

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, February 22, 2019

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: 76 were in attendance, 14 of whom signed in as guests.

New Business:

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

Chance Drawing: Green Isle Gardens sponsors our Chapter and provided 6 plants for the chance drawing. The drawing is held at the end of the meeting.

Longleaf Pinestraw Orders

Our chapter took orders for Longleaf Pine Straw, delivered on Feb. 12th. Steve thanked volunteers, Jo Hudak, Rodge Selch and Susan Hamilton. Our chapter donated 60 bales to Lake Griffin State Park for the median strip at the entry way.

Upcoming Chapter Outing for FNPS Members

Trip date: Weds., February 27th to **Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park** in Keystone Heights. Carpool from Hacienda Rec Center at 10:00am. It is a 1 hour 40 minute trip. There will be a Ranger led tour of the Gold Head State Park followed by lunch at Florida Cracker House Restaurant. Then it will be a short drive to the Palatka Ravine where you can drive to the bottom. Contact Pamela Powell 352 750 2420 or pamelynn1943@gmail.com .

Trip date: Weds., March 13th to **Pear Park** in Leesburg. Carpool from Hacienda Rec Center at 9:00 am, or meet at the parking area by the Nature Center at 9:30am if you are driving on your own. Visit the Wildlife Watch Post area, then a quarter mile walk through the scrub restoration area to the Butterfly Pavilion. Next, walk to the shady River Trail to see plant species. Return through a restoration area.

A \$5 deposit is requested for each outing you sign up for. The money goes to the guides as an honorarium or if not accepted to other FNPS related projects.

2019 UF/IFAS REVISED SAMPLE NATIVE YARD DESIGNS

All six designs have been reworked to be in compliance with current Villages ARC rules and have been converted to CAD. Our goal is to publish them on our chapter website in February. They will be available to download for free. Please note that if you want to convert your property to a native yard and use one of these designs, you still need to get approval from the ARC.

March 22 Topic

Next month, our speaker will be Gary Babic on The Life of Butterflies in Native Plant Gardens.

FNPS 39th Annual State Conference - Crystal River

The state conference this year will be at The Plantation on Crystal River, May 16-19th. Please consider attending as the location is very close to us. Thursday May 16 & Sunday May 19 are days for field trips. On Sunday, May 19, one of the field trips will be a garden tour of Native yards in The Villages. Direct link to the 2019 conference information:

<https://www.fnps.org/conference> .

You can sign up for single days rather than the entire conference. Registration is open now. If you want to sign up for field trips, read over the descriptions, note the letter of the trip for signing up. Sign up, early as field trips fill up. There will be general and technical presentations. For the tour of Native Yards in the Villages, addresses will **not** be published on line for privacy reasons. Addresses will be given to those who sign up. It is "self-guided" – you choose which yards to see and what route you want to take.

Officer Positions for 2019: We need a volunteer for Vice President of Programs. There will be lots of support for this position. It is mostly a matter of calling to enlist speakers and coordinating dates, etc. See Steve at the end of the meeting if you are interested.

Today's Presentation is: *An Easy Guide to Florida Native Plant Pruning and Maintenance*" by Nick Giannola, Green Isle Gardens, Groveton, FL

Speaker Bio: Nick Giannola was born and raised in the northwest suburbs of Chicago where he spent much of his childhood playing in the woods and fishing. His love for nature only grew stronger as his family made frequent trips to the Wisconsin north woods to stay at their cabin on the lake. Nick graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor of science in fisheries and wildlife and promptly started work as an invasive species monitor. This led to more hands on work, as an ecological restoration technician, restoring the lands he grew up exploring. Looking for some change from the north, Nick decided to move to Florida and began working for Green Isle Gardens. Nick has been with Green Isle since 2014 and is currently the nursery manager, overseeing the day to day functions of the nursery.

Presentation:

Why prune

- Shape the plant
- Decrease seed spread
- Increase fruit and flower production
- Plant health

Principles

- Prune like fire
- See the future and direct the energy

- Know the type & know the timing
- A little a day keeps disasters at bay
- The Landscape Mullet (neater in front yard, “wilder” in the back)

Tools

- Hand pruners & loppers (he uses Felco brand)
- Weed wacker
- Hedge trimmer
- Edger
- Mower

Tips

- Use the “winter die back” as a plant marker
- Cut the crazies
- Cut to the Y (encourages growth, encourages growth in the right direction)
- Watch out for “residents” – shake the plant a little so bugs, frogs, lizards have a chance to escape
- Plants are resilient

He showed before and after photo examples of trimming Grasses, Ground Covers, Wildflowers and Shrubs & Woody Plants. For Shrubs & Woody Plants, like Lantana, Firebush, Walter’s Viburnum, Yaupon Holly, Florida Privet, he suggested the 1/3 rule – cut NO MORE than 1/3 at a time. Yaupon Holly example, you could cut back to where the berries are. For Firebush, wait until Spring to see where new growth is sprouting.

Following her presentation, Mr. Giannola answered questions from the audience until 2:40pm. He stayed to answer individual’s questions until the meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

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

Jo Hudak, Secretary