



Florida Native Plant Society

Sea Rocket

Chapter Update

January 2025

Announcements

Happy New Year and Many Thanks from the Board of Directors!

The Board of Directors would like to thank our members and volunteers for their outstanding contributions to our Chapter's 2024 activities. Thanks to your efforts, the Sea Rocket Chapter held 42 events last year, including meetings, presentations, garden workdays, field trips, outreach booths at local festivals, plant sales, and more! Stay tuned for exciting information on our plans for 2025!

- **Budget**

As noted in our December update, the General Membership approved the 2025 Sea Rocket Chapter Budget, as it was proposed by the Board of Directors. If you would like to receive a copy, contact any Board member, or email srsecretary@fnps.org.

- **Annual Meeting – February 26, 2025**

Elections for our Chapter Officers, (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer), will be held next month. Responsibilities for all Board member positions are provided within our Bylaws.

Volunteer Opportunity! The Board of Directors is making an open call for Chapter members to self-nominate, or nominate other members (with their approval), for all 2025 Officer positions. This year, our Nominating Committee meetings have occurred during Board meetings, which all Chapter members are always invited to attend. ***It is requested that all nominations be submitted by January 6th, the day before the January Board meeting.*** Currently, our President and Treasurer have indicated they will be willing to serve another term, if elected.

Additional candidates are needed for Vice-President and Secretary.

The Nominating Committee will present a list of Officer's positions that have candidates with the February Chapter Update. Elections will be held during the February meeting.

Our Chapter Representative and Committee Chairpersons, who are recommended by the President and approved by the Board, will begin their new terms in March. **The following have agreed to continue to serve during the 2025 term: Chapter Representative, Field Trip Leader, Membership, Social Media, Gardens/Plant Sales, Hospitality, At-Large.**

The Education/Outreach and Newsletter Committee Chairman positions are currently open. Your help is needed to keep our Chapter going. Please consider volunteering for a one-year term

as a Board member; that's 12 two-hour meetings, folks. If you have any questions, feel free to attend a Board meeting, contact a Board member, or email srsecretary@fnps.org.

- **Bylaws**

The Board is currently reviewing our Bylaws during their monthly meetings and plan to distribute any proposed revisions with the February Chapter Update. The Bylaws will be presented to the General Membership for consideration of approval to members at the annual meeting, on February 26th. If you have suggestions, feel free to attend any Board meeting, or, you can submit suggestions in writing to srsecretary@fnps.org.

- **A Note from Our President: Facebook Page**

Please note that our FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter has only one authorized Facebook page.

It appears that in the past, there have been at least two other pages which related to our Chapter, but they are not actively facilitated by anyone who is authorized by our Board of Directors and therefore, do not represent our Chapter.

Please direct any information you would like to present for consideration of inclusion in our Facebook page to srsecretary@fnps.org, who will forward the information to the appropriate party.

We invite you to check out the Sea Rocket Chapter Facebook page if you have not had an opportunity to do so! You can reach our page through this link

www.facebook.com.searocketchapterfnps, or through the QR Code within each Newsletter or Chapter Update. Thank you! *Paul A. Schmalzer Ph.D., President*

- **Florida Wildflower Foundation Webinars**

The Florida Wildflower Foundation began a series of *free* webinars in December. The first webinar was **Basic Wildflower Botany**. The January 15th event is **BIG IDEAS Regarding Plants**. These webinars will be recorded and available on their website 48 hours after the event. A link will be sent to all those who register. For additional information on this series, contact www.flawildflowers.org.

- **Board of Directors Meetings**

The Sea Rocket Chapter Board of Directors generally meets at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary at 6:00PM on the first Tuesday of each month. Chapter members are always welcome to attend.

Outreach Reports

- **Garden Workday January 4, 2025** *Volunteer Opportunity!*

Our Chapter has an agreement with Brevard County, that allows us to meet and hold plant sales and other educational programs at the EEL Program's Enchanted Forest Sanctuary, in Titusville. As part of the agreement, our Chapter is responsible for maintaining the Butterfly Gardens. We do this through garden workdays, which are usually held the first Saturday of each month, except during the summer. Working in the Gardens is a great way to spend some time outdoors and make new friends while learning about Florida native plants *and* getting some exercise as a bonus!

On our last workday, which was December 7th, volunteers removed exotics from an island in the parking lot and did general maintenance work in the gardens at the front of the Center. Members of the public are invited to join us for these workdays!

- **Holiday Party December 7, 2024**

Fifteen Chapter members and their guests had a great time at this year's Holiday Party, which was held at Dixie Crossroads Restaurant, in Titusville. It was especially fun to get to know some of our new members a little better during this year's celebration.

- **T-Shirts, T-Shirts, T-Shirts!**

We'll have Sea Rocket Chapter T-Shirts for sale again at our January meeting.

- **Native Plant Mini- Sale December 14, 2024**

We sold an additional 25 plants during the mini-sale on December 14th. Check with the Garden Team on January 4th or stop by the Forest before the January 7th Board meeting or January 22nd General membership meeting to see what's still available.

Upcoming Events *Mark Your Calendars Now!*

- **January 4, 2025 Garden Workday - 9:00AM-11:00PM**

Volunteer Opportunity! If you would like to join us, please bring water and garden tools if you have them and dress for outdoor activities. Don't forget the sunblock!

- **January 18, 2025 ECO-FEST - *Postponed***

We were recently notified that the 2025 Eco-Fest is being postponed. We will relay additional information when it is received.

- **January 22, 2025 General Membership Meeting**

Speaker: Martha Pessaro, Topic: Tillandsia utriculata

Martha Pessaro, Sea Rocket Chapter member, current president of the Friends of the Enchanted Forest, Inc. and over 30-year volunteer for the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program worked with Dr. Teresa Cooper Yawn in the Enchanted Forest researching ways to protect *Tillandsia utriculata*, from the invasive, exotic "evil weevil", which has caused major damage. Martha currently leads a small, but effective team that is now working on conservation programs to ensure the continuation of this species, which is so important to the Forest's ecosystems and other natural areas.

The Florida Native Plant Society provided a 2020 conservation grant to the group and in 2024 the FNPS Sea Rocket Chapter provided funding for a new conservation cage to keep vulnerable plants safe from the weevil until they are ready to set seed. The group is also assisting with seed dispersal. Martha will take us on an exploration of the years of research and field work done at the Enchanted Forest!

- **Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival January 22-26, 2025 *Volunteer Opportunity!***

The Sea Rocket Chapter will share a booth with the Conradina Chapter, from Melbourne, at this year's event. If you would like to assist, or get additional information, please contact Elizabeth Bishop izbet@aol.com.

- **SAVE THE DATE: 2025 FNPS Annual Conference *Seeds for Tomorrow***

The next Florida Native Plant Society Annual Conference will be held April 2–6, 2025, at the University of Florida Hilton in Gainesville. Organizers are currently in the planning stages, with speakers and field trips to be listed soon. Registration for this year's conference will begin in early January with substantial discounts for early sign-ups. Check out the QR code at the end of this

Chapter Update along with future communications for additional information.

<https://www.fnps.org/conference/2025>

- **Upcoming Presentation: *How to Attract Butterflies to Your Yard* – Pictures needed!**

The Sea Rocket Chapter is compiling a presentation on attracting butterflies to our yards. Do you have pictures of butterflies on Florida native plants that you would like to share as part of this presentation? If so, please send them to LauraCovel@gmail.com. Photographers will be given credit for any of their pictures used in the presentation. We have already received a few contributions, but we would love to have more!

- **Plant Sales**

Our first plant sale of 2025 is scheduled at the Enchanted Forest on March 15th! Hope to see you then!

- **Field Trip – South Lake Conservation Area, Mims**

We'll be traveling to the South Lake Conservation Area in Mims on January 18th where there has been extensive restoration by cutting and burning, timber thinning, and exotic plant treatment. Vegetation is primarily oak scrub, scrubby flatwoods, and mesic flatwoods. The view from the hill is marvelous!

Dates to Remember

- January 4th: Garden Workday
- January 7th: Board Meeting
- January 18th: Field Trip to South Lake Conservation Area, Mims
- January 22nd: General Membership Meeting
- January 22nd–26th: Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, Cape Canaveral
- February 1st: Garden Workday
- February 4th: Board Meeting
- February 26th: General Membership Annual Meeting and Election of Board Officers
- March 22nd: Picnic, Fox Lake Park, Titusville

Board of Directors

President: Paul Schmalzer, Ph.D.
Treasurer: Megan McCormick
Chapter Rep: Elisabeth Bishop
Newsletter OPEN – (Update: Laura Covel)
Hospitality: John Stiner
At-Large: Jesse Baker

Vice-President: OPEN
Secretary: Laura Covel
Membership: Beverly Lewis
Social Media: Laura Covel
Education/Outreach: OPEN

Want to know more?? For More Information... On the Web

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

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

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/searocketchapterfnps>

Chapter Secretary: srsecretary@fnps.org

Florida Native Plant Society: <https://www.fnps.org/>

Sea Rocket Chapter Facebook Page



FNPS 2025 Annual Conference

