



*Sarracenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society*  
**The SARRACENIA TRUMPET**

FALL 2021

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### September 21, 2021 – Chapter Meeting

##### **The Botanical Legacy of Apalachicola's Alvan Chapman Dr. Rebecca Dolan**

Dr. Rebecca Dolan, botanist, academic, and Sarracenia Chapter member, will present a detailed look at the legacy of Dr. Alvan Wentworth Chapman who lived 1809-1899, the last fifty plus years in Apalachicola, Florida. Dr. Dolan's presentation will focus on Chapman's life, plants he named, and plants that were named after him, with explanations of the process of how plants get their names. This will be a virtual meeting using Zoom.

#### September 25, 2021 – Chapter Field Trip

##### **Aucilla Sinks** (more on Page 2)

#### October 16, 2021- Chapter Field Trip

##### **Apalachicola National Forest, Liberty County** (more on Page 2)

#### October 19, 2021 – Chapter Meeting

##### **Preserving the Rare Torreya Tree**

##### **Lilly Anderson-Messec**

Lilly Anderson-Messec is the FNPS North Florida Programs Director, coordinator of TorreyaKeepers, and President of the Magnolia Chapter. Her presentation will focus on the status of the rare and endangered Torreya tree and efforts to ensure its survival in its one little stronghold along the Apalachicola River.

#### November 16, 2021 – Chapter Meeting

##### **Rare Plant Conservation in the State Forests**

##### **Mike Jenkins**

Mike Jenkins, plant conservation biologist with the Florida Forest Service, will describe activities and needs in restoration and preservation of rare or endangered plant communities in state forests like Tate's Hell SF and Lake Talquin SF.

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*The Sarracenia Chapter meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month September – November and January – May. Meetings are held at 6:30 PM and are free and open to the public. FNPS promotes the preservation, restoration, and conservation of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.*



### CHAPTER UPDATES

Sarracenia entered its summer break with the sweet expectation of resuming in-person chapter meetings on September 21—with Florida's case of COVID greatly abated by then, and a strong meeting program on tap for the evening. We've entered September with a fine program arranged, all right, but unfortunately the virus is still warranting serious caution. So, at least for our September meeting, with Dr. Rebecca Dolan presenting, we will again be using Zoom. (See Upcoming Events at left.)

We have had several well-attended field trips since the last chapter meeting in May. One was a joint field trip with the Sweetbay Chapter (Bay County) to the area in the Apalachicola National Forest near Sumatra, where the party of over 25 got close-up looks at rarities like the mint "white-birds-in-a-nest" (*Macbridea alba*) and night-flowering petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*) as well as various carnivorous plants.



Joint field trip with Sweetbay Chapter photo by Sandy Tedder

Another joint field trip was held in July -- a bicycle field trip with the Magnolia Chapter exploring the Ochlockonee Bay Bicycle Trail in the St. Marks NWR.

As many of you know, some of our chapter members provide planting and maintenance support for the Sopchoppy Depot Park, a major native plant garden in downtown Sopchoppy. This summer the Sarracenia Chapter was granted the 2021 Award of Excellence, institutional category, from the Florida Native Plant Society for the native plant garden efforts. In a separate

event, Sopchoppy Depot Park also won a \$3,000 grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation for further native plant installations, including a naturalistic wildflower meadow to be planted in fall 2021. We welcome any additional help that our chapter members can give to this project. If interested in helping to plant and/or maintain, please send email to [Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com](mailto:Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com).



## TWO FALL FIELD TRIPS ON TAP

David Roddenberry

Sarracenia has scheduled two fall field trips for members and others. On Saturday, September 25, we'll conduct our first-ever trip east of Wakulla County when we visit Aucilla Sinks along the Florida Trail in western Taylor County. The place is a geological wonder with lush communities of native plants. Many consider it the most fascinating segment of the entire Florida Trail.

On Saturday, October 16, we'll again go into Apalachicola National Forest in southern Liberty County to observe the extraordinary variety of native fall wildflowers. This botanical "hotspot" never disappoints. We'll visit bogs full of our namesake and other carnivorous plants, and pine flatwoods with their different suite of wildflowers.

Field trip details will be sent via email as we get closer to the dates.



## DID YOU KNOW

**Did you know** that you can review past YouTube videos of valuable information on native plants from FNPS's Lunch and Learn series? You can get lots of valuable information -- from managing the invasive cogongrass to eating native edible plants to creating a wildflower pollinator garden. Here is the link to the Lunch and Learn sessions: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLT16Qn-flr4O7nxo1cDZII-bO0X9Oy126>.

Did you know that our chapter has a YouTube Channel? You will enjoy the videos we have produced. Here is the link: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_xtH-t3PBaGshb6KrTI4PA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_xtH-t3PBaGshb6KrTI4PA).

## CATCHING A WAVE: THE DUNE SUNFLOWER ASCENDS

David Roddenberry

White dunes and radiant sun just demand the existence of the dune sunflower. The Franklin County coast gives Sarracenia's territory miles of seaside dunes. That's where most of the dune sunflowers (*Helianthus debilis*) in our territory can be found, but the hand of man has given Wakulla a few. The creation of large, long-sloping dredge-spoil mounds at Fiddler's Point beside the Panacea Channel decades ago proved to be a good enough dune simulation for this native sunflower. It flowers there in modest numbers each summer.



Cucumberleaf dune sunflower Photo by David Roddenberry

The nomenclature here is enough to give the sense of having a whole cucumber in the mouth, but we should observe, since we're in the Panhandle, that our subspecies of the dune sunflower is *H. debilis* subsp. *cucumerifolius* – the cucumberleaf dune sunflower. This one is best distinguished from the two other subspecies in Florida by its more upright form.

In summer 2018 the large west spoil mound at Fiddler's Point exhibited cucumberleaf dune sunflower in, and only in, a long row arcing on the mound's slope at a constant elevation. One could immediately see what else besides sunflowers that same narrow row held – the highest storm-wrack line to be found on the mound. This had to have been deposited by the highest storm surge during the mound's existence, Hurricane Dennis in 2005.

One would be justified in supposing in 2018 that the dune sunflowers had been growing there exactly as long as the wrack line had been there – 13 years. He would also be justified in theorizing that the storm

*Catching a Wave (cont'd.)*

surge is how the dune sunflower gets up the dune or seaside mound, step by step (or surge by surge). Thus, when an even higher storm surge occurs and deposits its wrack line higher up the mound, dune sunflowers will appear in a new, higher row.

Coastal residents who had borne the wet, salty disaster of Dennis would have been happy if the botanist had to wait indefinitely for the storm that would test his summer 2018 conclusion about the hill-climbing means of the dune sunflower. But just four months later, in October 2018, Hurricane Michael would come. Its surge would be several feet vertically above Dennis's. The two wrack lines would be well separated on the mound's slope.



*Hurricane Michael's wrack line fresh three months after the storm, Jan. 2019*

Photo by David Roddenberry

An observation in June 2021 gave plain support to the storm-surge theory about the dune sunflower. Cheery little yellow sunflowers dipped and swayed in the breeze, sparse but in a row right in the unmistakable wrack line of Michael. No others were to be seen on the mound except those remaining, fewer now, in the battered wrack line of Dennis down below.



*Sunflowers flowering in Michael's wrack line, June 2021*

Photo by David Roddenberry

A further point of inquiry is in order. The strict adherence of the sunflowers to the narrow, plain wrack lines would lead the curious mind to one of two conclusions: either the seeds of the sunflowers came in among the floating debris making up the storm wrack, or the wrack, once deposited, somehow stimulated the germination of seeds already lying there. It would apparently take some properly designed experiment yet to rule out the latter possibility.

And just one more: if the seeds came floating in with the rest of the debris deposited as the wrack line, were they seeds from the preexisting row of dune sunflowers in the lower wrack line, or seeds from random coastal places, perhaps distant, in the Panhandle or Peninsula?

These remaining questions notwithstanding, we quit the matter now with the dune sunflower higher up the mound, thanks to Hurricane Michael, though not yet to the top. All things considered, no one is eager – not even botanists – for the dune sunflower to “summit” at Fiddler’s Point.



**ORDER YOUR “FLORIDA NATIVE” LICENSE TAG**



We have had previous articles about the FNPS license plate and FNPS still needs your help. There is an ongoing fundraising and awareness campaign called “Show your pride in Natives”, which is represented in an official new Florida vehicle license plate. The plate, which can be pre-ordered by vouchers, features a wooded scene fashioned entirely of familiar Florida native plant species. Vouchers for the Florida Native license plate can be bought at any county tax collector’s office in Florida. Although the plates are not available yet, you can help by pre-ordering your plate so that we reach our goal of 3,000 vouchers. We need that many pre-orders before the plate will be printed and made available. You can pre-order your license plate voucher in one of two ways:

Contact your local tax collector office at:  
<https://forms.fnps.org/license-plate-voucher>, or

Click on the link below, and you can order a voucher for yourself or a friend. It will be delivered by the Escambia County tax collector's office:

<https://forms.fnps.org/license-plate-voucher>



## SOPCHOPPY DEPOT PARK UPDATE

As you've read in other parts of this newsletter, the Sopchoppy Depot Park has received several awards and a grant this year. One of the grant opportunities has facilitated the installation of a meadow along the back area of the park near the pond. We've only just started. It was a lot of hard, hot work preparing the meadow area.



*Meadow preparation*

Once meadow ground was prepared we anchored clear plastic over the area to solarize it for further removal of weeds and seeds.



*Using plastic to solarize the meadow area*

While the meadow preparation was going on the rest of the park was showing off with beautiful native wildflowers that were planted and tended during the last two and a half years. We welcome volunteers and especially need help in October when we plant the meadow area. Email us at [Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com](mailto:Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com) to volunteer; we always enjoy the help.



*Northwest beds showing off* photos by Sandy Tedder

### Sarracenia Board and Regular Volunteers

David Roddenberry  
Jeannie Brodhead  
George Weaver  
Sandy Tedder  
Damon Corley

### Please Join Us at Any Board Meeting

Email us for dates and location  
[Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com](mailto:Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com)

### Other Volunteer Help

Ask how you can help with Chapter meetings, or help us at the Sopchoppy Depot Park.

Membership information is available at all in-person Chapter meetings, or contact us at [Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com](mailto:Sarracenia.nps@gmail.com), or online at [FNPS.org](http://FNPS.org) on the Join/Support tab.

Find us on Facebook at Sarracenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Visit our webpage: [Sarracenia.fnpschapters.org](http://Sarracenia.fnpschapters.org)