

# The Sparkle

The Sparkleberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Volume 2, Issue 7

July 2012

**President's Message: Carol Sullivan**

## **Enjoy being outdoors!!!**

The two weather events in as many months brought us some of the rain we have needed so badly - at a heavy price unfortunately. The damage from the flooding and sinkholes will be with us for a while as a constant reminder to be thankful for what we have every day. Be careful as you travel around the area.

On the bright side, everything outdoors had a good bath and the vegetation is all lush and green. Some of the herbaceous blooming plants that were dying back from the heat and lack of rain quickly recovered with fresh foliage and a flush of new flowers. Even the ditches came alive with plants that were lying dormant just waiting for enough moisture to shoot up.

Don't forget to use GoodSearch, GoodShop and the FNPS Store for your web searches and shopping. All three provide additional funds for the grants, awards and other ongoing projects that promote the mission of the FNPS. You can access all three from FNPS website ([www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)) or from the direct sites as described below. At our July meeting there will be a drawing for a few items purchased from the FNPS Store's booth at the Conference.

The annual Conference will be held in Jacksonville next year. Since it will be closer to home for us, the Executive Committee voted to give an award to one of our Chapter members for partial expenses to attend the Conference. Further details will be provided.

*Carol*

**Sparkleberry Chapter meetings** are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at Hatch Park, 403 SE Craven St., Branford. Meetings start at 6:30 PM.

**Please join us for our next meeting July 10, 2012**



**Sparkleberry Webmaster Mae Brandt** has produced our own SPARKLEBERRY CHAPTER web site. You can reach it at <http://sparkleberry.fnpschapters.org>. Web sites by nature are always a "work in progress" because there will always be updates.

Please visit the site and let Mae know what you think!

We also have a **Facebook** page, to be used as a communication spot for members between meetings. Visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), search for Sparkleberry, and become a friend and/or fan.

### **Calendar of Events:**

#### **July 10, 2012 - Monthly Meeting 6:30 pm., Hatch Park, Branford**

Our guest speaker for the July meeting will be Sarah Lauerman, an independent wildlife contractor. Below is the information she submitted for publicity purposes regarding her presentation and bio.

#### **From Sarah Lauerman:**

The title of my presentation will be **"The Red-cockaded Woodpecker Translocation Project at the Osceola National Forest"**.

The presentation will give a brief overview about RCWs, describe the monitoring, banding and preparations involved in translocations along with some fun, anecdotal information about the 2012 season. I will also include a few interesting plant observations that mark the timeline of the woodpecker adventures.

I have a BA in zoology from University of Wisconsin-Madison and a MS in wildlife biology from Clemson University. I began studying and monitoring the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker for my master's work in 2004 in South Carolina. Once I graduated, I moved to Florida for the job I am currently in. I am an independent wildlife contractor (my company's name is Aves Consulting, LLC) and I'm funded on annual grants from a variety of sources, including state and federal agencies. I work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, operating out of their ranger station in Sanderson, FL.

#### **August 14, 2012 - Monthly Meeting 6:30 pm., Hatch Park, Branford**

Annie Johnson, a member of the Nature Coast Chapter, has had a long-running fascination with the varying characteristics of many of our native plants. She knows how and when to select the various parts of each plant for many uses from refreshing teas to healing potions and will be sharing this information with us at the August meeting.

## Future Programs

Some of the topics coming in the near future include native trees of Florida forests and planting a landscape with native plants for wildlife habitats.

## Roadside Bloomers:

Some of the things you might see blooming as you drive along the local roads:

**Standing Cypress (*Ipomopsis rubra*)** - tall spikes of tubular red flowers with yellowish insides

**Tickseed (*Coreopsis leavenworthii*)** - 1" yellow ray flowers with brown centers on thin stems

**Softhair coneflower (*Rudbeckia mollis*)** - 3" yellow ray flowers with cone shaped brown center

**Pickeralweed (*Pontederia cordata*)** - blue/purple flowers thickly clustered on tall spikes

**Meadowbeauty (*Rhexia spp.*)** - small 4-petaled pink flowers at tops of stems

Some that are still blooming and will continue all summer are the Coral Honeysuckle, Trumpet Creeper, Gaillardia and Elderberry.

## Featured Article:

### MYRICA CERIFERA - Wax Myrtle or Southern Bayberry Myricaceae - Bayberry Family

Wax Myrtle is one of our most widely variable native plants in both its appearance and in its habitat. It can be found throughout Florida's hammocks, swamps, cypress domes, pine flatwoods, sandy pinelands and marsh edges in full sun to partial shade and can be a small tree or a small shrub. Even with all that, there are some features that are common among all Wax Myrtles. It is drought tolerant, salt tolerant, multi-stemmed and erect with dense, evergreen foliage. It's leaves are alternate, toothed near the tip, dark green above with lighter underside and are aromatic when crushed. It is dioecious having inconspicuous white flowers on the female in spring and yellowish catkins on the male plants. Flowering is followed by smooth berries covered in a blue-white waxy coating from summer through fall on the female plants.

There are some variations that appear to be related to the plants habitat. Typically, plants growing in moist to wet conditions can reach 35' as large shrubs or small trees, have 1"x6" and rarely form large colonies. Plants that grow in dry sites are smaller (3'), with smaller leaves and are more apt to freely spread by suckers. Some refer to this "dwarf" version as *Myrica cerifera* var. *pumila*, but this distinction has not yet been reliably determined.

You probably have guessed by now that *Myrica cerifera* is a highly adaptable, easy to grow plant for every landscape. It can be pruned to shape and is used for a hedge, screen, woodland border or commercial landscape. It grows from seed or cuttings, but is most easily propagated by root cuttings. The roots contain nitrogen-fixing bacteria that improves the surrounding soil. Because of its aromatic resinous oils, it is not considered to be fire resistant. It is, however, highly recommended for wildlife landscaping, providing cover for small animals, flowers for the pollinators, waxy berries for a large variety of birds and larval food for Red-banded Hairstreak butterfly and the Lo Moth. Candles can be made from the waxy berries, which can also be used to scent soaps. The plant was used by the colonists to treat stomach aches, ulcers, dry skin and colds, as well as to repel fleas and roaches.

*Myrica cerifera* is found throughout the southeastern states from Virginia to the Florida keys and over through Texas. There are two other species of *Myrica* that occur in Florida. *M. heterophylla*, Evergreen Bayberry, that grows mostly in wet conditions, and *M. inodora*, Odorless Bayberry, which has unscented leaves and occurs mainly in the panhandle from Wakulla County westward.

### **Of Interest:**

A way for each of us to help the FNPS is to utilize the three shopping/search sites listed below. Every time you use the FNPS online store, GoodSearch or GoodShop, FNPS receives a payment. These funds are used for grants and awards on other projects that promote the mission of the FNPS and it doesn't cost you a cent.

[www.TheFNPSshop.com](http://www.TheFNPSshop.com)

The FNPS online store handles a wide variety of Society, Chapter or member merchandise, including tee shirts, hats, seeds, artwork, bird houses, yard art and much more. A percentage of any purchase goes to the society. Many of the items are provided by other chapters that would also reap the benefits of your purchase. Take a look - you may be surprised by what you see.

### **Useful Links:**

[www.Goodsearch.com](http://www.Goodsearch.com)

GoodSearch is a search engine, powered by Yahoo, that pays a penny to FNPS everytime you use it for your internet searches. (Be sure you have entered "Florida Native Plant Society - Melbourne" in the box on the home page where it asks "Who do you Goodsearch for". The society name will appear in the box). From there you enter your request on the "Search" line above the society name and proceed just as you would with any web search.

[www.GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com)

GoodShop has a very large base of retailers to choose from, such as Best Buy, Lowe's, Walmart, OfficeMax, etc. A percentage of anything you purchase from their participating retailers is paid to the FNPS once you designate the "Florida Native Plant Society - Melbourne". Those percentages vary and are included in the listing for the merchant. GoodShop.com also offers discount coupons for a variety of merchandise.

**Points to Ponder:**

*The splendor of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not rob the daisy of its simple charm. If every tiny flower wanted to be a rose, spring would lose its loveliness.*

*Quoted from: THERESE OF LISIEUX*

\*\*\*\*\*

*"What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered."*

*Quoted from: Ralph Waldo Emerson*

**Officers and Committee Chairs**

President	Carol Sullivan	<a href="mailto:csullivan12@windstream.net">csullivan12@windstream.net</a>	386-364-9309
Vice President	Trish Haight	<a href="mailto:latriciah@aol.com">latriciah@aol.com</a>	954-547-5932
Secretary	Phyllis Bridges	<a href="mailto:pbrid3@windstream.net">pbrid3@windstream.net</a>	386-330-0382
Treasurer	Judy Townsend	<a href="mailto:judtown@gmail.com">judtown@gmail.com</a>	386-397-2731
Chapter Representative	Betsy Martin	<a href="mailto:betsymartin@windstream.net">betsymartin@windstream.net</a>	386-935-2453
Conservation	Carolyn Saft	<a href="mailto:csaft318@ufl.edu">csaft318@ufl.edu</a>	386-362-2771
Program Coordinator	Debbie Phillips	<a href="mailto:jeep5149@aol.com">jeep5149@aol.com</a>	386-364-7028
Publicity	Sylvia Dunnam	<a href="mailto:dunnams@windstream.net">dunnams@windstream.net</a>	386-362-3256
Membership Chair	Mae Brandt	<a href="mailto:maebrandt@bellsouth.net">maebrandt@bellsouth.net</a>	386-466-0915
Website	Mae Brandt	<a href="mailto:maebrandt@bellsouth.net">maebrandt@bellsouth.net</a>	386-466-0915
Newsletter	Judi Harn	<a href="mailto:judi826@gmail.com">judi826@gmail.com</a>	386-935-2537

.....



*"The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society is the preservation, conservation and restoration of native plants and native plant communities of Florida."*