Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 7/23/2023
Online Zoom Meeting
taken by Melanie Simon – CoC Chair

Melanie Simon called the meeting to order at 06:31 PM

**In attendance (21) – 19 of 33 Chapters**
* indicates proxy or guest

- Citrus – Gail Taylor*
- Cuplet Fern – Al Squires
- Cuplet Fern – Sandy Boylston
- Eugenia – David Martin
- Hernando – Janet Grabowski*
- Ixia – Walter Bryant*
- Magnolia – Maddie Snuggs
- Mangrove – Laura Soule
- Martin County - Dianna Wentink
- Marion Big Scrub – Deborah Curry
- Nature Coast – Diane Caruso
- Passionflower – Melanie Simon - Chair
- Pawpaw – Karen Walter
- Paynes Prairie – Sandi Saurers
- Pinellas – David Perkey
- Sarracenia – Lynn Artz
- Serenoa – Pamela Callender
- Sparkleberry – Carol Sullivan
- Sweetbay – Jody Wood-Putnam
- Tarflower – Jennifer Ferngren
- FNPS Landscape Committee - Patricia Burgos*

### Regular Agenda Items

- **Minutes from 6/25/23 meeting**
  - Gail T. motioned to approve the June 25, 2023 meeting minutes. Deborah C. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Next Meeting September 24th at 6:30pm.**

### News/Announcements/Reminders

- **Sabal Minor Printing**
  - Valerie Anderson requested a poll asking “Do you print the Sabal Minor PDF?
  - Results (20 total responses) were: Always – 0, Sometimes – 3, Never – 17.

- **Chapter Membership Payments**
  - Chapters got an email about membership dues payments. FNPS recently changed payment processors, so some chapters may need to provide additional information. Kim Zarillo will contact Chapters.

- **Landscape Awards Deadline**
  - Melanie reminded everyone there is only about a month left to submit Landscape Award applications. Any questions can be sent to info@fnps.org.
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- **Plantober**
  - Mark Kateli is planning a “Plantober” fundraising campaign for October (Native Plant Month). He will be preparing kits so Chapters can easily promote this campaign and will attend the September meeting to provide details.

- **Vice Chair and Secretary Positions**
  - Melanie announced that both the Council Vice Chair and Secretary positions are once again vacant and asked Chapter Representatives to please consider volunteering for one of these positions.

- **Volunteer Hours Reporting**
  - Reporting is going well. Palm Beach County has started reporting hours.

**Council Initiatives and Ongoing Business**

- **Council Survey**
  - A short survey asking about Chapter Status, Chapter challenges, and workshop/training suggestions is up and running. The survey will provide useful information about trends and also ideas for workshops to help Chapters.
    - Survey link is: [https://forms.gle/E7QYv4S1WXGxYDQy6](https://forms.gle/E7QYv4S1WXGxYDQy6)
    - Please complete the survey by August 19th
  - Chapter Representatives are encouraged to get input from their Chapter President/Board.
  - We did not add questions about Chapter corporate structure as discussed in the last meeting. Since we don’t have all the questions it will be less complicated to just ask these separately.

- **2023 FNPS Member Survey**
  - Preliminary results were reviewed. Further analysis to look at responses by Chapter, member vs. nonmember, by age, etc. are in progress, so be aware that the total response results presented might not be accurate for your Chapter, may be different for members only, etc.
  - Total responses: We have a total of 2,413 responses in the database.
  - Demographics: Survey median age 67 years (versus 42 years for total Florida population), gender 74% women (versus 51% for Florida), ethnicity 86% white (versus 72% for Florida), 52% retired and 31% work full time.
  - Membership status: 74% current members, 4% lapsed members, 19% never members, 4% not sure.
  - Responses by Chapter: Raw numbers of responses by Chapter not indicative of participation due to varying Chapter sizes. See chart of percent of Chapter Members Responding at the end of the minutes.
  - Not Renewing, Rejoining or Joining: Reasons cited included cost/finances, time constraints, leaving Florida, distance to meetings, distance to Chapters, membership benefits/value unclear, age/health, not able to attend meetings. Many nonmembers noted they don’t know enough about FNPS and membership. See word cloud at the end of the minutes.
  - Joining: Reasons for joining fairly generic including support the mission, nature, wildlife, conservation, the environment, to learn, for information and resources, make connections and join a community of like-minded people.
  - Renewing or Rejoining: Reasons for renewing or rejoining included the generic reasons (see above) but a large percentage indicated Chapter-centric reasons (like the people and sense of community, enjoy the programs and field trips, like the Chapter activities, like the Chapter knowledge and expertise, like educating the public and feel the Chapter is making a difference, and want to support the Chapter)
  - Time preferences: Saturday mornings most popular, followed by weekday evenings.
Conference: 9% attended. Reasons varied, but dates/times didn’t work was the most selected.

Interest in Topics: Average response where 3=Somewhat interested and 4=Very interested
- 3.83 - Residential gardening/native landscaping
- 3.77 – Florida ecosystems/natural Florida
- 3.75 – Supporting Florida wildlife
- 3.73 – Native plant identification & propagation
- 3.58 - Habitat conservation & restoration
- 3.43 - Sustainability/climate resilience
- 3.36 - Rewilding/restoring property
- 3.33 - Plant conservation & research
- 3.18 - Native plant demonstration gardens
- 2.80 - Native plant/nature art and photography

Interest in Topics: Average response where 3=Somewhat interested and 4=Very interested
- 3.37 - Field trips to parks, preserves, conservation areas
- 3.32 - Educational workshops
- 3.31 - Educational speaker programs
- 3.31 - Plant sales/auctions/swaps
- 3.24 - Yard tours
- 3.22 - Field trips to museums, demonstration gardens, nurseries
- 3.18 – Socializing with like-minded people
- 3.15 - Outreach to educate about the benefits of native plants
- 3.11 - Plant rescue & reintroduction
- 2.96 - Hands-on habitat management
- 2.95 - Citizen Science and research
- 2.87 - Advocating for policies & legislation

Volunteering: responses indicate potential for volunteer recruitment for helping at plant sales, with education and outreach, demonstration gardens, but not with running a Chapter.

Benefits: Average response where 4=Somewhat valuable and 5=Very valuable
- 4.19 - FNPS news and conservation alerts
- 4.15 - FNPS plant sales and swaps
- 4.06 - Chapter programs, field trips, etc.
- 4.06 - The Palmetto
- 3.94 - Discounts at native plant nurseries
- 3.92 - Plant rescues/habitat restoration projects
- 3.89 - The Sabal Minor
- 3.84 - Community outreach/education opportunities
- 3.55 - FNPS Lunch and Learns
- 3.05 - Private Facebook pages

Belonging & Satisfaction: Average response where 3=Somewhat agree and 4=Strongly agree
- 3.48 - My chapter is making a contribution to the FNPS mission.
- 3.34 - I can make an impact to Florida through FNPS.
- 3.26 - My Chapter and the FNPS community are important in my life.
- 3.15 - Members of my Chapter enjoy spending time together
- 3.11 - My voice matters to my Chapter and FNPS.
- 3.07 - I am satisfied with my involvement with FNPS.

Once analysis is complete, a meeting will be set up to discuss Chapter-specific results.
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (FFGC)
- Lynn A. provided an update on partnering with FFGC to plant native trees on Florida Arbor Day - 1/19/24 - and provide tree giveaways. She is coordinating the efforts of the garden clubs and has let them know FNPS Chapters are available to provide expertise.
- Chapters who indicated at the last meeting that they were interested in partnering with a garden club that has requested assistance have received emails with additional information from Lynn.
- FFGC will provide each club $100 from a grant to buy a native tree (native to their area). Preferably one that is a keystone species, provides shade, and is hurricane resistant (biodiversity and climate resiliency). FFGC also has funding for tree giveaways.
- It was noted that this is a great opportunity to educate existing gardeners about the benefits of native plants.

New Business

Strategic Planning
- Briefly discussed the ongoing FNPS Strategic Planning process. FNPS Board will meet on August 27th to start discussion.
- The Context Review phase (to identify challenges and opportunities) is in process. Chapter-related items are:
  - Status of Chapters (will be answered by Council Survey)
  - What orgs are Chapters interacting with? (Melanie is not sure what information is required from Chapters or what the significance of the question is)
  - Chapter challenges (will be answered by Council Survey)
- No other suggestions for topics were suggested.

Open Floor

Notification of Chapter Presidents
- Diane C. noted that Council information is not copied to her Chapter President as she thought that was a standard procedure.
- Melanie responded that copies to Chapter Presidents are not routine, except when there is no active Chapter Representative or cc has been requested. Diane can request.
- It was noted that it is the Chapter Representative’s responsibility to communicate Council announcements, requests, and relevant discussion topics to their Chapter officers and Boards.

Recruiting HS and College Students
- Laura S. mentioned that Mangrove is thinking about ways to get High School and college students involved in their chapter. The Chapter would pay membership dues individuals who volunteer.
- Others mentioned they have recruited Scouts, 4H members, HS club members and other service organizations to provide manpower for projects and events; however, there is no membership component, just verified community service hours.
- Al S. noted that Cuplet Fern provides internships (and a membership) to students who help the Chapter. Projects and tasks vary. Al suggested contacting Mark Kateli (mkateli@fnps.org) for more information.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:58 PM
Reasons for Not Renewing/Rejoining/Joining

New to Florida
Moving out of State
Can't attend meetings
Cost/finances
Age/health
Just like the information
Not aware of membership
Don't know enough about FNPS
Distance to Chapter/meetings
Not ready to commit
Time constraints
Benefit/value unclear
Other interests
Inconvenient times
Seasonal resident
Still learning
Undecided
Not a joiner
Not able to contribute