



# Sea Rocket



Florida Native Plant Society ~ Sea Rocket Chapter ~ Serving Central & North Brevard County

January 2016

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.

## ~ Sea Rocket ~ Board of Directors

### President

Lois Harris

[lois6459@att.net](mailto:lois6459@att.net)

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[armanddf@rcn.com](mailto:armanddf@rcn.com)

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[db453@bocabanana.com](mailto:db453@bocabanana.com)

## Chapter Representative

Greg Hendricks

[gatorgregh@gmail.com](mailto:gatorgregh@gmail.com)

## Committees

### Membership

### Education/Outreach

Shari Blissett-Clark

[jclark109@cfl.rr.com](mailto:jclark109@cfl.rr.com)

### Nursery

Lois Harris

[lois6459@att.net](mailto:lois6459@att.net)

### Hike Leader

Paul Schmalzer, PhD

[paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov](mailto:paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov)

### Newsletter

David Humphrey

[brevcracker@gmail.com](mailto:brevcracker@gmail.com)

### Hospitality

Vacant at this time

Sea Rocket to present this January 27, 2016, at 6:30 pm at the Enchanted Forest;

## **"Enhancing Home Landscapes with Florida Native Plants"**

With Shari Blissett-Clark

**Some folks believe native plants are just weeds, plants that offer no value to gardens and home landscapes.** But nothing could be farther from the truth; native plants, when used appropriately, offer a wide variety of benefits to gardeners and wildlife alike. Native plants have evolved over eons of time, adapting to the often extreme growing conditions in Florida. Plants in many habitats must survive drought, fire, freezing temperatures, flooding, extreme winds, salt water tides, and hurricanes. The nature of Florida has forged some very tough plants that are water-wise, disease resistant, attractive to animal pollinators, and often self-sowing, making them smart choices for home landscapes. Learn how to apply the "right plant right place" principle and take full advantage of all that Florida's native plants have to offer to home landscapes!



06/06/2015

# January Places To Go, Things To Do!

(Note: All future planning can change presently. If in doubt, verify the date and times are accurate.)

- Every Saturday: GUIDED NATURE HIKES - 10:00am** - For information call 321-264-5185.
- Every Wednesday: FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter Nursery Workday—9am-12noon**, email Lois at [lois6459@att.net](mailto:lois6459@att.net) for further info and schedule.
- January 6 FTA Hike to Seminole Ranch—** meet at West entrance of Lowe's parking lot at I-95 And Hwy. 50 in Titusville at 8:30 AM.
- January 13 FTA Hike to Cruickshank Loop Trail—** Meet at West entrance of Lowe's parking lot at I-95 And Hwy. 50 in Titusville at 8:30 AM. Five dollars per car or \$15 year entry fee.
- January 20 FTA Hike to Doris Leeper Trail—** Meet at West entrance of Lowe's parking lot at I-95 And Hwy. 50 in Titusville at 8:30 AM
- January 23 SCBWF at the Titusville Campus of Eastern Florida State College.** Sea Rocket will be having a plant sale on the lawn for Saturday Only
- January 23 Sams House on Merritt Island Night Flight Insect Observation** at 7:00 pm with PHD entomologist, Teresa Cooper. Using screens and lights we will call down the flying insects of the evening.
- January 27 Sea Rocket's Monthly meeting, at Enchanted Forest starting at 6:30 pm.** This meeting Presented by Shari Blissett-Clark is on how to "**Enhancing Home Landscapes with Florida Native Plants**"
- January 27 FTA Hike to Tosohatchee Loop Trail—** Meet at Lone Cabbage fish camp on Highway 520 and the St. Johns River at 8:30 AM. \$3 per car entry fee applies.
- January 30 Enchanted Forest Sanctuary "Secrets of the Long leaf Pine" 7 PM** Enjoy a screening of the new documentary "Secrets of the Longleaf Pine" produced by Rhett Turner and Greg Pope. The film explores the unique plants and animals found in the Southeastern longleaf pine habitats. For more information on the film please visit: <http://longleafpine.org/>.

## Don't forget to check out other EEL Sites and volunteer organizations for more

- Enchanted Forest Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EnchantedForestSanctuary?fref=ts>
- SAMS HOUSE : <http://www.brevardcounty.us/EELProgram/Home>
- Barrier Island Center: <http://www.brevardcounty.us/eelprogram/areas/barrierislandsanctuary>
- Keep Brevard Beautiful: <http://keepbrevardbeautiful.org/>
- Florida Trail Assn Hike Schedule: <http://jehikesced.blogspot.com/>

## This four-mile trek through the Lake Proctor Wilderness Area in Geneva leads hikers, trail runners and mountain bikers through four different habitats.

[Michelle Mulak](#), FLORIDA TODAY 12:59 p.m. EST December 4, 2015



(Photo: Michelle Mulak)

I was invited to join the Indian River Chapter of the Florida Trail Association on one of their Wednesday morning hikes. This group meets once a week throughout the fall, winter and spring at trail locations around East Central Florida. Their hikes attract anywhere between 20 to 50 participants, and generally range between three and five miles.

The Indian River Chapter is led by a man named **Jim Escoffier**, who is deeply knowledgeable when it comes to Central Florida's hiking trails. He comes out a few days ahead of each group hike and makes the trek, so he can survey the trail for hazards. His dedication to the group shines in everything he says and does.

The [Florida Trail Association](#) is one of Florida's most well-established outdoor organizations. They offer trail maps, a website, a book and workshops, and local chapters host regular hikes and other events.

This Wednesday morning hike synchronized perfectly with my parents coming into town for the Thanksgiving holiday. It was the perfect opportunity for all of us to get some exercise before we sat down for a feast the following day. We met the hiking group at the Lowes on S.R.

50 in Titusville before following caravan-style through Mims and then 17 miles west on S.R. 46. After a few brief instructions and introductions, we set off into the woods together.

The Wednesday morning hiking group is led by Jim Escoffier, the director of the Indian River Chapter of the Florida Trail Association. We followed the "red blaze" trail, which meandered through multiple habitats including several variations of scrub, hardwood hammock and marshy areas near the perimeter of Lake Proctor. We heard the loud calls of the Sandhill Crane throughout our hike and watched a majestic Bald Eagle circle overhead as we paused for a water stop. The trail was relatively well-maintained and well marked with both trail markers and U.S. National Grid marker signs.

The Lake Proctor Wilderness Area offers around six total miles of mixed-use trail systems. We covered about four miles. The red blaze trail was beautifully diverse, but what really made the experience special was the group of hikers whom we spent the morning with.

**Know Before You Go:** There are no restroom facilities on site. As a matter of fact, the closest restroom is almost 10 miles away. Plan accordingly. Though bugs weren't an issue on our hike, but some of the more experienced hikers in the group mentioned that the bug situation can be seriously uncomfortable during the wetter months. Bring bug spray, a hat and plenty of water.

**The Basics:** The red blaze trail is about four miles long. You'll move through shaded and sun-exposed areas. Terrain includes sand, packed dirt, mossy rock and leaves/pine needles. This is a mixed-use trail shared by hikers, runners, mountain bikes and equestrian users. Watch for horse droppings and wildlife.

**Challenge Factor:** Low to moderate. This trail would be suitable for older children to walk, and younger children if they were in a rugged stroller. This trail is not wheelchair accessible and is not recommended for those with disabilities. The trail is mostly flat, with minimal elevation gain/loss, and has only a few obstacles such as roots, fallen logs and rocks.

**(PHOTO ON FOLLOWING PAGE)**



# Community Corner

## News for and about your Chapter



The Wednesday morning hiking group is led by Jim Escoffier, the director of the Indian River Chapter of the Florida Trail Association.  
 (Photo: Provided for FLORIDA TODAY by Kathryn Louise)



IMAGINE IF TREES  
 GAVE FREE WIFI.

WE'D ALL BE PLANTING  
 LIKE CRAZY.

IT'S A PITY THEY ONLY  
 GIVE US THE OXYGEN

WE BREATHE.

### Call for Research Track Papers and Poster Presentations for 2016 FNPS Conference.

The 2016 Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference will be held in Daytona Beach, Florida, **May 18-22, 2016**. The Research Track of the conference will include presented papers and a poster session on Friday May 20 and Saturday May 21.

Researchers are invited to submit abstracts on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida including preservation, conservation, and restoration. Presentations are planned to be 20 minutes in total length (15 min. presentation, 5 min. questions).

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be submitted as a MS Word file by **email to Paul A. Schmalzer** at [paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov](mailto:paul.a.schmalzer@nasa.gov) by February 1, 2016. Include title, affiliation, and address. Indicate whether you will be presenting a paper or poster.

These native plants can better survive because they have roots that "travel down to forever" (not the Kentucky Blue Grass which is used for comparison and as an example of grasses grown in our lawns and golf courses).

Take a look at this illustration drawn by Heidi Natura, Conservation Research Institute.

<http://www.conservationresearchinstitute.org/index.html> [http://www.cdfinc.com/Conservation\\_Research\\_Institute](http://www.cdfinc.com/Conservation_Research_Institute)



From left to right: Kentucky Blue Grass, Lead Plant, MO Goldenrod, **Indian Grass**, Compass Plant, Porcupine Grass, Heath Aster, Prairie Cord Grass, Big **Blue Stem**, Pale **Purple Coneflower**, Prairie Dropseed, Side **Oats Gramma**, False Boneset, Switch Grass, White Wild Indigo, Little **Blue Stem**, Rosin Weed, Purple Prairie Clover, June Grass, Cylindric Blasing Star, and Buffalo Grass.

Drawn by Heidi Natura, Conservation Research Institute

<http://thislivelyearth.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Prairie-grass-roots-2-credit-small.jpg>. Conservation Research Institute is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of planning, design, installation restoration, and long-term management of sustainable ecological systems in built and natural environments through applied research, education, and outreach

## What can we learn from History?

The Dust Bowl was the name given to the Great Plains region devastated by drought in 1930s. The 150,000-square-mile area, encompassing the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles and neighboring sections of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, has little rainfall, light soil, and high winds, a proven destructive combination. When drought struck from 1934 to 1937, the soil lacked the stronger root system of **native grasses**, (buffalo grass *Buchloe dactyloides*), as an anchor, so the winds easily picked up the loose topsoil and swirled it into dense dust clouds, called "black blizzards." Recurrent dust storms wreaked havoc, choking cattle and pasture lands and driving 60 percent of the population from the region. Ranchers and farmers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, driven by the agricultural ethos of expansion and a sense of autonomy from nature, aggressively exploited the land and set up the region for ecological disaster. Increased use of larger and more powerful machines and the increased value of wheat, drove this disaster, and enticed farmers to plow up millions of acres of natural native grass cover that has been there for millennia, to plant an annual crop, wheat. The rest is history.



## Silk-grass, Silkgrass *Pityopsis graminifolia*

*pit-ee-OP-siss gram-ih-nih-FOE-lee-uh*

David Humphrey



Silkgrass is a beautiful silver gray, green plant, topped with a daisy like yellow bloom in the heat of the year. In Florida that could be most any time of the

year. The pityopsis was in bloom this past November at the Enchanted Forest. Though the bloom adds color and interest, the foliage itself is beautiful all year long. It is considered a “short lived perennial” which in essence means it will die after several years, but it will reproduce through seeds or rhizomes or it can be divided. A mature plant can cover several feet of ground providing a type of ground cover. It is beneficial to its native environment as a soil stabilizer. It will spread, but is not known to displace other plantings. Animals will graze it, butterflies will drink of it, and bees will collect from it (a pollinator plant). It is most often used in dry sandy areas closely resembling its native scrub environment where the grass can grow to three feet in dry sand. It grows naturally from the pan handle to the Keys. **Silkgrass is not salt tolerant** therefore be warned. It thrives in full Florida sun. This would make an outstanding plant for a wildflower or meadow style garden. One note of caution, the seeds are spread by wind and can grow several yards from the original planting. Therefore if your neighbor keeps a putting green lawn there could arise some tension betwixt the twain due to the wind born dispersal of the seeds. Just saying.

Hosting the Sea Rocket Newsletter since 2001;

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

North Brevard Business & Community Directory

David N. Rich

**Peak Performance Co.**

4030 Winter Terrace, Titusville, FL 32780

**321-267-7367**

[DavidNRich@gmail.com](mailto:DavidNRich@gmail.com)

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

*Tulinda's Garden*

Garden & Landscape Design  
Horticultural Consultation

Linda Gombert

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

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321-729-6857

**Maple Street Natives**

[info@maplestreetnatives.com](mailto:info@maplestreetnatives.com)

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

[www.facebook.com/maplestreetnatives](https://www.facebook.com/maplestreetnatives)

*green images*

*Florida Native Landscape Plants*

1333 Taylor Creek Road  
Christmas, Florida 32709

407-568-1333

[greenimage@aol.com](mailto:greenimage@aol.com)

**The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Education Center**

444 Columbia Blvd, Titusville, FL 32780 321-264-5185

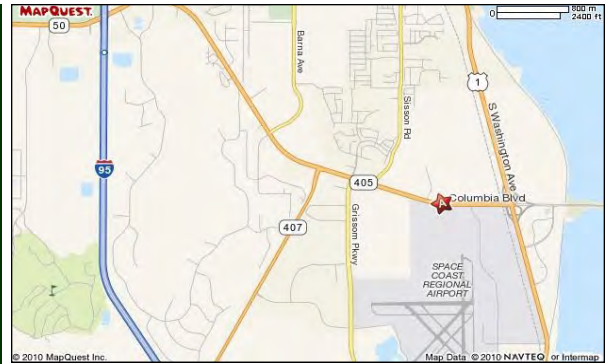


Driving Directions to the Sanctuary:

**From I-95 Northbound:** take SR-407 Exit 212 east 2.7 miles to SR-405 intersection. Turn right onto SR-405 and go east 1.9 miles (the Sanctuary entrance is on the left 0.4 miles past Sisson Road)

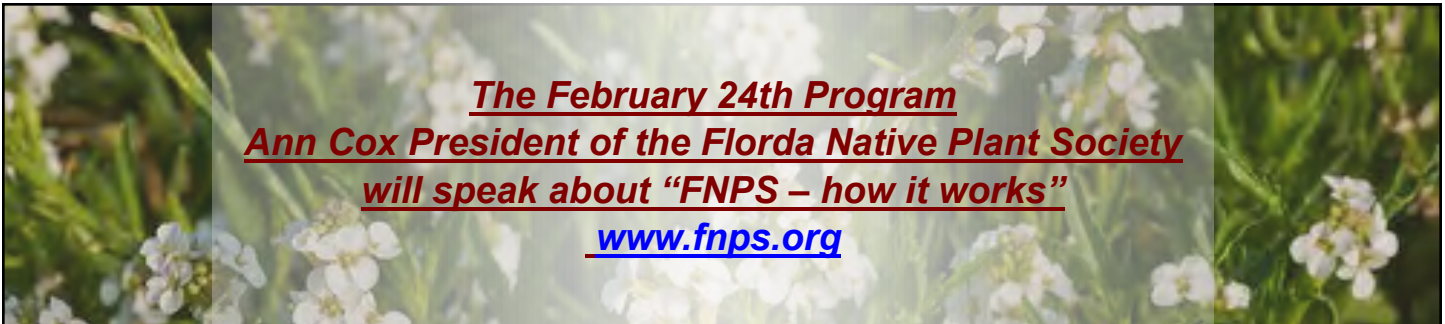
**From I-95 Southbound:** take SR-50 Exit 215 east. Turn left onto SR 50 and turn right onto SR-405 (2nd light) Travel 3.6 miles (the Sanctuary entrance is on the left 0.4 miles past Sisson Road)

**From U.S. HWY 1:** go west 0.5 miles on SR-405 in south Titusville. Sanctuary entrance is on the right.



**Florida Native Plant Society**

For membership information, address change: P. O. Box 278, Melbourne, FL 32902-0278  
Phone: 321-271-6702; Fax: 321-951-1941; Email: [Info@fnps.org](mailto:Info@fnps.org)/[www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)  
Sea Rocket Chapter mailing address: 444 Columbia Blvd, Titusville, FL 32780



**The February 24th Program**

**Ann Cox President of the Florida Native Plant Society**

**will speak about "FNPS – how it works"**

**[www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)**



**Sea Rocket Chapter**

444 Columbia Blvd,  
Titusville, FL 32780

**GO GREEN! RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL AND SAVE SOME GREEN! GO GREEN!**