Wildflower Symposium Oct. 15 in Apopka — see you there!

The Florida Wildflower Foundation’s annual Wildflower Symposium and membership meeting Oct. 15 will adopt a hands-on format this year that lets participants choose from a variety of workshops and presentations.

The event at the Wekiwa Springs State Park Youth Camp, Apopka, begins with a 9 a.m. meeting of FWF’s members. Morning presentations about wildflower trails and the Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants Web site (www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu) will follow.

After a lunch break in the camp’s dining hall, participants will attend a workshop or presentation of their choosing, which include:

• Happy Trails, Where the Wildflowers Are, a presentation by Jeff Norcini that features four wildflower routes surveyed by him and Gil Nelson.
• Native Landscaping for Fall, a presentation by Craig Huegel (right), a native-plant expert and author.
• Wildflower Propagation for Home Gardeners, a workshop led by Claudia Larsen of Micanopy Wildflowers nursery. (Space limited to 25 participants.)
• Selecting and Preparing Herbarium Specimens, led by Alan Franck, who will teach participants about specimen selection, drying and pressing. (Space limited to 25 participants.)
• Wildflower and Nature Photography, a presentation/workshop led Vince Lamb (right), experienced nature photographer and Florida Master Naturalist. (Space limited to 25 participants.)
• Wildflower Walk with author Dr. Walter Taylor, who will explore the woods and sandhills near the youth camp in search of wildflowers and grasses to identify. (Space limited to 25 participants.)
• Natural Lands Management, led by a Wekiwa Springs State Park ranger who will discuss how fire and other tools are used to maintain the park’s thousands of acres. (Space limited to 25 participants.)

A social from 3-5 p.m. will feature refreshments, a silent auction, door prizes and an awards ceremony. Native plants and seeds will be for sale throughout the day.

Cost is $20 for Foundation members and $30 for non-members, including lunch and refreshments. Admission to the state park is free for participants. Space is limited to 150; pre-register soon. Visit the FWF Web site, www.flawildflowers.org, to register electronically or download a registration form to mail your check.

To check the status of your FWF annual membership, email Lisa Roberts at lroberts@flawildflowers.org or call 407-353-6164. You can also renew or purchase a membership when registering.

FWF members and friends also are invited to paddle on Sunday, Oct. 16, with Lars Andersen of Adventure Outpost, who will lead a trip on Rock Springs Run near Apopka. Lars, who offers regular discounts to FWF members, is offering this trip at a reduced rate of $39, or $29 with your own canoe or kayak. Reservations only – contact Adventure Outpost: 386-454-0611; riverguide2000@yahoo.com.

Join us at the Landscape Show Sept. 29-Oct. 1

For the third year in a row, the Florida Native Plant Partnership (FNPP) will tout the virtues of the state’s native wildflowers, shrubs and trees at the Landscape Show at Orange County Convention Center, 9800 International Drive, Orlando. Come by and visit us in Booth No. 632.

The event, organized by the Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association, features more than 200,000 square feet of trees, shrubs, equipment and more from over 500 exhibiting companies. Most importantly, it gives FNPP a place in which to reach out to 7,500 nursery owners and growers, landscape architects and maintenance professionals and consumers.

FNPP is the sponsor of a presentation by Dr. Craig Huegel, of Ecological Services Associates, LLC, in Seminole. Huegel, who is also speaking at the Foundation’s Oct. 15 Wildflower Symposium, will talk about “Integrating Natives in Formal Settings,” particularly how to install beautiful, practical landscapes in a formal setting while conserving natural resources and restoring wildlife habitat. Individual native trees and shrubs that support birds and butterflies will be featured.

Volunteers are needed to help host the FNPP booth — contact Cammie Donaldson at cammiemcdonaldson@earthlink.net.

The Florida Native Plant Partnership is a collaboration of the Florida Association of Native Nurseries, Florida Native Plant Society, Florida Wildflower Foundation and Wildflower Seed and Plant Growers Association (“Seed Co-Op”).

IN THIS ISSUE

Fall in the garden 2
Join the native wildflower movement 2
PlantRealFlorida.org 3
Tribute to a friend 3
Ready for the Quin? 3
Fall asters 4
**FALL IN THE GARDEN**  
95-degree gardening – some like it hot  
by Claudia Larsen

Ewww, what’s that crawling down my neck? I reach my hand up to catch a slimy, crawly thing, but it’s just a long stream of sweat trickling down – the same sweat that’s burning my eyes and soaking my T-shirt for the third time today. Welcome to 95-degree gardening.

Besides being darn hot, the air is sucking the water out of my plants (technically, it’s called transpiring), so a daily inspection includes adding water to plants in pots and checking any recently planted wildflowers to ensure their establishment in the ground. Embracing Florida gardening in late summer and early fall has its challenges, but also its rewards.

After a long spell of inactivity in the garden this summer, I notice many more butterflies visiting flowers, including fritillaries, sulfurs, whites and various swallowtails. Coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) and Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) are in full bloom and hummingbirds dart aggressively among the plants to find just the right flower upon which to enjoy a nectar feast. These plants look great even in dry periods, but remember the honeysuckle will bloom best intermittently along State Road 40 at the woods’ edge in the Ocala National Forest, but the ones in my full-sun garden are much more robust.

The showstoppers in the wildflower garden are the *Rudbeckia*. Softhair coneflower (*Rudbeckia mollis*) is growing up to 4 feet tall, and it’s covered with bright yellow daisy-like blooms surrounding a central brown disc. The species is blooming intermittently along State Road 40 at the woods’ edge in the Ocala National Forest, but the ones in my full-sun garden are much more robust. Because they spread by roots and pop up in surprising places. After they finish flowering, I’m cutting them back to 3-5 inches tall so they will be renewed and regrow for a late fall display.

Other hot-weather lovers are Scarlet hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*) and Marsh-mallow hibiscus (*Kosteletzya pentacarpos*). These plants are related in the same *Hibiscus* genus of the Mallow family. Their flowers have similar petal shapes and a long tubular gynostegium containing the stamen, style and stigma. However, their leaves are distinctly different in color, size and texture. Both are perennial herbaceous shrubs.

Scarlet hibiscus has a rather tall and narrow stature, while Marsh-mallow is more compact and shrub-like, growing 4-5 feet tall. Both of these perennial plants can form large colonies in their native habitats of swamps and marshy areas. Because of my sandy soil, I keep the red hibiscus in a big pot with a saucer beneath it. Its height reached almost 5 feet and it flowered gloriously throughout August and September with bright red flowers growing more than 6 inches wide. I have seen large clumps growing in Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, where they easily grow 6-8 feet tall. This plant needs moist soil to thrive in the garden and, interestingly, new flowers seem to be triggered by rain events.

The pink Marsh-mallow hibiscus was slow to rebound after our dry spring. But it now has a dozen clear light pink 2-3-inch blooms that contrast nicely with its soft grey-green foliage. Surprisingly, the pink hibiscus can adapt to drier garden conditions and even a little shade. Check out my bonus sighting of the praying mantis. I have noticed several sizes, but this extra-large one seemed to pose for me, dancing on hind legs while stretching out its powerful front legs and even rubbing his ET-shaped head. I decided he was doing the mantis boogaloo. I guess some creatures just like it hot!

**Claudia will lead a workshop in wildflower propagation for home gardeners at the Oct. 15 Florida Wildflower Symposium (Page 1). Look for Claudia’s fall wildflower garden chores on the Foundation’s blog, www.floridawildflowerfoundation.blogspot.com.**

---

Support natives — become a member!

The Florida Wildflower Foundation invites you to celebrate and support Florida’s natural landscape by becoming a member of our organization.

FWF members care deeply about our environment and natural places. As a member, you’ll join them in assuring Florida’s wild future by helping to fund native wildflower research, informal adult education and school projects, and a planting program committed to sharing wildflowers throughout the state.

Visit [www.flawildflowers.org/membership.php](http://www.flawildflowers.org/membership.php) to view membership levels — starting at just $15 per year. Join online, or download a membership form to mail. Thank you for helping to keep wildflowers flourishing!

---

Join the growing movement to save Florida’s native wildflowers

Want to lend a hand? Individuals, businesses and community organizations are invited to get involved by sponsoring one or more of the Foundation’s exciting projects, participating on its board of directors and committees, or volunteering.

Here are just a few ways to help:

- **Join the Foundation as a member** ([www.flawildflowers.org/membership.php](http://www.flawildflowers.org/membership.php)).
- **Lend a hand at an event** (the Oct. 15 Wildflower Symposium, for instance) or with office duties.
- **Donate office space within the Central Florida area.**
- **Have your organization fill seed packets to send to schools and organizations throughout the state.**
- **Make a one-time donation** that will help support and expand our programs.

Here’s a look at how even a small amount can have a sizable impact:

- $10 provides butterfly/wildflower brochures to 50 schoolchildren
- $25 prints 200 educational wildflower handouts for an event or meeting
- $100 sponsors a school wildflower garden
- $250 purchases wildflower seeds for a football-field length of roadside
- $500 sponsors a La Florida, “Land of Flowers,” community planting
- $3,000 sponsors a native wildflower demonstration garden at a botanical garden.

For more information, please contact Lisa Roberts at lroberts@flawildflowers.org or call 407-353-6164.
**PlantRealFlorida.org: A great new tool for Real Florida Gardeners**

by Cammie Donaldson, FANN Executive Director

Whatever you need for your sustainable native garden — whether it’s native plants, professional help or local advice and assistance — you can find it using PlantRealFlorida.org, a new native plant and service locator. The site was developed by the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN) with funding from USDA and assistance from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

Using PlantRealFlorida.org, you’ll be able to:

- Learn about the soils, drainage conditions and plants naturally found in Real Florida’s native plant communities.
- Discover which Florida native plants might work for you, based on historical plant communities in your area and their similarity to your site conditions.
- Find out who carries the plants, pine straw mulch or organic fertilizer you’re looking for.
- Learn more about using native plants in your home garden with informative articles and online references.
- Search for plants by common or botanical name, including synonyms; plant community (e.g., pine flatwoods, sandhill, beach/dunes); wildlife usage (e.g., butterfly plants); plant type (e.g., wildflower) and hardiness zones.
- Locate garden centers and retail nurseries, landscape pros and more by county or zip code.
- Subscribe to the free Guide for Real Florida Gardeners, an annual publication promoting the use of Florida native plants for sustainable home landscapes.
- Explore links to local community resources, including organizations like the Florida Native Plant Society.
- FANN will continue to add content to PlantRealFlorida.org during the next year, including photos and modifications to plant definitions and lists. It is eager for user feedback, particularly constructive criticism that leads to future functionality enhancements and solutions. Submit comments at www.plantrealflorida.org/info/contact-us.

The organization is particularly interested in enhancing the site’s ability to guide the design process with plant community information. The site’s plant lists, based on the 1991 Xeric Landscaping with Florida Native Plants, include commercially grown plants that roughly correspond to historical plant community composition and work in the conditions specified. FANN is adding photos and some plant information to the Web site, but plans to provide detailed plant information by integrating with excellent Web sites that already exist.

PlantRealFlorida.org is being promoted through Spring 2011 via a televised service announcement produced by FDACS and viewable on the site and at YouTube.

---

**A tribute to a true friend of Florida’s wildflowers**

Elizabeth Pate, a true friend of Florida’s wildflowers, passed away in August in Jacksonville. Shortly before her death, Elizabeth learned that the Florida Wildflower Foundation had selected her to receive its prestigious 2011 Friend of Florida’s Wildflowers award.

Elizabeth was an active member of the Foundation, serving on its education and marketing committees and providing monthly State Wildflower license plate sales statistics. She was a life member of the Ribault Garden Club and a Florida Federation of Garden Clubs’ Hall of Fame member. She served for many years as the Roadside Beautification Chairman for Florida and was actively involved in the successful quest to establish a Florida State Wildflower license plate.

She is survived by her loving and devoted husband, retired Navy Captain Jack A. Pate of Atlantic Beach, FL, her children, sons David and Robert Stevens and daughter Pamela Tuggle, all from the Atlanta, Georgia area.

To read more about Elizabeth, please visit our blog at www.floridawildflowerfoundation.blogspot.com.

---

**Are you ready for La Florida’s Quincentennial celebration?**

La Florida’s 2013 Quincentennial is fast approaching, and the Foundation is readying for the celebration of 500 years of La Florida, “Land of Flowers,” in a variety of ways. And you can join in! Here’s a glimpse of some of what’s planned next year.

**Wildflower trails**

Drs. Gil Nelson and Jeff Norcini have mapped four wildflower viewing routes within the state. All offer displays of showy wildflowers, particularly in spring and fall. In the second phase of promoting these trails, the Foundation is working with partners — including individual counties and local governments and organizations — to teach and promote mowing practices that will keep wildflowers thriving.

Much of the work is concentrated along the St. Johns River to the Sea Loop, a 260-mile route within Volusia, Brevard, Flagler, St. Johns and Putnam counties that is likely to become the first designated Wildflower Trail in the state.

**Viva Florida! Wildflower Demonstration Gardens**

This new grant program seeks to partner with botanical gardens in Florida to establish wildflower demonstration gardens and related educational components that expose visitors to the importance of Florida’s native wildflowers and their ecosystems, including support for native food crop pollinators and other wildlife. The gardens must also relate the history and culture of La Florida. Educational components may include classes, signage and educational materials. A request for proposals will be issued this fall. Up to five awards of $3,000 are available.

---

**La Florida, “Land of Flowers,” Community Grants**

In spring 2011, 15 projects were awarded $500 microgrants to purchase native wildflower plants or seeds. Plants and seeds are being purchased now for projects, which include demonstration gardens, beautification efforts and roadside plantings. The program will award a second round of grants in late spring 2012, with the application period opening in March. Up to 16 grants are available.

**Viva Florida! Seed Packets**

Special 2013 commemorative seed packets of our state wildflower, Coreopsis, are being readied for distribution to organizations and at events. This year’s program comes with the opportunity for organizations, businesses and other supporters to participate as packet sponsors. Depending on the level of participation, sponsors will receive a number of packets to circulate. High sponsorship levels include the sponsor’s logo and brief message.
FALL WILDFLOWERS – IT’S ASTER TIME
Northern neighbors have their leaves, but we have a rainbow of wildflowers by Jeff Norcini

In cooler climates, fall is when “leaf peepers” hit the road to view red-, yellow- and orange-leaved trees. Here in Florida, fall color means wildflowers. And when you hit the road to view fall color here, it’s nearly impossible to not see one of our fall-flowering Asters. It is little wonder – the Aster family is one of the largest plant families in the world.

Before I continue, here’s a short FYI about Asters: When many of us envision an Aster, we think of a daisy-like flower. That flower actually is an assemblage of showy ray florets (petals) that surround a cluster of tiny disc florets that produce the seed. (Many species of the Aster family have flowers composed only of disc florets). Because of the composite nature of Aster flowers, the original scientific name for this family was Compositae.

Fall-blooming Asters with daisy-like flowers include yellow ones such as Golden Asters (Chrysocephalum spp.), Tickseeds (Coreopsis spp.), Beggarticks (Bidens spp.), Silkgrasses (Pityopsis spp.) and Sunflowers (Helianthus spp.), as well as the traditional purple to white Asters. (Symphyotrichum spp.). Multiple Asters, however, lack petals but still are very attractive, such as a traditional harbinger of fall: the Goldenrods (Solidago spp.).

If you have a passion for purple, eye-catching Asters composed only of disc florets include the Deer Tongues (Carpephorus spp.), Ironweeds (Vernonia spp.) and the ever-popular Blazing Stars (Liatris spp.). Moreover, Mother Nature was kind enough to give us many purple and yellow Asters that flower in the same habitats – a great color combination.

If you prefer other colors, these beauties also lack petals: blue-flowered Mistflower (Conoclinium coelestinum), pink-flowered Camphorweeds (Pluchea spp.), the dark-purple (but appears black) Rayless Sunflower (Helianthus radula), and white-flowered Thoroughworts (Eupatorium spp.). Narrowleaf Yellowtops (Flaveria linearis) is also very attractive, even though it has but a single petal.

Where are the best places to view fall Asters and other wildflowers? As they say in the real estate business: “location, location, location.” For wildflowers, that means rural locations and, more specifically, open areas without homes or businesses. Open areas, including woodland edges, provide the bright light in which many native wildflowers thrive. Given the extended drought occurring in much of Florida, naturally moist areas probably will be the best areas to view wildflowers. Forested areas and savannas also typically have showy displays of wildflowers the same year they’re burned.

Visit the Florida Wildflower Foundation’s Web site, www.flawildflowers.org/research.php, to see both what’s in bloom and the locations of the state’s prime viewing areas. Also visit www.flawildflowers.org/bloom.php for wildflower routes. Jeff Norcini will give a presentation on wildflower routes at the Oct. 15 Wildflower Symposium (Page 1).

Welcome new members

(r) – renewal

License plate
Connie Caldwell (r) | Shari Ellis
Mary Frances Lawrie | Carol Schaming
Ralph Turner | Marion Anderson

General
Cammie Donaldson (r) | Joan Morris
Martha Halloran | Wendel Martinkovic
Terri Chastain | Morena Cameron
Vicki Parsons | Jerry Fritz
Rosalyn Layton | Mark Abbot

Senior/student
Lassie Lee (r) | Frank and Tammy Scanlan

Business/Contributor
Kayak Amelia

Hit you with your best shot


Yahoo users also can share images to the Foundations´ Flickr site. Go to www.flickr.com/groups/fla_wildflowers, sign in to your Yahoo account, and follow the directions for uploading images. Please include information about the location of the wildflower (such as road number, county, park, state or national forest, etc.). If you don’t have a Yahoo account, it’s easy to sign up from Flickr.com.