

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, August 23, 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: 49 were in attendance, 5 of whom signed in as guests.

New Business:

**Jo welcomed members and guests.** At 1:30pm, the meeting was called to order. Steve welcomed all first time attendees and explained that we are not a Villages club, but a Chapter of the statewide FNPS.

**Green Isle Gardens Sponsors** our plant drawing. They contribute 6 plants, plus there are plants provided by various members.

**Upcoming Outings** - Pamela Powell described the several outings organized starting in October.

- October 15 – Scrub Point Preserve – If any members with 4-wheel drive vehicles could sign up, then we could drive the entire Preserve instead of walk a small part of it.
- November 3 – Organic Farm in Citra (Ladies Only) – this is a lunch; not related to FNPS. In January 2020, there will be an outing to this same location, men & women invited. When you sign up Pam is asking for a \$20/person deposit. She needs minimum 10 participants. It will include a tour of the greenhouse, Bee Demo, sit-down three-course lunch.
- December – Bear Track Preserve
- February 2020 – Hidden Water Preserve in Mt. Dora
- April 2020 – Flat Island Preserve

**Wildflower Festival for Lake County FNPS Chapters** – In support of other FNPS chapters there was an announcement about this Wildflower Festival on September 28, 9AM-2PM at Green Isle Gardens. Author Craig Huegal will be there. It's a nice drive to Groveland and you would get to see the Nursery, in addition to buying plants, etc. They are also looking for volunteers to work any time (doesn't have to be the entire 9AM-2PM). Volunteers will be paid with \$25 gift certificate for plants from Green Isle Gardens. Call Green Isle Gardens if you want to volunteer.

**Presentation: Beneficial Insects and Native Plants—the Keys to a Sustainable Landscape by Taryn Evans.** Taryn Evans is the owner of Serendipity Garden Nursery in Weirsdale: <https://www.creativegardenstructures.com/serendipity-garden-nursery> . She was the former president of the Marion County Chapter of FNPS. Taryn is an enthusiast observer of nature and an advocate for native plants. She is a wealth of knowledge about life in garden.

The native plants in your landscape provide the food and cover for the first tier of life, insects. There is a diverse and interesting matrix of insect life happening in your native garden. Taryn would like more people to change their relationship with insects in the garden, to appreciate them. Insects: Pollinate; Recycle nutrients, Enhance soil quality, Aid in decomposition, Provide food for other wildlife, are Predators to other insects. 75-90% of flowering plants need pollinators to provide 1/3 of food for people. The percentage is even higher when it comes to providing food for other wildlife. The economic value of insect pollinators for pollinating crops is estimated at \$18-27 BILLION.

Insects help natural areas and eco-systems keep their plants healthy. The decline of pollinator populations is attributed to:

- Bee Colony Collapse
- Habitat loss & degradation
- Diseases and,
- Excessive use of pesticides / insecticides.

Taryn went on to describe what are “true bugs” and “true flies”. Spiders are not insects, but they are a generalist predator and play an important part in the garden.

Taryn ways you can welcome insects into your garden:

- Plant native plants
- Have diverse flower species
- Make use of Field borders, hedgerows, cover crops, beetle banks and conservation buffers where possible
- More plant diversity = More bio-diversity
- Plant for the seasons
- Plant variety of heights
- Plant Composites (Stokes Aster is example) and Umbels (Swamp Milkweed is example)
- Colors white, yellow and blue”)

Balance is important – turn off your “zapper” if you have one. Don’t use pesticides. If given a chance, the plants will bring the insects they need on their own. She suggested we google the phrase “Paradox of Pesticides”. (from Wikipedia: “The **paradox** of the **pesticides** is a **paradox** that states that applying **pesticide** to a pest may end up increasing the abundance of the pest if the **pesticide** upsets natural predator–prey dynamics in the ecosystem.”)

Taryn’s last slide was a list of reference books and useful websites:

- Bugguide.net
- Whatsthatbug.com
- NWF.org/NaturePlantFinder
- FNPS.org

Taryn took questions from the audience for about 10 minutes.

Before turning all over to Jeannette Bacon for the plant auction, Steve Turnipseed mentioned that author Lucy Warren came to The Villages specifically to see some native landscapes. Steve showed here four native yards . Steve said that The Villages is becoming a destination to see native landscapes.

In September, our speaker will be Scott Davis from Tallahassee. His topic has not yet been determined, but Scott spoke here before.

Taryn mentioned that one could download an APP on your phone to help identify bugs call "INaturalist".

**Plant Drawing** – Jeanette Bacon managed the drawing for about a dozen plants in Carol Spears' absence.

The meeting adjourned just before 3PM.

The next general meeting will be September 27, at 1:30pm at the Big Cypress Recreation Center

Jo Hudak, Secretary