

# January Coccoloba Jam 2014

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Coccoloba Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society  
Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 13th, 6:30 pm social; 7 pm speaker  
Page Field Base Operations 5200 Captain Channing Page Dr., Fort Myers, FL 33907.



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*Dr. Jim Burch*

## January Guest Speaker

**James N. Burch, PhD.**

James N. Burch has held several positions with conservation organizations that deal with stewardship of natural systems in southern Florida, including National

- Bird Feeders
- Happenings

Follow Coccoloba happenings on the web, Facebook, & Twitter!

Check out Coccoloba's website for up-to-date information on chapter events ([www.fnpscoccoloba.org](http://www.fnpscoccoloba.org)). Like us on Facebook (type in Coccoloba Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society) and follow us on Twitter (@FNPSoccoloba) to join the conversation!

Audubon Society, Collier County Natural Resources Department, Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, the US Geologic Survey Biological Resources Division, Florida Gulf Coast University, and conducted research in several locations in southern Florida and Latin America. He received degrees from State University of New York, Florida Atlantic University, and Florida International University, and is a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, the Florida Academy of Sciences, Society of Wetland Scientists, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is currently employed by the National Park Service as a Resources Management Supervisory Botanist at Big Cypress National Preserve and oversees the exotic plant management program, a program that has experienced success in exotics control for over two decades, and continues to aggressively address problems with exotic plants.

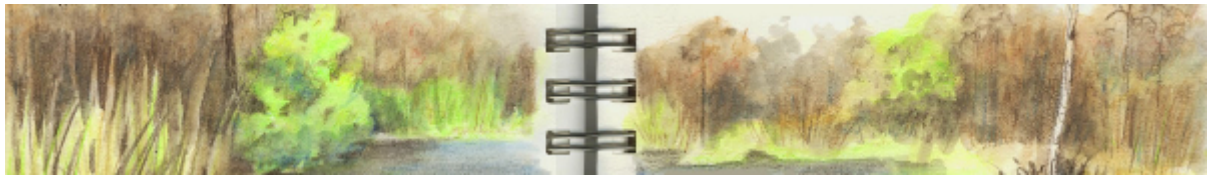
Dr. Burch will be discussing Xeric Biological Communities in Southwestern Florida. Xeric (dry) biological communities (scrub, sand pine scrub) are scattered through most of Florida, usually parallel to the coast. These are sandy ridges that were deposited as beaches when sea levels were higher, and persist as high ground in places often surrounded by wetlands. As high, dry ground, these areas have been preferentially used by humans for early pioneer settlements to contemporary commercial development. Because of this active human use, these previously uncommon biological communities, and their resident biota, are now very rare. The suite of organisms resident in these dry islands is different from most of our more common habitats, as they must tolerate austere conditions, including extreme seasonal drought, heat, intense sunlight, nutrient poor substrate, and small population isolation. Life on the former coastal ridges is no day at the beach.

## Do Not Forget!

### We have a brand new meeting place!

The new space is centrally located and has a lot of great new amenities. We will start using the new facility this month, January of 2015. It is important for all members to remember that the day is also changing; we are moving the meetings to THE SECOND TUESDAY of the month. The new location is Page Field Base Operations at 5200 Captain Channing Page

Dr., Fort Myers, FL 33907. The meetings will continue to start at 6:30 pm for socializing and 7 pm for presentations and speakers. See you all there!



# Nature Journaling with Elizabeth Smith

SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2015 FROM 10AM TO 2PM

Because Elizabeth Smith's Nature Journaling Workshop was such a huge success at this year's annual FNPS conference, we've decided to host her again! This workshop is exclusively for Coccobola members and is limited to only 10 lucky participants, so make your reservations soon! The cost of the workshop, including all materials, is \$30 per person. Hope to see you there! **To make reservations for this event please contact Pat Moyer at (239)543-4860.**

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# The Holiday Event of the Year!





**To celebrate the Holidays the Coccoloba Chapter got together for a luscious potluck dinner. We had lots of interesting entrees and lots of great conversation. Afterwards, we sipped wine and had fun making cool palm frond creations and seagrape greeting cards. Happy new year!**

## **Get ready to vote for the 2015 Coccoloba Board**

The election of the 2015 Board of Directors for the Coccoloba Chapter will occur during our March meeting. Below is a list of recommended officers. If you are interested in ANY of the positions please contact the board member of your choice.

President – Martha Grattan

Vice President – Open

Treasurer – Marlene Rodak

Secretary – Ben Johnson

Newsletter – Isabella Peedle

Fieldtrip Chair – Jim Rodwell

Member at Large – Bob K...

Membership Chair – Robin Krivanek

Outreach Chair – Pat Moyer

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# Our Big Year of Accomplishments

*By Marlene Rodak*

Coccoloba Chapter collaborates well with others developing creative and effective ways to promote the preservation, conservation and restoration of native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Every January, I wonder where the last year went and what I did with it. Here at Coccoloba we were pausing to think about this too. . . Then it came to us, we had a really busy year! Take a gander at the long list of accomplishments we had.

**Building an outdoor classroom at Heights Elementary School.** Our role is currently to wade through the permit process in order to rebuild a dilapidated boardwalk. En-Site Design has donated their time to create a vision for the classroom and is leading the permit coordination with South Florida Water Management District. Coccoloba Chapter-Florida Native Plant Society (CC-FNPS) secured a \$3,000 CHNEP grant for educational signage and is currently creating the plant and animal inventory along with finalizing the wetland delineation. CC-FNPS is also coordinating the invasive exotic control by working with the school board, Conservation 20/20 and exotics experts to identify the plants that should be removed and help them better manage the property. CC-FNPS is coordinating the assistance of adjacent land managers to remove their exotics to lower the maintenance and simplify the control of exotics on school property. CC-FNPS is also securing an artist and funding to create programs and signage for the project. CC-FNPS and Conservation 20/20 are helping the school system manage this property which will result in thousands of dollars in savings to the school board.

We successfully "worked" at two different **Lowe's Garden Centers** promoting native plants, Extension Services and explaining the Lee County fertilizer ordinance. We spent a total of 5 days doing this and plan to do many more of these in the future. We are in talks with Home Depot to expand this effort. The goal, if time permits, is to "work" one day in each nursery or garden center in Lee County. Also, Lee County Natural Resources has provided native plant pot stakes that we now use to periodically mark native plants in Lee County nurseries so customers may easily identify them. CC-FNPS is committed to making native plants more accessible to Lee County residents. CC-FNPS has been instrumental in the development of the [WetPlan.org](http://WetPlan.org) **Neighborhood Lakes and Ponds Management Workshops** for Lee County. These workshops help

homeowners, Home Owner Associations/Condominium Association Boards, CDD, homeowners and more manage their storm water pond systems and extend the lives of them. These workshops communicate important information to people and alleviate some of the burden from overworked county areas. CC-FNPS was one of the initiating organizations in developing this program which is being rolled out to other counties. We have five of these workshops scheduled in Lee County for the 2014/2015 season. The workshops are offered free of charge and refreshments are offered. The refreshments are generally provided by the hosting municipality or from a grant from our friends at CHNEP. This is a fabulous example of how MANY organizations can come together to develop outreach to achieve a common goal.

CC-FNPS is instrumental in coordinating **environmental outreach in south Lee County** which has been underserved in the past. Using this organization, outreach in City of Bonita Springs and the new Village of Estero is done so efficiently, Extension Services barely has to give it a thought. We currently have two FYN Workshops scheduled at Bonita Springs City Hall. A total of 38 people attended the December 3rd workshop. These workshops are offered free of charge and complimentary refreshments are provided by our friends at the City of Bonita Springs.

CC-FNPS coordinates planting projects that benefit the county. Projects over the past summer include a street median planting project with **Oasis High School** and a very large project at **Estero Community Park**. Both events placed the county and Parks and Rec in favorable light. All plants provided were donated by Florida Forest Service or by CC-FNPS members. In the case of the Estero Park, there was fantastic press coverage of the event.

**CC-FNPS makes yard visits** to help homeowners understand the importance of landscaping that reduces the need for fertilizer and irrigation. Volunteers are able to provide assistance and materials because they work so well with partnering organizations like SFWMD, UF/IFAS Extension Services, CHNEP, Lee County Natural Resources, City of Bonita Springs, etc. Two yard visits were conducted in October 2014 -- one in Bonita Springs and one in Sanibel. More are expected in the future. These visits are provided to FNPS members at no charge. Both of these visits were initiated at the state level of the Florida Native Plant Society (via Melbourne, FL).

CC-FNPS coordinates and executes **field trips** that show off fabulous Conservation 20/20 properties and other lands. These field trips increase our membership, educate attendees and facilitate friendship and goodwill between volunteers. Recent field trips include Hickey's Creek, Wild Turkey, Prairie Pines, Fakahatchee Strand and Cayo Costa. Prairie Pines included a group of home schooled students and their parents. This group has asked that we continue to lead the children on these walks.

Also in 2014, **CC-FNPS hosted the state FNPS conference at FGCU** which was reported to be one of the best, if not the best program in the 34 year history of the Society conferences. This shows the dedication of the chapter and organization. For FGCU, it was their first major conference that so closely aligned with the environmental stance of the school. Low-priced dorm housing was offered for attendees which proved

extremely popular with attendees and volunteers who even lived in Lee County! Partial funding and support was provided by many of our friends including WGCU, CHNEP, Bill Smith Appliances and Lee County VCB. This conference is the model for future FNPS annual conferences around the state.

While doing all this great stuff, we still make **regular appearances at events** throughout the year where we are able to promote native plants and native plant communities. At the state Society level, CC-FNPS is known as one of the most active chapters. Other chapters look to CC-FNPS for assistance and advice with their own outreach.

### **What's in Store?**

CC-FNPS is in the process of developing a **tree canopy project** for homeowners' associations which will help identify trees suitable for their development. This will promote diversity while educating residents of the value of trees. Funding options to subsidize the purchase of trees is currently being secured for this project. It is expected to roll out in south Lee County in 2015.

CC-FNPS will host a **nature journaling workshop** on January 31st at Six Mile Cypress Slough. There are still some spots available for that.

Two more dates for **Lowe's on Gladiolus** are being finalized for exciting outreach projects.

CC-FNPS is able to be flexible and innovative in ways to sprint along in their outreach marathon.

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## **Finding a safe place for your birdfeeder**

Now that you have filled your yard with native plants you are probably getting a lot of visiting birds.

Maybe you are thinking it would be nice to feed the birds and encourage them to stay on.

So, how do you find the perfect place for a bird feeder, while keeping it protected from danger? By following a few simple steps, you can have a great location for you to bird-watch while the birds have a safe place to eat breakfast.

Finding the perfect location is a balancing act between getting the views you want while keeping the birds safe. The first step is to decide on where you plan on watching birds from, whether it be from your patio, kitchen, or the living room. You can start by limiting the possible area by deciding to focus on a specific zone of your yard.

Second, you need to check for known dangers. The most common cause of bird mortality is from hitting windows. Some estimates put the number of songbirds lost at over a million per year from these accidents. You can reduce this issue by moving your feeders to within 3 feet of your window. This ensures that a startled bird will not be able to build enough momentum to harm itself on impact. The other option is to move the feeders further away. If you choose this option go for at least 30 feet away. The deadliest zone is the space between 15 to 30 feet. It is in this zone that birds are likely to try to escape predators by flying into the windows.

Finally, it is important to cover your yard with the proper plants to provide safe hiding places from predators. Birds often grab a seed then retreat to cover to eat it, so it is best to place plants near or surrounding the feeder.

Using these helpful tips, you can protect native birds while seeing a great view!

# Happenings

Rotary Park Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) Gardening Series

(Register by calling Rotary Park at (239)546-4606)

**Jan 23rd**, 9:00 am: Composting and Vermicomposting to Improve Your Soil w/ Rachel Singletary

**Feb 6th**, 9:00 am: Lawn Care and Lawn Weeds w/ Barbara Meyer

**Feb 20th**, 9:00 am: The Care & Feeding of Palms w/ Donna Cressman

Festival in the Woods

**January 24th, 2015**, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Picayune Strand State Forest, Sabal Pal Hiking Trail Trailhead

3.3 Miles East of Collier Boulevard on Sabal Palm Road

Map:

[http://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/4826/30729/picayune\\_strand\\_trails\\_map.pdf](http://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/4826/30729/picayune_strand_trails_map.pdf)

[Heather.Ferrand@FreshFromFlorida.com](mailto:Heather.Ferrand@FreshFromFlorida.com)

(239) 690-3500 ext. 104

This festival includes guided hikes, wildlife presentations, guided bicycle tours, children's activities, and environmental exhibitors & vendors.

Neighborhood Lakes and Ponds Management Workshop (WetPlan)

**January 27** 1-4 pm



January 27, 1-4 pm

City of Bonita Springs, City Hall

**February 20**, 1-4 pm

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium

Visit [www.WetPlan.org](http://www.WetPlan.org) for more information on this and other workshops

Nature Journaling Workshop with Elizabeth Smith

**January 31** at Six Mile Cypress Slough

Please contact Pat Moyer (239) 543-4860

Fort Myers Lee County Garden Council Garden Tour

**Tuesday, February 3rd**, 10 am to 1 pm

Berne Davis Botanical Garden

The Coccoloba Chapter is hosting a garden tour, with Pat Moyer as our representative host.

Florida Earthskills Gathering

**February 5-8**, Hawthorn

<http://floridaeearthskills.org/>

This is a conference that gives you an opportunity to learn, share, and experience sustainable living skills. There are dozens of classes to sign up for, which include wild medicine, didgeridoo making/playing, buckskin sewing, fire making, yoga, insect study, cabbage palm basketry, bird songs, atlatl throwing, permaculture, mushrooms, and more. For more information and to register, visit their website listed above.

FNPS Retreat at Archbold Biological Station

**February 7th & 8th**

All members are welcome. For more information, visit: <http://www.forum.fnps.org/index.php?topic=1027.0>

FYN Intro Workshop

**February 19**, 1-4pm

City of Bonita Springs, City Hall

[www.FNPSCoccoloba.org](http://www.FNPSCoccoloba.org)

Florida Herbal Conference

**February 27-March 1st**

Camp Winona, DeLeon Springs

<http://floridaherbalconference.org/>

Organized by Emily Ruff, this is a must for all herbalists. This conference includes interesting speakers and great classes, with a crossover of the first conference (Earthskills) listed above.

However, the two conferences are significantly different, so we suggest going to both. Visit the website for more information and to register.

Jasmine Garden Club-Fairchild Gardens Tour

Tuesday, **March 3rd**, 8 am to 6 pm

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Miami Beach, FL (Chihuly at Fairchild) \$30, plus \$18 admission fee to garden

Contact Mitzi Marckesano (239) 561-5513 or email at [couponqwn@hotmail.com](mailto:couponqwn@hotmail.com) to make your reservation.

This tour is open to all members of Jasmine Garden Club, Inc. and the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council, Inc. and their friends and/or family! (The Coccoloba Chapter membership is also a member of the Lee County Garden Council.) Please arrive at departure point by 7:30 am so we will have a timely departure at 8 am sharp. The travel time is approximately 2 ½ hours and lunch is on your own. Approx. 3:30 pm departure from Miami for return to Fort Myers by 6 pm.

Contact the above number/email to make your reservation.

Comments about the newsletter? Not displaying correctly? Wrong email address? Please let Isabella Peedle (newsletter editor) know at: [marthagrattan@yahoo.com](mailto:marthagrattan@yahoo.com)

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