



THE PAWPAW PRESS

Newsletter of the Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society: January 2019

Chapter honors work of student scientists

The Pawpaw Chapter presented two awards at the annual Tomoka Science Fair held at Stetson University on January 26 to students whose projects addressed Florida's native plants, native plant communities, or conservation biology.

Based on the evaluations of Danny Young and Don Spence, first place was presented to Madison Solodsky of DeLand High School for her work with Laurel Wilt Disease. Honorable mention went to Coral Reese of Creekside Middle School in Port Orange, who is interested in the ecological health of water bodies and the impact of nutrient runoff on phytoplankton and zooplankton.



Madison Solodsky, left, and Coral Reese with Amy Monahan, a Volusia County science curriculum specialist

In addition to cash awards, the recipients each received a wildflower book and a student membership in the Florida Native Plant Society. We look forward to the future contributions of these young scientists.



Rewards for the hardy

A hardy group of Pawpaw members found many pleasant surprises in the middle of winter on a cold January Monday at our demonstration garden. All are welcome to visit our native plants garden in the Park of Honor in South Daytona. The workday is the third Monday morning each month. A special shout-out goes to volunteer extraordinaire Amelia Evans, who makes extra trips from Ormond every month to keep an eye on our plants and do some extra weeding and watering.

Sande takes the native plant message to the Sierra Club

Sande Habali, longtime Pawpaw member and current secretary, gave an invigorating speech at the local Sierra Club meeting on January 17. Her well-organized presentation began with an overview of the Florida Native Plant Society, then followed with a discussion of some of our chapter's recent projects such as the Adopt-A-Highway program and our involvement with the Land Management Review Board. After educating the ecologically sensitive audience about invasive plant species in our area, she finished with photos and descriptions of a few of her

favorite native plants. Her speech clearly demonstrated how the FNPS and the Sierra Club have compatible goals.

Sande's presentation was well-received by members of this famed conservation group, as evidenced by several of the audience's questions. Of particular note was a resident of the Breakaway Trails subdivision who expressed interest in transforming her yard into a native plant landscape. We certainly hope to get a foothold in this large HOA-governed neighborhood.

In addition, another Sierra Club member involved with an Ormond Beach civic group that monitors municipal land use was enlightened by Sande's speech, and consequently invited Pawpaw members to meet with her organization. Thank you, Sande, for spreading the word about native plants, the FNPS, and our fabulously fun chapter!—*Leslie Nixon*

Delicious for birds: wild coffee

Our first Plant of the Month on 2019's theme of "Flowering Favorites for Feathered Friends" was presented by Sande Habali. Wild coffee (*Psychotria nervosa*) is a favorite of hers because it likes partial shade, which her yard has in abundance. Its little white flowers and red berries are loved by cardinals, mockingbirds, catbirds and spicebush swallowtail butterflies.

It grows in well-drained soil and is considered a shrub, reaching as tall as 6 feet, but usually staying 4 feet or under. It is well suited for zones 9-10. The leaves are wavy and dark green. We sometimes spot another wild coffee (*Psychotria tenuifolia*) in our area, but its leaves are not as green and are silky instead of glossy. This wild coffee likes shade too, but doesn't live as long as *P. nervosa*.

Don't expect a high-octane cup of deliciousness from wild coffee, however. It does not have caffeine and does not taste, when brewed, like the cultivated coffee plant.—*Sande Habali*



Upcoming events:

Feb. 11 (Mon.) Pawpaw Chapter meeting with Annie Otto on aquatic plants of Bulow Creek

Feb. 16 (Sat) Picnic lunch at Fairchild Oak at Bulow Creek State Park beginning at noon followed by a short loop trail around Fairchild Oak, then carpool over to Boardman Lane for an additional trail walk to include a couple of overlooks of the Bulow Creek Aquatic Preserve. Contact: Warren Reynolds

Feb. 18 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

March 2 (Sat.) Ponce Preserves the Planet in Ponce Inlet

March 11 (Mon.) Pawpaw Chapter meeting with Nick Giannola of Green Isle Gardens

March 16 (Sat.) Plant ID walk along the St. Joe Walkway on the intracoastal waterway in Palm Coast Leader: Warren Reynolds

March 18 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

March 23rd (Sat.) Deland Wildflower Festival

April 6 (Sat.) Master Gardeners' Fair, DeLand

April 8 (Mon.) Pawpaw Chapter meeting with David Schroeder from Evolving Landscapes in DeLand. He will speak on landscaping with native plants.

April 12-13 (Fri-Sat) Florida Wildflower Foundation annual conference, Gainesville. For details: FlaWildflowers.org/symposium.

April 15 (Mon): Park of Honor workday, Olive Street, South Daytona

May 16-19 (Thur-Sun) FNPS annual Conference in Crystal River. For details: fnps.org/conference/2019

Keep up with chapter events on our Facebook page: facebook.com/pawpawchapter/