Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 10/23/2022
Online Zoom Meeting
taken by Melanie Simon – CoC Chair

Melanie Simon called the meeting to order at 06:33 PM

In attendance (24) – 19 of 33 Chapters
* indicates proxy or guest

Citrus – Jeffrey Bippert
Cuplet Fern – Al Squires
Eugenia – David Martin
Heartland – Gregory Thomas
Ixia – Cate Hurlbut
Lake Beautyberry – Patricia Burgos
Mangrove – Kate Bordua
Marion Big Scrub – Deborah Curry
Naples – Sara Dust
Nature Coast – Diane Caruso
Passionflower – Melanie Simon - Chair
Pawpaw – Karen Walter

Pawpaw – Sande Habali
Pawpaw – Susan Anderson
Paynes Prairie – Sandi Saurers
Pine Lily – Tayler Figueroa
Pinellas – David Perkey
Sarracenia – Lynn Artz
Suncoast – Virginia Overstreet
Tarflower – Jennifer Ferngren
The Villages – Sue Egloff
Member Pkg. Committee - Gail Taylor*
FNPS Conference Chair – Athena Phillips*
FNPS Executive Director – Lynda Davis*

Note that links and action items have been highlighted below.

Regular Agenda Items

- Minutes from 9/25/22 meeting
  - Cate H. motioned to approve the September 25, 2022 meeting minutes. Kate B. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- Next Meeting November 27th at 6:30pm

News/Announcements

- 2023 Awards
  - Application deadline for the 2023 Awards is March 3, 2023. Applications sought for Endowment Research Grant, Conservation Grands, Dan Austin Award for Ethnobotany, and Cornelia McNamara Grant.
  - Poster presentations
  - Information is posted on the home page of the Council website (council.fnpschapters.org) and on the FNPS website (www.fnps.org) - What We Do/Awards and Grants tab.
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- **State-wide Activities**
  - Lynda D. reported on Society activities
  - Working on refunds for FNPS License Plate vouchers
    - Should have information from the State soon to tell purchasers how to get refunds.
    - Will give purchasers an option to donate the fee in lieu of a refund
  - Working on the Annual Campaign – letters asking for donations should go out in November.
  - Palmetto magazines have gone out
  - Working on 2023 FNPS budget – initial draft being reviewed by Board
  - Lynda would like to visit with more chapters - contact her at executivedirector@fnps.org if you would like to invite her to an event

- **Hurricane Ian Damage**
  - Lucy B. (Coccoloba - Lee County) reported by email she is still dealing with hurricane damage and could not attend meeting.
  - FNPS (per Lynda) has reached out to chapters affected by the hurricane and has offered to pay for membership renewals for those affected.
  - Sara D. (Naples) reported in chat that Naples suspended all October activities and Chapter leaders are meeting this week. Unknown how many members were personally impacted, but damage does not appear to have been as bad as further north.
  - David P. reminded the Council about the Council inter-Chapter Disaster Relief fund.
    - Relief Fund was set up to help chapters recover by replacing equipment and materials. Chapters could also help with paperwork, etc. if needed.
    - Initially set up for only Chapters who contributed, but several participating chapters indicated they would not have a problem using the funds for other chapters if needed
    - Pledged funds are held by each contributing chapter until needed.
    - Link to the Inter-Chapter Disaster Fund information is on the home page of the Council website.

- **Annual Conferences**
  - 2023 Conference
    - Will be last weekend in April followed by in-person event (Big Days Out – with field trips, speakers, socializing) the following weekends
    - In-person events will be in the Panhandle (Magnolia and Sarracenia) and Central Florida (Cuplet Fern) – planning still in progress
    - Registration will open in the new year (mid-February)
    - Athena asked for feedback (send to conferencechair@fnps.org)
      - Are Chapter Presidents/Treasurers interested in having a virtual space to meet/network?
      - Are there suggestions for specific topics for breakout rooms (to replace last year’s Rockstar Roundtable?)
      - Are there any speaker suggestions?
  - Call for Research Papers
    - The 2023 Conference will include a virtual session with poster presentations on research related to native plants and plant communities of Florida. Presentations will include FNPS-funded research, but posters on other research are invited
    - Athena explained that at the conference, research is presented on a poster and the researcher stands next to the poster and answers questions.
    - Abstracts are needed by January 15, 2023
    - Information is posted on the home page of the Council website (council.fnpschapters.org)
o 2024 Conference
  • Looking for a location for the 2024 conference – planning a large in-person event
o Conference Student Sponsorships
  • Patricia asked about Chapters sponsoring students to attend the conference
  • Melanie noted that attendance is free, but the sponsorships were for to reimburse for travel expenses. Chapters could reimburse travel to one of the in-person days for 2023
  • Student/Young Professional Conference Scholarship information is on the Council website at council.fnpschapters.org/initiatives/

Initiatives/Reminders/Updates

• New Member Packages
  o No progress to report this month on drafting pages for the New Member Packages.
  o Concept is a 10 to 12 page “generic” package with general information and links to where additional information can be found (less updating over time)
  o The “generic” package will be supplemented by Chapters with templates for chapter-specific information and local resources

• Speakers List (Speakers Bureau)
  o Melanie noted that some of the programs she’s seen reported in the volunteer hours report look really interesting. We all need to keep adding topics and speakers to the list – it really helps chapter members who are setting up programs.
  o Speakers List is in the Announcement/Reminders list on the home page of the Council website or at https://drive.google.com/file/d/19_bl5HkzKnjMdNoTv9AJk4emR052guyq/view

• Council Vice Chair and Secretary Vacancies/Handbook
  o Melanie will work on incorporating changes to the Council Guidance (Handbook) to change requirements for officers and elections.
  o Once edited, Handbook changes will need to be voted on.
  o Please continue to consider filling one of the vacancies

• FNPS Membership Database
  o Melanie asked if Chapters all have passwords and instructions – none of the chapters at the meeting said they had not received their passwords. Several mentioned they were not able to attend the training and had not yet tried using the new database.
  o Training video is not in its final location, but can be temporarily accessed at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OomyRlMoI0aC6DUmAV647q-rFkP7gB/view
  o Database function and instructions are still being updated and feedback will help identify needed fixes and improvements.
    • Ask chapter Membership person if they have any questions or suggestions - send feedback to Melanie to consolidate and send to the Communications Committee.
    • Lynda noted that they are working on providing the number of members in addition to the number of memberships.

• FNPS Budget
  o Budget input provided for 2023 printing cost. Not yet approved, but expected to be equal to or greater than 2022 budget.
New Business

- **OUTSIDE Sustainable Landscaping Collaborative**
  - The recent OUTSIDE Collaborative event was attended by several people: Melanie (virtual) and Sue E. (in-person). Reports about this event prompted discussions and ideas about native plant availability and landscaper training
  - Sue noted that OUTSIDE has put in native plant landscaping at the Sunbridge development in Lake Nona and is exploring what works best as well as what is financially viable. Sue commented that it was great seeing a development lots with native landscaping and to see how well it was being embraced
  - OUTSIDE speakers/panels on native plant landscape design, installation, and maintenance were great.
  - Conference materials are free to download as open source resources at [https://outsidecollab.com/articles/](https://outsidecollab.com/articles/)
    - Native Plant Yard Pattern Book (includes layouts and plant selections that have been tested for hardiness and maintenance ease
    - Videos (tutorials) on maintaining a Florida native yard
  - David M. noted that the pattern book is a group project and the contributor list seems a good place to look for experts on native plants. Sue concurred.
  - The keynote speaker (Thomas Rainer) – author of “Planting in a Post-Wild World” was also excellent - biodiversity and resilient landscapes
  - Availability of native plants still an issue
    - Cate was invited by the woman in charge of the University of North Florida Horticulture Landscape program to speak about natives at a Northeast Chapter of the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association () event. Not much time to prepare this year, but there could be an opportunity for FNPS to work with this state-wide trade group organization to get more businesses to grow and sell natives
    - Need more chapters to work with nurseries like Cuplet Fern is doing (see September meeting minutes)
    - Gail asked Cammie from FANN about approaching a local tree farm about carrying more native trees – Cammie asked to get information about the business and said she would have someone from FANN contact them
  - Difficult to find landscapes with native plant knowledge
    - Virginia noted that some native plant nurseries (like Troy Springer) provide maintenance services – not inexpensive (so do some landscape designers who work with native plants)
    - Sue asked if FNPS has a form letter to send to local landscapers to start learning about Florida natives
    - Karen wondered if FNPS could get universities to offer courses about native plants and offer CEUs – should work to get more courses and get information out to landscapers so they can increase their knowledge base and get a certificate in native plants
    - OUTSIDE is working on training – the OUTSIDE program offered CEUs
  - Sue suggested further collaboration with OUTSIDE. Melanie will provide Athena with contact information so OUTSIDE can be invited to speak at the conference.

- **Model Bylaws**
  - Model Bylaws for Chapters were raised by Melanie and discussed briefly at the last FNPS Board meeting. David M. noted that emphasis was to make them fit how each Chapter actually works,
check for consistency with Florida statute and FNPS bylaws and Handbook and should not be burdensome for Chapters.

- John Benton is chair of committee that will review/update the Model Bylaws for Chapters. Send any questions or comments about bylaws to him at jbenton@fnps.org
- Melanie will find out where to send new chapter bylaws to when they have been revised.

Open Floor

- Mangrove is moving headquarters and working with Sarasota County. They are managing with meetings in homes and there may be delays
- Sandi S. noted (in chat) that her chapter would like to see the Coloring Book reprinted. Lynda will follow up.
- Dr. Marc Minno will be giving his “Florida’s Fascinating Moths” program for Ixia on November 2 (register in advance for Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwsceivrDooHdTPfy8Id11ZUUM8dJXGQC77. Dr. Minno will also be speaking at the 2023 conference.
- Karen W. brought up the idea of listing chapter Outreach Events in a central location. Not sure if we could use the FNPS calendar for this?

Motion to Adjourn

Kate B. motioned to adjourn. Al S. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:44 PM