



PALM PRINTS

The quarterly newsletter for community associations and associated professionals

Vol. 5, No 2.

October-December 2005

Help Protect Florida's Natural Areas

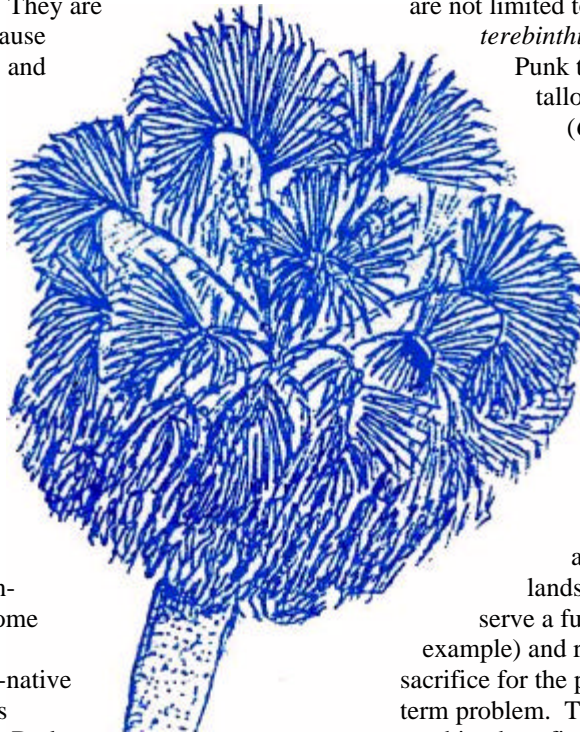
More than one-half of Florida's land area is in agricultural or urban land uses, and native habitats are continually being lost. Continued urbanization is an inevitable consequence of increasing population, and food production by agriculture is essential. However, preserving and protecting Florida's native habitats for historical significance and to protect native species, water quality and water quantity is also essential.

Non-native invasive plants are weeds of natural areas. Non-native invasive plants are plants that exist outside of their natural ranges and form self-sustaining and expanding populations within plant communities with which they were not previously associated. They are weeds in natural areas because they displace native plants and associated wildlife, including endangered species, and can alter natural processes such as fire and water flow.

Problems associated with non-native invasive plants have increased during the years, and non-native invasive plants are now a growing concern to scientists and land managers. About 1,200 plant species growing on their own without cultivation are non-native and some have become serious problems for land managers. Control of non-native invasive plants in Florida's natural areas is expensive. Dade County has spent 2.8 million since 1993 (after Hurricane

Andrew) on removal of invasive plants from 500 acres of natural areas.

Federal and state laws were passed that now restrict possession, transport, or sale of certain plants known to interfere with native ecosystems. These plants are listed in the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) *Federal Noxious Weeds List*, The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) *Florida Noxious Weed List*, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) *Prohibited Aquatic Plant List*. Plants that occur on at least one of these lists and may occur on private property in Florida include (but are not limited to) Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), Australian Pine (*Casuarina spp.*), Punk tree (*Melaleuca quinquinerva*), Chinese tallow (*Sapium sebiferum*), carrotwood (*Cupianopsis anacardioides*) and air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*).



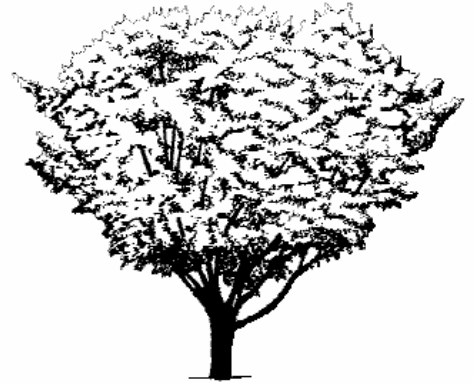
Some of these non-native invasive plants have been introduced as landscape ornamentals and by accident. They now exist in our landscapes and are growing in proximity to natural areas and are a source of invasion. Seeds can be spread by birds, animals, wind, and yard trimmings. Removing non-native plants from private property can eliminate a major source of invasion into natural areas. Many invasive plants, such as potato vine, are also weeds in private landscapes. Others, such as carrotwood, may serve a function in the landscape (as shade for example) and removal of these plants may seem a sacrifice for the property owner, but this loss can be a short-term problem. The plant removal will be of long-term far-reaching benefit to Florida's natural areas. To learn more about non-native invasive plants visit the website of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council, www.fleppc.org.



Shaded area represents range



foliage and fruit



mature Buttonwood

Conocarpus erectus Green Buttonwood

Green Buttonwood is a wonderful replacement for invasive, non-native trees such as carrotwood or Brazilian Pepper, especially in coastal locations. Green Buttonwood is a low-branching, multi-trunked, shrubby, evergreen tree, which has small leaves. The inconspicuous, small greenish flowers appear in dense heads in the spring and are followed by ½ inch red-brown, cone-like fruits. When planted in the open, Buttonwood will grow to about 20 to 25 feet tall and wide and is ideal for specimen planting. The species is less common and grows taller than the Silver Buttonwood. Due to the attractive, ridged bark and soft foliage, a multi-stemmed specimen can make a nice patio or street tree. Buttonwood will often take on a picturesque, contorted appearance when exposed to constant seashore winds, creating an attractive specimen. The crown is more symmetrical ½ mile or more from the coast or on the inland side of a tall ocean-front building. The wood of Buttonwood was formerly used for firewood, cabinetwork, and charcoal making and is very strong. It is an ideal wood for smoking fish and meats. A Florida native, Buttonwood is ideal for seaside plantings and is highly tolerant of full sun, sandy soils, and salty conditions. It also tolerates brackish areas and alkaline soils and thrives in the broken shade and wet soils of hammocks. Buttonwood withstands the rigors of urban conditions very well and makes a durable street or parking lot tree. It is tough and long-lasting in the landscape.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Scientific name: *Conocarpus erectus*

Pronunciation: kawn-oh-KAR-pus ee-RECK-tus

Common name(s): Green Buttonwood

Family: Combretaceae

Origin: native to North America

For more information on this and other trees, visit this website: <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/trees>, where fact sheets of more than 600 trees can be found.

What is Blooming at the Florida House?

The shortened day length is affecting some of our temperate plants; however, because our temperatures remain high, the anticipated autumn colors will be minimal. Leaves are showing some color change on the fig, green ash, mulberry, persimmon, sugarberry, and sycamore. The warm weather is also promoting new growth and extending flowering periods for many plants.

Flowers in bloom now:

African bush daisy, African iris, Beach sunflower, Blackberry lily, Blue daze, Bromeliads, Butterfly pea vine, Cannas, Cat's whiskers, Coral honeysuckle, Crinum lily, Cupid's shaving brush, Cypress vine, False dragonhead, Forsythia sage, Gaillardia, Gloriosa lily, Goldenrod, Horsemint, Indigo

spires sage, Jewels of Opar, Lantanas, Liriope, Mimosa, Painted-leaf poinsettia, Passion vines, Pentas, Perennial peanut, Pickerelweed, Pineland heliotrope, Pink and scarlet sage, Porterweeds, Purple heart, Scarlet hibiscus, Scorpion-tail, Spiderwort, Tampa verbena, Walking iris, Water lily and Yellowtop.

Shrubs in bloom now:

Bougainvillea, Cassias, Dwarf firecracker, Dwarf Turk's cap, Firebush, Firecracker plant, Firespike, Louis Philippe rose, Mexican heather, Mexican sage, Necklace pod, Nora Grant ixora, Plumbagos, Porterweeds, Seminole hibiscus, Sweet viburnum, Thryallis, Tibouchina, and Vitex.

Trees in bloom now:

Jatropha, Orange Jasmine, and White Cordia.

Necklace Pod (*Sophora tomentosa*)



Plants with fruit or berries:

Bananas, Beautyberry, Carambola, Cardboard plant, Citrus, Coontie, Crape myrtle, Dwarf Indian hawthorne, Dwarf pomegranate, Fiddlewood, Golden dewdrop, Miracle fruit, Papaya, Persimmon, Quailberry, Rouge plant, Sea grape, Simpson's stopper, Walter's viburnum, Weeping yaupon holly, Wild coffee, and Vitex.

Patricia Porchey, Horticulturist

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: FALL 2005

All programs are **FREE**, but registration is required. For classes held at the **Florida House** (4600 Beneva Rd. South, Sarasota), please call 316-1200; for classes held at **Shamrock Park** (3900 W. Shamrock Dr., Venice), please call 486-2706; and for classes held at **Twin Lakes** (6700 Clark Rd., Sarasota), please call 861-9900.

October 5, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Twin Lakes: Pumpkin Pleasures

This class will focus on the nutritional value of pumpkins and how they can be used.

October 5, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m., Twin Lakes: Adaptive Products

Adaptive products and how they can help you regain your mobility and lifestyle.

October 6, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Shamrock Park: Coastal Native Plants

Learn about plants that will yield a more successful coastal landscape.

October 11, 2:00– 3:30 p.m., Florida House: Sustainable Solutions

Techniques, materials and products that are sustainable, as well as safer for your family.

October 12, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Spiders of Florida

This class will focus on spiders, both harmless and venomous, that are found in our area.

October 12, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m., Twin Lakes Park: Coastal Native Plants

Learn about plants that will yield a more successful coastal landscape

October 19, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Centerpieces from Natural Resources.

Techniques to make creative and beautiful centerpieces for your home.

October 19, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m., Twin Lakes Park: Portion Control

Learn to discover the secrets to enjoying the holiday season without gaining weight.

October 20, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Shamrock Park: Spice Up Your Life

Information on adding flavors with herbs and spices, while cutting back on salt etc.

October 25, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Florida House: Mosquitoes!

Mosquitoes, how they survive and how we can control them responsibly.

October 26, 4:00 – 6:30 p.m., Twin Lakes Park: Pest in and Around the House

Common pests in and around the home and how to control them.

November 2, 10:00- 11:00 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Healthy Appetizers

Easy recipes to start your holiday entertaining or for everyday snacking.

November 2, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., Twin Lakes Park: Beneficial Insects

Learn to recognize natural enemies of pests in order to minimize reliance on pesticides.

November 3, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Shamrock Park: Invasive Plants

This class will provide information about troublesome plant species found in this region.

November 8, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Florida House: Butterfly Gardening

How to attract butterflies to your garden.

November 9, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Twin Lakes Park: Ants, Ants, Ants

Learn about ant characteristics, habits and behaviors, and ways to control them.

November 16, 10:00 -11:30 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Stress Busters ...Get Unplugged

This program will provide strategies for reducing stress while you enjoy the holidays.

November 16, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m., Twin Lakes Park: Shark Encounters

Explore the behavior, anatomy and physiology of sharks native to Florida.

November 17, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Shamrock Park: Look Alikes

Simple steps to poison-proof your home and reduce the risk of accidental poisoning.

November 22, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Florida House: Organic Foods

This class will introduce some of the issues related to organic foods.

November 30, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Portion Distortion

Join us as we discover secrets to enjoy the holiday season without gaining weight.

December 1, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m., Shamrock Park: Snakes

Learn about identification, harmful/harmless characteristics managing snake encounters.

December 6, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Florida House: Trends in Home Decorating

The environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits of building material reuse.

December 7, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Twin Lakes Park: Holiday Plants

Learn how to keep those colorful plants for years, not just a season.

The 9th Annual Florida Neighborhoods Conference

Sarasota County Neighborhood Services would like to extend an invitation to you to attend the Florida Neighborhoods Conference in Lakeland, Florida, October 20-22. There will be several training "tracks" featuring workshops that will appeal to your particular interests, including: Association Building; Tools of the Trade; Brick, Mortar, and Aesthetics; Safety and Environment; and Partnerships. In addition to the workshops, the FNC offers tours of successful Lakeland and Polk County projects. The conference fee is \$40.00 for the basic registration track and includes: A welcome Reception at Fantasy of Flight; Keynote Luncheon with Florida Secretary of State, Glenda Hood; Music on the Promenade at Hollis Garden; Keynote Breakfast; Closing Luncheon; and Discounted Admission to Cypress Gardens. If you would like a copy of the conference registration booklet, please contact Sarasota County Neighborhood Service at neighbor@scgov.net or via phone at 861-5000.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Cycle VI of the **Neighborhood Grant Program** was completed but classes for the next cycle will be held throughout the county in the fall. This great program provides funds for resident and community associations located in Sarasota County to help them improve the quality of life in their areas. A maximum of \$12,000 can be awarded to participants. For every dollar the County contributes, the neighborhood or community association will have to contribute a like amount. This may be cash, donated goods or services by local businesses, or volunteer time. The Grant Goals are: Enhance Safety (signs for neighborhood watch programs etc.), Preserve Character and Value (landscaping public rights-of-way or medians, entrances, and **removal of non-native invasive plants**), Build Neighborhood Leadership (cost associated with organizational and educational events, etc.), and Enhance Health (trails, bike paths, improvements to the environment, etc.). The Grant will only fund landscaping projects that conform to **Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Principles** and conserve water. For more information about this program, contact Rochelle Brassard at 861-5415 or rbrassar@scgov.net. For information about Florida Yards and Neighborhood principles, please contact Annemarie Post at apost@scgov.net or 861-9815.

We are again sending **Palm Prints** by e-mail to many of you. Community managers, who in the past received several hard copies, will now only receive only one e-mail copy. Please forward it to the communities that you manage. For those of you who are still receiving a hard copy in the mail, please consider sending us your e-mail address. We are trying to reduce the amount of paper that is being used and are also trying to cut down on our printing and mailing costs so that more funds will be available for programming. If you have e-mail, please contact Annemarie Post at apost@scgov.net, so we can add the information to our records. Please include your name, the name of your association or business, your address, and your phone number. You will also be able to access **Palm Prints** through our website: <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>.

Annemarie Post