

MINUTES
FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER
Friday, July 22, 2016
Big Cypress Recreation Center, Periwinkle Room

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Kathy Porter at 1:30.

Present: 44 members and guests.

Old Business:

- Kathy welcomed guests and members, and reported that our state organization has over 3,000 memberships; membership is tax deductible. A membership expires a year after it was paid.
- Plants were donated by Green Isles Nursery and members.

New Business—Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- August 26th – Panel Discussion. This includes Q&A on various topics with knowledgeable members, including those who have transformed their landscapes. A topic will be introduced, and then the audience will direct questions to the panel.
- September 23rd –Meeting Presentation. There will be a meeting presentation by Jason Smith from the University of Florida on Urban Tree Diversity: Alternatives for your Landscape.
- September 24. There will be a Florida Wildlife Symposium at Silver Springs State Park. The cost is \$35 for Florida Wildlife members and \$45 for non-members. The keynote speaker is Roger Hammer. Other presentations include Monarch butterflies, Florida's ghost orchids, and by our President, Steve Turnipseed on transforming a turfgrass lawn to a native landscape.
- September 30th – Native Plant Garden Tour 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. More than a half dozen of our members will be opening their landscapes for viewing by FNPS members only.

Speaker: Lisa Dougherty with Boggy Creek Tree Farm in Christmas, Florida reported on the sabal palm also known as the cabbage palm, Florida's State Tree. (But it is found in other states in the south.) She also reported on smaller palms like the sabal minor or blue stem and the sabal etonia or scrub palm.

Michael Adamson discovered the sabal palm in 1763 and called it the tree of life as it is hard to kill. In the past it was used for baskets, arrows, fish nets, brooms and brushes, chickee huts, medicine (from the palm hearts, but this kills the tree) and building construction. It is now used for chickee huts, hearts of palm and landscaping. It is known by the crossed -leaf bases which are called boots.

The tree is harvested from the wild as it takes a seed 6 to 10 years to grow a trunk, and it is usually harvested from land to be developed. It can be harvested in two ways. The first is a "hurricane cut" which removes most of the "leaves". (The term "hurricane cut" indicates a way of landscapers trimming the palm right before a hurricane, so the wind won't blow off the leaves and do damage to buildings. This can damage a tree, and is not recommended. The term is also used in harvesting.) After the hurricane cut, the tree is then planted in a landscape. Because of the transplant shock and mortality of 60-70%, Boggy Creek does not harvest trees this way. They "regenerate" the tree—they plant it in their nursery for 6 to 9 months for root regeneration, and then plant it in a landscape. It is more expensive to harvest this way, but this lessens the mortality rate to 2 %.

A sabal palm is a wonderful tree for landscaping, as it draws wildlife like birds, insects, raccoons and even snakes. Also it grows very slowly—6 inches per year. It can take full sun and even “wet feet”. The tree should be planted at least 48 inches from a second one. No special soil is needed, but it does not like clay soil or white sugar sand. The maintenance of the tree is simple—no pruning or prune to “9 to 3” (like on a clock), and prune only brown fronds. Boots should be left on, as they insulate the tree, and removing them might remove some of the tree itself. They will fall off naturally.

Donations: Donated native plants from Green Isles Nursery and members were awarded to members and friends.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:30.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be August 26 at 1:30 at the Big Cypress Recreation Center.

Jeanie Powell, Secretary
