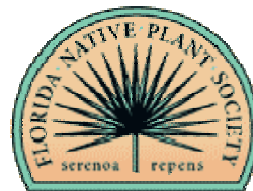




Sea Rocket



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

April 2009

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



Going Coastal Surviving in a Challenging Environment

Paula Berntson
Wednesday - April 22, 7pm

Learn more about our amazing native species that thrive along the shoreline of Brevard County. These salt & drought tolerant plants are an intrinsic part of our coastal eco-system and provide food, habitat, and protection to many species. Some of these sacrificial natives are the first line of defense for upland property and infrastructure during storm events. Many of these plants can also survive inland and make great additions to a backyard landscape. Come and see which of these coastal natives may be a welcome addition to your landscaping. Paula has worked for our County for almost a decade - creatively establishing coastal programs to help restore our dunes natural defenses against wind & water. Much of the work has been grant funded and includes municipal & private lands.

Malabar Scrub Sanctuary Field Trip

Saturday, April 25 - 9am until noon

This public conservation land was a joint acquisition of the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program and the State of Florida. Vegetation is scrub, flatwoods, and marshes. Prescribed burning and scrub restoration have been conducted since its acquisition, which began in 1993. Hike will be mostly in scrub and flatwoods; this Sanctuary has established and well marked trails.



Our Hike Leader Paul Schmalzer, PhD is on our County's Environmentally Endangered Lands program's Selection & Management Committee and is an expert in natural communities & native plant identification. This is a real & rare opportunity to get to know Florida and our precious native plants better.

Directions: I-95 south to Malabar Road (SR 514). This is the second Palm Bay exit. Go east about 3 miles on Malabar Road. Sanctuary is on north side of road, just past the Malabar Fire Station. Turn left into sanctuary entrance, go north to gate. Parking is in gravel lot to left. Bring hat, sunscreen, water, and insect repellent.

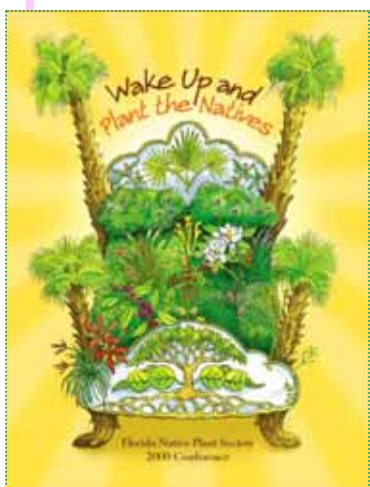
Sea Rocket Chapter Meeting Minutes . . . submitted by Ginny Blaetz

March 25, 2009 - Ag Center

Our newly- elected President, Suzanne Meyer opened the meeting with a request for the adoption of the January & February Minutes as published in the Sea Rocket news' March edition. Pat Bayer made a motion for approval & Paul Schmalzer seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved as published. Sea Rocket needs a new Membership Chairperson. Please let a Board member know if you'd be willing to do this. Access to e-mail is a requirement. We also need a publicity chairperson & a newsletter editor. Suzanne announced that the 3rd Annual Florida Wildflower Festival would be held in Deland on Sat., March 28 & encouraged members to attend. Sea Rocket's Nursery Comm. will conduct a native plant sale at the Enchanted Forest on Sat., Apr. 4. FNPS State Conference registration is open & available on line. Early registration fees are reduced. All members are encouraged to attend the conference which is held in May. This year the site is West Palm Beach.

Sea Rocket has a new project: a butterfly garden at the South Lake Elementary School, Titusville. This project is in conjunction with the Titusville Environmental Council (TEC) & the Titusville Men's Garden Club. The Middle School Environmental Club will be doing some of the planting. The garden was designed, in the shape of a butterfly, by Sea Rocket member Shari Blisset-Clark. Funds for equipment, soil amendments, soaker hoses, & some plants, etc. are being provided by the TEC. Sea Rocket will be contributing \$366.00 worth of plants. The children of South Lake Elementary School will be making concrete stepping stones. Sea Rocket members will supervise the planting of the actual plants & will also install a windbreak of larger shrubs & grass. We will be soliciting members to help with this project during April. Please feel free to come by & view the project near the bicycle rack after it gets going with rototilling on April 10th.

This month's speaker was Shari Blisset-Clark, above mentioned designer, who spoke about establishing our own butterfly gardens. She gave us an organized blue-print for deciding where, how & with what to plant a butterfly garden however large or small somewhere in our own domain. Florida butterflies need Florida plants was a recurring theme. We were encouraged to spend a good amount of time sitting in our yards with a beverage of our choice, observing butterflies we already have to see where butterflies can find the basics which these solar powered creatures need such as food (both host food & nectar), shelter, water & sun. Host plants for larva were discussed & we were warned to expect bugs & caterpillars. Blooming seasons of plants require that many plants be available to provide host foliage & nectar in all seasons. Planning for watering of newly planted materials & designing traffic patterns was also discussed. Water for butterflies must be kept shallow & several designs for "muddles" we mentioned. Members were advised to develop a written plan of all materials needed, to plan our work & enlist help as well as to evaluate how the project went & improvements when we've finished.



Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference

West Palm Beach Marriott Hotel

May 21-24, 2009

Wake Up and Plant the Natives

Planting Today to Preserve Florida's Tomorrow

REAL FLORIDA Fieldtrips lead by REAL EXPERTS

Presentations on conservation science & native landscape

More information is available at www.fnps.org. Click on the "Conference" listing

Pine Straw Mulch

Pine straw makes great mulch for your garden & walking paths and this is a great time to be sprucing up your garden.

Delivery to Brevard is limited to large quantities so we are looking for interested parties to share the cost.

Each bale is about \$3 and covers ~ 60SF.

Contact Joanie at jregan@cityofcocoabeach.com with questions or to share in this pine straw order.

MUSHROOM - photographers needed

Sea Rocket is looking for Mushroom Photos for an autumn slideshow by Jay Barnhart. Please note Date & Location of all photos. If interested, email rspringer29@earthlink.net.

You can also request a form if you would like to make a sport print.

This is a chance to get involved in an upcoming presentation.





ECO Action Alerts



Florida's Conservation Lands are being CUT - Please take ACTION

The State legislative budget is threatening severe cuts for management of Florida's protected conservation lands - even as we know understand that much of Florida's fiscal problems stem from unbridled growth. These lands are Florida's lifeline to protect natural resources and steer growth away from critical state habitats. Please follow the Audubon Society EASY weblink to voice your opinion on Florida's valuable protected lands. http://audubonaction.org/campaign/florida_lands_need_more_money



**Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better, it's not!**

Dr. Seuss from The Lorax



Florida's Water Supply

On April 13, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) will vote on a permit from Seminole County to withdraw an average of 5.5 million gallons of water a day from the St. Johns River. This initial permit represents the beginning of an Alternative Water Supply (AWS) program that could result in the withdrawal of over 260 million gallons of water a day (MGD) from the St. Johns and the Ocklawaha. Action is needed to protect all of our State water resources - aquifers, rivers and springs. Please take the following actions to protect FL's water supply for generations to come.

- * Attend the SJRWMD Governing Board meeting in Palatka on Monday, April 13 at 1pm [4049 Reid Street, Palatka, FL 32177] AND/OR
 - * Email the SJRWMD Governing Board and Gov Charlie Crist and let them know that you oppose surface water withdrawals and support water conservation.
- Use the following EASY web link to email the Governor and the SJRWMD Board.

<http://www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org/thirstthreatens.asp>



Reaping the fruit planted by Greed

By CARL HIAASEN [Miami Herald, February 15, 2009]

It wasn't surprising that President Barack Obama came to Florida to push his economic stimulus package, because no place in the United States has fallen so hard, so fast.

And when the mega-recession finally ends, Florida will be one of the last places in the country to turn itself around. That's because other states have actual industry, while our employment base depends fatally on double-digit population growth and, to a lesser extent, tourism.

Everything was going gang-busters when a thousand people a day were moving here, but now the stampede is over, and the jig's up. Without fresh meat for the housing market, Florida basically hasn't got an economy.

Developers have controlled state and county governments for so long that no Plan B exists. Lost and clueless, lawmakers desperately hack away at public budgets while clinging to the hope that boom times will return.

For good reason, Florida has become the poster child for America's fiscal disintegration. We stand at the top of the leaderboard in rising unemployment, foreclosures and, of course, mortgage fraud.

To read the rest of this great article discussing our State's economic plight due to Growth Mis-Management . . .

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/columnists/carl-hiaasen/story/903185.html>

President's Corner

Hello, I am Suzanne Meyer, newly elected President for Sea Rocket Chapter for this year. Thank you for supporting our organization. This is my fifth time as President since 1990. I am a little rusty but will try my best to be a good leader. Please feel free to contact me or any of our board members with questions or suggestions. We have an exciting project in the works! This is a butterfly garden for South Lake Elementary School in Titusville. We are partnering with TEC (Titusville Environmental Committee) and the Titusville Men's Garden Club with financial support from the City of Titusville. This is wonderful for our group and the children belonging to the environmental group in their school. Our education chair Stephanie Phillips has already done an informative talk for the teachers & children. We will be starting the work on April 10th and the dedication will be on April 24 at 10am. The children will be making the stepping stones and planting most of the plants. The design was created by Shari Blissett Clark in the shape of a butterfly. It will consist of all native plants specifically for host and nectar for our native butterflies and also any migratory visitors. If you would like to be involved please contact me by email meyermenagerie@clf.rr.com or phone 264-4922. I am looking forward to a productive and fun year of promoting our beautiful native plants.

GET INVOLVED with your FL Native Plant Society - **Board Positions** Currently **OPEN**

* **Newsletter Chair**

* **Membership Chair**

Speak with any Board Member to learn more about these opportunities!



Better Know a Native ! Wild Petunia - *ruellia caroliniensis*



A great hummingbird and butterfly plant - wild petunia is host to the Malachite and common buckeye. It is commonly found in fatwoods, sandhills and hammocks and

can handle moist areas but is very drought resistant. Wild petunia like both full sun and partial shade and is great for groundcover, mass plantings, hanging baskets and even climbing down a wall. This plant tends to be shorter and leaves broader than its evil locally invasive cousin described below - although the flower can be very similar. Wild petunia is readily available in native nurseries. See the Association of Florida Native Nurseries for a comprehensive search engine that can help find even rare native beauties: www.afnn.org.



Know Your Invasives Mexican Petunia - *ruellia brittoniana*

Mexican petunia is a prime example of a plant promoted over the web & in garden centers as a "hardy" perennial edging plant for flower beds & colorful groundcovers. The problem is that the Mexican petunia is highly invasive and listed as a Category 1 invasive species by the FL Exotic Pest Plant Council. Mexican petunia has invaded and can thrive in a range of habitats, including flatwoods, hardwood hammocks, prairies, rivers & pastures - rapidly spreading by roots & spraying seeds far from the mother plant.



Upcoming Events

- Mon, April 13** *Conradina FNPS Meeting, Intro to Butterfly Gardening, Melbourne Library, 7pm*
FL WATER SUPPLY MEETING, SJRWMD Palatka (see Action Alert)
- April 16-19** *Indian River Lagoon Festival - Sand Point Park, Titusville*
- April 17-19** *Earth Day Celebration - Maple Street Natives (contact info below)*
- April 18** *KBB Trashbash - 9-noon, www.keepbrevardbeautiful.com/events_trashbash*
EarthFest - FL Solar Energy Center, www.fsec.ucf.edu
- Wed, April 22** *Sea Rocket Chapter Meeting - Go Coastal with Natives, 7pm*
EARTH DAY: PLANT a TREE, SHUT OFF your LIGHTS, WALK/BIKE
- Fri, April 24** *Atlas V Launch*
- Sat, April 25** *Sea Rocket Hike - Malabar Scrub Sanctuary, 9*
Fox Lake Festival of Crafts - Titusville, 9-4pm
KBB Secret Garden Tour [see Candy Murphy's garden!] www.keepbrevardbeautiful.com
- Tues, April 28** *Delta 4 Launch*
- Sat, May 9** *Old Timers' Day, Fort Christmas*
- Tues, May 12** *STS-125 Atlantic Launch*

If you would like to have an item included in this section, please contact Joanie Regan at joanie.regan@hotmail.com

Sea Rocket nursery volunteers enjoyed beautiful weather for the plant sale on Saturday, April 4. It was the beginning of Earth Day celebrations all month at the Enchanted Forest. A total of \$438 was

made selling plants, native seeds and one book. We are also very happy to welcome another member to our nursery committee, Vivian Soreiro. She used her pickup truck to get our supply of soil on April 9th. It took her two trips and we had 6 of us to help shovel, rake and sweep the soil out of her truck and on to our tarp. The volunteers are putting in overtime this month to install the butterfly garden at South Lake Elementary by April 24 and to keep up with the weeds at the nursery. We have also spent time in meetings and on buying trips for supplies like fence, rocks, pond liner, edging and to get some plants that our nursery can't provide for the butterfly garden. We are also taking pictures all along the way so there will be a photo record & presentation in the future. Our next sale will be on June 6 at the Enchanted Forest during the Merritt Island Ace Hardware's Pond Tour. Put a post-it on your calendar and tell your friends to come!

Nursery News

submitted by Pat Bayer



Not sure where to get native beauties for your yard?

Naturewise

Green Marketplace

2295 Adamson Road
Cocoa, FL 536-1410

kari@naturewisepplants.com

www.naturewisepplants.com

Tues 2-6pm, Fri 10-6pm
and Sat 9-1pm

Maple Street Natives

7619 Henry Ave
West Melbourne, FL
729-6857

info@maplestreetnatives.com

www.maplestreetnatives.com

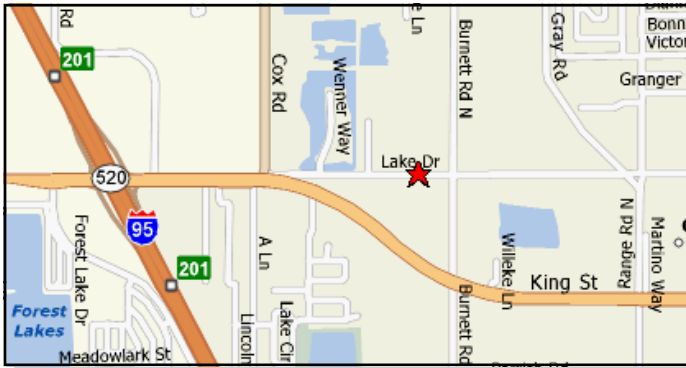
Mon thru Sat 8-5pm

Green Images

1333 Taylor Creek Road
Christmas, FL
407 568-1333

greenimage@aol.com

Wed & Sat 10 - 2pm



CHAPTER MEETING LOCATION

Brevard County Ag Center, 3695 Lake Drive, Cocoa, Florida

- From I-95, go east on SR520 to 1st traffic light (Burnett Rd.). Turn left at light and drive one block north to Lake Drive. Turn left & Ag Center is on your left.
- From US 1, go west on SR520 to traffic light immediately after Bob Steele Chevrolet. Turn right onto Burnett Road & go 1 block to stop sign. Turn right onto Lake Drive & Ag Center is on your left.

Please do not call the Ag Center

For questions, contact a member of the FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter board.

Sea Rocket Board of Directors

President: Suzanne Meyer: meyermenagerie@cfl.rr.com

Vice President: Debra Springer: rspringer29@earthlink.net

Secretary: Ginny Blaetz: vblaetz@hotmail.com **Treasurer:** Betty Page: sloned@digital.net / 269-0555

Nursery Chair: Pat Bayer: bayeriii@juno.com **Library Chair:** Woody Dierberg, PhD aquachem1@aol.com

Chapter Rep & Hike: Paul Schmalzer, PhD: 268-5473 **Newsletter:** Joanie Regan: joanie.regan@hotmail.com

Membership: Gail Hill: 453-4865 **Education:** Stephanie Phillips: k4mvo@titustek.com

Hospitality: Candy Murphy: budyboo@yahoo.com / 636-4074



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>

P. O. Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32902-0278



Sea Rocket

c/o Joanie Regan
1460 South Atlantic Avenue
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

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