

## Magnolia Chapter FNPS December 2012 Monthly Update

"There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil  
to one who is striking at the root."

(Henry David Thoreau)

### Chapter Happenings

In the damp December dark, a promise of good things for native plants and the Magnolia Chapter came to light. Soaking rains stirred seeds, corms and bulbs from their beds. Mistletoe, holly berries, and evergreens cheered. Calendars sold. New members joined. Old friends renewed. And Craig and Alexa Huegel rode a wagonload of fun up from St. Petersburg, to start a holiday celebration of wildlife, native plant and friendships! Magnolioids are positive folks, and as the year ended with the doom and gloom of the Mayan Calendar ending and the fiscal cliff looming, kept growing, learning and planting, confident the promise of the resting soils springing forth new growth when light warms the months ahead.

### December Plant of the Month – Oakleaf Hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*

The plant doctor, Dan Miller of Trillium Gardens Nursery brought the hardy, handsome, colorful oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, a tall native shrub valued for its ornamental and wildlife values. Among early explorers to the region, oakleaf hydrangea first attracted the eye of William Bartram, who beautifully described the species, observing "coppices or clumps near or on the banks of rivers and creeks" between the Oakmulge and Flint Rivers [check out Bartram's account in his "Travels": prose bordering on poetry, bringing to mind the art of William Faulkner and Marcel Proust]. In Florida, oakleaf hydrangea is associated with limestone outcrops, needle palm, red buckeye and other calcium loving plants in Marion County, Apalachicola/Ochlocknee River Basins and Escambia Bay area slope forests. In a shady, mulched bed of my garden, it does not appear to require any mineral supplements for robust growth.

### December 6, 2012 Program – Dr. Craig Huegel, "Native Landscaping for Wildlife"

December's program was fun, filled with folks readying for the holiday. An audience of 67 Magnolia Chapter members and interested visitors attended to see what is going on in the Chapter, learn about wildlife gardens and take a chance on winning not only Dan's oakleaf hydrangea pick for the plant of month, but also plants that Craig Huegel brought from his Hawthorne Hill nursery for the raffle. Susan Oosteryoung won Dan's oakleaf hydrangea. Of Craig's plants, Grant Peebles scored twice, winning a goldenrod, *Solidago pedicellaris*, and a phlox, *Phlox linearis*. Karen Berkley won the savanna gayfeather, *Liatris savannensis*, and Karen MacClendon won Bartam's ixia, *Calydorea caelestina*, a small endemic iris.

Wildlife ecologist and author Craig Huegel, never stopping to take a breath, filled the Jim King Life Science Auditorium with a humorous and insightful exposition of your power to learn from wildlife-habitat relationships to make our properties more diverse and alive. Craig seriously questions why we accept things that kill wildlife, construction practices that "guttled the place and ripped out the life blood groundcovers and soil. He reminded us that "there's not a good cat or a bad cat, just a cat" and asked why we plant landscapes that always look the same, "Why not just paint your window?" As with Doug Tellamy's "Bringing Nature Home" approach, Dr. Huegel draws on research which clearly show that wildlife diversity is greater with higher invertebrate diversity (insects, spiders, worms, springtails), which is greater with higher landscape diversity (plant species, sizes, branch structure microclimate). For the wildlife gardener, Dr. Huegel finds the problem is not lack of food for wildlife, but lack of habitat.

Craig's garden tips include:

- Diverse native plantings are the only way to build the foundation of backyard habitats, healthy invertebrate populations.
- Don't spray pesticides!
- Plant for seasonal changes in habitat needs,
  - o wax myrtle for migratory warblers
  - o swamp dogwood, with berries that don't ripen all at once
  - o littlehip and other fall fruiting hawthorns whose fruit ripen later when birds are foraging
- Red is the universal color asking wildlife to "come and check me out."
- Leave some bare ground for the dusting birds, ants and other critters ("who invented the bare spot guilt trip?").
- Wildlife loves thorny stuff, which the gardener can make safe by placing behind "outfielder warning strips."

### **December 8, 2012 Field Trip – MacClendon Wildlife Garden and Herbarium, Blountstown**

Chapter members Travis and Karen MacClendon and a perfect December day, cool in the morning – clear and warm in the afternoon, welcomed the Magnolia Chapter to share their experiences bringing nature back to the 25 acre former dairy farm site. Sharing their do's and don'ts (do get a tractor, don't think that Callery pear is inoffensive), Travis and Karen toured the 31 wildlife garden enthusiasts (from all points of the compass) around their front yard meadow planting, native trees, and butterfly gardens and then stopped in on the bird window and herbarium. The MacClendon's have catalogued over 900 species in Calhoun County, sharing specimens with FSU and USF herbaria. After stopping at a planted longleaf pine ecosystem, the tour traversed the "back forty" where Travis has been hard at it attacking Chinese privet and Japanese climbing fern with his tractor and sprayer. Before heading in for Karen's chili, snacks, and sweets all lovingly prepared for our lunchtime consumption, the group piled into the couple's gazebo, never imagining it could hold 31 folks (we have pictures to prove it), and Dr. Anderson found a small bluestem grass to add to Travis's list. After the lunch, several of the group ventured to the swamp forest boardwalk of Blountstown's Pioneer Park, and walked some of the Greenway. All in all a great day!

Thank you Karen & Travis for leading the tour through your award winning native plant garden, herbarium and ecosystem restoration, and tour, for the gazebo crush, and for a delicious chili luncheon.

### **December 15, 2012 Invasives Workshop – Woodlands Drives Neighborhood Eco-Team**

Magnolia Chapter President Fritz Wettstein met with representatives from the Myers Park area neighborhood to form an invasive plant eradication initiative. The kickoff meeting included an invasive plant identification walk and demonstration of invasive plant removal techniques

### **Roadside Wildflower Update**

Roadside Wildflower Committee Chair reports that a new State Road 65 wildflower tour guide is in the works for the spring bloom. Building on the success of Panhandle Wildflower Route brochure and the SR 65 fall wildflower guide, the new guide will highlight the spring blooming orchids, carnivorous plants and other wildflowers along the scenic highway through the Apalachicola National Forest pinelands.

Remember to pick up your Magnolia Chapter Native Plant Calling Cards! You have the power to Speak for the Flowers. Oaks rustle, palms shush and pines may whisper but wildflowers' shouts are not heard. How can you speak for them? Although money may be the evil of all roots, it can talk. You can make your money talk for the native plants by dropping one of the Magnolia Chapter's new "calling cards" at local businesses you visit on your botanical rambles. Based on Audubon's "birder" calling cards, the Magnolia cards put together by Pamala Anderson are available at chapter meetings and events, or by contacting:

Eleanor Dietrich: (850) 385-0003, eleanor43@aol.com; or, Pamala Anderson: (850) 643-2799, banderson@nettally.com. Ms. Anderson is also willing to help other FNPS chapters customize the cards for their use.

### **Welcome New Members!**

Meta and Fred Calder [apologies to Meta for misspelling her name last month]  
Rob and Lynn Williams

...and thank you renewing members, keeping the growth of the chapter steady. There are now 136 Magnolia Chapter memberships.

### **In Memoriam: James C. Myers, August 30th, 1918 – November 7th, 2012**

Jim Myers was a WW II veteran, originally a botanist and later a librarian. He developed an early interest in identifying wild plants and took a B.S. and M.S. in Botany from West Virginia University. During his field work he identified and classified a rare and local variety of Polygonum [smartweed]. After the war and marriage, Mr. Myers moved to Tallahassee to take a position at the FSU science library, which he held for many years. He died November 7th at his home in Tallahassee of pneumonia. Among Mr. Myers's survivors are his wife, Enid, and daughter and Magnolia Chapter Member Jennie, who both live in Tallahassee. The Magnolia Chapter appreciates the contributions made in memory of Jennie's father.

### **Tip of the Hatpins! 2012 Magnolia Chapter Year in Review**

Congratulations everybody, for your accomplishments in 2012. You've completed a transition to a new e-mail service, started partnerships with the Florida Trail Association, Panhandled Wildflower Alliance, FSU and FAMU campus groups, supported native plant science and education, contributed your time and finances to native plant conservation, published another great native plant calendar, helped spread the good news of native plants throughout the area and much, much more. Your board members have put together a solid "challenge budget" for 2013 and an honorarium policy to guide future program committees. In addition to the 21<sup>st</sup> century e-mail system for Ms. Magnolia (thank you Mike and Amy Jenkins), you have upped our digital game with a revamped chapter website.

Magnolia Web-ster Helen Roth has created a chapter page with easy to find, valuable resources, now including Dr. Loran Anderson's plant species lists for area wildlife refuge, state forests, city/county parks, etc., and from your board, copies of the budget and new policies. Check them out under "documents", or browse the new native plant "links" at the Magnolia Chapter website: <http://magnolia.fnpschapters.org/>.

### **Looking for help with your New Year's Rosa-lutions?**

If your New Year's Resolution included "spend more time with friends in the Magnolia Chapter FNPS," or "Save the Planet, one native plant at a time," you can volunteer with us:

- Help with the Magnolia Chapter native plant booth at special events, such as Florida Arbor Day, January 19<sup>th</sup> in Crawfordville. Contact: Fritz Wettstein, 412-1121, fwettstein@comcast.net.
- Be a greeter welcoming folks to the monthly chapter meetings. Contact: Fritz Wettstein, 412-1121, fwettstein@comcast.net.
- Join the calendar committee: brainstorm, take pictures, write captions, sort images. No experience necessary! Contact: Amy Jenkins, 850-766-6719, fnpsmagnoliach@gmail.com ; or Pat Stampe, 850/893 2204, patriciastampe@netscape.net.
- Help recruit members and coordinate follow up of lapsed memberships. Contact: Mike Jenkins, 766-5716, fnpsmagnoliach@gmail.com .

- Volunteer at the Maclay Garden, Phipps Park or Gholson Nature Park workdays. Contact: Bob Farley (Maclay) 685-0237, [robertfarley@gmail.com](mailto:robertfarley@gmail.com); Leigh Brooks (Gholson) 663-4631, [lbrooks2wd@nettally.com](mailto:lbrooks2wd@nettally.com); Karen Berkley 570-5740, [kjberkley@gmail.com](mailto:kjberkley@gmail.com).
- Start an educational project with local school children organizing campus student activities.
- Write letters to the editor or advocate on local issues important to plant conservation.

### **Florida Arbor Day, Saturday, January 19, 2013**

Join the fun at Hudson Park in beautiful downtown Crawfordville. This year's trees include: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), Chickasaw plum (*Prunus angustifolia*), Shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), mockernut hickory (*Carya tomentosa*), winged elm (*Ulmus alata*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Eastern hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*), Ogeechee tupelo (*Nyssa ogeche*), Southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), and a few *Quercus michauxii*, *Quercus laevis*, *Taxodium distichum*, *Tilia americana* and *Celtis laevigata*.

Everyone who signs in will receive one free tree and at noon additional trees can be obtained with a \$4.00 donation per tree. For more information, contact Fritz Wettstein, 412-1121, [fwettstein@comcast.net](mailto:fwettstein@comcast.net), or Jeannie Brodhead, Sarracenia Chapter FNPS and Iris Garden Club of Wakulla County, Inc. at [jeannieb9345@gmail.com](mailto:jeannieb9345@gmail.com).

### **2013 Elinor Klapp Phipps Park Exotic Plant Removal, Tallahassee**

The Magnolia Chapter FNPS is partnering with the Apalachee Chapter of the Florida Trail Association to attack the invasive exotic coral ardisia in an important plant area north of town. This program will use Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park's extensive invasion of Coral ardisia (and other exotics) for a series of hands-on education and volunteer opportunities. Each session involves working in a selected test area of the park. Learn how to identify and safely eradicate Coral ardisia (and others), wherever you hike or use trails from FNPS expert, Mike Jenkins. The events will continue on 2013 Saturdays February 9, March 16 and April 13. Meet at 9:30am at the Meridian trailhead, off Meridian Rd at the entrance for baseball fields; the trailhead is located on left about ¼ mile in from Meridian Rd.

Bring water, bug spray, gardening work gloves, and wear shoes appropriate for hiking. Although some tools will be provided, please bring a clipper and/or a shovel (pointed type is best), and/or root jack, if you own them. Lunch will be provided. No pets, please. Note that this activity is not appropriate if you are severely allergic to poison ivy. IvyBlock barrier cream will be provided for those who wish to use it. For more information contact: Karen at (850) 570-5740, [kjberkley@gmail.com](mailto:kjberkley@gmail.com).

**Upcoming Magnolia Chapter Native Plant Society Activities and Events (some events subject to change...check your email!)**

- 1/19/2013 Saturday Native Plant 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
- 2/02/2013 Saturday Native Plant Booth: Bay Day, St. Joseph Bay Buffer Preserve (Gulf County) Leigh Brooks
- 2/07/2013 Thursday 7 pm Chapter Meeting: Gil Nelson, author. “An introduction to the iDigBio Database.”
- 2/09/2013 Saturday 9 am Field Trip: Apalachicola Bluffs & Ravines Preserve, Liberty County. Led by Annie Schmidt, TNC Resource Manager/Biologist
- 2/9/2013 Saturday 9:30 - 12:30 Workday: Invasive Exotics Education and Volunteer Program, Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park, Leon County. Joint Florida Trail Association/FNPS program, Karen Berkley
- 2/17/2013 Sunday 9 am – noon Workday: Gholson Nature Park, Gadsden County. Exotics workday, Leigh Brooks
- 2/23/2013 Saturday 9 am – noon Workday: Maclay Gardens, Leon County. FNPS garden day, Bob Farley
- TBA Ad hoc field trip: Wolfe Creek Trout Lily Preserve (Grady County, GA)

Prepared by Fritz Wettstein  
January 14, 2013

*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.*