

Wildflower Gazette

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Florida Wildflower Foundation Quarterly Newsletter

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Learn more about the Florida Wildflower Foundation at www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org

A look ahead: What will 2010 bring?

By Jeff Caster, FWF Board Chair

Looking forward through 2010 and beyond, the Foundation remains committed to its mission – to enrich lives with Florida native wildflowers. Deliberately simple, easy to express, and easy to understand, the mission has instant appeal, attracting and uniting agencies, organizations, communities, and individuals. Whether seeking the economic, ecologic, or aesthetic benefits, Floridians are rediscovering the natural beauty of native wildflowers. A few equally simple to understand goals help the Foundation keep limited human and fiscal resources directed on what matters most:

- Uncovering the mysteries of wildflowers. More than 100 years of collected data guides the production of food and fiber crops. Questions about wildflower seed production and propagation, however, remain unanswered. Through 2010 and beyond, the Foundation will continue to invest in scientific research that supports wildflower conservation, seed production, and natural area restoration.



- Teaching how to establish and manage a meadow. Children, the most beautiful natural resource, have difficult lessons to learn. Grade by grade the classroom challenges increase while budgets seem to decrease. Looking forward, while growing the next generation of wildflower enthusiasts, wildflower education programs developed by the Foundation will help teachers and students with their reading, writing, math, and science lessons.

- Experiencing the natural beauty of native wildflowers. Though lawns and gardens are popular and common, Florida native wildflowers, like other natural resources, are often overlooked when planning, planting, and protecting our most meaningful and influential landscapes. As noted by Mary Frances Baker in her 1926 book, *Florida Wild Flowers*, “No other part of our country can show so great a variety of its wild flowers [sic], and in no other state are there so many plants of strange habits and remarkable characteristics.”

For the future, the Foundation will be supporting community-based planting projects that put Florida seeds on the ground.

In 1513, when Juan Ponce de Leon arrived here and named this place La Florida, the natural beauty of wildflowers was the land’s most visible and memorable quality. As the quincentennial celebration of Ponce de Leon’s arrival



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U.S. Highway 441-41 in Lake City. Photo courtesy of FDOT



approaches, the Foundation is striving to make wildflowers as iconic to Florida as manatees, palm trees, orange trees, beaches, and sunsets. Everyone should know and understand the significance and enjoyment of these important and valuable resources.



Our heartfelt thanks to our 2009 donors:

Coreopsis (\$10,000 and above)

Gary Henry

Helianthus (\$100-\$4,999)

Jeff and Mimi Caster

Lisa Roberts

Rudbeckia (\$0-\$99)

Sam and Arline Bleecker

Kay Yeuell

Mount Dora Garden Club

Special thanks to our partnering organizations:

- Florida Native Plant Society
- Association of Florida Native Nurseries
- Florida Federation of Garden Clubs
- Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
- University of Florida/IFAS
- Florida Master Gardeners
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Florida League of Cities

Thank you to all our 2009 Wildflower Ambassadors, who freely gave their time to support the Foundation's work for Florida.

Anne Mackay

Jeff Caster

Terry Zinn

Gary Henry

Carolyn Schaag

Terrie Fishman

Brightman Logan

Terril Nell

Walter Taylor

Nancy Rodlun

David Fasser

Jeff Norcini

Tina Drake

Eric Carden

Bobby Jo Roberts

Stan Meeks

Carol Simmons

Marianne Popkins

Dixie Tate

Nancy Tyree

Elizabeth Pate

Nancy Lee

Mary Harger

Dara Dobson

Eileen Zebowski

Craig Huegel

Theresa Bradley

Paul Stevenson

Barry Glenn

Tyler Glenn

Bill Randolph

Joan Randolph

Petal-pushing volunteers needed!

Do you want to get involved with a great organization that is making even greater things happen for natural Florida? The Florida Wildflower Foundation needs your skills. Here are just some of the ways you can lend a hand:

- Be a Wildflower Ambassador by helping to staff our booth at:
 - Wekiva Riverfest, March 6, Wekiwa Springs State Park, Apopka.
 - Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival, March 27, downtown DeLand.
 - EPCOT International Flower and Garden Show, dates to be announced in March, April and May.
 - Boktoberfest, Oct. 16, Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Wales.
- Serve as a committee member.
- Write newsletter articles.
- Lend your expertise to fund-raising, outreach and marketing efforts.
- Be part of our expert speakers bureau.
- Help with administrative duties.

Those who help at daylong events in 2010 will get a FREE Florida Wildflower Foundation annual membership worth \$25. Call Lisa Roberts at 407-353-6164 to sign up.

Welcome new members!

Nancy Lee

Mary Harger

Carolyn Beckman

Kiel

Larry Weber

Veronica C.

Taborsky

Kristine Worrell

Barbara Hopkins

Elizabeth Scott

Diedrich Dierks

Tina Allen

Barb Messimer

Jane Wallace

To support the work of the Florida Wildflower Foundation by joining as a member, visit our [Web site](#) and choose "Join Us" under "About Us."

Let your voice be heard – take our online survey

We want to know more about what you'd like from the Foundation – More membership events? Scheduled outings? More wildflower information? Take our quick and easy online survey and let us know. [Click here](#) to take the survey.

Earn money for wildflowers by surfing and shopping

Are you surfing or shopping on the Internet?

You could be earning money for the Florida Wildflower Foundation with each search. Use [GoodSearch.com](#) as your search engine (powered by Yahoo.com), and you'll earn a penny



per search for the Foundation when you "verify" our name. Each time you make a purchase from an online store via the [GoodShop.com](#) portal, a percentage of your purchase is given to the Foundation.

Don't forget to send your wildflower photos

We've collected an impressive selection of wildflower photos thanks to your help! For a look, check the "What's Blooming in Florida" pages under "Photo Gallery" on our Web site, [www.floridawildflowerfoundation.org](#). To have your own photos displayed, send a JPEG file no more than 1 MG to Lisa Roberts at [flawildflowers@gmail.com](#) with a description that includes when and where it was shot and species included.



Okahumpka Service Plaza. Photo courtesy of FDOT

Let your county know it's a wildflower world

Want your county to buy into the valuable economic and ecological impacts of preserving native roadside wildflowers?

The Florida Wildflower Foundation has just the thing for you, thanks to FWF Chair Jeff Caster and wildflower enthusiast Eleanor Dietrich, Tallahassee. The two have developed a "kit" that can be used to persuade your county government to support the growth of native wildflowers.

The simple kit includes a fill-in-the-blank county resolution that pledges support for roadside management,

including reduced mowing, that promotes the growth and reseeding of naturally occurring wildflowers. An accompanying PowerPoint presentation explains the historical, cultural and ecological importance of Florida's flowers. Notes embedded in the presentation prompt the presenter to engage the audience and add county-specific information and photos.

The presentation and resolution were developed during recent efforts in Wakulla and Gadsden counties to allow wildflowers to flourish on roadsides. Both counties now have voted to protect roadside wildflowers in key locations

during experiments that could lead to more beautiful roadsides being preserved.

"Officials in Wakulla and Gadsden counties are leading the way in the effort to preserve and conserve Florida's wildflowers," Caster said. "They understand that bountiful native flowers hold the potential for profound economic benefits through increased ecotourism. They also recognize that wildflowers play a large role in the culture and heritage of La Florida – 'land of flowers.'"

For information on making this presentation to your county, contact Lisa Roberts at 407-353-6164.

Save the date: Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival

The weekend of March 26 and 27 brings two things to celebrate – the fourth annual Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival in DeLand and the annual recognition of Ponce de Leon's arrival in and naming of "La Florida."

Florida Wildflower Foundation members, be sure to stop by FWF's booth for a wristband that will get you discounts at downtown DeLand shops and restaurants! Don't forget to bring your FWF membership card (we'll have a membership list at the booth, just in case).

The weekend will be jam-packed for FWF members, who are invited to attend the festival, where vendors will be selling native wildflowers and plants, garden equipment and supplies, seeds, books, honey, food, produce and festival attire. Other activities include:

- Guest speakers – including popular horticulturalist Tom Macubbin and Dr. Walter K. Taylor, aka "Mr. Florida Wildflower."
- Tours to Volusia County parks lead by county naturalists.
- A tour of a wildflower farm.
- Kids' free take-home crafts.

- Booths offering wildflower, native plant, butterfly and gardening info and supplies.
- A post-Festival downtown music concert – party with Bike Florida cyclists!

We've arranged for special hotel rates for members for the nights of March 26 and 27 – reserve early, supply is limited. Be sure to mention the Florida Wildflower Foundation when making reservations at the following establishments:

- \$71.99 at Comfort Inn DeLand, 400 E. International Speedway Blvd., 386-736-3100.
- \$85 for a standard suite (minimum two-day stay) at Artisan Inn, 215 S. Woodland Blvd., DeLand; 386-736-3484; www.delandartisaninn.com.

Information on more events and special rates will be sent to FWF members as they develop. For more information on the Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival, contact MainStreet DeLand, 386-738-0649. For information on Florida Wildflower Foundation events, contact Lisa Roberts, 407-353-6164.

Foundation helps form Florida Native Plant Partnership

The Florida Wildflower Foundation has formed an alliance with the Florida Native Plant Society, Florida Association of Native Nurseries and the Florida Wildflower Seed and Plant Growers Association. This coalition – called Florida Native Plant Partnership, or "FNP2" – is jointly pursuing grants and education and marketing opportunities that will expand and support the use and demand of Florida native plants.



"We're excited to be involved with these three fine organizations, with which the Foundation has many overlapping goals," said Lisa Roberts, FWF executive director.

"This coalition represents more than 20,000 Floridians who are actively supporting Florida's native wildflowers and plants and promoting their advantages. With their continued help, FNP2 will work hard to build new awareness and support of our natives."

FWF alters grant-making process

The Florida Wildflower Foundation's board began 2009 with a two-day session that resulted in a strategic plan – a 10-year "roadmap" expected to guide it for the next decade.

It is now using the plan to guide decisions about project funding. Only projects that help the Foundation

accomplish its goals will be considered. Those goals, however, may change as the Foundation refines its focus and program areas.

The organization now announces funding opportunities through either requests for proposals (RFPs) or invitations to apply for specific grants. Opportunities are posted on its Web

site and Facebook page and are sent to members and friends via email.

To join our email list, please send your name and email address to flawildflowers@gmail.com. To download a copy of the Foundation's strategic plan, visit [our Web site](#) and choose "Mission and Vision" under "About Us."

Program updates: Research, planting and education

Research: Chair Terry Zinn

(Committee members: Brightman Logan, Dr. Walter K. Taylor)

- Wildflower surveys: Spring, summer and fall surveys of naturally occurring wildflowers on the St. Johns River to the Sea Loop trail were completed in 2009 by researchers Gil Nelson and Jeff Norcini. A final report containing findings and recommendations – including sites' GPS coordinates, photos and management recommendations – is available on the Foundation's Web site.

The St. Johns River to the Sea Loop likely will become the state's first Wildflower Trail. With an eye on establishing future trails, the research committee is looking for suggestions of other areas in the state to survey. To report sightings of profuse wildflowers, send the date and location of the sighting, along with species names (if known), to wildflower.research@gmail.com.

- University of Florida research projects: Three multi-year research projects are in their final year at the University of Gainesville. They include:
 - "Production, Propagation and Landscape Evaluation of Native Wildflowers in West, Central and South Florida" (University of Florida; Wilson).
 - "Assessing Potential Loss of *Coreopsis leavenworthii* Genetic Diversity under Commercial Seed Production and Gene Flow from *Coreopsis tinctoria*" (University of Florida; Deng).
 - "Establishing Provenance, Viability-Testing Standards and Enhanced Germination for Seed Production of Wiregrass in Florida," (University of Florida; Perez).

2009 year-end reports from these projects and the St. Johns River to the Sea Loop surveys can be downloaded at [our Web site](#) by choosing "Past Recipient Reports" under "Grants."

- Seed protocols: One of the Foundation's long-term goals is to increase the number of native wildflowers species in production for use in landscape design and restoration, conservation and beautification projects. Toward that end, a request for proposals for research into three species was released in November. The species are *Gaillardia pulchella*, *Phlox drummondii* and *Vernonia gigantea*. Submittals are being reviewed.

In December, the Foundation awarded \$5,000 to the Florida Native Plant Society to be used to research and develop *Liatris* sp. seed protocols. FNPS will administer the project and send FWF

findings and progress reports.

- Literature survey: A request for proposals to conduct a survey of wildflower research literature was released in November. Committee members are reviewing submissions. A searchable database of survey results will be added to the Foundation's Web site in the future.
- Gary Henry Endowment for the Study of Florida Native Wildflowers: FWF board members voted unanimously to fund the endowment with \$100,000. Since its creation in 2007, the Foundation has devoted \$300,000 to the fund, which is managed by the University of Florida Foundation. A state match of \$150,000 is expected. The fund is intended to one day support a full-time graduate student position devoted to native wildflower research.

Planting: Jeff Caster, chair

(Committee members: Paul Stevenson, Nancy Rodlun, Herb Hiller, Amanda Meksraitis, Timothee Sallin)

- Wildflower planting guide: In September, the Foundation awarded \$11,800 to the Association of Florida Native Nurseries for the development of a six-page native wildflower planting guide within AFNN's 2010 Real Florida Gardeners publication. A half-page was granted to the Florida Native Plant Society, which provided information on wildflowers' cultural and historical significance. About 125,000 copies will be distributed statewide. Florida Wildflower Foundation members have received a copy via mail. For more information on AFNN and the publication, visit www.afnn.org.
- Seeds for Schools: The planting committee is working on a microgrant program that would enable schoolteachers to obtain gift cards for Florida native wildflower seeds. The committee has produced an initial design for an online form that teachers would submit to request the seeds. The committee hopes to launch the program by spring, which would allow teachers to receive seeds in time for fall planting.

Education: Anne Mackay, chair

(Committee members: Carolyn Schaag, Dara Dobson, Elizabeth Pate, Eileen Zebroski)

- Curriculum: In November, the education committee released an RFP for a contractor to research opportunities for developing curriculum for elementary, middle and high school students. A number of proposals are under consideration.
- Tourism: A request for proposals was released in November for the research

phase of this project. Two proposals were received, and the committee has extended the deadline in order to interest more individuals or businesses in submitting proposals. Meanwhile, the Foundation is applying for grants that will help it fully fund the project.

- Pollinator video: Nature Wise Inc., Orlando, received a grant in 2007 to develop a video called "Gardening for Native Pollinators." Shooting has been done, and the script for the first half-hour program has been finalized. Post production is under way, and Tracy McCommon of Nature Wise expects to finish segments early this year.
- Video Vignettes: Nature Wise Inc. has finished two educational three-minute videos that introduce Florida's native wildflowers and their uses in landscapes. The videos are available on YouTube.com (search "Florida wildflowers") and soon will be posted for viewing on the [Foundation's Web site](#).

Special committees

- Web site: Ten proposals were received in response to a request for proposals to overhaul the Foundation's Web site to make it the foremost Web portal for Florida native wildflower information. Proposals are now being reviewed.

FWF Calendar

- Jan. 19: Lisa Roberts, Executive Director, speaks at Gateway Center for the Arts, DeBary
- Jan. 22: Board meeting, Gainesville
- Feb. 8: Lisa Roberts, Executive Director, speaks at Mount Dora Garden Club
- Feb. 19: FWF Board teleconference
- March 6: Wekiva Riverfest
- March 27: Florida Wildflower and Garden Festival
- March, April, May: EPCOT International Garden Flower and Garden Show

