

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, August 24, 2018

Big Cypress Recreation Center, 3110 Hendry Drive – Periwinkle Room

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

Present: 61 were in attendance, 13 of whom signed in as guests.

New Business:

Steve welcomed members and guests. Steve welcomed all first time attendees.

Chance Drawing: Green Isle Gardens provided 6 plants for the chance drawing, some of which might be unfamiliar to members. Steve described the Sky Flower, Pineland Hibiscus and Narrow-leaf Ironweed. Steve also thanked those members who provided additional Florida Native Plants for the drawing. If you want to donate plants, please bring them to the meeting by 1PM and have them labeled.

FNPS: We are a chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (not a Villages “club”). 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. The state society has about 3,000 members / 4,000 individual members and our chapter have over 150 memberships. FNPS has an annual conference and in 2019 it will be in Crystal River – very close to The Villages. FNPS encourages local landscaping practices and policies that preserve Florida’s native plant heritage.

Volunteer help: Steve thanked Marcia Gould for volunteering to help out our Treasurer, Judith Mason.

September Presentation: Kathy Porter will speak on Composting and Vermiculture.

Our August Presentation is: **Native Florida Pollinators** by Jonnie Dietz

Speaker Bio:

Jonnie is an entomologist and educator from the Florida Museum of Natural History where she works as a Living Exhibit Specialist and Outreach Coordinator. Her presentation will include an introduction to our native pollinator groups, their benefits and some fun facts.

For more background, attached is a link to a brief on the Florida Museum of Natural History:

<https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/>

- Flies: There are actually a variety of flies. They are not efficient pollinators, but there are so many of them, they get the job done. You can identify a fly because it only has two wings. Described – Hover Flies, Bee Flies, Tachinid Flies and Blowflies.

- Love Bugs: Are native to Central America and on their own have migrated north and east to US.
- Mosquitos: Both male & female need nectars, but only the female will bite people because the blood help her to produce eggs.
- Beetles: Are the largest group of insects. She described Tumbling, Soldier, Scarab and Longhorn Beetles.
- Wasps: Some are aggressive and should be avoided or left alone such as Paper Wasps including, Yellow Jackets and Hornets. These are communal wasps and build nests and will defend them.
- Mud Daubers, Digger Wasps and Cicada Killers: Are solitary nesters. They prey on insects to feed their young.
- Potter Wasp: Builds a little “pot” out of mud and lays 1 egg in it with one strand of silk, and then stuffs it with paralyzed caterpillars. The larva will feed on the paralyzed caterpillars.
- She also described Spider Wasps, Cuckoo Wasps, Tiphid Wasps and Scoliid Wasps.
- Bees: Are the best pollinators. They have long tongues (some fold up under their chins). Bees fed pollen to their young. Their bodies have branched hairs that collect pollen. She described Sweat Bees, Leaf Cutters, Mason Bees (that will nest in Bee Boxes), Bumble Bees and Carpenter Bees.
- Butterflies: Sulphurs, Skippers, Swallow Tails, Brush Foots. Brush Foot Butterflies include Monarchs, Gulf Fritillary and Zebra Longwing (the Florida State Butterfly). The Zebra Longwing is the only butterfly that feeds only on pollen and can live several months versus most butterflies living only about 4 weeks. The Monarch has one generation born in the North that will live long enough to migrate back to Mexico, rest and begin northern migration. But it takes several generations of Monarchs to be born along the way in their migration to the North.
- Moths were the last category she described.

The Florida Museum of Natural History is working with the Florida Department of Transportation to limit their mowing along roadsides, to help native pollinators with their habitat.

The Florida Museum of Natural History works with the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund to raise awareness of endangered animals, including the Miami Blue Butterfly.

Following her presentation, Ms. Dietz addressed questions from the audience for about 15 minutes, until 2:30pm.

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

The next general meeting will be September 21, at 1:30pm at the Big Cypress Recreation Center

Jo Hudak, Secretary