



The Sparkler

The Sparkleberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

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President's Message: *Carol Sullivan*

Spring is Springing!!!

After the last two work days at Heritage Park, the difference in its appearance is pretty impressive. The Rotarians, along with some of their wives and children, Master Gardeners and Sparkleberry members hacked and whacked their way through a mass of vegetation to reveal another row of Azaleas along a portion of the front fence. A full page in the Suwannee Democrat featured the event with pictures of the group in action. One picture was of Dona Mann and Kathleen Elbare, along with a young man of about six who was "helping" them, though it's a little difficult to tell who was so far under the Chinese Wisteria! Thanks again to all of you who helped with this task. A lot of Japanese Honeysuckle, Camphor, Chinaberry, Nandina and Chinese Wisteria were cut down and hauled away. One treatment won't eliminate them, but they sure will have a headache for a while. *(Editor's note: I'll bring a copy to our meeting for those of you who don't get the paper!)*



Before



After

This warmer weather has caused Spring Fever to set in early for me. I'm headed outside to play in the yard! See you all on Tuesday the 13th when we will learn how to make the most of our native plants in the landscape. *(See program information on Page 2)*

Carol

Sparkleberry Chapter meetings are held the 2nd 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 on March 13, 2012



Our **Chapter webpage** is accessed through the main Florida Native Plant Society webpage. Go to www.fnps.org, go to the column on the left side of the main page, find the dropdown box with the list of chapters, and click on Sparkleberry. Sparkleberry Webmaster Mae Brandt updates our Chapter's latest information, speakers, etc., on our page, so check it out!

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

Calendar of Events:

3/13/12: Monthly Meeting, 6:30 PM., Hatch Park, Branford

“The Role of Landscape Preferences in Sustainable Design,” by Gail Hansen, MLA, PhD

Dr. Hansen’s program will explore how we think about landscapes, our aesthetic preferences, and why we like what we like about landscapes. She will also discuss the role of cultural norms and how we can have more sustainable landscapes that are attractive and low maintenance by using a concept called “cues to care.”

Dr. Hansen is an assistant professor in the Environmental Horticulture Department at the University of Florida. Her teaching and extension focus is sustainable landscapes, and her program addresses best design practices and quality of life in residential and urban landscapes. She is also a faculty member in the Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology (CLCE), the faculty advisor for the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program, and the Statewide Extension Specialist in Landscape Design. Dr. Hansen has an MLA and PhD in landscape architecture. She worked for a private landscape architecture firm in Gainesville, Florida for eight years and as an adjunct faculty for seven years in the landscape architecture department at UF before joining the environmental horticulture department where she teaches the residential landscape design courses.

3/17/12: Field Trip, 9:30-11:00 AM - Little River Wildlife Management Area, O’Brien

(For more information and directions, see “Field Trips” section, Page 3)

3/13/12-4/7/12: Suwannee County Fair - The Sparkleberry Chapter will have an educational display booth in Exhibition II Building.

4/10/12: Monthly Meeting, 6:30 PM., Hatch Park, Branford

"Native Plants, Native People," presented by Barbara Hines. Barbara will discuss how the native people and early settlers in Florida used the native plants of this region.

Barbara is a Registered Professional Archaeologist and the Outreach Coordinator for the North Central Region of the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN). She specializes in historic archaeology of the 19th and early 20th century. Her interests include the turpentine and lumber industry, early Florida architecture, and Southeastern Indian communities.

5/12/12: Plant Sale - time and place to be determined

We have decided to have a spring plant sale on May 12th. Yes, it's the day before Mother's Day. We're hoping to get added sales for gifts for Mom! This is the time of year when plants are starting to bloom, when everyone is thinking of adding a few plants to their landscapes, and when gardeners are anxious to get out and dig in the dirt! AND early May is right before it gets too hot, and when the afternoon rains should start to help in establishing plants.

The date is fast approaching . . . **SO**, for those that are interested in growing or participating in the sale day, **we will have to have a quick get-together after the meeting this month**. Hopefully, some of you are already potting things up for the sale. We do have some things left over from our last sale that made it nicely through the winter. I will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting, so put your name and info on it when you get there if you are interested in helping. If you have a specific job you would like to do, make sure and put that down.

Thanks, *Betsy Martin*

Future Program: The Effects of Wildfire in our Forests

Field Trips:

3/17/12: Little River Wildlife Management Area, O'Brien, 9:30-11:00 AM.

On our field trip in February, 2011, we saw the first 1/2 mile or less of a 3-mile road through the tract that has over 2,000 acres of natural communities, including sandhill, bottom land forest and floodplain. The roadway winds its way to a point on the Suwannee River directly across from Troy Springs State Park. This trip will be to explore another section along the roadway. With the warm weather some things are beginning to bloom, so there will be some interesting vegetation and habitat to see.

Directions from US 129 in O'Brien:

Turn west at the blinker light onto CR 349; continue on CR 349 for approximately 3.5 miles; entrance is on the left and is identified by a brown and white sign.

We'll meet in the parking area at the entrance located on CR 349. This is a primitive tract that has no facilities, so plan accordingly.

For more information, contact Carol Sullivan. csullivan12@windstream.net 386-364-9309

Of Interest:

Reminder!!! Daylight Savings Time starts on 3/11/12
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Roadside Bloomers

Dogwood, *Cornus Florida*, are showing large white bracts surrounding their small greenish flowers. Some Walter's Viburnum, *Viburnum obovatum*, and Chickasaw Plum, *Prunus angustifolia*, still have their white flowers.

The Cherry Laurel, *Prunus caroliniana*, has fuzzy cream colored blooms

Blueeyed Grass, *Sisyrinchium angustifolium*, and Lyleleaf Sage, *Salvia lyrata*, are both popping little blue flowers.

Coral Honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*, is beginning to display it's clustered red tubular blooms



CORAL HONEYSUCKLE
LONICERA SEMPERVIRENS

Coral Honeysuckle is an old-time favorite native vine that occurs from Central Florida to Connecticut and over to Texas. It can be seen blooming in spring and summer climbing on top of pasture fences or over old mailboxes. Although those seem to be its favorite places, it is a great choice for the sunny spot you see from your kitchen window or from the porch while sipping your morning coffee. ☺ Not only is it a good nectar source for the hummers and butterflies, the clusters of tubular red flowers are followed by bright red berries that are attractive to many birds and last through the fall. It does have long twining stems, but it is not an aggressive climber. It is a well-behaved vine that maintains a rather compact growth habit when given a trellis or some other kind of structure to grow around. A highly ornamental, easy-care vine that grows in a wide variety of conditions and can be pruned and trained, even as ground cover.

Unfortunately, many natives have been shunned as landscape plants because of their association with their weedy relatives. The Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), with its white to pale yellow flowers is a rampant grower that has escaped into our forests, taking over native habitat with its strong underground roots and dense foliage, smothering trees and shrubs in its path. Japanese Honeysuckle is listed as a Category 1 invasive pest plant by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council.

COMMON NAME: Coral Honeysuckle

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Lonicera sempervirens*

DESCRIPTION: Twining (no tendrils), mostly evergreen vine that will not grow out of control, prefers a structure for support

HEIGHT/SPREAD: Stems to 15'

LEAVES: Opposite, usually sessile near the tip of a stem (cupped around the stem), smooth dark green above, silvery underneath

FLOWERS: 2” tubular flowers borne in clusters; red to slightly orange, spring and summer, producing red berries in fall.

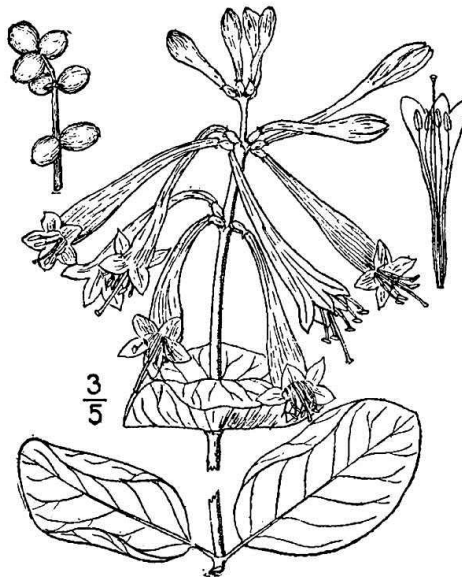
GROWING CONDITIONS: Full sun in well-drained, moderately dry soil is preferred. Tolerates partial shade and moister sites.

DROUGHT TOLERANCE: High. Exists on normal rainfall once established.

PROPAGATION: Cuttings or seeds.

WILDLIFE ATTRACTOR: Hummingbirds and butterflies attracted to nectar; birds and small wildlife attracted to berries.

OTHER FEATURES: Can be pruned, grows well in containers, can be used as a ground cover.



Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. 3 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Vol. 3: 280. Courtesy of [Kentucky Native Plant Society](#).

Point to Ponder:

"The best part of any JOURNEY is the people we meet along the way"

Unknown

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