



Sea Rocket



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

May 2017

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

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Photo of Osmunda Spectabilis
by Jim Sloan

See Page 5 for more

May 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 for further info and schedule.

May 3 FTA Hike—Next weeks hike is a makeup for the Doris Leeper hike we didn't get to do earlier. Meet at Lowe's parking lot in Titusville on Hwy. 50 just off I-95 at 8:30 AM.

May 6 & 20 Garden workday from 9 am to ...

May 6 Nature photographer and Florida Master Naturalist Vince Lamb is hosting a guided photography session at 9:30 a.m. at Wildflowers of Florida Inc., a working wildflower farm in Alachua. This field trip is FREE for Foundation members and \$15 for non-members. Call 407-622-1606 to find out if your membership is current or needs to be renewed, or [click to become a FWF member](#). Want to go? [REGISTER NOW!](#)

May 7 Sams House at Merritt Island 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm North American Bats. Can we save them? Presented by: Shari Blissett-Clark, President of the Florida Bat Conservancy This program explores recent bat conservation initiatives in North America and outlines strategies that anyone can use to help save bats. Native bat species will be displayed after the presentation.

May 9 Sea Rocket's Board of Directors will be meeting at 5:30, at NYNY in Titusville.

May 13 Sea Rocket is having a plant Identification scavenger hunt from 10 am to 12 pm, in the gardens, right there at the Enchanted Forest. Learn more about the benefits of native plants and identify the ones you would like in your garden. Enjoy a hike after or the Discovery room for the young ones, and young at heart.

May 20 Keep Brevard Beautiful is hosting the SECRET GARDEN TOUR from 9 am to 4 pm. See page 6 for more details. Tickets are on sale at various locatins

May 24 Sea Rocket will be holding their General Meeting from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. We are pleased to have oyr Chapter President, Lois Harris speaking to us on the Brevard Botanical Gardens.

May 29 National Composting Day Composting Day is a great opportunity to "Go Green" and help the environment. Composting is easy. It makes you feel good, knowing you are doing your part to keep our environment a little bit cleaner. You may be surprised at how easy it is to compost. And, everyone can compost.

Please send calendar items to David Humphrey at brevcracker@gmail.com

For a comprehensive view of Sea Rocket activities go to www.FNPS.org; events, "searocket".

Sea Rocket Chapter General Meeting Minutes 4-26-17

Board Members present: Lois, Jim, Madeline, Paul, Karen, Arlene, Armand, Dave
Guests: 19 present with five guests.

Welcome and Call to Order: 7:00 pm

BUSINESS:

A Quorum established

Approval of March General Meeting Minutes as printed in April newsletter: **Approved**

Treasurer Report: Madeline Klinko, \$2,329.76 in checking; \$2,501.66 in saving, \$4,831.42 total
4/22 Earth Day @ EFS **PLANT SALE** \$1,064.00. We introduced 201 new natives to the environment

Welcome New Committee Chairs: Media/Marketing – Arlene Perez-Garrido
Membership Chair – Karen Butrim

Board Member Openings: **Vacant Committee Chairs: Chapter Representative, Education/ Outreach. We need your help – This is your Chapter – Get Involved!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Refreshments – Armand De Filippo, David Humphrey, Jim Robey, Mary, and Bill Roe and Karen Butrim – Thank you for providing these snacks for our enjoyment. It was a regular feast with pizza and cheese and cookies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

April, Fox Lake Hike –Dr. Paul Schmalzer. Dr. Paul had 22 participants, excellent day. This was the last field trip for the summer.

Newsletter Chair: David Humphrey, The May Newsletter is full. This month's newsletter has a wide variety of subjects and several very talented first-time authors, Excellent reading this month.

EVENTS:

Epcot Flower & Garden Festival 3/1 thru 5/29

BOD meeting – 5/9 @ New York, New York in Titusville starting at 5:30

5/13 Workshop - Plant Identification- Scavenger Hunt @ EFS Butterfly Gardens 10-12

5/18-5/21 Annual Conference at the Westgate River Ranch

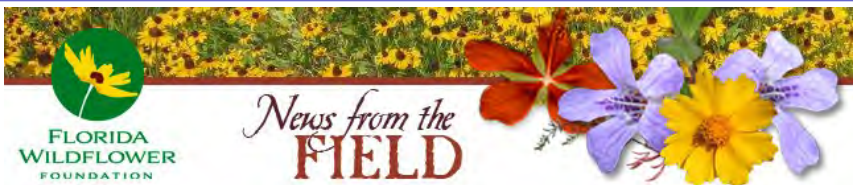
5/24 Guest Speaker – Lois Harris – Brevard Botanical Gardens from the Beginning

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS: If you want to know what is driving your chapter, come to the BOD meeting and find out. It is fun, and we get a lot accomplished.

FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter Meeting adjourned at 7:18 pm

Guest Speaker – Ariel Horner is an EEL Program Naturalist at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary and will be speaking on - **Amphibians of Florida**. Ariel is a Titusville resident and has been involved in the natural world most of her life. She is currently working on her Masters studying diseases of amphibians. She has her eyes set like flint on pursuing her doctorate in a few more years.

The word amphibian is from the Greek “amphi” meaning “of both kinds”, and “bios”, meaning life. Amphibians start out breathing with gills like a fish but morph into air breathers like reptiles. Some amphibians do not have lungs but breathe through their skin! During their life cycles, they start out in the water and change, very much like a butterfly, into an air-breathing land dweller. This transformation rearranges their innards and reorganizes their skeletons. The transformation changes their entire physical form. Ariel explained the difference between a frog and a toad as primarily in their skin texture. The toad being “wart-ier” and thicker than a frogs skin. Both frogs and toads can have toxins on their skin, and therefore are generally colored to alert predators “Do Not Touch.” Her presentation was fun, interesting with a nice selection of photos. Ariel is very knowledgeable and is a great speaker. She put to rest the Urban Legend of getting warts by toad handling. **That legend is BUSTED!** That’s not all - Ariel is an accomplished frog caller. I’ll put my money on Ariel winning the next Olympic “Frog Callin’ Contest.” RIBBIT, RIBBIT.~



FDOT updates wildflower policy to include pollinators

It may be just five words, but they could mean a world of difference to wildflowers and, perhaps more importantly, to the critters depending upon them. Those words, “*for the benefit of pollinators*,” were recently added to the Florida Department of Transportation’s Wildflower Program.

In part, the program’s purpose statement now reads, “To develop and implement integrated vegetation management practices on roadsides and other transportation right of way, including reduced mowing, ***for the benefit of pollinators***, while developing and maintaining safe, cost effective and efficient transportation corridors and systems.”~



Thank you for telling the legislature to leave the tag alone!

As of the writing, the section proposing that small decals take the place of all of Florida's specialty license plates' de-



signs has been stricken from a proposed bill in the Florida House.

Thank you for taking the survey we forwarded in our last e-newsletter to let our legislators know what you thought of that idea. The response was strong, and our lawmakers got the message - hand's off our specialty tags! ~

Global Photosynthesis Increased 30% In 200 yrs.

By [Himanshu Goenka](#)

for the

International Business Times April 6, 2017

While human activity in the past 200 years, since the advent of the industrial revolution, has poured in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into Earth’s atmosphere at an unprecedented pace, scientists have now confirmed that plants around the world have also increased the amount of photosynthesis they do. While nowhere near enough to offset the rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration, global photosynthesis went up by 30 percent in the last 200 years, a study published Wednesday found.

Appearing in the journal Nature, the paper estimates the growth in photosynthesis “based on long-term atmospheric carbonyl sulfide (COS) records, derived from ice-cores, and ambient air samples.” Its findings are consistent with the figures used in climate models, including the assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.~



Osmunda Spectabilis

The American Royal Fern

By David Humphrey

Photos by Jim Sloan

I've tried to grow orchids for years, and when Jim Sloan told me he had some, Osmund type fern, I



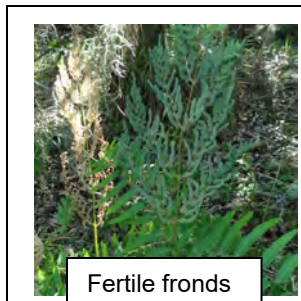
knew I had heard of this Osmund fern somewhere. "Osmunda" I recognized usually referring to the root masses that used to be used commonly for

growing orchids. For years the preferred growing medium for orchids was on Osmund fern blocks or sheets. This medium was largely removed from retail stores years ago because it was becoming increasingly expensive and difficult to find. USDA still classifies the Osmunda (sp.) ferns as Commercially Exploited



It has been only recently that *O. spectabilis* has gained a separate taxonomic classification. *O. Spectabilis* is a sub-species of the *O. regalis* or Royal Fern. It is totally excusable to mistake *O. spectabilis* for similar varieties of the Osmunda family, *O. japonica*, *O. lancea*, or *O. regalis*. Only There are several native varieties of the Osmunda fern. The

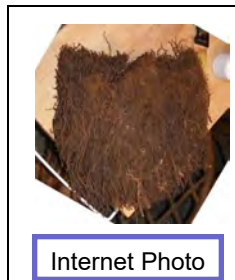
FNPS Plant Finder has two, the *O. Cinnamornea* or Cinnamon fern and the *O. regalis* var. *spectabilis* as native to Florida and the Eastern half of North America. We have Cinnamon fern at the Enchanted Forest around Serenity Pond.



ity Pond.

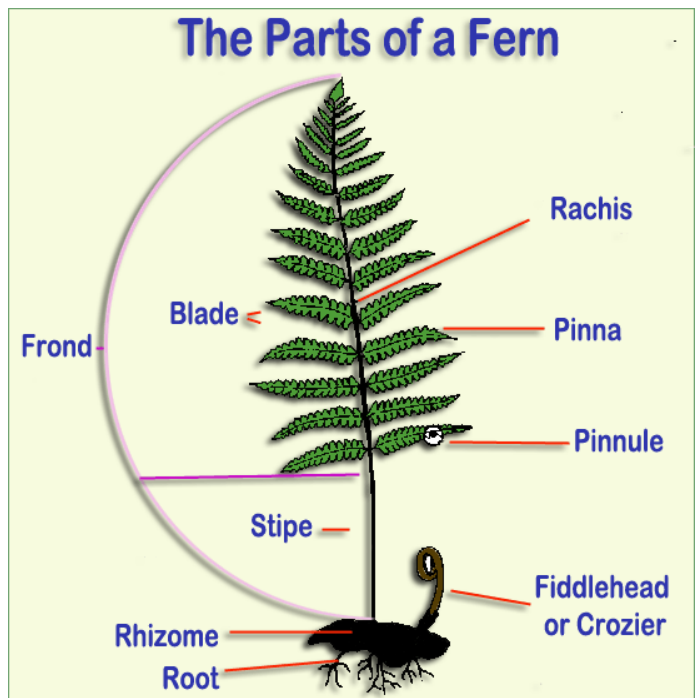
The American Royal Fern likes to grow in wet conditions in an acid soil. An accurate description of the Mesick Hammock The plant produces separate fertile and sterile fronds. Notably the mid to lower fronds are sterile, whereas the uppermost pinnae or primary division of a pinnately compound leaf, are fertile. Ground moisture would appear to be a major concern to the manifestation of fertile fronds on the royal fern. Jim noted that there were no fertile fronds last year (2016). Due to the exceptionally dry winter, Jim has watered the ferns with buckets of lake water and suspects that has aided the "bloom" in 2017.

In Florida, the USDA classifies the Royal fern as



"Commercially Exploited." As far as it's susceptibility to being threatened is concerned, there is no indication it is. The lack of marketing the osmunda root planks indicates that there may be a moratorium on the fern

root, possibly due to the availability of alternate potting and growing mediums, and or cost.~



Community Corner

News for and about your Chapter



This year KBB's Central Action Team invites you to this year's tour. Gardens north of the Pineda Causeway and south of 528 will be featured. This year we will again be featuring Lagoon Friendly (Florida native) gardens. We hope you will take home lots of ideas that may work in your yard and be motivated to get your yard featured in an upcoming tour! Tickets are \$10 and can be bought at the following locations:

- Growing Crazy Nursery; 1510 Old Dixie Hwy, Titusville
- Brevard Botanical Gardens; 3695 Lake Dr, Cocoa
- Ace Hardware; 1005 N. Courtenay Pkwy, Merritt Island
- Ace Hardware; 705 N. Atlantic Blvd, Cocoa Beach
- Ace Hardware; 8300 Astronaut Blvd, Cape Canaveral
- Rockledge Gardens; 2153 US 1, Rockledge
- Maple Street Natives; 7619 Henry Ave, Melbourne
- Meehan's Office Supply; 900 E. New Haven Ave, Melbourne
- New Visions Landscaping; 590 Montreal Ave, Melbourne
- The Green Marketplace; 3910 N. Cocoa Blvd, Cocoa
- Viera Wildlife Conservancy – please call 321-338-5030
- Keep Brevard Beautiful office; 1620 Adamsn Rd, Cocoa

For more information contact the KBB office [321.631.0501](tel:321.631.0501)

The KBB Trash Bash was a 30,642 lb success. That is over 15 tons of trash removed from Brevard County by more than 1,150 volunteers. Young and old pitched in to collect a record amount of trash.



No Water used in either piece of the yard.



4 years old

I've waited a long time for this, My Spring Yard. Enlarge the photo and the main yard is full of pink puff balls, Mimosa in the Spring. In the fore ground is **'The Meadow'**. There is a rain lily in bloom, Dune sunflower, Tropical Sage, and Lop-sided Indian Grass. So far something is eating the flowers off the Indian Grass before it can set seed. Oh well, that is exactly what the plants are there for. Bon appétit. Editor Dave **P.S. LATE BREAKING NEWS—I had a neighbor tell me how much she likes my yard.~**

Florida Exotic Pest Plant Control (FLEPPC) Annual Conference theme, "The Walking Weeds."

An Eye Witness Report

By Jim Robey



I, Jim Robey went the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Melbourne for the day-long meeting of the FLEPPC members and interested parties. I shared a table with the Conradina members of Melbourne. It was a busy day, for there were many activities. I did have time to network with several groups of professionals and vendors. Candice Prince gave a talk and ID session on cane grasses of Florida. I Got to speak with Erick Revuelty who spoke on Invasive Grasses in Florida. Also with John Kunzer of the FWC on Invasive Plant Management. Some discussion was given on the control of Cogongrass, (*Imperata cylindrica*) which is listed by the US Dept of Agriculture as a invasive noxious weed. Cogongrass spreads by airborne seed and underground rhizomes. Cogongrass in a forested area can be devastating to the pines and the undergrowth. Cogongrass will burn very hot due to its chemistry, hot enough to kill most other grasses, young trees, and even older trees. It is not readily identifiable from several other grasses. One clue might be that the midvein in not in the center, but offset. If you suspect you have cogongrass call the extension service in Cocoa (321) 633-1702 and verify it. They may be able to suggest methods to prevent its spread. ~



Did you know

85% of plant life is found in the ocean

71% of the Earth is covered in water.

The Oceans hold 96.5% of that water.

Now you know

Hosting the Sea Rocket Newsletter since 2001;

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The Forbidden Fruit

By Ron Chicone

There are secret places hidden within Central Florida's wild and unfrequented hammocks that harbor majestic survivors of a once great empire. In these rare places, growing beneath ancient live oaks and surrounded by cabbage palms, you may find a very old variety of grapefruit that tastes sweeter than anything cultivated today. Not only sweet, but this grapefruit has also been described in a recent New York Times article as "bracing and complex, simultaneously sweet and tart." The trees I have seen can reach a foot in diameter, and as best I can discern, belong to the very first variety of grapefruit widely cultivated in Florida, the Duncan grapefruit. Once plentiful in the late 1800's and early 1900's, it is now nearly impossible to find in cultivation, replaced by seedless, more colorful, and easier to harvest varieties. But I have crossed paths with a few of these old timers right here in north Brevard growing under some huge live oaks. If you visit one of these secret places in early spring you will understand how Adam and Eve might have felt walking through Eden. Golden globes of heavenly nectar partially clothed in dark green foliage, decorating every branch. Pure forest-filtered water, rich organic soil and the sacred spirit of the forest bless these trees and create in their fruit a masterwork of flavor and health. I would offer some personal advice to anyone eating a forest-grown Duncan: do not treat this sacred fruit like a store-bought variety. Hand-squeeze it using a simple citrus juicer and inhale the aromatic oils of the rind. Pour it into a wine glass because this delicacy is for sipping, not for drinking like Gatorade. Break off a piece of dark chocolate (at least 70% cacao) and, oh man, welcome to paradise. One more thing, please return the leftover parts



to mother earth, not the trashcan.

Although all Citrus is native to Asia and not Florida, these wild trees are a stirring connection to our natural lands and history. The most common is the sour orange (*Citrus x aurantium*) which predates the Romans and was brought to Florida by the Conquistadors. The grapefruit (*Citrus x paradisi*) came much later and has a more incestuous lineage as a cross between a cultivated pummelo (*Citrus x maxima*) and probably a sweet orange. It was first described in 1750 from Barbados by Reverend Griffith Hughes who called it the "forbidden fruit." Its species epithet, "*Paradisi*," does mean Eden-like landscape. *However, the rather odd name "grapefruit" came along later as a reference to its unique clusters of fruit.* The somewhat infamous

Frenchman Count Odet Philippe is recognized by the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame for introducing the grapefruit to the US, which was at the time considered a "rich-man's dish." William Cooper, a citrus scientist and author of *In Search of the Golden Apple* (1981), reports grapefruit growing wild in Haiti, and that Philippe took seeds from trees growing in the Bahamas to Safety Harbor, FL in 1823. Philippe's plantation in Safety Harbor is now Pinellas County's Philippe Park. I spoke with Vance Perkey from the Parks Department who told me there are no grapefruits there today and that sour orange is the only citrus growing in the historic grove. It was A.L. Duncan, an insurance salesman from Dunedin, who grafted trees from Philippe's grove on to sour orange in the late 1800's and created the first widely cultivated grapefruit, the Duncan variety. Interesting how a conquistador, a French Count and an insurance salesman are the progenitors of an agricultural goliath. Perhaps there is a gardener within us all.

(Cont next page)

Forbidden Fruit (Cont)

Amidst the carnage of Florida's citrus industry (from its latest malady, Citrus Greening) are these stately, forgotten, grapefruit trees cultivated only by the cool forest understory and the music of songbirds. I asked Jason Lingle of Hollienna Groves in Maitland about this. He is a fan of Duncans and one of the few people selling them. However, you won't find them advertised on the Hollienna website since he doesn't actually grow them but tends to a small grove of trees on a nearby property. According to



Lingle these old trees growing in the understory have fewer flushes of new growth which normally attracts the Asian Citrus Psyllid (the vector for Citrus Greening). He also mentioned that many of the old Duncan groves were "topdressed." That means cut down and used as rootstock for newer varieties. The trees I have come across are growing either from the rootstock of an old grove or randomly from seed. I assume they are Duncans, but it is also conceivable that they are progeny from Philippe's original trees since he is said to have been very generous in sharing his fruits and seedlings. Whatever they are, I wish them a long, fruitful life. ~

Fox Lake Sanctuary Field Trip

by Madeline Klinko

On the cool morning of 04.08.17, twenty-two hikers gathered at the sanctuary entrance near the Fox Lake Park boat ramp. The group was composed of Florida Tech ecology students, Florida Master Naturalist students, and FNPS members and friends.

Dr. Paul Schmalzer, Plant Ecologist, FNPS Science Committee Chair, and Sea Rocket hike committee leader introduced us to the 2,568 acre sanctuary using his plant species list and the kiosk map.

We walked into a shady mesic hammock.

Our leader quickly began pointing out lyreleaf sage, yaupon holly, and ferns: swamp, cinnamon, netted chain and bracken.

We walked single file stepping over tree roots, and noted the columnar form of loblolly bay, and the fragrant flowers of smilax. Dr. Schmalzer pointed out that saw palmetto can achieve an upright (but wobbly) growth habit in shady areas.

In scrubby flatwoods he talked about how prescribed fire is used as a tool to restore and manage the land. We saw pennyroyal with fuzzy terminal heads, St. Peter's-wort, pawpaw (*Asimina reticulata*), rusty lyonia, red bay, yaupon holly, and oaks: myrtle & *geminata*. Several of us took pictures of an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly excitedly nectering on lyonia flowers.

We descended downslope and saw deerberry (some flowering, some with unripe fruit), a highbush blueberry, wax myrtle, and many loblolly bays.

Stepping out into an open grassy area, we watched red-bellied woodpeckers chasing each other and drilling into slash pine. Our leader pointed out milkpea and groundsel.

On our way to a marsh, we admired a milkwort (*Polygala rugelii*) on the trail. In the marsh, we stepped through a couple inches of water then stood on maidencane grass and tufts of pipeworts to keep our feet dry. There was an island of sawgrass in the middle of the marsh. Dr. Schmalzer told us that small isolated freshwater wetlands play an important role in amphibian reproduction (there are no fish to eat the eggs or tadpoles). On the way out of the marsh, we stepped around disturbed redroot (*Lachnanthes*), so named for the red sap of its roots, a favorite food of feral hogs.

Returning through scrubby flatwoods we saw bluestem grass, then spotted a purple-pink flower of a plant endemic to Florida, a Roseling (*Callisia ornata*). Another surprise was blanket-flower (*Gaillardia puchella*), more often seen near coastal dunes. We saw a nice group of shiny blueberry, *Lyonia fruticosa*, and tarflower growing together.

We paused to admire a huge live oak and re-entered the mesic area, where we saw large loblolly bays, and a swamp bay (*Persea palustris*).

Before leaving, we thanked our patient teacher Dr. Paul Schmalzer for an informative and enjoyable Saturday morning.~

The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Education Center

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

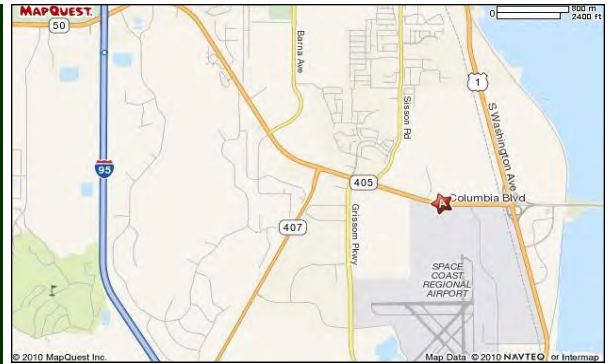


Driving Directions to the Sanctuary:

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.



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/www.fnps.org

Sea Rocket Chapter mailing address: 444 Columbia Blvd, Titusville, FL 32780



The June 2017

There is no General meeting in June

www.fnps.org

Why Plant Native Anyway

There are several good reasons to plant native where possible. We'll start with what should be most important, that being the protection of our environment and our precious lagoon. Planting natives, the correct native plant in the correct location, for the sun, soil, water available. In nature, a native plant will grow where the conditions are right. From an economic position, planting native has big dividends in maintenance costs. Ben Franklin said, "*A penny saved is a penny earned.*" Planting native can save many pennies, in water costs, fertilizer costs, and pest control costs. Some yards can be hazardous to pets and children from the amounts of chemicals used to sustain plant life.



Now see the difference in one yard, mine. No added water, no fertilizer, no bug juice, with a minimum of expended time in management. It is clear that the normal grass side (foreground) which consists of leftover St. Augustine grass from a chinch bug attack, random Bahia grass, various sedges, and weeds are not doing well in our drought. The green is Mimosa Strigillosa, a native ground cover. I had planted several, maybe six plants around a beautiful Green Bismarckia palm I had shading my yard. Somehow worms got in it and killed the tree. The mimosa found its rooting and took off. Not only is more than half my yard green, but it also has pink puff balls all over. Pollinators work the flowers endlessly. There are several varieties of bees that frequents the blooms to the point a buzzing sound can be heard! The Bahia will green up after rain, but the St. Augustine is probably gone.~