

## Magnolia Chapter FNPS November 2012 Monthly Update

"No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,  
No comfortable feel in any member -  
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,  
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds,  
November!"

(Thomas Hood)

### Chapter Happenings

The November glooms were not barren for the Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. November in Tallahassee was not penned by poets from northern climes: it overflowed with a bounty of thanksgiving. Not empty words, but heartfelt appreciation thankful for: rest from summer's heat, the veil of green foliage pulled back from forest's edge, teasing, changing into autumnal colors and revealing the curves of slope forests and sandhills; sulphur butterflies holding fast onto the last foxglove, salvia, and aster blooms of the season; from forest canopies, new voices of migratory birds overhead; beautiful calendars celebrating the area's bounteous botany; and new members joining the Florida Native Plant Society, and new friends signing on to speak for the trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers. "Words are but empty thanks." (C. Cibber) Actions of those truly thankful for the abundance of natural gifts in North Florida speak far louder.

### November 1, 2012 Program – Will Sheftall, "Phenology – Clues for a Changing World"

People have tracked the life cycles of plants and animals for centuries to help them know when to hunt and fish and when to plant and harvest crops. Now, the timing of these life cycles (phenology) is being used as a tool to assess climate change by its impacts on nature. Will explained how to become part of the growing number of citizen scientists who provide valuable observations about how plants and animals are responding to our changing climate. Observations are needed as part of ongoing research on the effects of climate change that lead to management. Information on the online database maintained by the USA National Phenology Network is available at [www.usanpn.org](http://www.usanpn.org).

### November Plant of the Month – Coontie, *Zamia floridana*

The plant doctor, Dan Miller of Trillium Gardens Nursery brought coontie, *Zamia floridana* (syn. *pumila*), a native species important for its ecological, ethnobotanical and horticultural values. Most are familiar with coontie as a hardy native groundcover, with glossy fronds resembling a fern or palm. The slow growing coontie is suited to both sunny or shady planting beds in about any upland site as long as the soils are not too heavy or wet. Also called "Florida arrowroot," coontie served as a source of starch for Native Americans and settlers. Over-collected both as a foodstock and ornamental plant, coontie is now protected in the wild as a "commercially exploited" native plant. Florida's only native cycad, a plant family with roots back to the Mesozoic era when it was dinosaur candy, coontie has subtropical relatives in the Caribbean and Antillean islands, and ranges north to Taylor and Suwannee Counties. Even with the hard 1998 freeze killing the fronds of many Tallahassee plants, new leaves emerged from the large underground tubers, as they do in the flatwoods following fires.

### November 3, 2012 Field Trip – Phipps Park, Tallahassee

The phenology observations field trip was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. Look at your calendars for a make-up trip to be scheduled in 2013.

### **November 3, 2012 Apalachicola Seafood Festival, Franklin County**

Leigh Brooks reported back that folks out that Saturday were not only hungry for oysters and other delicacies from the sea, but for native plants! The Magnolia Chapter Native Plant Booth was greeted with inquiring minds, and left folks with smiles and plenty of wildflower brochures and other native plant information. Thanks to the Magnolia Chapter volunteers for helping with the booth, it was a good day for native plants. The Chapter expects to be invited back by the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve next year.

### **November 7, 2012 Tallahassee Garden Clubs Fall General Membership Meeting, Tallahassee**

In addition to leading garden clubbers and master gardeners on numerous botanical rambles along State Road 65 this fall, Eleanor Dietrich spoke at the Fall Garden Club Meeting on "Including Native Plants in Your Garden." Eleanor provided lists of some of the native plants she recommends, and presented a power point program illustrating how she uses wildflowers and native shrubs in her garden.

### **November 11, 2012 Elinor Klapp Phipps Park Exotic Plant Removal, Tallahassee**

The Magnolia Chapter FNPS partnered with the Apalachee Chapter of the Florida Trail Association to attack the invasive exotic coral ardisia in an important plant area north of town. The first in the "Invasive exotics in the woods: Education/Eradication Program" series of events to help hikers identify and eradicate invasive species took place Veteran's Day, November 11th, at Phipps Park, managed by the City of Tallahassee and the Northwest Florida Water Management District. Hikers and FNPS folks brought tools (can you say "Root Jack?") to eradicate Coral ardisia, an invasive shrub, in a "giving back" effort sponsored by the Florida Trail Association and Florida Native Plant Society. Karen Berkley reports:

"We had a great/enthusiastic turnout: a total of 25 (including the 7 of us, two children [Mike's daughters], and Handbasket [Chuck's dog]), all of whom (well, maybe not the dog) seemed to really enjoy the day. I did.."

The events will continue in 2013. For more information contact: Karen at (850) 570-5740, [kjberkley@gmail.com](mailto:kjberkley@gmail.com).

### **Roadside Mowing Update**

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, the Wakulla County Commission unanimously passed a resolution supporting reduced mowing for all of the Scenic Byways within the county. Proposed by Commissioner Lynn Artz and supported by Sarracenia and Magnolia Chapter members, the resolution memorializes portions of the FDOT reduced mowing schedule developed in response to community outrage over the mowing of terrific stands of wildflowers during this fall's Monarch butterfly migration. It will also integrate with the reduced mowing plans adopted by Leon County for Bloxham Cutoff and Smith Creek roads, which both counties share.

### **Cascades Park and Franklin Boulevard Plantings**

Letters from the local Audubon Chapter co-signed by Fritz Wettstein for the Magnolia Chapter, from Lana Arnold, President of the Tallahassee Garden Clubs and from others raised the hackles of City of Tallahassee and Blueprint 2000 planners after members found that a planting plan included heavenly bamboo, *Nandina domestica*, and other invasive species. With help from Tallahassee Native Nurseries, the letter writers encouraged greater use of native plants in landscapes that could be more sustainable than the conventional albeit attractive landscape plantings proposed.

### **Tip of the Hatpins!**

Congratulations, Guy Anglin, Jackson County Tree Farmer of the Year! The November 16th event of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, Farm Credit Union of Northwest Florida and the Jackson County Extension Service honored Magnolia Chapter FNPS member and retired U.S. Forest Service Botanist Guy Anglin with the 2012 award.

Congratulations, Eleanor Dietrich and Mike Jenkins for recording and nominating Florida Champion Tree #955, the third largest recorded sweetbay in Florida, from Eleanor's property. Way to go!

### **Native Champion Trees Needed**

There are currently no silverbells in our Florida Champion Tree roster. So, if you want to nominate the biggest one out there, it will be an instant state champion. For more information contact:

Charlie Marcus, Urban Forestry Coordinator  
Florida Forest Service, FDACS  
Phone: 850-921-0300  
charles.marcus@freshfromflorida.com

### **Welcome New Members!**

Mita and Fred Calder  
Angel and Thomas Eason  
Liz Sparks

Hope you are soon glad to be a Magnoloid.

### **December – January Activities and Events (some events subject to change...check your email!)**

12/06/2012 Thursday 7 pm Chapter Meeting: Craig Huegel, ecologist - Native landscaping for wildlife

12/08/2012 Saturday 9 am Field Trip: Travis and Karen MacClendon's property, Calhoun County - Award winning native landscape south of Blountstown. FNPS members only

12/29/2012 Saturday 9 am – noon Workday: Maclay Gardens State Park, Leon County – Maclay Native Garden Day, Bob Farley

1/03/2013 Thursday 7 pm Chapter Meeting: Malcolm Hodges, The Nature Conservancy - Lichens

1/05/2013 Saturday 9 am Field Trip: TBA - Led by Malcolm Hodges

1/12/2013 Saturday 9:30 - 12:30 Workday: Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park eradication hike, Leon County Invasive Exotics Education and Volunteer Program, Joint Florida Trail Association/FNPS program, Karen Berkley

1/TBD/2013 Saturday TBD Booth: Crawfordville Arbor Day Celebration (Wakulla County)

1/19/2013 Saturday 9 am – noon Workday: Gholson Nature Park, Gadsden County - Exotics removal, Leigh Brooks

1/26/2013 Saturday 9 am – noon Workday: Maclay Gardens State Park, Leon County - FNPS garden day, Bob Farley

Prepared by Fritz Wettstein  
December 5, 2012

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

