



Sea Rocket



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

 **October 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.

Sea Rocket Meeting on Wednesday, October 24, 2007, 7:00 pm Green Roof Technology with Dr. Jay Garland

In the quest to design more energy efficient buildings, green roof technology is on its way to becoming a popular alternative to conventional roofs. Benefits include lower energy costs and increased control and management over storm water run-off. Living roofs outlast conventional roofs by 2-3 times and reduce heat and noise levels within the structure. Examples of green roof technology include Boston General Hospital with its 6500 square foot "Healing Garden", California Academy of Science in San Francisco with a 2.5 acre rolling garden, and the Fairmont Hotel in Vancouver with a food garden roof. Germany currently has 20% of its buildings roofed with living gardens.

Dr. Jay Garland is the Chief Scientist/ Biological Programs Manager for Dynamac Corporation at Kennedy Space Center. He oversees research associated with the protection of the sensitive environment surrounding the space center and the potential use of biological systems for environmentally sustainable water and nutrient recycling. He has completed research fellowships in Japan, Buenos Aires, and Innsbruck, and has authored over 60 papers.

A tour of UCF's green roof buildings has been planned for Thursday, November 1, at 8am. Mike Rider has offered to give a presentation and tour of the two buildings on campus that have green roofs. Each roof is different from the other, with the more established garden on the Student Union Building designed with a weight load of 50 lbs per square foot, while the newer roof on the Storm Water Lab has a lighter load rating of 20 lbs per square foot.

Here's your chance to see fully functional green roofs in action. Parking spaces at UCF are at a premium, and in an attempt to organize a carpool we are asking Sea Rocket members who are interested in this tour to RSVP to Barbara Venuto *as soon as possible* at cvenuto@cfl.rr.com, or call 452-3609.

Field Trip—Saturday, October 20, 2007 from 9:00am to 12:00pm Buck Lake Wildlife Management Area

This conservation area is a jointly managed project of the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program. Habitats include scrub, flatwoods, hammocks and marshes. Prescribed burning and scrub restoration have been conducted since its acquisition in 1996.

Directions: I-95 to St. Rt. 46 (Exit 223). West on SR 46 1.2 miles. Preserve entrance is on the north side of SR 46. It is a gravel road called Blake Lee Trail. There is a sign marking the conservation area entrance and the mail box is marked 5060. Drive north on the gravel road for 0.3 miles and park in the grass area to the left of the gate.

Be sure to bring your hat, sunscreen, water, and insect repellent!



Sea Rocket Meeting on Wednesday, November 28, 2007
David Hartgrove, Halifax River Audubon

Please join Sea Rocket on Wednesday, November 28 when Mr. David Hartgrove of the Halifax River Audubon Society will discuss Florida's birds and their relationship to plants.

David lives in Daytona Beach and became interested in birds at an early age. In 1989 he became the Conservation Chair for Halifax River Audubon, a position he has held ever since. He compiles the Daytona Beach Christmas Bird Count and is the Volusia County compiler for the North American Migration Counts in the spring and fall each year. David leads many birding trips for the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Daytona Beach, The Nature Conservancy, the Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, and other Audubon chapters.

David has worked for FPL for more than 42 years, and he says one of the things he'll miss most when he retires is the use of FPL's bucket truck when replacing baby owls in their nests!

Plan to join Sea Rocket members in welcoming Mr. Hartgrove. The meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Brevard County Agricultural Center on Lake Drive in Cocoa, and begins at 7pm.

Field Trip—Saturday November 3, 2007 from 9:00am to 12:00pm
Maritime Hammock

Maritime Hammock Sanctuary is a joint acquisition of the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program and the State of Florida, acquired between 1992 to 2002; it also includes lands donated by the Richard K. Mellon Foundation. It is located in the South Beaches region of the barrier island west of A1A. Vegetation includes coastal strand, maritime hammock, hydric hammock, and mangrove forest.



Laurel Wilt Disease is affecting the red bays (*Persea borbonia*) on this site. Part of the field trip will be looking at the initial impacts of this new disease which is caused by an introduced insect and fungus.

Directions: I-95 to US-192 (Melbourne Cswy). East on US 192 to A1A. Travel south 10.3 miles on A1A. There are two trailheads on the west side of A1A. One trailhead is north of the Mark's Landing development, and the other is a few hundred yards to the south. Park at the north trailhead.

Be sure to bring your hat, sunscreen, water, and insect repellent!

Question of the Month

By Kari Ruder

Question: How can you tell the difference between False Nettle, *Boehmeria cylindrica*, and actual Nettle (*Urtica* sp.)? I often see what I think is *Boehmeria cylindrica*, which is supposed to be a larval host for the Red Admiral, and wish to take a cutting. So far, I am too wimpy to just touch it. Thanks-Cristina C.

Answer: False nettle, *Boehmeria cylindrica*, lacks the stinging hairs that true nettle, *Urtica chamaedryoides*, has. To locate the hairs or lack thereof, check the stem. The hairs are visible to the naked eye. The other way to distinguish the two species is by the location of the flower clusters. False nettle flower clusters appear to be located all along leaf stems, while stinging nettle flower clusters are located in leaf axils.

Yellowtop

(*Flaveria linearis*)

Most of us are familiar with the more typical Goldenrods, which appear as spikes of tiny brilliant yellow flowers arranged in a linear fashion along elongated upright stalks. Yellow top is listed among the flat-topped Goldenrods and when they are found growing in large masses, this feature is most noticeable as the entire group of flowers seems to occur at one level across the tops of the plants. In the wild, Yellowtop grows in coastal sites, marshes, pine woods, open meadows, and along roadside ditches and swales. Although the plant blooms throughout the year, the late summer and fall are the most prolific flowering times.

Yellowtop is a perennial herb that can be found in central and south Florida, the West Indies, and Mexico. The leaves are elongated and opposite, and may have smooth or slightly serrated edges. The most distinctive feature of this plant is the flower head of bright yellow tiny aster-like flowers which bloom in a compact flat-topped array on stalks above the foliage. Botanically speaking this type of flower is a characteristic of the aster family in which Yellowtop has been classified. If you have a hand lens handy, examine one of these blooms and you will be treated to an even greater appreciation of their beauty.

And don't fear a sneezing episode from doing this! Just because most goldenrods bloom at the height of hay fever season, they are often unjustly blamed for the torment suffered by victims of this malady. In reality the true culprits are ragweed and other wind pollinated plants which happen to bloom at around the same time of year.

Yellowtop is a great beginner's plant because it is easy to cultivate, tolerates a wide variety of soil conditions, and is pest resistant. The abundant blooms attract butterflies and other pollinators, and the hefty stalks support the flower heads beautifully when used in floral arrangements.



Contributed by: Jay Barnhart and originally published in Sebastian Inlet State Park's Volunteer Newsletter, *The Outgoing Tide*, published and edited by Sebastian State Park Ranger Ed Perry.



Yard and Garden Tours

By Kari Ruder

A huge thanks to George Opre for hosting an informative tour of his yard and subdivision common areas. It was amazing how fast some of our natives like Fiddlewood, Firebush, Cherokee Bean, Privet, Narrow-leaf Sunflower and Necklace Pod grew in such a short time (1-4 years)! We were also very appreciative of the extra umbrellas and yummy snacks! 13 members came for the tour so thanks to our hosts and members for making it a great morning!

Suggestions for future yard/garden tours include:

- The new EEL Barrier Islands Education Center
- The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary
- BC Volunteer Appreciation and Learning Garden, Viera

We still need members to volunteer their yards. Don't feel like it has to be a paradise! Members can learn from all sizes, themes, states of progress, etc. Stay tuned for the announcement of our next tour!

Chapter Meeting Minutes for September 2007

By Joanie Regan

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. There is an upcoming Green Roof tour on Nov. 1 – a signup sheet was available for those interested. Next yard tour is Sept. 29 at a Merritt Island subdivision – George Opre has been incorporating native beauties into the neighborhood's common areas. Tour starts at 9am, see Kari Ruder for directions. The FNPS Retreat is from October 5-7 in Clermont – see website for more info. There is a Butterfly Festival in Gainesville at UF and a FNPS Chapter Plant Sale in Port Orange. Suzanne Kennedy is the speaker at the next Friends of the Enchanted Forest meeting. There is a Plant Sale at the MINWR on Oct 13. FNPS is sponsoring an Amazon Jungle adventure from Oct 19-28. The next Sea Rocket hike led by Paul Schmalzer, Ph.D., is at Buck Lake on Saturday, Oct. 20 – Paul will lead another hike on Nov. 3 at the south beaches Maritime Hammock Sanctuary. The next Sea Rocket General Meeting will be on Oct. 24 and will include a presentation on earth-friendly Green Roofs.

Guest speakers Carl and Bernie of *Our Vital Earth* in Sanford gave the low down on vermicomposting. Turns out worm poop and pee are excellent concentrated fertilizers and worm pee can be used as a fungicide, herbicide and pesticide. We learned that the proper terms are actually worm castings (or black gold) and tea, and both have a quite pleasant aroma! Vermiculture is composting in an accelerated mode – plant-based food garbage can be converted into valuable “black gold” to reuse in your garden quickly. A family worm composting unit can hold about 12,000 hungry worms and consume about 40 pounds of vegetable scraps, paper and grass clippings a week! This is then quickly available to enrich your garden. Carl & Bernie have a line of products for folks who want to keep a worm farm, or just want to get that black gold and tea. Their product Can-O-Worms is basically a worm condo that takes very little attention. The product is fabricated in Australia and made out of recycled auto battery cases.

For more information, visit *Our Vital Earth* at www.ourvitalearth.com.

Hospitality Vacancy Filled

Many thanks to Ginny Blaetz for stepping forward and filling the Hospitality Chair vacancy! Ginny's rapid response to Sea Rocket's need illustrates the volunteer spirit which keeps our chapter going...and growing! Please take a moment to thank Ginny for her leadership, and don't forget to sign up to bring refreshments to one of our meetings.!

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, October 17	Friends of the Enchanted Forest Mtg., Suzanne Kennedy, <i>Dicerandra thimicola</i>
Week of October 19-28	FNPS Amazon Jungle Safari
Saturday, October 20	Field trip to Buck Lake Conservation Area, 9 am
Wednesday, October 24	Tree Pruning Workshop, Cocoa Extension Office
Wednesday, October 24	Sea Rocket Chapter Meeting, 7 pm, Green Roofs with Dr. Jay Garland
Monday, October 29	Workday at Volunteer Garden, Viera, 4:30 pm
Saturday, November 3	FNPS BOD/AFNN Meeting, Sweetbay Nursery, Parrish
Saturday, November 3	Field trip to Maritime Hammock, 9 am
Saturday, November 3	Sea Rocket Native Plant Sale, Enchanted Forest Sanctuary's Forest Festival
Saturday, November 3	Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Forest Festival, 10am to 4 pm
November 3 & 4	Brevard County Orchid Society Annual Fall Orchid Fair
Saturday, November 17	Eighth Annual Patrick Smith Day at Forever Florida

Please contact Shari Blissett Clark if you have an event to include in future newsletters.

Ups 'n' Downs in the Nursery

by Pat Bayer

Your chapter nursery committee has worked every week all summer to keep down the weeds and to start new plants. There is a plant sale coming up on November 3rd at the Enchanted Forest for their 5th annual Forest Festival. If anyone wants to donate plants for the sale please bring them to the October meeting and let us know whether they are for the sale or for the plant raffle. The nursery donated 6 one-gallon plants to our September meeting raffle; they were Seaside Goldenrod, Burmarigold, Blue Curls, Scarlet Sage, Scorpiontail, and Rough Leaved Sunflower. We encourage you to visit the nursery and see how you can help spread the magic of Florida's native plants! Pat Bayer, 638-4660, or Suzanne Meyer, 264-4922.

Driving Directions to Sea Rocket Nursery

Looking for a way to help your chapter? Volunteer at the nursery! You'll learn a lot and have a good time, too. For information on scheduled workdays, call Pat Bayer at 638-4660, or Suzanne Meyer at 264-4922.

The nursery is located inside Titusville's Wastewater Treatment Plant property. The entrance is on the south side of Knox McRae Drive, west of Coquina Elementary school and east of St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, and just west of the blue Fleur de Lis apartment complex. The address is 1125 Knox McRae Drive.

Workday at the Volunteer Garden, Viera

It's time for another workday in the waterwise section of the volunteer garden in Viera. This is the garden we received a KBB grant to install and it is our responsibility to maintain it. Volunteers are needed to come out for an hour or two and weed, prune, etc. Please bring gloves, a bucket or bags, and a trowel and/or pruners.

Our next workday is scheduled for Monday, October 29th at 4:30 pm. Feel free to come earlier or later. We'll be there until about 6pm.

Please contact Kari to RSVP at:
kari@naturewiseplants.com or 536-1410.

Tree Pruning Workshop

The Brevard County Extension Office is hosting a tree pruning workshop via teleconference on Wednesday, October 24, 2007, from 8:30am to 3pm at the Agricultural Office in Cocoa. The workshop will be led by Dr. Ed Gilman, professor of Environmental Horticulture at UF. Cost of the workshop is \$25 and a reservation is required. For more information, call the Cocoa Extension Office at 633-1702.

Proposed Increase to Membership Dues

The dues structure established by FNPS in October 2006, which raised the cost of individual memberships by \$5, has not generated enough revenue to meet the shortfalls caused by inflation and rising costs associated with postage, printing, and insurance. You may recall that last year's increase was the first since 1991. The Executive Committee is currently considering increasing membership dues for the second year in a row. Your Sea Rocket Board of Directors wants your opinion concerning this proposed increase. They also want to hear your suggestions for "balancing" the Society's budget. Are there alternate revenue sources, recurring grants, or expenditure controls you'd like to see considered instead of increasing membership dues? Please contact a member of the board as soon as possible with your comments and suggestions. This item will be discussed at the October 24th general membership meeting, so plan to attend and participate in the discussion.

The FNPS Executive Committee is planning to take action on this issue at their November 3rd meeting. We want to make sure Sea Rocket's voice is heard at that meeting!

OCT 24, 2007 CHAPTER MEETING – MEMBERSHIP VOTE

Sea Rocket Participation in Brevard County Comprehensive Plan Meetings

Local environmental groups have requested the participation of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) Chapters in Brevard County at meetings regarding developer requested changes to the Wetlands Comprehensive Plan. The Sea Rocket and Conradina Chapters were involved in developing the current Comprehensive Plan, and by staying involved we can ensure that the Plan protects our local resources as intended.

The Viera Company is planning a new development on 11,567 acres west of their present development. The Comprehensive Plan has changed since their present development was approved, so they are proposing amendments to allow them to bypass current Comprehensive Plan policies.

Brevard County has and is setting up meetings with the developer and concerned environmental groups, including The Sierra Club, Space Coast Audubon, Partnership for a Sustainable Future, and FNPS. There could be anywhere from six to twelve meetings that a FNPS representative would need to attend, as well as County Commission meetings.

Both Conradina and Sea Rocket Chapter Boards have discussed this issue and have asked for volunteers from the Boards; however, because of the lengthy time commitment this project will require and the very busy schedules of our members, both Boards have agreed to ask Karina Veaudry, Executive Director of the Florida Native Plant Society, to represent us at these meetings. Karina has agreed despite the fact that this activity does not fall under her current scope of services as FNPS Executive Director.

Karina has proposed a service contract which would allow her to represent us at these meetings and follow the issue through to completion. This will require a fair amount of research and reporting on her part, and Sea Rocket and Conradina have tentatively agreed to share the contractual costs of this service. The proposed total contract cost is \$1600, which includes a FNPS discount.

Sea Rocket's share of this cost would be \$800. According to our By-Laws, an expenditure of this amount requires general membership notification and approval. Our current budget can accommodate this expense, and your Sea Rocket Board feels that the issue is important enough to warrant our attention and funding. Therefore, it is recommended that the expenditure be approved.

A vote on this proposal will be held at the October 24th Chapter Meeting. If you have any questions or would like to review the proposed contract, please feel free to contact a Board member.

Saturday, November 17, 2007
EIGHTH ANNUAL PATRICK SMITH DAY at FOREVER FLORIDA
Sponsored by the Allen Broussard Conservancy

The public is invited to a special day on Saturday, November 17, 2007, from 10am to 2pm, honoring acclaimed Florida author Patrick D. Smith who has been voted "Greatest Living Floridian" by the Florida Historical Society.

Smith's best known novel, *A Land Remembered*, was recently voted Best Florida Book for the eighth year by readers of Florida Monthly Magazine. Much of *A Land Remembered* is set in the 1800s in Florida's prairies and scrub brush, which has been preserved in its natural state at Forever Florida. Patrick Smith plans to be in the Visitor Center to sign his books.

The keynote address, "The Allen Broussard Legacy: How to Conserve Wildlife," will be delivered by Dr. Rob Deblinger, Deputy Director, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife.

Photography fans will enjoy an opportunity to photograph natural Florida on An Early Riser Photography Tour from 7 to 9am. The cost is \$40.00 per person and includes breakfast and admission to Patrick Smith Day. Additional entertainment includes Cajun music by Allen's Cajun cousin Alan Broussard and friends, Cajun stories, Kid's Zone, games, activities and a Cracker oxen demonstration. Dr. Sandra Wise will hold a cracker horse training demonstration. Local artisans will be on hand to display their wares.

Following the entertainment, a special Eco-Safari Tour of Forever Florida and the Crescent J Ranch will be offered for \$19.95.

Admission is \$5.00 per person or \$10.00 per car. Lunch includes Gumbo & Crawfish or BarBQ for \$10.00. FOREVER FLORIDA is located in East Osceola County, 7.5 miles south of Holopaw on US 441. Please call 1-888-957-9794 or 321-777-0839 for more information. Map and directions are available at the Forever Florida website: www.foreverflorida.org

Don't Forget About Our Website!

Use the Sea Rocket website to read interesting articles written by Sea Rocket members. Explore pertinent links to related subjects and catch up your reading with Chapter newsletters!

All this and much more is available to you with just a click of your mouse at
<http://nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/index.html>

Thanks for Renewing!

BIG THANKS to the following members who renewed their Sea Rocket memberships during August and September.

Marion Anderson, Bill & Suzanne Meyer,
Carolyn Mouat, Linnea Reid,
and Elsa Torres.

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Don't Let YOUR Membership Lapse!

Do you know when YOUR membership is due for renewal? To find out, please call Gail Hill at 453-4865.

**2nd Annual
Berry Merry Holly-Day Party**

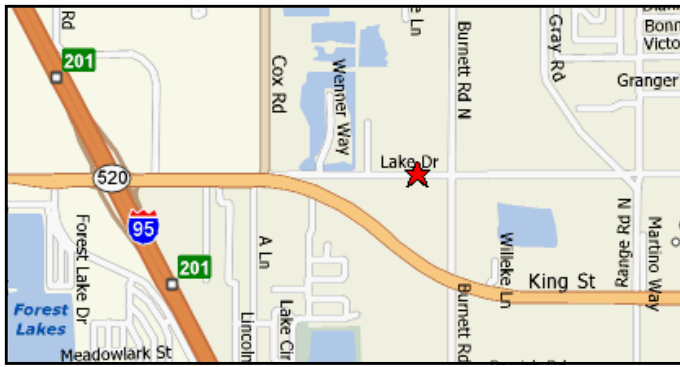
Mark the date!

Sunday, December 9, 2007 from 2 to 4pm
at The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary

In an effort to reduce waste, we are asking everyone to bring their own eating utensils.

**Watch for all the merry
details in the November
newsletter!**





Brevard County Agricultural Center

3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa, Florida * 321-633-1702

- From I-95, go east on SR 520 to the first traffic light (Burnett Rd.). Go left at the light and drive one block north to Lake Drive. Turn left and the Agricultural 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 Agricultural Center will be ahead on your left.

** Please do not call the Agricultural Center for anything but clarification on directions to the center. For all other questions, contact a member of the FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter board.*

Sea Rocket Board of Directors

President: Betty Page: sioned@digital.net / 269-0555

Vice President: Barbara Venuto: cvenuto@cfl.rr.com / 452-3609

Secretary: Joanie Regan: jregan@cityofcocoabeach.com / 482-3323

Treasurer/Chapter Director: Eileen Szuchy: 634-5248

Nursery Co-chairs: Pat Bayer: 638-4660 & Suzanne Meyer: 264-4922

Library Co-chairs: Woody Dierberg, PhD & Joanie Regan

Newsletter: Shari Blissett Clark: jclark109@cfl.rr.com / 264-5185

Hike Leader: Paul Schmalzer, PhD: 268-5473

Hospitality: Ginny Blaetz

Education: Kari Ruder: 536-1410

Membership: Gail Hill: 453-4865



Florida Native Plant Society

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

<http://nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/index.html>



Sea Rocket

c/o Shari Blissett Clark
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Please contact us if you would like to receive future Sea Rocket newsletters via e-mail.