

December 2023 Newsletter



Hello Members! We hope your Holiday Season is off to a great start. Our Annual Holiday Party will serve as our General Membership meeting for the month of December. Also, Chapter Elections are in February and nominations are currently being accepted.

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Sea Rocket Chapter Announcements:

Results of 2024 Budget Vote

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the 2024 proposed budget, which was approved by the Board of Directors in October, was unanimously approved by the General Membership on November 15, 2023.

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.

There have been no nominations for 2024 Officers to-date. Paul Schmalzer, President, and Laura Covell, Secretary have offered to serve one more year if they are elected. The positions of Vice-President and Treasurer are currently open. Filling the position of Treasurer is of the highest priority.

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 no later than the December Board meeting, which will be held this year on December 5th.

Sea Rocket Chapter Announcements

Annual Elections of Chapter Officers

The Nominating Committee's recommendations will be published in the February newsletter, with voting held during the February 28th General Membership Meeting.

Please consider serving a one-year term in any of our open Board positions, as an Officer or as a Committee Chairperson. The Board meets on the first Tuesday evening of each month for two hours at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary. If you have questions regarding how the Board works, or on responsibilities for any of the positions, feel free to contact srsecretary@fnps.org, or speak with any Board member.

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

Thank you to those who have served as members of the Sea Rocket Chapter Board of Directors during 2023. Brittany Bayliss, Elizabeth Bishop, Laura Covell, Kim Gibbs, Patti Larson, Beverly Lewis, Paul Schmalzer, John Stiner, Jill Whitson, Tenzin Yeshe.

Tropical Milkweed: Harmful to Monarchs and Florida Ecosystems

Volume 38: Number 4 (2022) of the Quarterly Journal of the Florida Native Plant Society

Palmetto contains important information concerning Tropical Milkweed: [https://www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/palmetto/Palmetto%2038-4 Milkweed Messec.pdf](https://www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/palmetto/Palmetto%2038-4%20Milkweed%20Messec.pdf)

Report For 10/28/23 Dicerandra Field Trip
Text: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photos: Adam Lewis, Madeline Klinko

Eighteen people attended the October 28, 2023, field trip to the Dicerandra Scrub Sanctuary (photo 1). We were joined by several FNPS members from the Cuplet Fern Chapter (Seminole County), including Chapter and FNPS President Mark Kateli, two Conradina Chapter members (southern Brevard County), and one Ixia Chapter (Jacksonville) member.

The Dicerandra Scrub Sanctuary was acquired by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program and the State of Florida in the early 1990's. It consists of about 44 acres and is adjacent to the City of Titusville Wellfield. The Sanctuary, City Wellfield, and some adjacent private lands support the largest existing population of *Dicerandra thinicola* (Titusville balm, Titusville mint) which is endemic to Brevard County. *Dicerandra thinicola* is one of a group of about six woody species of *Dicerandra* endemic to Florida. All these species occur on different scrub ridges, and all are rare.



Photo 1: Field Trip visitors at Dicerandra Scrub Sanctuary.



Photo 2: *Dicerandra thinicola* in bloom

Report For 10/28/23 *Dicerandra* Field Trip

Text: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photos: Adam Lewis, Madeline Klinko cont.

They all also require sandy openings in the scrub matrix to grow and reproduce. *D. thinicola* is listed as Endangered by the State of Florida. In addition to the *Dicerandra* plants in the Sanctuary and Wellfield, there are some small populations in Mims and a translocated population at the Indian Mound Station Sanctuary. *Dicerandra thinicola* flowers from about mid-October into November (photo 2). After the seeds mature, the flowering stems die back but the lower leaves and woody base persist. Many fall-flowering grasses, legumes (pea family, *Fabaceae*), and aster family (*Asteraceae*) flower at the same time as *Dicerandra*. Grasses in the genus *Andropogon* (bluestem grasses) flower in the fall; one of these is *Andropogon brachystachyus* (shortspike bluestem) (photo 3).

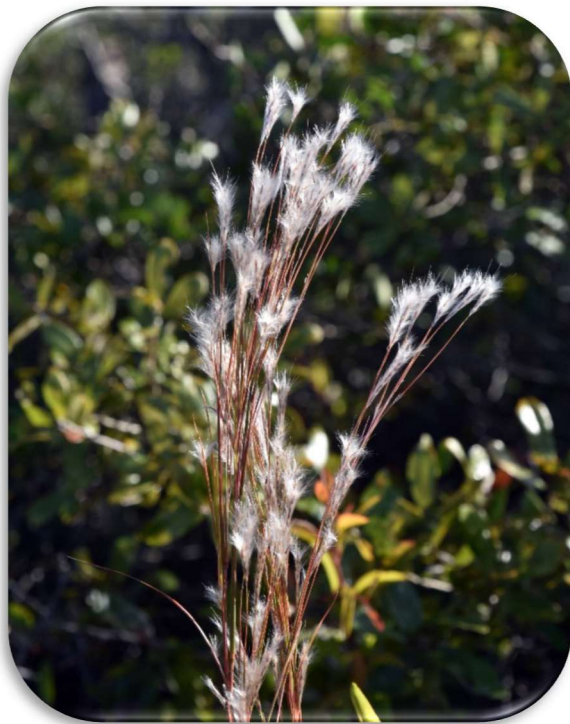


Photo 3: *Andropogon brachystachyus*



Photo 4: *Dalea feayi*

Report For 10/28/23 Dicerandra Field Trip

Text: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photos: Adam Lewis, Madeline Klinko cont.

Dalea feayi (Feay's prairieclover) is a legume that flowers about the same time as *Dicerandra* (photo 4). It has narrow, linear leaflets and its flowers have just one petal, although most legumes have flowers with five petals.

Many species in the aster family flower in Autumn. *Chrysopsis scabrella* (Coastplain goldenaster) occurs along with *Dicerandra* (photo 5), as does *Liatris tenuifolia* var. *quadriflora* (shortleaf gayfeather) (photo 6).



Photo 5: *Chrysopsis scabrella*



Photo 6: *Liatris tenuifolia* var. *quadriflora*

Report For 10/28/23 Dicerandra Field Trip
Text: Paul A. Schmalzer, Ph.D. Photos: Adam Lewis, Madeline Klinko cont.

Dicerandra is not the only rare plant at this site. *Euphorbia cumulicola* (formerly *Chamaesyce*) (coastal dune sandmat) is a State-listed Endangered plant that grows prostrate in open sandy areas (photo 7). These species all occur in drier areas. The Sanctuary slopes down to a depression pond that is flooded currently. Vegetation changes along this slope with species of wetter habitats such as *Solidago fistulosa* (pinebarren goldenrod) (photo 8) occurring. Preservation and management of the Dicerandra Scrub Sanctuary and adjacent areas is critical to the survival of a species found only in Brevard County. This demonstrates the importance of local conservation efforts.



Photo 7: *Euphorbia cumulicola*



Photo 8: *Solidago fistulosa*

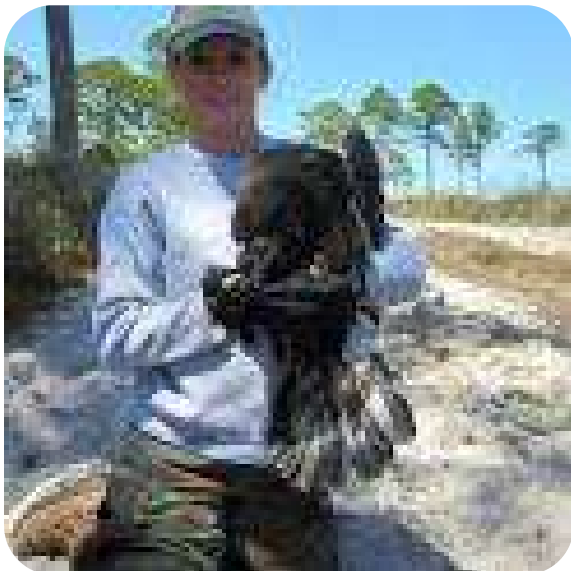
Report for 11/15/2023

General Membership Meeting

Speaker: Rebecca Bolt

Topic: “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.



Did You Know?...

- Brevard’s Scrub Jay Population has decreased by 33% since 1993
- Brevard County has 421 species of birds.
- Ospreys are expert divers and have a 25 % success rate when diving for prey.

Join Us For Garden Workday on December 2nd!

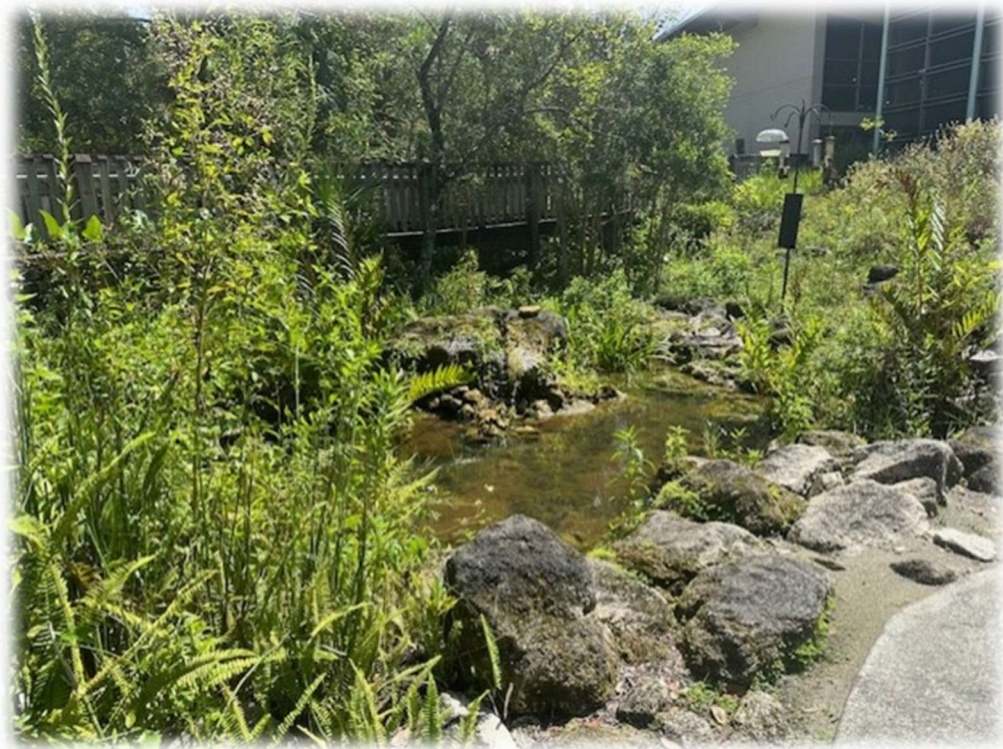
Would you like to...

Earn Volunteer Hours?

Learn how to maintain Florida native plants?

Meet new and interesting people?

Please join Sea Rocket Chapter Members and Sanctuary Volunteers this Saturday December 2nd from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Butterfly Garden at 444 Columbia Blvd., Titusville, FL. We look forward to meeting you!



Sea Rocket Chapter General Meeting December 2nd

FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter Annual Holiday Dinner

Dixie Crossroads Seafood Restaurant

1475 Garden Street
Titusville, FL 32796

Saturday, December 2, 2022

Dinner 6:00 PM

RSVPs requested.

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

Full Menu Available at:

<https://dixiecrossroads.com/>

Our Annual Holiday Party will serve as our General Membership meeting for the month of December. *Please note all attendees are responsible for their own checks.* Our next meeting will be held January 24, 2024, at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary, 444 Columbia Blvd, Titusville. We have a Social Time from 6:00 - 6:30PM when the business portion of the meeting begins.

Indian Mound Station Field Trip Announcement

Saturday December 9, 2023, 0900-1200

Indian Mound Station Sanctuary. This sanctuary consists of about 148 acres north and south of Parrish Road in Mims, Florida. It was acquired by of the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program in 2006 (south, 85 ac) and 2011 (north, 63 ac). Vegetation of the northern section is primarily oak scrub and scrubby flatwoods; the southern section includes oak scrub, scrubby flatwoods, hydric flatwoods, floodplain swamp, and floodplain marsh. The site had been unburned for > 40 years. Timbering, mechanical treatment of scrub vegetation, and prescribed burns have been conducted on the site since acquisition. A recent project is establishing a population of the endemic *Dicerandra thinicola* on the site.

Directions:

Access to the sanctuary and parking is at Holder Park directly north of the sanctuary.

I-95 to Mims, St. Rt. 46 exit # 223. East on St. Rt. 46 (0.1 mile) to Holder Road (traffic light). South on Holder Road (0.5 mile) to Holder Park Drive. East on Holder Park Drive which turns right and becomes Glendale Blvd., continue 0.2 mile to Holder Park (2650 Glendale Blvd.). Take sand road on west side of first ball field short distance to trail head. Parking is by trailhead.

Bring a hat, sunscreen, water, and insect repellent, we look forward to meeting you!

Wordsearch

N	P	D	G	E	S	O	R	O	T	Y	M	C	P
V	E	R	K	I	U	M	U	X	E	J	S	F	S
N	A	C	O	E	C	J	S	N	U	K	T	H	U
A	C	C	T	T	K	A	A	O	C	E	O	E	E
T	O	A	S	A	E	A	R	I	Z	T	M	M	D
U	C	U	L	Z	R	R	Y	T	R	D	A	O	O
R	H	G	U	S	P	G	A	A	E	H	T	A	B
A	L	D	N	G	K	H	U	N	N	G	A	U	U
L	E	R	E	J	J	X	R	I	T	K	O	W	L
I	A	H	T	D	Y	E	B	L	D	H	N	O	B
Z	T	W	U	K	J	R	V	L	D	E	O	P	I
E	E	Z	B	R	B	S	E	O	M	A	U	U	F
D	I	U	R	N	A	L	R	P	Y	S	G	G	S

Cochleate- shaped like the coiled shell of a snail, fiddlehead of fern

Diurnal- opening or occurring during daylight hours

Naturalized- occurs when a nonnative plant is introduced and becomes established

Nectar guide- distinct pattern, most brilliantly viewed under UV light, used to guide pollinators to nectary

Pollination- the transfer of pollen from anther to stigma

Proteranthous- flowers arriving before the leaves as in *Erythrina herbacea* (Coralbean)

Pseudobulb- a thickening of stems, as seen on many epiphytic orchids

Stomata- the pores by which gaseous exchange occurs

Sucker- a shoot that originates from below ground as in *Sambucus canadensis* (Elderberry)

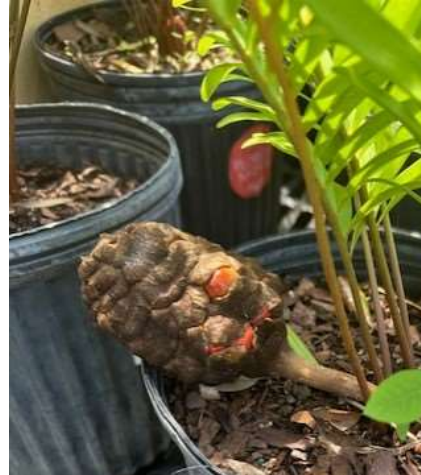
Torose- cylindrical with alternating contractions and swellings, as in the seed pod of *Sophora tomentosa var. truncata* (Necklace Pod)

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: *Zamia integrifolia*, COONTIE

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRITTANY BAYLISS

THE COONTIE PLANT IS A SLOW GROWING DIOECIOUS CYCAD, MEANING THERE ARE MALE AND FEMALE PLANTS, THAT CAN TAKE 5 YEARS TO REACH MATURITY. COONTIE IS A FLORIDA GARDEN STAPLE GROWING TO JUST 3FT BY 3FT. THE COONTIE PREFERENCES PARTIAL SHADE AND NATURAL RAINFALL ONCE ESTABLISHED. SEVERAL PLANTS CAN BE GROUPED TOGETHER TO FORM A WELL-BEHAVED LOW HEDGE. BESIDES ITS LOW MAINTENANCE AND SLOW GROWTH, COONTIE IS ALSO THE HOST PLANT FOR THE EXTREMELY RARE ATALA BUTTERFLY. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

[HTTPS://WWW.FNPS.ORG/PLANT/LO
NICERA-SEMPERVIRENS.](https://www.fnps.org/plant/lo-nicera-sempervirens)



Top;
Reproductive cone of female plant. Female cones produce seeds. Specimens may only be sexed once the cones are visible.



Middle: Male cones produce pollen, note the number of pollen cones.



Bottom: a freshly emerged Atala butterfly, photo taken in Rockledge Fl on September 22, 2023.

December 2023 Events at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary

NOTICE: The Enchanted Forest Sanctuary education center & trails will be **CLOSED Sunday, Dec. 24th** through **Tuesday, Dec. 26th**.

Music and Drumming in the Forest

Sat. Dec. 2nd 3 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Join the Painted Raven, Holly Red Feather, and the Friends of the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary Inc., for music and drumming. This event is free and open to all. Bring your drum! For more information call 321-264-5185.

Garden Workday

Sat. Dec. 2nd 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., Dec. 6th 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: Courageous Coyotes! Join us to learn about coyotes 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., Dec. 10th, 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. *Limited Spots Available*

Sanctuary School

Wed., Dec. 13th 10:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Geared towards ages 6 through 12. Theme: Curious Coyotes! Enjoy learning about coyotes 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 Dec. 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 Dec. 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.

(More on the next page....)

Guided Hikes

Openings Sat./Sun. in Dec. 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!

Indian River Lagoon Aquatic Preserves

Winter Garden Workday

Help bees & butterflies, win prizes, enjoy refreshments, learn about local ecosystems, experience pollinators up close!



Thursday December 7th

9:30 AM- 1:00 PM

DEP Native Plant Pollinator Garden

5332 Riveredge Drive, Titusville FL 32780

Volunteers needed to remove invasive, non-native, and aggressive plants, edge and mulch, and spread native seeds!

- Refreshments and gardening equipment provided.
- Please be prepared for exposure to full sun, wear closed-toed shoes, and bring a re-fillable waterbottle.
- Participants under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Minors must have volunteer waiver signed by parent/guardian.

The DEP Native Plant Pollinator Garden is a roadside demonstration & community garden designed for native bees & butterflies, providing an example of Florida Friendly Landscaping for all

Join us! Email Emily.Surmont@FloridaDEP.gov

Sea Rocket Chapter Board of Directors



Please consider serving a one-year term in any of our open Board positions, as an Officer or as a Committee Chairperson. The Board meets on the first Tuesday evening of each month for two hours at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary. If you have questions regarding how the Board works, or on responsibilities for any of the positions, feel free to contact srsecretary@fnps.org, or speak with any Board member.



Sea Rocket Chapter Events December 2023

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
31						

December 2nd- Garden Workday at EFS* 9:00-11:00 am

December 2nd- Sea Rocket Chapter Annual Holiday Party, beginning 6:00 pm at Dixie Crossroads, 1475 Garden St, Titusville FL, 32796

December 5th- Board Meeting, Open to All Members. From 6:00-8:00 pm at EFS* Classroom.

December 9th- Field trip to Indian Mound Sanctuary Field Trip, from 9:00-12:00 pm. Please see pg. 10 for directions

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

Wordsearch Answers

N	P			E	S	O	R	O	T				P
	E	R			U						S		S
N		C	O		C			N			T		U
A	C		T	T	K			O			O		E
T	O			A	E			I			M		D
U	C				R	R		T			A		O
R	H					G	A	A			T		B
A	L						U	N			A		U
L	E							I	T				L
I	A							L	D	H			B
Z	T							L		E	O		
E	E							O				U	
D	I	U	R	N	A	L		P					S