

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, November 23, 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: approximately 44 in attendance; 8 guests signed in.

New Business:

Chance Drawing: Green Isle Gardens sponsors our Chapter and provided 6 plants for the chance drawing.

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

Officer Positions for 2019: We have one open position, **VP of Programs** – responsible for lining up the speakers for 11 monthly meetings. There is a list of resources and prior speakers from which to draw. There will be recommendations and support for the position. If you are interested in volunteering, let Steve Turnipseed know. Voting is at the January 25, 2019 meeting.

Outings scheduled for December 4 and January 18. The **December 4** outing is to the Florida Scrub Jay Trail in Clermont in Lake County for a nature walk. The Florida Scrub Jay Trail is dedicated to increase awareness of the need to restore habitat for scrub-jays, gopher tortoises and native plant species.

Pam also has an outing planned for **January 18** to Mike Roess Gold Branch State Park in Clay County. This is one of Florida's first state parks, developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. It offers rolling sand hills, ravines, lakes – it will be a lot of walking.

November 23rd Presentation: Steve explained that we are doing something different today. There are 4 tables set up, each with a panel of “experts” on the topics of: Design and ARC approval (Steve Turnipseed, Kirsten Sharp-Ortega Habitat Designer of Green Isle Gardens); Installation (Roger Selch, Carol Spears, Jo Hudak), Maintenance (Linda Hunt, Ann Lambert) and Plan Selection (Myrna Farquhar and Taryn Evans, owner of Serendipity Garden & Creative Garden Structures in Weirsdale). Participants should choose a topic they are interested in. One person at each table should take notes – just bullet points is fine. Participants can ask questions, hold discussion. Q&A or discussion points will then be posted on our website. At the end, we will still hold the plant auction.

NEXT MEETING IS JANUARY 25, 2019. No December meeting.

DESIGN & ARC APPROVAL:

Consider neighbor's reactions

- View obstruction

- Soon they see native wildlife – butterflies, birds, etc.

- Make sure it looks tidy & blends in with others

Easements?

- Minimum 2 feet of groundcover; 3 feet of groundcover if using a hard edge

- No edging on property line – use below-ground edging to separate

- 13-1/2 feet from street into yard, must be only one species (grass or ground cover), maximum 12" height, uniform appearance

What can I do for utility easements?

- Same as above

- Including a picture may help

- For new purchase, get a copy of any ARC approvals and take pictures of how it looks

What about changing existing plants?

- Practically, not an issue but make it look good

For brand new areas, Districts 11-12, same process, but meet directly with the developer's rep, who is very reasonable and less stressful than sitting in front of large ARC.

Forms are available at www.districtgov.org -> Community Standards

Good shade perennials

- Wet twinflower is good (*also called swamp twinflower*)

Courtyard Villa needs a freestanding trellis for vines (don't attach to neighbor's wall)

- Simpson Stopper, Walter's Viburnum, Peach, Showstopper

- Afternoon sun: Coral Honeysuckle (gets leggy), Coral Jasmine (February flowers)

Shade vines

- Coral Honeysuckle, Corky Stem Passionvine

General Design question to Green Isle

- 2 hour review, general - \$95

- Specific plants / design ideas

- Can install as well

Mulch

- Rocks very bad

- Stay away from "dyed" mulch

- Meleleuca – OK for beds, excellent choice for paths

Pesticides - horticultural oils or soaps or natural products

How to remove small areas of grass

- Strip grass

- Herbicide – 3-4 weeks in slow-growing season, 2 applications, in summer, 3 applications

Plant spacing for frog fruit – 18" to 3'

Make sure grass is dead.

INSTALLATION:

Resources:

UF/IFAS

Master Gardener Clinic, 466 & Morse Blvd.

Staffed Mondays 9AM-3PM, to answer questions

Free literature

FNPS website

Replace grass

You can replace turf grass with a native ground cover with ARC approval

Keep neighbors informed

Anyone can complain, might not be a neighbor, just someone driving through

If there's a complaint, ARC will send someone to check it out. They will contact you.

If within approval guidelines, they go back to complainant.

If not, they will tell you to change it within a specific time period.

Best time to install

After hurricane season

Getting rid of grass

Round up works only on the green leaf – it affects photosynthesis, not roots

When Jo's grass was herbicided, Green Isle left the dead grass as organic matter

Stones

Stone not recommended

Requires more fertilizer

Requires more water

Stones can become little missiles during strong winds, tornadoes

Irrigation

Don't leave bare dirt more than 1 night because unwanted seeds etc., will land

Drip – requires knowledgeable person to change water pressure

For Carol's installation, Steve helped, and as Green Isle laid out the plants, they followed with the drip line.

Drip can be added after conversion – Roger did

Can update your irrigation control panel – Roger can control from his phone

Goal is to conserve water

Figure out what you want, how you want to use your yard / garden

Get professional input / design

You can make changes even after installation, move plants, add, etc.

Using pine straw improves the soil as it breaks down

If you have Zoysia grass

Designed to go dormant

You can stop watering – watering is just wasting water

Or water – as a choice, has a cost to the environment

Frost, like in Dec 2017 – Natives may have looked dead, but most came back

Favorite plants

Flaming red maple – the young leaf is red, turns green, Calamint - flowers Nov – May and has nice aroma, Rouge plant (small flowers), Rosin Flower, Stokes Aster, Firebush

New homeowner asks about replacing the plants that are in beds – ARC approval needed?

If you replace “in kind” don’t need ARC approval

Citrus trees – are you allowed to have, how to care for?

There are many diseases that affect citrus trees. Need Citrus Fertilizer, no mulch, no ground cover up to trunk – the roots are close to the surface. Can go to the plant clinic at 466 & Morse for advice. If you are getting good fruit, then maybe no change needed. Look for leaves that are not symmetrical, or fruit where one side is dried out but other is not – indicates Citrus Greening.

Recommend plants for full sun

Goldenrod, Bee Balm, Scorpion-tail, Silk Grass

MAINTENANCE

Pruning

Prune in spring, but after flowering

Can prune annuals and perennials while they are growing to limit height

Do not prune tender plants in winter

Can prune hardwood year round

Prune clump grasses in February, in cone shape or cut a couple of inches from ground

Don’t need to prune tropical sage, unless you want to control height

Cannot eat wild coffee berries

Don’t use salt or vinegar for weeds – pull them

When to take off supports for trees?

3-6 months or 1 year

Check for girdling

Use of reclaimed water for edibles

Use rain barrel

Fertilize cumquat 2X a year

Weeding – mulch heavily

Watering -> ½” in rain gauge, then wait 1 week before turning on.

Use Neem Oil on fungus, BT

PLANT SELECTION

What should be planted to screen out neighbor's security light & camera?

Small tree or Walter's Viburnum

When looking for plants remember that we are zone 9 A

Don't plant a whole area of like plants as diseases/pests could wipe them out

Myrna lost 5 pineland lantanas to nematodes

Hedges look better if they are different plants; diversity is better

Sweet viburnum occluding bedroom window.

Remove & replant with: Coontie

Walter's viburnum

Simpson Stopper

Do trees need to be staked - in particular a new red bud without leaves?

Yes, until established, if they have large canopies, if subject to a lot of wind

Why are ornamental grasses separated from other plants?

Usually in commercial areas; Planting beds look more organized and tidy when plants of similar species are placed in groups (mass plantings)

Is there any ground cover that will exclude Zoysia grass? NO!

6 in deep metal barrier in ground to prevent rhizome encroachment.

What is good ground cover/planting for a small area?

beach sunflower, Porterweed, love grasses

groundcovers need to be managed to keep them confined

Is Lizard Tail the same as Scorpion Tail? No

Lizard Tail water plant.

Can native plants be grown from seed? Yes

Yucca can be planted in sandy soil.

Discussion of pests and leaving them alone so beneficial bugs will come in & eat them

Discussed *Ask the Master Gardener* plant clinics.

Suggested when going for advice to take picture of plant in its environment, a 'sick' leaf' as well as a healthy one.

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

The next general meeting will be January 25, 2019 at 1:30pm at the Big Cypress Recreation Center

Jo Hudak, Secretary