

SARRACENIA CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

OCCASIONAL—JULY 2012

UPCOMING CHAPTER FIELD TRIP LATTER JULY —SUMMER WILDFLOWERS— DETAILS TBA



Citizen Sarracenia

Sarracenia has participated in several native plant projects on public lands during the last year. Some are —

□ a 2,000-sq.-ft. native plant garden at the front of the Wakulla Public Library, established jointly with Iris Garden Club in 2008. We and IGC have cultivated dozens of species there. We even did an experimental prescribed burn of part of the “Muhly grass” (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*) patch there last year. A pretty flowering of *Gaillardia* is underway now, and this fall should see a fine, bunched display of narrowleaf sunflower blooming. However, meeting the challenges of this garden is going to need renewed commitments of energy from the two organizations.

□ a unit of new landscaping at the west entrance of the Wakulla County Courthouse (look for the cabbage palms), incorporating native plants to a good degree. The work was done this February, after both monetary and planning help from Sarracenia. Our money covered the purchase of the treeform wax myrtle shrub as well as some coonties and other natives.

□ the Wakulla County Community Center site in Crawfordville. Sarracenia members answered the call last year to identify native trees as best candidates for preservation on the 22-acre site. (Preliminary plans already protect the best-forested part of the property in a passive-use designation.) In concert with arborist John Melton, they tagged trees in 20 species in the areas of proposed development, this as a tree-resource guide when construction planning advances. The site is blessed with a good complement of young- to medium-age Southern red oaks, post oaks, and mockernut hickories ---to name three very

characteristic of Crawfordville. Many individuals in those species are among nearly 230 trees now wearing our tags. Damage was done, unfortunately, to some of the selected trees in a surprise pruning, aggressive and unskilled, by a county agency near the end of the year.

□ a wildflower seeding project in the reduced-mowing right-of-way of US 98 in central Wakulla County. Sarracenia joined with many other citizens last October in executing this project instigated and planned by chapter member and Wakulla County Commissioner Lynn Artz. Chapter members are invited to help document the result this summer simply by photographing the patches of flowers that have cropped up

Photo Coreopsis and Gaillardia along US 98



An Endemic of Our Own?

The term *endemic* gets a lot of use. Endemic to Florida. Or endemic to the Central Ridge of Florida. Or the Panhandle. It gets smaller and finer. How about the identification of something as endemic to an FNPS chapter's territory? Trivial? Maybe. A pretty esoteric thing to meditate on? Yes. But maybe it's worth the risk to point out that our home ground of Wakulla and Franklin Counties has at least one native plant species endemic to it. And it's something showy. Godfrey's gayfeather (or Godfrey's blazing star), *Liatris provincialis*, makes a great

September show on sandbeds of the two counties—and no place else.

The common name is eponymous with FSU's Robert Godfrey (1911–2000), of course. Species-hood goes back to 1961, when Godfrey described the plant in *American Midland Naturalist* as distinct from similar gayfeathers like *L. chapmanii*. Food for thought: what barrier has kept a plant that's so abundant and at home in the dry sand of Bald Point and Alligator Point from getting across the rest of the coastal sandbeds of Franklin County and into the next county to the west?

We *Sarracenia*s ought to make a point of getting acquainted with our endemic this September. Dr. Loran Anderson offers this help: flowerheads of *L. provincialis* are spreading (sometimes nearly at right angles) from the inflorescence stalk, while *Liatris chapmanii* heads are pretty tightly appressed along the stalk. Flower color in *L. p.* is a relatively light bluish pink while in *L. c.* a much darker pinkish-purple.

Another native plant that's so far vouchered only for Wakulla County is "St. Marks yellow-eyed grass" (*Xyris panacea*). The four years since Loran Anderson first described this species isn't a very long time for botanists sojourning in other counties to sort out all the *Xyris*s. Should the actual range of *X. panacea* be held in abeyance for a while?

Photo Godfrey's gayfeather with "October flower" (*Polygonella polygama*) behind / Jeannie Brodhead



Leon County Gets on the Map (of whitetopped pitcherplants)

The juicy bugs and bogs of the Big Bend were not enticement enough for the whitetopped pitcherplant (*Sarracenia leucophylla*) to come east of the Ochlockonee—or so we thought. It turns out better. The species was vouchered recently in the Apalachicola Nat. Forest in Leon County, 7 miles east of the River.

Jon Johnson of Carrabelle photographed whitetopped pitcherplants at the site in spring 2010, along with the hooded pitcherplant that mostly populates the site. But in droughty 2011 he did not find the *S. leucophyllas*. Then in late May this year Jon

guided several *Sarracenia* Chapter members to the place, the expectation being a good look at the hoodeds. It was only a moment before a diminutive whitetopped, red-veined trumpet leaf was spotted among the hoodeds. More looking revealed several others. In June, Dr. Loran Anderson (we can't let him alone here!) was shown the site and recorded the species.

To the good news of one more site for the species, and one more county colored in, can be added a further datum: this site is now apparently the easternmost known natural occurrence of whitetopped pitcherplant in Florida; reported occurrences in Franklin County are west of the line of longitude. While the species has its range in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, the total number of sites is small. Georgia reportedly now has a single remaining site.

The newly recorded population is not at all vigorous after these years of drought. The leaves are small. And the site is quite exposed to ATVs; it may have been lucky so far.

One last observation to titillate: the new site is only 2½ miles outside of Wakulla County. One day tidings even more pleasing to *Sarracenia*s could come.

Photo whitetopped pitcherplant / Jon Johnson



Don't Take 'em for Granted

Hopes for a \$1,500 FNPS conservation grant to the City of Carrabelle, with *Sarracenia* as sponsoring chapter, were not met when the FNPS Conservation Committee convened in May. No grants were made in the category.

Carrabelle would have installed native littoral plants in the stormwater basin adjacent to Sands Park beside US 98. *Sarracenia* and perhaps *Magnolia* Chapters would have provided counsel on species and labor for the plantings

Commendations are in order for Rosalyn Kilcollins of Apalachicola Nat. E.R.R. for developing the idea and preparing the application, and for our own Lesley Cox as liaison to the City.

Phenology, Anyone?

Phenology (Webster): “the study of natural phenomena that recur periodically, as migration or blossoming, and of their relation to climate and changes in season.” St. Marks NWR is participating, by the eyes of a few volunteers, in a long-term national phenology project that has thousands of citizen observers throughout the nation. For the Refuge, it’s plants that are being observed. Some 25 individual trees in nine species around the visitor center are designated for frequent observation and reporting, and 25 more in eight species at a site on Surf Road at Buckhorn Creek in the Panacea Unit of the Refuge. There is now a problem: the recent wrecking of Buckhorn Cr. bridge by floodwaters could possibly put trees on the two sides of the creek 25 road miles apart!

A new *phenophase* is reached in a given year when, as examples, pollen release is first observed or demonstrated, or when in the fall 50% of the plant’s leaves show some fall coloring. Observations are reported online to the USA National Phenology Network.

State Land Management Reviews

In 2011 *Sarracenia* provided the FNPS member on the onsite Land Management Plan Review for Bald Point State Park — under a partnership between FNPS and Florida’s principal land-management agencies. Next month, *Sarracenia*’s Lesley Cox will serve FNPS in the same way on the 200,000-acre Tate’s Hell State Forest.

Epithets (Benign)

Several species *epithets* current or historic are from the very fields of the *Sarracenia* Chapter. That in *Xyris panacea* honors the name of the unit of St. Marks NWR whence Dr. Anderson described the new species in 2008. That in *Hymenocallis franklinensis* reflects the county containing the tidal creek at whose Ochlockonee River mouth this “Cow Creek lily” was noticed 20 years ago. And Ochlockonee River SP, only a long mile away, was honored for a time in the last decade in the name of a terrestrial orchid found there, *Cleistes Xochlockoneensis*. In this last case all elements of the scientific name soon fell in the “taxonomic melee,” as Dr. Gil Nelson

has called it. This and another “rosebud orchid” went to the genus *Pogonia*, and as a separate matter this one also relinquished its species (or hybrid) distinction, being folded into *P. bifaria* — “Fernald’s pogonia.”

The *Sarracenia* Machine

Two *Sarracenia* members are candidates for seats on the Wakulla County Commission. Dr. Howard Kessler is going for the District 3 seat, and new member Emily Smith is making a bid for the District 5 seat being vacated by Lynn Artz. Good luck in November, Howard and Emily.

Thanks, Monte Dickey (and help wanted)

After serving *Sarracenia* so well for several years now, Monte Dickey is vacating the recording secretary position on the board. Thus we now have a need for a member committed to the Chapter’s success to step up and become secretary. The recording duties pertain principally to board meetings and the minutes of same.

Other Openings Not to Miss

July—

- hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*)
- swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*)
- loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*)
- rosegentians (*Sabatia* spp.)

August—

- scarlet basil (*Calamintha coccinea*)
- one-flower honeycombhead (*Balduina uniflora*)
- pine lily (*Lilium catesbaei*)

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7-5-12

