



2010 FNPS Green Palmetto Nominees

Nominee: Kathy Burks – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by Fritz Wettstein, Gil Nelson, Gary Knight and Greg Jubinsky

Kathy Burks gave much to Florida's conservation efforts in years of scientific research and public service, much of which was focused on the management of invasive plants. Florida lost a great native plant person when she died in 2006 after a brief illness. Everyone remembers Kathy for her joyful personality, her passion for botany, her personal integrity, her dedication to excellence, and her many contributions to botany and conservation in Florida and the Florida Native Plant Society.

Kathy Burks received a Master of Science degree in Biological Science from Florida State University in 1992 under the direction of Dr. Loran Anderson. Her master's project was a critical floristic study of Lake Miccosukee and environs in the Florida panhandle, where she developed an early expertise and interest in aquatic species, and endangered species such as the federally listed Miccosukee gooseberry (*Ribes echinellum*).

Kathy's first major project after graduating from FSU was a four-year study of plant diversity in wet savannas in the Apalachicola National Forest, which involved botanical inventory and monitoring of groundcover diversity in response to prescribed fire. She worked as a botanist for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Invasive Species Management for ten years and then the Florida Natural Areas Inventory. Kathy researched and wrote for numerous publications, including Florida Wetland Plants: An Identification Manual (UF, 1998), and Identification and Biology of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (UF, 1998). Her characteristic wit and humor wink from many of her writings.

Kathy served the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) as Chair of the Invasive Species List Committee for many years, and was active in FLEPPC outreach activities. During her career, she also served as Chair of the Science Committee for the Florida Wildflower Advisory Council, and as a member of the Florida Endangered Plants Advisory Council. Kathy had also been appointed to be Plants Editor for the Florida Committee on Rare and Endangered Plants and Animals (FCREPA). She was known as one of the state's foremost experts on invasive plant species and provided expert plant identification services for biologists and public land managers throughout the state. She was a keynote speaker at the 2004 Florida Native Plant Society conference. Whether it was invasive plants, rare plants, or roadside wildflowers, Kathy brought good science and a human touch to all of these important conservation issues.

Kathy Burks devoted herself as an advocate for the R. K. Godfrey Herbarium at FSU. She brought positive attention and critically needed financial resources to this important educational and research resource. On Friday, June 13, 2008, a memorial to Kathy Craddock Burks was placed on the campus of Florida State University, close to the herbarium. FLEPPC's Kathy Craddock Burks Education Grant was named for her,

commemorating her achievements in non-native invasive plant education and outreach projects in Florida.

Nominee: Trish Gramajo – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by the Ixia Chapter

The Ixia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society is pleased to nominate Trish Gramajo-St. John for the 2010 Green Palmetto Award for her service and education efforts in the three county regions served by the Ixia Chapter.

Trish has been an active FNPS and Ixia Chapter member since 2005. As the Ixia Board's Conservation Chair, she helps build support for Florida's land buying program, Florida Forever, by encouraging advocacy by Ixia members and other large grassroots groups and working with the FNPS Executive Director to secure legislative support from Florida Representatives and Senators for continued funding of the program.

Also as Conservation Chair, she led the efforts to secure a FNPS Conservation Grant which enable the Chapter to create and publish an AlterNatives poster featuring 15 Florida exotic Plant Council Class I and II invasive species recommended for removal and more than 35 Florida friendly natives recommended to use in their place. The \$1000 grant was augmented by a donation of \$1500 of graphic design services, enabling the Chapter to print 2,000 copies of the poster. The poster has been widely distributed to gardeners, nursery and garden centers and is available through the FNPS website.

Trish founded the First Coast Invasive Working Group in 2006 and chaired it since 2006. The Group was established to work across federal, state, local and private lands for invasive species prevention and management efforts. The Group represents partnerships with over 40 formal partners, including all the large public land managers, extension programs, universities, The Nature Conservancy, Audubon, Florida Native Plant Society, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, Student Conservation Association, many private landowners and others.

The Group has developed a 5-Year Strategic Plan which includes the goal of establishing the Green Thumb Nursery Plan by 2011 and has submitted a proposal for funding. The Plan would certify nurseries in five Northeast Florida counties that adhere to practices that prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plants and help raise awareness of the environmental and financial advantages of using native plants.

In 2006, Trish launched the first local National Invasive Species Awareness Week and the inaugural Great Air Potato Roundup. The Great Air Potato Roundup in Northeast Florida has been followed by three succeeding events to date. An estimated 10 tons of tubers have been removed from the region's natural areas with almost 1,000 volunteers participating over the three year period.

Trish is also a Board member of the Jacksonville Arboretum and Gardens, whose mission is to educate Northeast Florida and its regional communities about native and cultivated plants, improve its beauty and atmosphere, engage in and promote the conservation and preservation of our natural resources, and provide public service.

Trish has nine years of conservation experience with The Nature Conservancy and is responsible for implementing The Conservancy's freshwater and land management projects in northeast Florida and southeast Georgia and has assisted with statewide and local conservation campaigns to fund land management and willing seller acquisition programs in

Florida. Trish's academic credentials include a political science and public administration degree from the University of North Florida.

Nominee: Sonya Guidry – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by Elizabeth Flynn and the Pawpaw Chapter

Sometimes it is all rolled into one: immense knowledge, inexhaustible energy, selfless spirit, and a wholehearted desire to share with others. Sonya Guidry embodies it all!

When she joined the then-newly formed Pawpaw Chapter in 1991, Sonya embraced the mission of FNPS. She soon served as the Chapter's president from 1993 – 1995, before finding her calling as Field Trip Chair, where she is the native plant ambassador for participants new to exploring central Florida's plant communities.

Sonya leads field trippers to meet native plants in their natural habitats - whether by foot, Eco-Buggy, canoe or pontoon. Ever-equipped with her native plant books and a child's sense of wonder, every outing is lovingly planned as a great adventure. One such trip was to Silver Glen State Park, when beforehand Sonya had compiled a list of native plants she hoped to see based on Marjorie Kinan Rawlings mention of them in her book *The Yearling*. Under Sonya's direction, participants found the little stream that was the site of Jody's handmade water-wheel and they attempted to construct their own!

Her regard for native plants shines through as she speaks of them as old friends, complete with quirky personalities and idiosyncrasies. Participants agree Sonya makes outings thoroughly enjoyable, as well as educational, remarking that "She brings native plants alive for me on the many field trips." or "I've also been able to visit areas of Florida that I probably would have overlooked." And Sonya shows as much regard for her participants by always supplying them ahead of time with details about their destination, transportation, trip leader, needed funds and sometimes even overnight lodging options.

The past presidents and the board members she has served with through the years agree that when volunteerism is at its lowest, you can always count on Sonya to lend a hand - or hat! (Donning an ostentatious flowery garden hat, Sonya passed out fliers at an unrelated festival of 7,000 people to advertise a Chapter plant sale the following week!) As a constant fixture at all Pawpaw events - plant sales, book sales, demonstration garden cleanups, festivals, meetings and email campaigns – she goes above and beyond to reach the public and educate them on native plants and environmental issues.

One member recounts how Sonya was instrumental in her joining the Society. At a festival where FNPS had a table, she met Sonya who sold her an iris and they talked at great length. "I found her to be a fountain of knowledge. I went to the next Pawpaw meeting, and joined." This member went on to be the Chapter's 7th president and is still active with Pawpaw today. The iris Sonya sold her is still in her yard.

It is the unanimous consensus that no one in our Chapter works harder on our activities than Sonya Guidry. And without question it was Sonya who was the indisputable single source when the Pawpaw Chapter was asked to compile its 20-year history for this 30th anniversary celebration. For all these reasons – and so many more! – Sonya Guidry is our nomination for the 2010 Green Palmetto award.

Nominee: Greg Jubinski – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by Kristina Serbesoff-King, Kathy O'Reilly-Doyle and Drew Leslie

Greg is very motivated; he is passionate about conservation –from his home life to his work life. He is the Program Leader, Upland Invasive Plant Management Program Division of Habitat and Species Conservation Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to wildlife and plant habitat in the State of Florida. Greg is at the helm of one of the most effective programs in the State, working to combat that problem. He not only thinks out of the box, he creates new and innovative approaches.

Greg has no tolerance for wasting time or resources; as a result he is keenly focused on improving efficiency and effectiveness of his program. He has made a huge difference in the state of Florida planning and implementing the eradication of invasives which makes FL native ecosystems healthier. Greg is the “go to” person state wide and his professionalism and reputation are well known. He has been a speaker at the FNPS conference on several occasions and is a long time member and provides the society with resources. He is a dedicated FNPS member who’s life and career embody and forward the mission of the Florida Native Plant Society.

“What drives a man like Greg to invest his professional and personal time and energy to restore and protect native habitat in the State of Florida? My guess is that he has a personal connection to the nature around him.” He has a stewardship ethic that fuels his leadership role in designing programs and leading the charge to make a measurable difference on the ground, and stay focused on the actions that truly matter.

Greg Jubinsky, is an enigma –he’s a conservationist extraordinaire.

Nominee: Dan Miller – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by members of the Magnolia Chapter

The Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society is pleased and honored to nominate Dan Miller for the Green Palmetto Service Award. Dan’s commitment to native plants is broad, covering many different aspects of service. He has served on the Magnolia Chapter Board for over six years. He brings native plants that he has propagated to Chapter meetings and to many different festivals and events in the area. He has helped countless individuals learn about growing native plants in their gardens. He contributes extensively to the annual Birdsong Nature Center plant sale. He has made numerous presentations for Chapter programs, and programs requested by gardening and nature groups throughout the region. One of his most demanding achievements has been providing the leadership and hundreds of volunteer hours to the restoration of the native plant garden at MacClay Gardens state park. He is unfailingly generous with his time, and unfailingly kind and patient with his assistance and support.

Dan’s service commitment extends far beyond our local area; he has been a strong advocate for regional conservation. By training and trade, Dan Miller is a quiet chemist. But a small yellow flower (actually millions of small yellow flowers gathered together) turned him into a

tireless and fearless crusader. Under his leadership, with solid support from key people like Gil Nelson and Wilson Baker, along with many other supporters, Dan spent three years of continuous hard work that resulted in saving a precious piece of land to be the home of countless trout lilies in perpetuity.

In 2006, Dan and Wilson discovered a treasure, a threatened treasure, and were inspired to ensure its safety. On a 140 acre tract in South Georgia, land scheduled to be sold for residential dwellings, they were awed to find the largest population of trout lilies (*Erythronium umbilicatum*) they had ever seen or heard of. Thus began a long and tough effort to secure this land as a public sanctuary. Dan was key in speaking to local officials, state and national conservancy organizations, and many individual donors for the purpose of finding over half a million dollars to buy this land from a friendly and cooperative owner. By June of 2009, the deadline for a major source of funding was fast approaching. At the last moment, a private donor pledged the amount necessary to seal the deal, and Dan was actually reported to be seen dancing with joy.

We all owe Dan our heartfelt gratitude for his ceaseless efforts in territory entirely new to him, because of a cause that he cared for so deeply.

Nominee: Bobbi Rogers – FNPS Green Palmetto Service Award

Nominated by John Holyland, Al Squires and the Mangrove Chapter

When Bobbi Rodgers joined the Mangrove Chapter in 1997 she began a career of service that continues to this day. Her service has helped to transform this one time stagnant Chapter into the vibrant, growing Chapter it is today.

Bobbi was a new member when she accepted the position of President and served two terms (1998-2002). She followed this with service as Immediate Past President and Chapter Representative (2003-04). She then assumed responsibility for arranging our busy program of speakers as Program Chair (2003-06). When both the Publicity Chair and Conservation/Education Chair asked to be relieved of their duties, Bobbi relinquished her program duties and assumed these roles (2007-present) She has also authored an invasive plant booklet and produced a DVD on "Lemon Bay, Past, Present and Future", both encouraging the use of native plants. Bobbi makes sure Mangrove Chapter activities are announced and reported in the press and maintains the Chapter web presence. Bobbi is the Resource Manager of Cedar Point Environmental Park and has offered this facility as the site of the Chapter's Annual Plant Native Day and the planned Chapter Garden.

Whether serving as an officer or board member, manning a booth at an environmental event, producing informational materials or setting up chairs for a meeting, Bobbi has served as an example of a service orientated person for over a decade in the Mangrove Chapter. Please help us honor her record by presenting her with the Florida Native Plant Society Green Palmetto Award.