

# November 2023 Newsletter

Hello Members, it's that time of year again! As we gear up for the Holiday Season, be prepared to receive Chapter correspondence concerning the upcoming 2024 Board of Directors Elections. Also, the 2024 Sea Rocket Chapter budget has received preliminary approval from the Board of Directors and will be presented for approval by the General Membership during our next meeting on Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> in reference to Thanksgiving Holiday. If you did not receive an email outlining the 2024 Sea Rocket Chapter budget, please email [srsecretary.fnps.org](mailto:srsecretary.fnps.org).



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# Report on Field Trip to Helen and Allen Cruickshank Sanctuary

Written by: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photographed by: Beverly Lewis

Ten people attended the field trip to the Helen and Allen Cruickshank Sanctuary on September 23, 2023. The Cruickshank Sanctuary is a site of about 140 acres in Rockledge. It was acquired by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program and the State of Florida and is managed by the EEL Program.

Vegetation is primarily scrub and flatwoods.

The Cruickshank Sanctuary is a conservation success story. By the time it was acquired, and management began, the Florida Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) [figures 1,2] population on the site had declined to few or none. With removal of dense pines, mechanical treatment of overgrown scrub oaks, and prescribed burning the habitat has improved, and Florida Scrub-Jays are now abundant on the site. The recovery of the Scrub-Jay population was facilitated by their presence in the Viera East Conservation Area south of the Cruickshank Sanctuary.



Figure 1 & 2: *Aphelocoma coerulescens*

# Report on Field Trip to Helen and Allen Cruickshank Sanctuary

Written by: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photographed by: Beverly Lewis

The Cruickshank Sanctuary supports many plants typical of scrub and flatwoods including scrub oaks (*Quercus* spp.), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) slash pine (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*) and shrubs in the heath family (Ericaceae). Sandy openings are an important habitat feature in scrub for Florida Scrub-Jays



Figure 3: *Selaginella arenicola*



Figure 4: *Gratiola hispida*

and for some plants. In sandy openings we found sand spikemoss (*Selaginella arenicola*) [photo], a genus of plants in its own family that reproduces by spores, as do ferns. Also in the openings was the small flowering plant rough hedgehyssop (*Gratiola hispida*) [photo]. Scrub habitats are dry at least parts of the year. Many scrub plants have narrow linear leaves that may reduce water loss; an example is Atlantic St. John's wort (*Hypericum tenuifolium*) [photo]. This contrast with the broader leaves of roundpod St. John's wort (*Hypericum cistifolium*) [photo] typically in more mesic habitats.

leaves that may reduce water loss; an example is Atlantic St. John's wort (*Hypericum tenuifolium*) [photo]. This contrast with the broader leaves of roundpod St. John's



Figure 5: *Hypericum tenuifolium*



Figure 6: *Hypericum cistifolium*

# Report on Field Trip to Helen and Allen Cruickshank Sanctuary

Written by: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photographed by: Beverly Lewis

Many plants in scrub and flatwoods flower in the fall including grasses, plants in the Aster family (Asteraceae) and legumes (Fabaceae). We



Figure 7: *Carphophorus odoratissimus*

saw vanillaleaf (*Carphophorus odoratissimus*, Asteraceae) [photo] and sensitive pea (*Chamaecrista nictitans*, Fabaceae) [photo] in flower as well as the fall-flowering tall jointweed (*Polygonella gracilis*) [photo].



Figure 8: *Chamaecrista nictitans*

The Cruickshank Sanctuary is an island of native habitat in what is now a highly urbanized landscape.



Figure 9: *Polygonella gracilis*

The Gardens Team has been making Great progress!

Join Sea Rocket Chapter members and Enchanted Forest Sanctuary volunteers while they enjoy nature and learn about Florida's native plants while working in the Forest's Butterfly Gardens. Our next Garden Workday will be in December.



Photo by Laura Covell. These patches of native plants are a pollinator's oasis.



Photo by Laura Covell. Sea Rocket Members help to maintain the gardens.

# Report for 10/25/2023 General Membership Meeting

*Our members* were the speakers for our last meeting when the group reviewed a presentation titled *What's in Your Yard?* and shared stories of their success stories and challenges with Florida native plants at their own homes and gardens. Thank you, Madeline, Kim, Elizabeth, Beverly, Brittany, Paul, and Laura for sharing your photos as well as to the members who participated in the discussion.



Clockwise from top: Firebush blooms by Laura Covell, Sand Live Oak by Elizabeth Bishop, Muhly Grass by Beverly Lewis, American Beautyberry by Kim Gibbs.



# Report for 10/21/2023 Plant Sale

Written and Photographed by Laura Covell

Thirty-nine different species of Florida native plants were available for this event and 183 plants found new homes! It is anticipated that our next sale, which will be held in early March, will be a **BIG** one; we're requesting volunteers sign



up for half-day (8:30am – 11:30am or 11:00am – 1:30pm) or whole day shifts. Sending out a big thank you to Beverly Lewis,



Adam Lewis, Madeline Klinko, Paul Schmalzer, Kim Gibbs, Brittany Bayliss, Brittany Watts, and Laura Covell for their efforts in making our last sale a big success.

**SPECIES SPOTLIGHT:**  
***Lonicera sempervirens*, CORAL HONEYSUCKLE**

WRITTEN BY BRITTANY BAYLISS PHOTOGRAPHED BY GINNY STIBOLT

CORAL HONEYSUCKLE IS A CLIMBING VINE WITH STEMS REACHING UP TO 15 FT. LONG. WELL KNOWN AS A HUMMINGBIRD ATTRACTANT, THE CORAL-COLORED TRUMPET FLOWERS ARE PLENTIFUL IN THE SPRING WHICH COINCIDES WITH THE TINY CREATURES' MIGRATION. ONCE POLLINATED, THE FLOWERS MATURE INTO BRIGHT RED FRUITS THAT ARE A FAVORITE OF CARDINALS WHOSE DIGESTIVE PROCESS AIDES IN THE DISPERSAL OF SEED. THE FOLIAGE OF THIS VINE IS A HOST PLANT FOR SPRING AZURES AND SNOWBERRY CLEARWINGS. CORAL HONEYSUCKLE PROVIDES RESOURCES TO SEVERAL NATIVE SPECIES AND IS A GARDEN MUST HAVE AS IT TOLERATES A WIDE RANGE OF WATER AND SUN EXPOSURE. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

[HTTPS://WWW.FNPS.ORG/PLANT/LONICERA-SEMPERVIRENS.](https://www.fnps.org/plant/Lonicera-sempervirens)



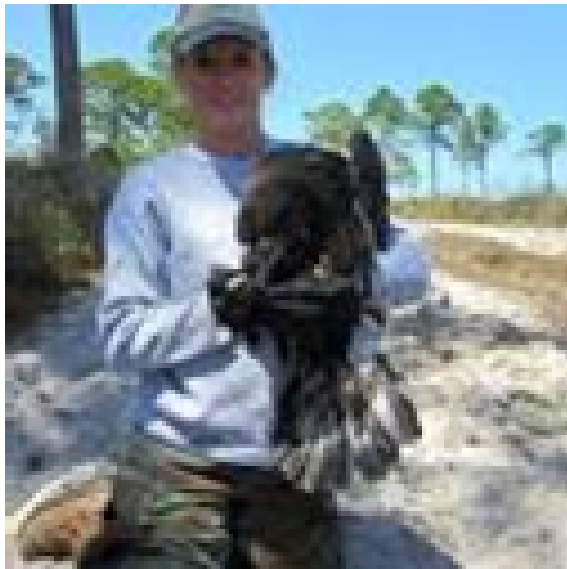


## General Membership Meeting: November 15<sup>th</sup> Speaker



Local author Rebecca Bolt will be giving a presentation titled “Birds of Brevard and Their Habitats”.

Becky is a wildlife ecologist who recently retired from 35 years at Kennedy Space Center. During her tenure at KSC, she worked with animals ranging from fish to mice, was involved in over 30 professional publications, and gave many, many educational presentations. Her book: “*My First Birder’s Life List*” is a simple, yet challenging book for young bird lovers which will be available for sale at the meeting.



Left: Becky hard at work in the field. Right: Becky’s book will be available for purchase at the meeting, a great opportunity to obtain a signed copy.

# November 2023 Events at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary

## Garden Workday

Sat. Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Grab your hat, sunblock, and water and come help maintain the butterfly garden at the Sanctuary with the Sea Rocket Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society! Registration required, please call 321-264-5185 to sign up.

## Nature Storytime

Wed., Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Geared toward ages 5 and under. Enjoy a half hour story time at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary! Theme: Magnificent Migration! Join us to learn about bird migration through fun activities and crafts. Registration required, please call 321-264-5185 to sign up. NO SAME DAY SIGN UPS.

## Pine Needle Ornament Class

Sun., Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Join Yvette Flis for a class on how to make pine needle ornaments/decorations. Registration required. Call 321-264-5185 for more information.

## Sanctuary School

Wed., Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Geared towards ages 6 through 12. Theme: Majestic Migration! Enjoy learning about bird migration through fun activities and crafts! Registration required, please call 321-264-5185 to sign up. NO SAME DAY SIGN UPS.

## Tai Chi at the Forest

Every Sat. in Nov. 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Join instructor Kate Perez for a beginner level class on the porch! Loose-fitting clothing and a water bottle are recommended. Registration required no later than the day before class, please call 321-264-5185. SPACE LIMITED. NO SAME DAY SIGN UPS.

## Yoga in Nature

Every Sun. in Nov. 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Join local yoga instructors for a traditional class for all levels on the porch! Wear loose-fitting clothing and do not eat anything an hour before class. Bring water and a mat. Registration required no later than the day before class, please call 321-264-5185. SPACE LIMITED. NO SAME DAY SIGN UPS.

## Guided Hikes

Openings Sat./Sun. in Nov. at 10:00 a.m.

Enjoy a 45-minute guided hike. Please bring a hat, water, and walking shoes. Days are limited to staff availability. Registration required no later than the day before the hike, please call 321-264-5185 to sign up. NO SAME DAY SIGN UPS.

*The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary was created and managed under Brevard County's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program referendum. The referendum was established by voters in 1990 to protect and preserve the rich biological diversity of Brevard County for future generations. The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary operates in partnership with the Friends of the Enchanted Forest to provide hands on educational experiences for all visitors. Admission to the sanctuary and education center is free and open to the public Tuesday through Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm. Come out to visit soon!*

# **FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter Annual Holiday Dinner**

## **Dixie Crossroads Seafood Restaurant**

**1475 Garden Street  
Titusville, FL 32796**

**Saturday, December 3, 2022  
Dinner 6:00 PM**

*RSVPs requested.*

*Please contact Elizabeth Bishop  
[izbet@aol.com](mailto:izbet@aol.com) or [text to 321-452-1579](tel:321-452-1579).*

**Full Menu Available at:  
<https://dixiecrossroads.com/>**

**Please Join Us  
To Celebrate the Holidays!**

*Attendees responsible for  
their individual checks.*

# Sea Rocket Chapter Announcements:

## Annual Elections of Chapter Officers

As a reminder, we will be holding our next Annual Meeting on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, and will have elections for Chapter Officers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary) during that meeting. If you have interest in serving as a Chapter Officer or would like to nominate someone else (and they agree to be nominated, please submit your nomination to [srsecretary@fnps.org](mailto:srsecretary@fnps.org) no later than the December Board meeting, which will be held this year on December 5th.

The Board of Directors is an important component of our Chapter, and your help is needed to keep the Chapter moving forward.

## \$\$\$ Sea Rocket Chapter 2024 Budget \$\$\$

The draft Sea Rocket Chapter 2024 Budget has been approved by the Board of Directors and will be presented to the General Membership for approval at the November 15th (third Wednesday) meeting. Please watch your emails for information relating to the budget and make plans to attend this important meeting.




# FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter Board of Directors



Please contact [srsecretary.fnps.org](https://www.fnps.org/srsecretary) or speak with any Board Member, if you are interested in any of the following: serving on the Board of Directors, volunteer opportunities, or newsletter additions. Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/searocketchapterfnps> to receive up-to-date information on Chapter happenings.

# November 2023 Sea Rocket Chapter Calendar of Events

<https://searocket.fnpschapters.org/calendar/>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 
5	6	7 	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**November 4<sup>th</sup>**- Garden Workday is cancelled this month.

Please join us next time at the EFS\* Pollinator Garden

**November 7<sup>th</sup>**- Sea Rocket Board Meeting from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Please join us at EFS\* Classroom as the meeting is open to all members.

**November 15<sup>th</sup>**- Social time from 6:00 to 6:30 PM. Join us from 6:30 - 8:00PM for business meeting including 2024 budget vote and local author Rebecca Bolt who will be giving a presentation titled *Birds of Brevard and Their Habitats* in the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Classroom.

**\*EFS- Enchanted Forest Sanctuary, 444 Columbia Blvd., Titusville FL 32780**