

# Wildflower Gazette

Volume 3, Issue 3

Florida Wildflower Foundation Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2010

Learn more about the Florida Wildflower Foundation at [www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org](http://www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org)

## Working for Florida's natural future

Spring and its stunning wildflower show have given way to summer and its heat, humidity and thunderstorms.

Despite the heat, the Foundation's work outdoors continues. On Page 2, you'll read about the three-season wildflower surveys being conducted by Drs. Gil Nelson and Jeff Norcini in the Panhandle, Big Bend and Corkscrew Swamp. With their spring surveys complete, they'll soon be rolling out for summer explorations. These surveys of naturally occurring and planted wildflowers will give us the information we need to leverage for changes in roadside management. It also will aid the Foundation in putting in place scenic wildflower routes across the state by 2013, the 500th anniversary of the naming of La Florida, "land of flowers."

The Foundation also is busy working on its annual educational forum and several statewide projects.

Members and friends are invited to gather for a series of educational presentations on Sept. 25 at Florida Federation of Garden Club headquarters, 1400 S. Denning Drive, Winter Park. Doors open at 9 a.m.; come early to peruse silent auction items! Presentations will begin at 10 a.m. On tap are talks about working with county governments to preserve and plant wildflowers, and using herbaceous wildflowers and flowering native bushes

in landscape designs. Look for a complete schedule of events in your email in-box soon.

This spring, the Foundation awarded a grant to the Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville, for the development of a phone "app" keyed to the Great Florida Birding Trail. The museum and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission are pooling resources to develop the app, which eventually will feature photos and descriptions of birds, wildflowers and butterflies common to the trail's almost 500 sites.

Meanwhile, the new Seeds for Schools planting program is off to a roaring start. Though 20 grants were planned, the Foundation has awarded seeds to all 80 schoolteachers who applied. Program administrator Claudia Larsen now is organizing delivery of the seeds and is recruiting volunteers who will lend both hands and advice to the teachers.

To volunteer at a school near you, email [SeedsforSchools@gmail.com](mailto:SeedsforSchools@gmail.com).

Meanwhile, the Foundation's education committee has researched the need for elementary school wildflower curriculum – especially for worksheets and exercises that will support Seeds for Schools gardens – and is entering the development stage of the project.

Another education project has come out



## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>3-season surveys</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Paths of Sunshine winners</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Wildflower projects honored</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Meet our new board members</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Seeds for Schools launches</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Join the fight for wildflowers</b>	<b>4</b>

of the cocoon – "Gardening for Native Pollinators 1: Butterflies and Moths." The video, produced by Nature Wise Inc. with a grant from the Foundation, is expected to air in late summer on PBS stations statewide. Check local listings for your chance to view this excellent Wildlife Matters episode. Nature Wise's Tracy McCommon and crew now are working on Part II.

## Tag sales hard hit by fee increases

Fee increases levied by the Florida legislature late last year are having a profound effect on sales of the Florida State Wildflower license tag.

As you know, the Florida Wildflower Foundation receives a \$15 donation with the sale of each tag, which funds native wildflower research, education and planting projects statewide. Those donations make up the bulk of operating funds for the Foundation's programs.

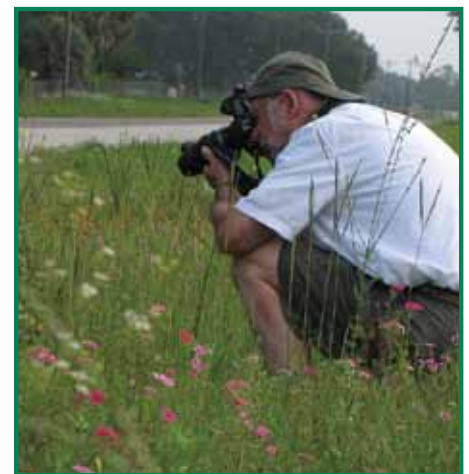
Final numbers have yet to be tallied, but predictions are that the Foundation will receive about \$70,000 less than in 2009, when about \$264,000 was donated through the tag. Overall, the state's specialty tag program – which includes about 100 nonprofit organizations, universities and colleges – is expected to collect at least \$1 million less than it did in 2009.

We know that in these economic times our supporters are making tough monetary decisions, which may include dropping the State Wildflower plate. If you feel you must relinquish it, please consider keeping the good work going for Florida's wildflowers and ecosystems by making a donation to the Foundation or becoming a paying member.

You can read more about membership on Page 4 of this newsletter, or visit [www.Floridawildflowerfoundation.org/join\\_us.html](http://www.Floridawildflowerfoundation.org/join_us.html) to see the full range of levels and benefits.

You can also donate online via PayPal by visiting our [Web site](http://www.Floridawildflowerfoundation.org)'s home page and selecting "Donate." With your help, we can stand fast in the fight to protect and preserve our native flowers and sustain healthy natural ecosystems.

— Lisa Roberts,  
Executive Director



Dr. Gil Nelson documents roadside wildflowers during a spring survey sponsored by the Foundation. To learn more about research going on in the Panhandle, Big Bend and Corkscrew Swamp area, see Page 2.

# Foundation sponsors 3-season wildflower surveys throughout Florida

Building on the success of the recent St. Johns River to the Sea Loop wildflower surveys, and in an effort to expand the number of wildflower routes for Florida's quincennial celebration in 2013, the Florida Wildflower Foundation has funded research to develop wildflower routes in three other regions of the state. They are:

- Panhandle (Jefferson County, and westward)
- Big Bend (Madison County to Levy County, south of I-10 and west of I-75)
- Corkscrew Swamp vicinity (Collier, Hendry, and Lee County)

The goal of these three-season surveys is to document the best possible routes (and loop routes, if possible) that:

- Highlight showy stands of native wildflowers/grasses and native wildflower/grass communities typical of a region.
- Occur along roadsides and, where applicable, natural areas (parks, wildlife management areas, forest roads, etc.) that are easily accessible to the public. And where appropriate:
- Provide general management suggestions to promote sustainability of the site.
- Provide suggestions for enhancing the site with seed of existing or complementary species in order to enhance aesthetics.

Jeff Norcini and Gil Nelson began their work in March with spring surveys in the Panhandle and Big Bend and a spring reconnaissance trip to the Corkscrew Swamp region. More than 110 native wildflowers were observed, most of which were flowering.

Here are some highlights of their spring trips.

**Panhandle** – The entire wildflower route identified is within Liberty County and includes Apalachicola National Forest's stretch of State Road 65, widely considered to have the best displays of native species in the state from late winter through late fall. Moreover, displays and diversity are consistent from year to year because mowing has been substantially curtailed, thanks to the US Forest Service and Florida Department of Transportation. In late April, the loop, which includes County Road 379, had excellent displays of naturally occurring native wildflowers and grasses, much of which were contiguous. Showy stands of roadside wildflowers included three species of pitcher plants (*Sarracenia*) as well two of our state wildflowers – the

yellow lanceleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) and the pink swamp coreopsis (*C. nudata*). Unfortunately, most of the wildflowers on C.R. 379 were mowed in early May.

**Big Bend** – In this region, wildflower routes are in parts of Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette, Levy, Suwannee and Taylor counties. Like the Panhandle, many excellent displays of naturally occurring native wildflowers and grasses occur along these routes, though displays usually weren't nearly as contiguous as in Liberty County. The exception was in Suwannee County, where there were many contiguous stands of goldenmane coreopsis (*Coreopsis basalis*). Other notable wildflowers included showy stands of southeastern sneezeweed (*Helenium pinnatifidum*), starrush whitetop (*Rhynchospora colorata*), annual phlox (*Phlox drummondii*), and the majestic dixie iris (*Iris hexagona*).

**Corkscrew Swamp Region** – This region includes several important natural areas (listed below), most of which are connected by a network of busy major roads and highways with little to no wildflowers. The parks and preserves provide a varied collection of readily accessible short walks — many on attractive and easy-to-negotiate boardwalks. All feature an assortment of native wildflowers embedded within excellent examples of Southwest Florida's natural ecosystems. Displays, in general, were not as showy as roadside populations in the Big Bend and Panhandle. However, small populations of dixie iris throughout these sites were quite showy. One showstopper along C.R. 832 just west of the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest was a 10+ acre stand of toadflax (*Linaria canadensis*).

The researchers' initial recommendation for this region is to devise a designated driving trail leading to these sites, noting important roadside wildflower sites along the route where available, and highlighting the hiking trails and wildflowers at each park or preserve. The ultimate suggested wildflower route may vary for spring, summer and fall.

Sites included:

- **Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**, which offers a 2¼ mile raised boardwalk (suitable for strollers and wheelchairs) traversing four distinct natural communities, including pine upland, wet prairie, cypress swamp and freshwater marsh.

- **Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) Marsh and Cypress Dome Trails**, more than 7 miles of trails through pine flatwoods, sawgrass marsh, seasonal freshwater marshes oak hammocks, pop ash sloughs, along seasonal ponds, and the margins of cypress domes.
- **Okaloacoochee (OK) Slough State Forest**, which includes a short trail through flatwoods that terminates at a birding boardwalk overlooking a freshwater marsh.
- **Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve**, a 2,500-acre county park that includes a fully accessible 1+-mile boardwalk traversing hammock, pine flatwoods, cypress slough and lakeside habitats.
- **Other potential sites** to be assessed during the next three seasonal visits include the CREW bird rookery, Koreshan State Park and Estero Bay Preserve State Park. Smaller connector roads that will be more thoroughly explored include county roads 846 and 832 (Keri Road), and state roads 82 and 29 north of Immokalee.

## FWF Calendar

**July 8:** FWF board meeting at Crystal Springs Preserve

**Aug. 18:** FWF board phone conference

**Sept. 24:** FWF board meeting

**Sept. 25:** Florida Wildflower Foundation Annual Meeting, Winter Park

**Oct. 12:** Join Terry Zinn at FNPS Sea Oats Chapter meeting, St. Augustine

**Oct. 16:** Join FWF at Boktoberfest, Lake Wales

**Nov. 6:** Join Lisa Roberts at the Master Gardener Expo, Seminole County

**Jan. 26-31:** Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, Titusville



## Paths of Sunshine awards announced

The Florida Federation Garden Clubs and Florida Wildflower Foundation annually join forces to honor garden clubs, civic groups, government agencies and others who have produced exemplary wildflower plantings during the year.

Paths of Sunshine winners receive a cash prize from FFGC and a certificate from the Foundation with which to purchase wildflower seed. This year's winners, announced at FFGC's convention in April, are:

- Garden Club of the Lakes, Keystone Heights, which purchased \$1,400 worth of blanketflower seed then worked with

the city to plant it in a barren median on State Road 100.

- Garden Club of Switzerland and the Florida Department of Transportation, which worked together on a wildflower planting in Jacksonville.
- Garden Club of Stuart, which sponsors plantings in a butterfly garden as living memorials to deceased members.

During the conference, Foundation Secretary Gary Henry, a member of the Ribault Garden Club, received a "Pillar of Pride" award for his outstanding work for FFGC. Gary received a medallion to be proudly worn at FFGC functions.



Foundation secretary Gary Henry and FFGC president Carol Hall, right, present a Paths of Sunshine award to Jackie Host of Garden Club of the Lakes.



The Deerfield Beach Middle School project features blanketflower and dune sunflower as well as other Florida native wildflowers.

## Wildflower projects praised in Broward County

Two wildflower projects – one sponsored by the Florida Wildflower Foundation – received 2009 Emerald Award Trophies from Broward County in April.

The award's Naturescape category recognizes individuals, businesses, municipalities, schools and government facilities that have created and maintained landscapes that are drought tolerant; provide food, water and shelter for wildlife,

and utilize landscape best-management practices.

Dr. Genevieve Chung of Broward College's Central Campus in Davie was recognized for her Wildflower Project, which was funded by a grant from the Foundation.

Suzu Pinnell and Parker Ranspach received an award for the Deerfield Beach Middle School Wildflower Path, which turned a bus loop at the school into a wildflower meadow.

The Foundation congratulates all who worked on these fine projects!

## Meet our new board members

In April, the Florida Wildflower Foundation welcomed Michael A. Gilkey Jr., Sarasota, and Donna Torrey, Pompano Beach, to its board of directors.

Mike is a landscape architect at Michael A. Gilkey Inc. He will represent the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects on the 10-member board. He brings to the Foundation a depth of knowledge in appropriate design applications for wildflowers and native flowering plants.

"I look forward to learning more about Florida's wildflowers, and helping to suggest ways they might be used more prolifically," he said. "Most of us are familiar with the Foundation's highway beautification efforts, but there are many ways we can use wildflowers and other natives in everyday projects that will benefit Florida's residents,



Michael Gilkey

visitors, wildlife and ecosystems."

Donna joins the board to represent the University of Florida/IFAS' Florida Master Gardener program. She owns The Garden Gate shop in Pompano Beach, which emphasizes

Florida native plants and wildflowers, and is an active

member of the Association of Florida Native Nurseries. She serves on Broward County's Naturescape Task Force and the City of Pompano Beach's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. She also is a National Wildlife Federation Habitat Steward and writes a monthly column for three local newspapers.



Donna Torrey

"Michael and Donna bring valuable expertise and ideas to the board. Their guidance will help steer the Foundation's future success as the state and nation begin to focus on the La Florida - Land of Flowers quinquennial celebration in 2013," said board chairman Jeff Caster.

Among the other agencies and organizations

represented on the board are the Florida Native Plant Society, Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Florida Department of Transportation, Association of Florida Native Nurseries, Florida League of Cities, University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and Florida Wildflower Seed and Plant Growers Association.

## Seeds for Schools grant program proves popular with teachers statewide

The Foundation's Seeds for Schools grant program opened April 1 to a burst of enthusiasm from teachers across the state – from Pensacola to Fort Lauderdale. Grants were awarded to schools in Alachua, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Hillsborough, Indian River, Jefferson, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Manatee, Martin, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Santa Rosa, Seminole, St Johns and Volusia counties.



The application period of four weeks was reduced to only 10 days because of overwhelming response. Though 20 initial grants were scheduled for awards, the Foundation's board of directors voted to fund all 80 applications.

"Funding the extra applicants will expand the initial grants across the state and allow us to gather school gardening experiences with many different wildflower species in a range of climate areas," said Claudia Larsen, program administrator.

Seeds for Schools grants provide a \$50 certificate for wildflower seeds, planting instructions and a wildflower garden sign to elementary, middle and high schools. The Foundation Web site ([www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org](http://www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org)) also will offer teachers links to resource materials, worksheets and curriculum. In return, participants will provide pictures and seasonal reports on their gardens to

the Foundation.

In May, teachers were asked to identify their wildflower garden site and get project approval from school principals. Site preparation, seed selection and planting will begin in the fall.

Florida teachers seem as excited as their students. Peri

Schirmacher of Starke Elementary School said via email, "I'm looking forward to this fall and working with the Wildflower Foundation. The school principal and I are looking for a location on the school grounds that can be turned into a permanent wildflower field that will grow to around a quarter acre or more. Our local extension office is having one of their Master Gardeners to help us with the project."

The Foundation will post school garden stories and pictures on its Web site in spring 2011. Look for the next round of Seeds for Schools grants to be announced then.

Master Gardeners and members of the Florida Wildflower Foundation, Florida Native Plant Society and Florida Federation of Garden Clubs are being sought to help plant and maintain the gardens and to give advice to teachers. Contact Claudia Larsen at [SeedsforSchools@gmail.com](mailto:SeedsforSchools@gmail.com) to learn how to volunteer at a school near you.

The Foundation is grateful to the Florida Wildflower Seed and Plant Growers Association for their participation in advising teachers and mailing seeds to schools.

## Become a member so wildflowers will continue to flourish

There are three great ways to support the work for Florida's wildflowers:

- Purchase the State Wildflower license tag, which includes membership.
- Purchase an annual membership: Student/Senior, \$15; General, \$25; Business/Contributor, \$100; Sustaining, \$250.
- Make a one-time donation.

State Wildflower license tag holders become Foundation members through the \$15 donation made through the purchase or renewal of their tag. However, we are unable to contact tag holders unless they check a box on the DMV form that releases their contact information to us. Alternately, tag owners also can register their free membership via an electronic membership form on the Foundation's Web site or by

downloading and mailing a print form.

Those who want to renew or purchase a regular membership can use PayPal on the FWF Website, or they can print a form to send via regular mail. To see membership benefits and join as a tag or paid member, visit [www.floridawildflowerfoundation.com/join\\_us.html](http://www.floridawildflowerfoundation.com/join_us.html).

If you choose not to become a member, you can still make a one-time donation using the "Donate" button on our [Web site's](http://www.floridawildflowerfoundation.com) home page. Or, send a check to: Florida Wildflower Foundation, PO Box 941066, Maitland, FL 32794-1066.

However you choose to join the fight, we thank you for standing beside us to save Florida's native wildflowers and natural places!

## Welcome new members

### License Tag

Carol Sigler	Jan Blue
Nancy Given	David Drylie
Stephanie Adams	Romana Dyne
James Carcano	Lynda Eidson
Lori Reinke	Annetta
Connie Caldwell	Schildbach
Marcie Lee	Billy Ray Bates
Ray and Sonya Jarrett	Kathy Souers
Loran Anderson	Krystal Clouser
Alan Squires	Marlene Lindsay
Sondra C.	Cynthia
Greenfield	Honeycutt
Gloria Wilberg	Scott Taylor
	Helen Yarbrough

### Student/Senior

Shirley Mathews	Doris Bareiss
Angelika Traylor	Marylou S. Klein
Stacey Matrazzo	Jean Rigg
Connie Caldwell	

### General

Lavon Silvernell	Nia Wellendorf
Thom, Anita, Quinn and Holly Larsen	James Loper
Cammie	Elizabeth Hale
Donaldson	Donna Torrey
Cathi Rodgers	Amy Dohan
Joan Rothrock	Sharon Osterholt
	Jim Couillard
	Mark Hutchinson

### Business/Contributor

Nancy Bissett/The Natives

### Sustaining

Michael Gilkey  
Roger Tripplett/Green Seasons Nursery  
Green Thumb Garden Club

### Renewal

Gene and Betty Roberts (Student/Senior)  
Barry and Denny Meneghelly (General)  
Peggy Green (Student/Senior)  
Paula Russo (General)

## Thank you to our volunteers

### Florida Native Plant Society

#### Conference

Jeff Caster Jerry Fritz  
Terry Zinn Jill Ziebell  
Curtis Barnes

#### County Wildflower Resolution

Eleanor Dietrich Vince Lamb  
Jeff Caster Beth Glover

#### Seed packets

Thom, Anita, Quinn and Holly Larsen  
Hard Rock Orlando Support Center Green Team