

## **The Villages Native Plant Society General Meeting Apr 14, 2023**

### **Minutes/Notes:**

**Welcome /announcements** Sue Egloff called the mtg to order at 1:30 PM. She noted the need for more volunteers to help in key roles including co-secretary and graphic artist. Sue also spoke about the benefits of membership in FNPS.

Alycyn Culbertson asked if any members have milkweed seeds to share, she would like to have some. Please put them in paper envelopes by type.

Marcia gave a short update on financial status of the Chapter, noting our chapter's recent plant sale at the Sumter County Master Gardeners Spring event made over \$250 and Linda Lapinsky donated plants to the sale which increased the profit.

Linda Neff reported at the General Meeting, there were 48 members in attendance, including 17 guests, and three new members joined at the meeting. Currently, the chapter has 126 individual members, 53 multi-members

Sue acknowledged donation for the plant raffle of native plants by Green Isle Gardens and members Linda Hunt and John Nicholson. She also encouraged participants to share photos of their native plants with the Daily Sun at [photo@thevillagesmedia.com](mailto:photo@thevillagesmedia.com), the chapter's Facebook page as well as our newsletter.

Upcoming are the following events:

- On Apr 22, FNPS-TV will host a table at the "Water Matters" event at Lake Sumter Landing and seeks volunteers to staff that event also.
- The Great Milkweed Giveaway will be held on May 12 to members of FNPS; Alycyn Culbertson is leading this event. May 12 will be the last General Meeting until such meetings resume again in Sept.
- The annual Garden Tour will occur on June 2. You must be a member to attend.
- The next BOD mtg will be held on Tues Apr 25 at 3:30 PM EDT by Zoom.

Program co-chair Vicky McLean introduced today's speaker Jim E. Davis, the UF/IFAS Multi-County Extension Director for Sumter and Hernando Counties. His program areas include Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Urban Pest Management. Jim has been in Extension for 17 years serving in previous positions such as Florida Yards and Neighborhoods agent, Residential Horticulture agent, and Master Gardener Coordinator. Jim earned his Bachelor of Science in Environmental Horticulture specializing in Public Garden Management and Master of Science in Entomology, specializing in Urban Pest Management from The University of Florida. He is a native Floridian and wildlife photographer. Jim's presentation was on native palms and shrubs and included the following:

### Palms:

- Paurotis Palm (also known as Everglade Palm). Grows 20' high by 20' wide. Typically used in commercial landscaping and is not suitable for residences.
- Cabbage Palm or Sabal Palmetto, a favorite native and wildlife magnet, grows 50' high by 10' wide. Slow grower, can be 200 years old when only 20' high; typically transplanted. Historically used by native peoples as roofing material and also as a bat for native ball games, Toli, and dolls. Can be subject to lethal bronzing which also attacks Sylvester Palm and the larva is found in grass. Can be treated.
- Dwarf Palmetto or Sabal Minor grows 8' high by 8' wide. Found near wetlands. Wildlife feed on berries.
- Saw Palmetto grows 6' high by 12' wide. Clumping. Green or silver color. Wonderful honey is made from the nectar gathered by bees. Doesn't transplant well. Salt and wind tolerant.
- Needle Palm grows in shade, 6' high by 6' wide. Clumping. Very cold hardy. But has large needle
- Coontie has poisonous seeds. A cycad, grows 2-5' high. Attracts Atala (also known as Coontie Hairstreak) butterfly.

### Shrubs and Trees:

- Buttonbush – full sun, deciduous, has white fragrant flowers. Grows 6-20' high. Foliage is poisonous to livestock. Larval host to hydrangea sphinx, titan sphinx and royal walnut moth.
- Paw Paw – full sun, slow grower in sandy soil. Is larva source for Zebra Swallowtail butterfly. Dwarf version grows to 5' high.
- Florida Privet- A favorite of Jim. Full sun, 1-15' high. Great hedge. Flowers in spring, fruit for songbirds. Slow grower. Avoid Chinese Privet-invasive.
- Firebush-full sun/part shade. Attracts Zebra Longwing, various Sulphur butterflies and hummingbirds. 3-10' high. Dies back to ground in winter and blooms in spring.
- Beautyberry – 3-8' high. Lavender flowers and purple fruit. Bird favorite. Fragrant leaves when crushed is a natural mosquito repellent.
- Dwarf Walters Viburnum - full sun/part shade. 3-4' high. White flowers attracts bees. Withlacoochee variety grows up to 20' high.
- Eastern Redbud-20-30' high. Deciduous. Flowers in spring. Takes time to bud. Acid/slightly alkaline soil.
- Southern Red Cedar-a favorite of Jim. Grows 50' high by 20" wide. Drought tolerant. Attracts birds.
- White Fringe Tree – 6-12' high. Deciduous. Slow grower. White flowers, purple fruit. Attracts birds.
- Wax Myrtle-Dwarf or tree 10-40' high. Full sun/part shade. Attracts wildlife with berries. Resin is very aromatic and can be fire hazard.
- East Palatka Holly – 30-45' high. 10-15' wide. White flowers and red berries. Male and female needed to make fruit.

- Live Oak – 40-80' high and 60-120' wide. Wind resistant and drought tolerant. A keystone plant necessary to environment. Jim does not recommend Laurel or Water Oaks, both are bad for yards.
- Southern Magnolia-evergreen, deciduous. 100' high. Large white flowers. Little Gem variety grows up to 40' high. Prefers moist soil. Pollinated by beetles.
- Simpson Stopper-Evergreen. 20-30' high. Fragrant white flowers and red berries. Slow grower.

Jim responded to questions asked by members.

The meeting was adjourned by Sue at 2:50 PM and the raffle winners were announced.

The next general meeting is Friday, May 12 at Big Cypress Rec Center.