotic plant and animal control, mechanical vegetation reduction and prescribing burning, and hydrological restoration projects. As a Land Manager who is concerned about the challenges of implementing prescribed burns in urban interface areas, I was not able to compete with conversations of burning habitats next to rocket fuel! The trip also included a good deal of the history of the area including the space missions of the past and the rockets that continue to carry modern-day satellites into space. Overall, it was a very informative day, and I am glad that I was able to participate.

**2007 Sea Rocket Summer Gathering—Saturday, July 28, 2007 at 4:00 PM
Lori Wilson Park, Cocoa Beach, North Parking Lot, Pavilion A**

Bring a pot-luck dish, and to save natural resources, bring your own reusable dinnerware, cup and utensils. Napkins and beverages will be provided.

Our meal will be followed by a short hike to explore coastal dunes and hammocks.

Don't forget to contact Judy Gregoire to RSVP or with questions: Judy_gregoire@yahoo.com or 264-5185.

News from the Florida Native Plant Society
SHOP ONLINE AND RAISE FUNDS FOR FNPS

The next time you need to shop online, check out [Giveline.com](http://www.giveline.com) and a portion of your purchase will be donated to FNPS! [Giveline.com](http://www.giveline.com) has over a million best-selling products, and every purchase you make generates a donation for FNPS. [Giveline.com](http://www.giveline.com) is an online store created for the community-minded shopper, offering more than a million products including books, movies, music, electronics, house wares, gifts and more.

Every purchase generates a donation to FNPS - an average of 16% of sales will go directly to FNPS.

The only difference between Giveline and other major online retailers is that every purchase earns money for our organization. Check it out and if you decide to buy, remember that FNPS will earn funds to support our mission! We invite you to check out the store by clicking the following link:

<http://www.giveline.com/default.asp?v=V022626901> (This is a special link that notifies the Giveline company that you are with FNPS). FREE shipping for a limited time for new shoppers (Use discount code NCD07 during checkout). I will report back to you after 6 months on the status of this fund-raiser.

Karina Veaudry, Executive Director
Florida Native Plant Society, Inc.

A clean cut Brazilian Pepper branch
found to sprout roots and leaves when left in
the sun without any water or soil!!!

Photo Credit: Scott Taylor, Brevard County EEL Program



?????Question of the Month?????

Answered by: Judy Gregoire

Q. I have a few biggish Brazilian peppers in the natural area behind my yard that I cut down. They enthusiastically stump sprouted (though I doused the stumps with glyphosate). When using round-up, are there any benefit to breaking these sprouts vs. cutting them cleanly vs. spraying the foliage? Submitted by Cristina Canales

A. Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) is one of the harder plants to remove from any yard or habitat. Constant maintenance is the only way to truly rid an area of peppers. It is no surprise that your initial efforts re-sprouted, so don't be discouraged by that—I have seen branches cut clean away from the original plant with no leaves that were able to sprout roots and leaves!!! Spraying only the stumps or foliage of the plant may result in its death, however anytime that you can break into the xylem and phloem, whether through breaking branches or making a clean cut with a machete or saw, your efforts will be more productive. In times of drought—like we experienced up until last month—plants may shut down to conserve resources. Thus, if the plant is not moving water and carbohydrates throughout its system, it will also not move your glyphosate throughout the plant. The Brevard County Natural Resource Office *Control of Non-native Invasive Plants in East Central Florida* recommends hand pulling seedlings and using foliar (cover all foliage to the point of run off), basal bark (spray onto the lower portions of woody stems), or cut stump techniques (apply herbicide to the outer circumference of or the entire top surface of freshly cut stumps). Always be sure to follow the direction on the label of your chemicals. So to answer your question—any of the techniques you mentioned are adequate—as long as you are prepared to continue with your choice over the course of several treatments.

Please submit your questions to Judy Gregoire for future newsletters.

Ditch of Dreams – History of the Cross-Florida Barge Canal
Report by Woody Dierberg on one session at the 27th Annual FNPS meeting

The Paynes Prairie Chapter hosted a strong program at the 27th Annual FNPS meeting in Gainesville. Like so many Sea Rocket members who had conflicts over the Earth Day weekend, I was only able to attend about half the program. Nevertheless, I was able to hear some fascinating presentations. The one that captured my interest the most was a presentation by Dave Tedeger and Steve Noll entitled: “Ditch of Dreams – History of the Cross-Florida Barge Canal”. The audience benefited from many years of research pursued by the two history professors in their quest to write a book on the history of what can arguably be the most important environmental and land use debate in Florida during the 20th century. I was impressed at the high scholarship that went into developing the political, environmental, and personal accounts of a “dream” to construct a cross-Florida canal originating as far back as the Spanish conquistadors.

The first real progress on starting the “ditch of dreams” occurred during the Depression in the 1930s as part of Roosevelt’s WPA program – putting people to work. Excavation techniques were primitive (shovel and mule) and the living raucous. As the nation eased out of the Depression, so did the political will to keep funding taxpayer-supported welfare projects benefiting only one state.

Although a start had been made, the construction of the “ditch of dreams” laid dormant for 30 years, until it was revived by commercial interests in 1964. With much fanfare, which included a kick-off visit by President Lyndon Johnson, the project was re-authorized with federal funds. Progress towards the completion of the cross-Florida barge canal seemed unstoppable – until an active group of citizens led by Marjory Carr did what seemed almost impossible. Through press releases, lobbying, and public awareness programs, they succeeded in stopping the project in the early 1970s under the Nixon Administration. However, the success did not come in time to save a stretch of the Ocklawaha River, one of Florida’s most notorious (Silver Springs fame) and scenic rivers.

The legacy of the “ditch of dreams” continues to this day. Rodman Reservoir, which was created by damming the Ocklawaha south of Gainesville during the 60’s construction phase, symbolizes the controversy, past and present, which has followed the “ditch of dreams”. Although Marjorie Carr and her supporters could claim a major victory in stopping the construction of the Cross-Florida Barge Canal, they were unsuccessful in restoring those parts of the Ocklawaha that had been ditched and dammed. Ironically, what construction that had occurred on the Cross-Florida Barge Canal helped to secure a mile-wide conservation easement along the sides of the canal, which today is known as the Marjorie Carr Cross-Florida Greenway.

Wanted: Speakers and Mentors

The Space Coast Science Education Alliance (SCSEA) is currently seeking presenters for “Brevard Research Rules!” - a science fair conference for middle school students, teachers, and parents. This program will be held September 15, 2007 at the FSEC/UCF Cocoa Campus and September 22, 2007 at the BCC/UCF Palm Bay Campus. The program goals are to introduce middle school students to science project possibilities and to connect students with mentors and other local science research resources. Speakers are asked to give a 30-minute presentation on the science fair category most closely related to their field of expertise. Mentoring commitment level is up to you and the student. Mentoring can be as simple as a phone conversation, or as detailed as guiding a student throughout the project. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Katrina Morrell at (321) 255-4466 or kmorrell@brevardparks.com.

Sea Rocket newsletters are slowly being added to the Sea Rocket website.
Check them out and share with friends at <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/>

Board of Director and Committee Reports

Vice President: Barb Venuto **Speakers in the Planning**

We are planning some dynamic speakers for the next season. Two of the topics we will cover are worm composting and green roofs. I had been worm composting for years 18 years ago, and now I read a 25 year old drop out from Yale is a multi-millionaire selling worm poop tea to Home Depot, Lowes, and Wal-Mart. Why didn't I do that? He even uses recycled containers. Our September worm composting speaker was recommended to us and will be driving in from Orlando. Green roofs are a very exciting alternative to keep your home cool. Twenty percent of the buildings in Germany have green roofs. In Canada, there is a company that makes a carpet of plants that you would just roll out over your roof! Some Florida natives are already being discussed for this use. So I hope I've tweaked your interest, and please stay tuned for the next newsletter for more information.

Education: Kari Ruder

The waterwise section of the Brevard County Volunteer Appreciation and Learning Garden continues to grow and do well. The plants that had died were replaced, and we hope those will survive. A few plants are struggling, but overall, the plants are doing fabulous. The dry conditions we started with have been replaced with moist soils, and in fact I even hit standing water when I planted the replacement plants. Weeds are starting to become a problem however, so please consider participating in weeding workdays as well as going there on your own. If you join us, you will increase your plant identification skills, learning not only the names of some of our great native landscape plants, but also how to identify weeds from young native seedlings. Please tell your friends about the garden too, as this is a great place to see examples of many of our great natives! The garden is located in Viera Regional Park, just north of The Avenue and east of the county government center. Thanks to Nancy Escoffier, Buddy Daniels, and Paula Berntson for assisting at our last garden workday.

Nursery: Pat Bayer **June 16, 2007 Pond Tour Profits**

'Twas a magical day at the Enchanted Forest sitting on the porch and watching the Serenity Pond. Thanks to the spirited help of Betty Page, Ginny Blaetz, Suzanne Meyer, Michelle Clifton and Pat Bayer we also made money in the shade. Our net income was \$460 for the Pond Tour Sale. We brought over 200 plants, 36 different varieties of flowers, shrubs and trees. The Scarlet & Swamp Pink Hibiscus sold very quickly. People were filling up our new nursery cart with plants to take home.



Butterflies at the Brevard Zoo

Butterflies are back for a limited time this summer from June 16 through July 31. The butterfly house will be open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The zoo will feature a variety of butterflies for your viewing pleasure including queens, monarchs, gulf fritillaries, and a variety of swallowtails, sulphurs, skippers and potentially luna moths.



New Sea Rocket Nursery Ground Cloth

Don't forget to let a member of your Sea Rocket Board of Directors know if you have a suggestion for a future newsletter article.

From the May 2007 Conradina Newsletter

Monday, September 10th
~ Monthly Program Meeting~

Conradina is very excited to announce that noted author, co-author and contributor of many books on Florida botany and other topics concerning natural Florida, Gil Nelson will be speaking for our 1st meeting after summer hiatus. We may meet at a larger facility for this special event. We will keep you posted on the details. If you wanted to check out his books before he speaks, his bio listing his books can be found at <http://www.gilnelson.com/bio.html>

Contact info@maplestreetnatives.com for more information about the South Brevard FNPS meeting.

Membership: Gail Hill

Thanks for renewing your membership
Pat Bayer, Shari Blissett Clark, and Forrest (Woody) Dierberg

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, July 25—6:30 PM—Friends of the Enchanted Forest Meeting: Bill Belleville, Author—*Loosing it all to Sprawl*; the talk will be followed by a book signing

Saturday, July 28—Sea Rocket Summer Gathering, see page 1 for more information.

Wednesday, August 15—6:30 PM— Friends of the Enchanted Forest Meeting, Scott Taylor, Ph.D., Brevard County EEL Program, Pine Island Conservation Area and Sam's House Historic Site

Wednesday, September 12—6 PM, Sea Rocket BOD Meeting, Environmental Field Station, Cocoa

Monday, September 10—Conradina Chapter Meeting, 7 PM, Melbourne Library on Fee Ave. With Guest Speaker Gil Nelson, Presenting his new books *Atlantic and Gulf Coast Florida Native Plants*.

Wednesday, September 26— Sea Rocket Chapter Meeting, 7 PM, Worm Composting

Please contact Judy Gregoire to alert Sea Rocket members to future events throughout the community.



Sea Rocket Chapter - Florida Native Plant Society

Chapter Meeting Minutes,

May 23, 2007, 7PM

Chapter President Betty Page opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests, and encouraged guests to sign up to receive a complimentary electronic version of the Chapter's newsletter. Betty thanked Paula Berntson for hosting the Chapter's Yard Tour and opening up her backyard of beautiful native plants to the membership. There will be a Plant Propagation Workshop on June 2 from 9am until noon; so far eight people are registered. Ace Hardware Pond Tour will be held on June 16 – the Enchanted Forest and Paula Berntson will be participating and the Chapter will hold a Plant Sale – particularly wetland plants - at the Forest. The Summer Siesta is approaching and Chapter meetings will be suspended until September but there will be a Picnic sometime in late July – the date/time/location will be published in the one summer edition of the Chapter Newsletter. Betty stated that the last Chapter meeting minutes were published in the May Chapter newsletter and asked if there were any additions or corrections – hearing none, the April Chapter minutes were approved. There was no Treasurer's Report. Vice President Barbara Venuto introduced the evening's speaker – Dr. Jay Barnhart, who examines Florida Wildflowers much the way he performed forensics medicine for years in Miami-Dade.

Dr. Jay gave a satirical, comical and thoroughly entertaining presentation of our local plants and flowers as seen through the instruments of forensic science. Dr. Jay made it clear that no animals were hurt in the production of the slideshow! Through crime scene photography in the saw palmetto brush of Florida, Dr. Jay solved a crime scene involving prickly pear, juniper berries, Spanish moss (which was used a couch stuffing in the past) and saw palmetto berries (breakfast?). Dr. Jay reminded us of wisdom from Yogi Berra, "You can observe a lot but just looking". Dr. Jay encouraged the group to always carry a notebook and magnifying glass when out hiking and trying to identify plants. Various specimens were identified through plant family clues and others by leaf hairs, scent and bloom structure. The long leaf pine was easily distinguished from the common slash pine by their 3-needle configuration. The audience was reminded that one cannot tell the age of a Sabal palm by looking at its cross-section (monocot)! Dr. Jay stressed the importance of learning plants by their correct names, which can help in figuring out unknown species' taxonomy. The audience was clued into an effort underway to improve the unified naming system through a partnership between the Smithsonian Institute and Harvard University. Members and guests were treated to a parade of beautiful plants photographed for identification using forensic tools. Dr. Jay leads many hikes locally and invited the group to join him on one in the future.

Proposed FNPS Dues Increase

Submitted By: Judy Gregoire

Hopefully by now you have received your June-July 2007 *Sabal minor* newsletter. I would encourage you to take some time to read the two page letter from FNPS President Shirley Denton that was included in the bi-monthly newsletter regarding the proposed dues increase for FNPS members across the state. The letter includes dues comparisons with similar organizations from around the county, some history of the FNPS fee schedule over the past 15+ years, and some of the programs that your FNPS membership go to support. You have probably noticed the your membership dues have already been raised this past year, and Shirley's letter explains the rationale behind this second dues increase. Talk to a member of your Sea Rocket Board of Directors if you would like to comment on the proposed membership fee increase before the November 2007 FNPS Board of Directors Meeting.

Tree Canopy is an Essential Urban Resource

Submitted by: Joanie Regan

In the 1930s, site development retained about 47% of tree canopy. By the 1950s, that protected tree canopy was down to 30%. With the introduction of computer aided site design and more “efficient” land clearing equipment, preserved tree canopy dropped to 16% by the 1980s and 4% by the 1990s. We can witness this phenomena throughout the state. Ordinances and comprehensive plans struggle with standards and regulations to reverse this trend but there is a wide array of opinions on what is reasonable. Here’s what canopy trees do for our urban areas:

- **Capture/store rain**, reducing and slowing storm runoff – think of that dry area under a tree! An urban forest of 1000 trees can store and transpire approximately I million gallons of runoff annually. The rain that falls, is slowed down.
- **Release oxygen to the air**, which is particularly needed in our urban areas.
- **Moderate the climate** by reducing the “heat island” effect of concrete and particularly asphalt surfaces.
- **Absorb air pollutants** – annually a large tree can absorb 10 pounds of air pollutants including 4 pounds of ozone and 3 pounds of particulates.
- **Increase business**. A University of Washington study found that shoppers come more often and stay longer in downtowns with street trees, and spend on average 11% more.
- **Increase property value**. A University of Philadelphia study found that home prices in a neighborhood rose 9% after trees were planted within 50 feet of a home.
- **Reduced crime**. A University of Illinois study in Chicago found that heavily treed apartment complexes had 52% fewer crime reports than those with little or no trees – the premise was that greenery reduces aggression and promotes well-being . . . duh.
- **Provides food/shelter for wildlife**.

Unless referenced, findings stated are from the Center for Urban Forest Research. Many cities throughout our nation are using tree canopy as a tool in achieving sustainability goals. This article is reaching the “choir” so pass this info onto friends and family.

More info can be found at www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/cufr/

“I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our natural environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our national past and which will build handsome and balanced cities for our future.” – JFK

Did you know that there are currently 87 Sea Rocket members?

Bring a friend to a future meeting or field trip and help us to break 100!!!

Sea Rocket hikes will continue again in October—check your September newsletter for details.



FNPS AMAZON JUNGLE SAFARI—October 19-28, 2007

Join fellow members of the Florida Native Plant Society on a natural history tour. This rainforest adventure is a great opportunity to have fun and learn about the world's largest rainforest and river system. We will have our own specially trained guides to describe flora and fauna for us. We will be staying in 4 Explorama Lodges and hiking in the jungle as well as traversing the river system in "collectivos" - long, passenger boats. Along the way we will see monkeys, sloths, toucans, macaws, horned screamers, piranhas, caiman, leaf cutter ants, pink dolphins, etc. We will have the opportunity to view the top of the rainforest on the Canopy Walkway which is 115 feet in the air and a third of a mile long. We will view ethnobotanical plants along the medicine trail and within the ReNuPerRu Ethnobotanical Garden adjacent to one of the lodges we will stay in. Starting and ending in Miami, the price for this adventurous nature itinerary is \$2,795 per person to double occupancy. The tour is escorted by experienced FNPS tour leaders Jo Anne and Fred Trebatoski. A Peruvian naturalist will meet you at the airport in Iquitos and stay with you throughout the trip. For more information please log onto www.fnps.org and click on the brochure (pink) in the trip descriptor on the home page. Hope to meet you on this trip.

You can reach the Trebatoski's at plantnative@earthlink.net or call 800-466-9660 for more info.

Conservation Cures by Yards and Miles

Submitted by: Paula Bernston

Gainesville! What a great venue for the FNPS conference in April! After much difficulty, Jim and I decided to hike the La Chua Trail at Paynes Prairie, visit the Lube Bat Conservancy, and canoe down the Ichetucknee River for our field trips. All turned out to be excellent choices! Our two favorite sessions were "Mulch as an Upland Restoration Tool" and "Native Plants as Hosts and Attractors of Beneficial Insects for Farmscaping in Agricultural Systems" which was a fascinating two hour panel presentation. The Friday Social at the Florida Museum of Natural History and the Saturday Dinner at the Harn Museum of Art were a special treat that we will not soon forget. The native plant sale was very interesting with many species from North Florida. We purchased two pitcher plants that are now in the ground around our pond – happy to this point but we'll see! In our spare time, we also managed to visit a couple of local native nurseries, tour the Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, buy scrumptious locally grown veggies at the Alachua Farmer's Market, and shop for arts & crafts in High Springs as they celebrated "Pioneer Days". Many thanks to the Paynes Prairie Chapter for an unforgettable conference. Jim and I are already planning for the 2008 FNPS Conference in Palmetto! Hope to see you there!

May Sea Rocket Kayak Trip in the
Thousand Islands, Cocoa Beach



Sea Rocket member Paula Bernston's yard at the
May Keep Brevard Beautiful Yard Tour.



Thank you to Diane Stees for these photos.

TREAD SOFTLY aka STINGING NETTLE

Cnidoscolus stimulosus

This plant may indeed be considered as a due warning to obey the signs that say "PLEASE DO NOT WALK ON THE DUNES!" These abundant, primarily small, attractive herbs thrive on the dry sandy conditions of the dunes, where they peacefully coexist among the grasses, vines, and Sea Rockets. My first and very unpleasant experience with Stinging Nettles occurred when I was attracted to the fragrant odor produced by 1/2-3/4 inch flowers which are formed by 5 white sepals, which give the appearance of snowy white flower petals. This incident took place prior to my acquiring any books on Florida Plant identification. Grabbing the stem of the plant with my bare hand to get a better look at it resulted in an extremely surprising and painful sensation that was produced by innumerable poisonous hair-like spines penetrating and breaking off in the surface of my hand and fingers. There was accompanying redness and swelling that lasted about an hour. I have since acquired some reasonably good photographs from a respectable distance using a special lens. As you might guess, Stinging Nettle is in a group of plants that have many unfriendly features, such as numerous sharp spines and/or poisonous milky sap. Family: Euphorbiaceae (spurge).

The plant is found throughout Florida and can grow in shade or full sunshine. Each flower produces a 3-parted capsule that is covered with stinging hairs. Inside the capsule are 3 brown angular seeds. Even the soft looking shiny leaves, which are often divided into 3-5 lobes, are covered on all parts by the stinging hairs.

I've read some accounts of folk medicine practiced in the southern United States which claim that a concoction made from the milky sap found in the rather large starchy roots and ingested along with some gin or whiskey has been reportedly used to "give a man courage". The translation of this phrase is best left to the imagination of the reader.

I'm sure that Tread Softly serves a very important purpose in web of life, but I choose to enjoy it at a safe distance. Watch your step!

Contributed by:

Jay Barnhart;

Originally published in:

Sebastian Inlet State Park's Volunteer Newsletter, *The Outgoing Tide*, published and edited by Sebastian State Park Ranger Ed Perry.



Cnidoscolus stimulosus. Drawn by P.N. Honychurch.



Photo by Paul Rebmann

Thanks to the Sea Rocket members who have continued to volunteer throughout the year to assist the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program North Region with its year-long floristic survey of the South Lake Conservation Area. The year is half over and we already have 110 plants identified and prepped for the herbarium.

Jim and Nancy Escoffier

CJ Greene

Betty Page

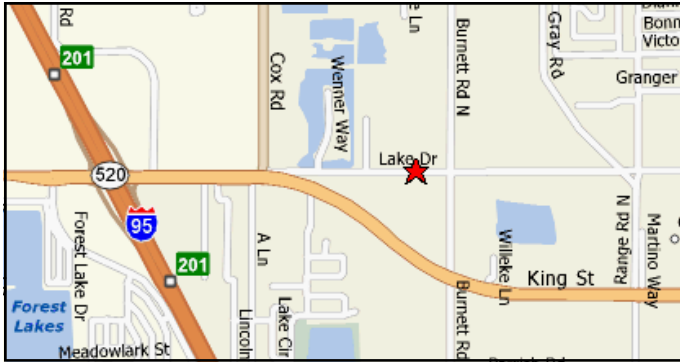
Paul Schmalzer

Vicky Hamilton

Suzanne Meyer

Neil Thomas

Barb Venuto



Brevard County Agricultural Center

3695 Lake Dr, Cocoa, FL

- From I-95, go east on SR 520 to the first traffic light (Burnett Rd.). Go left at the light and one block north to Lake Drive. Turn left and the Ag. Center will be ahead on your left.
- From US 1, go west on SR 520 to the traffic light immediately after the Bob Steele Chevrolet dealership. Turn right onto Burnett Road and go one block to the stop sign. Turn right onto Lake Drive and the Ag. Center will be ahead on your left

Please do not call the Ag. Center for anything but clarification on directions to the center. For all other questions, contact a member of our board.

Sea Rocket Board of Directors

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Florida Native Plant Society

For additional information on membership benefits or changes of address call, write or e-mail FNPS, or visit our website:

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Sea Rocket

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Please contact us if you would like to receive future Sea Rocket newsletters via e-mail.