

FOCUS

on Florida House

Butterfly Day

Our butterfly education day on July 18th was a great success, and despite the intense heat and humidity, we had a nice turnout. **Ruth Linsley** talked to participants about butterfly gardening, and took them around the landscape on a tour to see the various plants that attract butterflies. In the course of the tour, they even discovered some Swallowtail eggs!



Kathie Balchin deserves special credit for developing the children's activities, as well as the posters and mobiles to advertise the event. She also organized all the handout materials and scheduled all the volunteers who came that day to help with children's activities, lead tours and answer questions: **Celene Berman, Norman Carmel, Donna Grantham, Heather Fortner, Michele Guffanti, Barbara, Erin and Kelly Shelby, Erland Stephens, Joyce Suplica, and John Vollstedt.**



Children's activities included:
Face painting (Thank you **Shelbys!**)
Coloring books
Clothespin butterflies
Flower butterflies (Thank you, **Heather!**)
Foam butterflies
Puzzles
Finger butterflies
Stages of butterfly life coloring pictures



Volunteer Benefits

As a Sarasota County volunteer, you are eligible to take [computer classes](#) offered by the county at no charge (subject to space available, of course). If you are interested in training in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or one of the other Microsoft programs, let us know and we will look up the list of classes and help you to get registered.

You are also covered by [Workers Compensation](#) medical benefits (in accordance with Chapter 440 of the Florida Statutes) if you should be injured during your volunteer time. You must inform staff immediately if you sustain an injury so that we can get you the necessary medical attention and benefits.

[Federal Tax Deductions](#) are allowed for your out-of-pocket expenses paid in rendering services without compensation, including your automobile expenses—so keep track of that [mileage](#) to and from the Florida House!

If you would like a copy of your record from the Volunteer Hours Log at the end of the year, just ask. We will be happy to provide a copy to you for your tax return records.



Change a Light, Change the World

ENERGY STAR Change a Light Day, marked for the first time in 2005, was proclaimed by 30 governors and a handful of mayors last year. This year's ENERGY STAR Change a Light Day will take place on **Wednesday, October 4th** and is an excellent opportunity for us to help rally our community around the campaign's call-to-action. We will offer a special **class on lighting at 2:00pm that day**—and will give away an Energy Star compact fluorescent bulb to each participant!

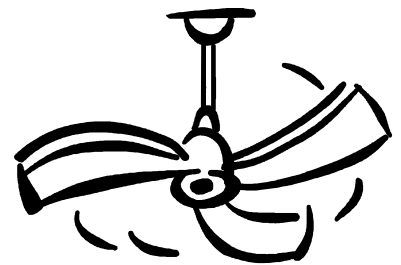
Americans will continue to be encouraged to take the ENERGY STAR Change a Light Pledge at www.energystar.gov/changealight, committing to change at least one bulb or fixture to an ENERGY STAR qualified model. This year, more than 77,000 Americans have already taken the pledge!

For a list of ENERGY STAR qualified residential light fixtures, view the Qualified Product List on the web site at www.energystar.gov. Click on Products, and then on Residential Light Fixtures. This list is updated on a monthly basis.

Ceiling Fan Tips

Share these energy-saving facts with visitors:

- In **summer**, run the blades **counter-clockwise (downward)** to cool more efficiently. On hotter days, dialing up the thermostat by only 2 degrees and using your ceiling fan can lower air conditioning costs by up to 14% over the course of the cooling season, according to DOE.
- For year-round savings, **reverse the fan motor (clockwise) and operate on low speed in the winter to redistribute warm air.**
- Use low wattage CFLs in the ceiling fan light fixture for cooler light bulbs and more energy savings.
- Ceiling fans cool only people, not the room—so **turn them off when you leave the room!**
- See www.energystar.gov for interactive tools and more energy-saving advice for the entire home.



Recycling Tip

An easy way to make a difference is to take your own reusable, non-disposable bags to the grocery store. There is an international awakening to the extremely finite capacities of all countries to handle plastic waste.



Kathie's Korner

Chit-Chat Well...we can finally stop complaining about a lack of rain! Now we have lots of yard work to do.



Michael Ireland will be conducting a class on how to use the new copier to retrieve stored documents we keep in the literature and product racks. We'll let you know the dates when they are finalized.

Joan Resker and **Norm Carmel** are willing to help any new gardeners who want to putter in the yard. They work on Thursdays, so feel free to come and join them any time.

Master Gardener Workday—July 24, 2006

Special thanks to all the Master Gardeners who worked this past workday: **Jerry Becker, Sally Corcoran, Heather Fortner, Donna Grantham, Bennie Komarek, Sally Lunch, and Erland Stephens.** Extra special thanks to **Mark Shelby** and his Bella Terra employees, **Marshall Eastmoore** and **Zach Taylor, who cheerfully pruned the palm trees and oak tree!**



Our **next Master Gardener Workday** will be **Monday, August 28th from 7 to 11 a.m.** Please try to attend this workday. There's lots to do!

Meet Master Conservationist — Ken Finley



I have been a full time resident of Sarasota for eight years. My wife Janet and I came to Florida from Houston, Texas which was just a stop along the way, which included other home towns like Wilmington, NC, Chicago, San Francisco, Milwaukee and Fort Worth, Texas. We love Sarasota and think we have found a home. We have two children: our daughter, Cynthia, lives in Atlanta and our son, Scott, lives in Los Angeles. We also have a new grandson as of Thanksgiving this past year.

Both Jan and I enjoy traveling. As I write this, we are in the middle of a trip west which has included nearly a week in Arches and Canyon Lands National Parks in Utah. The art work Nature can perform is amazing. I am the fisherman of the family but Jan enjoys biking and hiking with me. And then there is our grandson, who is a real joy to both of us.

Last fall we took some friends who were visiting us to the Florida House and I found it really interesting. There were so many ideas that were new to me. One commitment I made to myself this year was to find some place to volunteer and as I thought about it, my experience visiting the Florida House came to mind. I was lucky that a class was about to begin, so I enrolled. What I learned from Betty and others has been eye-opening. I didn't understand the meaning of 'Sustainability' until I took the course. Now with a grandchild to consider, there is even more reason for me to learn more, practice it, and most importantly, pass on the knowledge I have gained. I look forward to a long-term experience here at the Florida House.



Creepy Crawly Critters Day



On **Saturday, August 19 from 1—4 p.m.**, Florida House will exhibit some of the amazing creatures found in Florida that most of us know very little about. From snakes to owls, frogs to hawks, and worms to spiders, we will have quite an assortment of critters. Sarasota County Extension entomologist, **Dr. Fred Santana**, will be displaying some of his own collection and invites citizens to bring in any they would like to have identified. (Any live animals or insects should be in an appropriate container, of course.) UF Agents **Rob Kluson, Mary Jo Oswald** and **Patricia Porchey** will also be on hand, conducting special activities and giving out information.

As an added bonus, we will have a Florida Panther. **Bill Samuels** of the **Florida Panther Project** will provide an opportunity for those of us who have never seen one in person to learn about this endangered Florida native that is estimated to have fewer than 100 left in the wild in Florida. Naturally, it will be in a cage behind the glass doors, with “no petting allowed.” The Project is a non-profit that seeks to preserve panther habitat and greenways. www.FloridaPantherProject.org

Kathie has once again done a great job of coordinating this event and has a few children’s activities planned, so if you would like to have fun with the kids, help us man the house, give landscape tours, or just greet the public, please call Kathie to sign up for an hour—or three! 316-1200

What’s happening in the landscape?

By Patricia Porchey

In addition to the vast array of ornamentals, edible plants are abundant at Florida House. In the winter and spring, there is a profusion of fruit on the citrus - oranges and grapefruit. Spring brings fruit ripening on the Surinam cherry and miracle fruit (a fruit that sweetens all you eat afterwards) and sometimes a second crop is produced on both in the fall. Summer crops are harvested from avocado, lychee, mango, natal plum and pond apple (however, most people don’t find this fruit particularly appetizing). There are many year-round producers: bananas, kumquat, papaya, pineapple, and star fruit. Herbs and vegetables now growing include chives, Mexican tarragon, Okinawa spinach, rosemary, and sage. Some ornamentals are edible as well - false Roselle and purslane and in the cooler months, nasturtium and pansies.

The University of Florida has a fact sheet titled, “Edible Landscaping for Urban Sustainability.” The tremendous transportation cost has made it more economically important to grow one’s own food. Instead of waiting days or weeks to receive fruits and vegetables at the marketplace from the field, they can be just steps away. When grown in your yard, the products are allowed to remain on the plant longer as shipping is no longer a consideration for harvesting before they are fully ripened. You are the beneficiary of improved flavor and the enhanced nutritional content also. By growing your own fruits and vegetables, your dependence on others for your food is diminished and the self-satisfaction received from your accomplishments is tremendous. Extension has this publication and other fact sheets to help your landscape become an edible one.

Plant of the month: False Roselle

False Roselle, *Hibiscus acetosella*, is also known as maroon mallow, red-shield hibiscus and more commonly as cranberry hibiscus. This is a great color choice if you want the look of the northern Japanese maple in your landscape. This native tropical African plant has young leaves that emerge a burgundy color and get lighter with age. If left unpruned, the plant can easily reach six feet or more in height, but the branches have a tendency to break and split if left to grow more than three to four feet. It is a full sun plant but will wilt during periods of low rainfall, however, it usually revives once it receives moisture. This hibiscus reportedly resists nematodes and other insect pests.



False Roselle is sometimes confused with Florida cranberry, *Hibiscus sabdariffa*, whose seedpods are used in teas. However, it’s the leaves that have culinary uses on the False Roselle. The leaves have a flavor described as similar to the rind of a grape or even an acid taste similar to sorrel. Young leaves are often added to salads for the additional color. The leaves have also been used in cooked dishes such as rice, vegetables, soups, or stews. The roots are edible as well, but they are quite fibrous. So for bits of glowing burgundy color in your landscape that you can also eat, try False Roselle.

Green Gallery

Green is the new red, white, and blue. It's not just for tree-huggers anymore, but for all patriots, strategic thinkers, and geo-politicians.

Thanks again to all of those who worked so hard at the Master Gardener Workday July 24th!



Heather too
had a lot to do!

“When Jerry Met Sally”... they did not dilly-dally!



And Mark pruned the trees
without charging us fees!



Once working was done, they stopped for a rest,
You accomplished a LOT—you guys are the BEST!

Don't forget to check the Extension website for a list of all the upcoming educational programs:
<http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>

August 3: 10am at Selby Library – Gardening author and radio host, Tom MacCubbin, will be talking about **Summer Gardening in Florida** and signing books. Sarasota News & Books will have books available for sale. Call Vera Neuman-Wood for more information: 861-1175

August 2006



**Creepy
Crawly
Critters
Day!**



**August 19th
1—4 p.m.**



**Master
Gardener
Workday**



**August 28th
7—11 a.m.**



Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>MC: J. Hanson</p> <p>MG: Jo Hanson</p>	<p>2</p> <p>MC: K. Findley R. Goodell</p> <p>MG: B. Roberts</p>	<p>3</p> <p>MC: L. Towner</p> <p>MG: D. Beeman, N.Carmel, J. Resker</p>	<p>4</p> <p>MC: B. Nickel</p> <p>MG: C. Meskimen</p>	<p>5</p> <p>MC: J. Vollstedt</p> <p>MG: C. Kiblinger</p>
<p>8</p> <p>MC: J. Hanson</p> <p>MG: Jo Hanson</p>	<p>9</p> <p>MC: R. Goodell R. Singer</p> <p>MG: C. Berman</p>	<p>10</p> <p>MC: L. Towner</p> <p>MG: D. Beeman, N.Carmel, J. Resker</p>	<p>11</p> <p>MC: K. Findley B. Nickel</p> <p>MG: C. Meskimen</p>	<p>12</p> <p>MC: J. Nordquist</p> <p>MG: E. Mirabelli</p>
<p>15</p> <p>MC: J. Hanson</p> <p>MG: Jo Hanson</p>	<p>16</p> <p>MC: L. Nilssen R. Singer</p> <p>MG: C. Berman</p>	<p>17</p> <p>MC: L. Towner</p> <p>MG: D. Beeman, N.Carmel, N.Cook J. Resker</p>	<p>18</p> <p>MC: K. Findley</p> <p>MG: T. Stewart</p>	<p>19</p> <p>MC: R. Goodell K. Grove J. Vollstedt</p> <p>MG: P. Olsen</p>
<p>22</p> <p>MC: J. Hanson</p> <p>MG: Jo Hanson</p>	<p>23</p> <p>MC: R. Goodell R. Singer</p> <p>MG: C. Berman</p>	<p>24</p> <p>MC: L. Towner</p> <p>MG: D. Beeman, N.Carmel, N.Cook J. Resker</p>	<p>25</p> <p>MC:</p> <p>MG:</p>	<p>26</p> <p>MC: M. Andrews</p> <p>MG: E. Mirabelli</p>
<p>29</p> <p>MC: J. Hanson L. Nilssen</p> <p>MG: Jo Hanson</p>	<p>30</p> <p>MC: K. Findley R. Goodell</p> <p>MG: M. Watts</p>	<p>31</p> <p>MC: L. Towner</p> <p>MG: D. Beeman, N.Carmel, N.Cook J. Resker</p>		