

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, May 25, 2018

Big Cypress Recreation Center, 3110 Hendry Drive – Periwinkle Room

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Steve Turnipseed at 1:30.

Present: 53 members and 9 guests.

New Business:

Green Isle Gardens – Steve thanked Green Isle Gardens for their monthly donation of plants.

Steve welcomed members and guests. Steve welcomed all first time attendees. There are annual dues to become a member of the Florida Native Plant Society and about 30% of the dues come back to our Villages Chapter.

Pine Straw – We donated 30 bales to the Lake Griffin State Park. Steve thanked the volunteers who helped him spread the pine straw: Charlotte and Rick Rahm, Will Hunt

The FNPS Annual Conference for 2018 was held May 17-20, in Miami. One of our members won the Backyard Butterfly Garden Award – Carol Spears. Steve presented the award to Carol, and asked her to say a few words. Steve noted that this is the third year in a row that an award went to a member of our chapter.

The FNPS Annual Conference for 2019 will be held in Crystal River. Since it is so close to us, they may tap our chapter for volunteers.

Spring Garden Tour June 1st (7:30AM-12:30PM) - Our chapter will host a self-guided Spring garden tour of 12 homes for FNPS members in good standing. This is the first time that our chapter has hosted a Spring tour. These landscapes of members have been converted to all or mostly native plants. Register and sign a release of liability at the today's meeting to receive the addresses. The tour is this one day only and these hours only. The addresses are not sent via email for privacy reasons. Please stay on walkways and paths. Surfaces may be uneven, so please be careful. You may take photos. The homeowners may be available and may ask you sign in. We do not have a rain date, so bring an umbrella if it rains. Four of the homes are first time participants.

Steve acknowledged those present who were opening their gardens for the tour.

June Presentation will be an update on Native Plant Landscapes in The Villages by Roger Selch and Steve Turnipseed. They will have before and after photos.

Serendipity Garden Nursery and Creative Garden Structures, Taryn Evans, gave an update on what was happening at the Nursery. They will be moving to Summer Hours soon which means they will be open to the public two days a weeks (still to be determined). Taryn introduced Emily who is an employee there. Taryn brought a sign-up sheet for email / newsletter updates.

She mentioned a workshop on June 16 for making Hypertufa Pots. The \$20 fee cover materials and includes a small plant. She needs a minimum of 5 people to sign up and cannot accept more than 10. Contact information is on the flyers she supplied in the back of the room.

Our Special Presentation for May - Invasive Plants Still for Sale, by Sandra Wilson, UF/IFAS Professor of Environmental Horticulture.

A Professor of Environmental Horticulture at the University of Florida's main campus in Gainesville, Sandra received B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Delaware and a Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from Clemson University. Dr. Wilson completed postdoctoral studies at both Clemson University and Chiba University, Japan. She teaches courses on Native Florida Landscaping, Plant Propagation, and Annual / Perennial Gardening.

An invasive or exotic plant is one that is not native to the ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Most invasive or exotic plants were introduced as ornamental. An estimated cost of invasive plants in natural areas, agricultural and gardens is \$34.7 BILLION to the U.S.

Florida ranks second in the US for the degree of ecosystem devastation as a result of invasive alien species. Invasive species enter Florida via (1) Ports (2) Weather (3) Waterways (because Florida is a peninsula) (4) Tourism.

Plants may be determined to be invasive based on: (1) status (2) known impacts (3) potential for expansion (4) difficulty of management (5) commercial value.

- Florida is the second largest producer of ornamental plants in the US.
- The Florida Department of Agriculture Consumer Services has the best / most accurate website for determining if a plant is considered invasive.
- In 2016, Florida Native Plants represented 16% of nursery sales, doubled from 2010.
- 45.2% of retailers offered "Florida Friendly Plants" for sale.
- Florida has over 3,300 native plant species, but less than 20% are estimated to be in cultivation.
- We need to re-train our "eye" to appreciate a Florida Native Landscape.

Following her presentation, Dr. Wilson addressed questions from the audience until 2:50pm. Then Steve Turnipseed presented Dr. Wilson with a \$200 check from The Villages Chapter of FNPS, to continue her work.

Donated plants were awarded to members and guest in the chance drawing.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

The next general meeting will be June 22, at 1:30pm at the Big Cypress Recreation Center

Jo Hudak, Secretary