



Connections

NEWSLETTER OF THE *CONNECT TO PROTECT NETWORK*

June 2010 - Issue 2

CONNECTING MEMBERS

One of the main goals of the Connect to Protect Network is to develop an active network of members that assist each other with garden maintenance, plantings, and advice. We want to see the network flourish! To facilitate network exchange, we created *Connections*. We will regularly post useful information, including opportunities to assist with CTPN related activities throughout Miami.

Several months ago, we launched our Facebook page which is an excellent way to meet other CTPN members. We encourage you to use Facebook to share ideas by posting relevant information.

Learn about upcoming events and recent developments through *Connections*. If you have information that you would like us to distribute through the newsletter, please email Joyce Maschinski (jmaschinski@fairchildgarden.org) or Devon Powell (dpowell@fairchildgarden.org).

GARDEN IN FOCUS

In each issue of *Connections* we will highlight a garden in the Connect to Protect Network. In this issue, the garden at CasaLin dos.

Located in the heart of the Wynwood art district, in a place where natural pine forest is a memory long gone, lives an extraordinary pine rockland garden.



Pine rockland garden at CasaLin dos

At the time of purchase, this yard could be described as nothing more than a dusty lot. Today it's a place dedicated to the native flora that character-

izes our unique Miami pine rocklands. As beautiful, and as even natural as this garden now seems, getting to this point was no easy task. A backhoe was used to remove yards and yards of fill exposing limestone karst, hundreds of plants were installed, bales of pine needles were used as mulch, and crushed coquina shells were brought in to create "natural" paths.



Influenced by the concepts that formed the Connect to Protect Network, Lin Lougheed, owner of CasaLin dos, hopes that his pine rockland garden will inspire the local community to utilize natives in their landscape. In the words of Mr. Lougheed, "the need [for native plantings] exists, we must now create the desire."

Lin welcomes visitors from the CTPN and native plant enthusiasts. E-mail for an appointment: lougheed@lougheed.com

PLANTS TO SHARE

* CTPN member, Lauren McFarland has seedlings and cuttings to share. If interested, please email Lauren. Lauren@ilcs.net

* Fairchild would like to share some of the extra *Guettarda scabra* and *Acacia pinetorum* in our collection. Email Devon Powell for more details. dpowell@fairchildgarden.org

Visit us at www.fairchildgarden.org/centerfortropicalplantconservation/connecttoprotect/

PESKY PLANTS

Rose Natal Grass (*Melinis Repens*)



Originally from Africa, *Melinis repens* was brought to the United States in the late 1800's and introduced as a forage crop (Stokes, 2009).

Melinis repens now occurs throughout Florida and has naturalized in our wild areas. The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) considers it to be invasive and has placed the species on their list of invasive plants.

Rose natal grass is listed as a Category 1- FLEPPC invasive plant. Category 1 species are defined as "invasive exotics that are altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives" (fleppc.org).

Fairchild graduate student Cara Cooper will focus her research on *Melinis repens*. She will look at seed production and viability and persistence of this species in the seed bank, as well as coming up with Best Management Practices for eradicating this invasive plant from our natural areas.

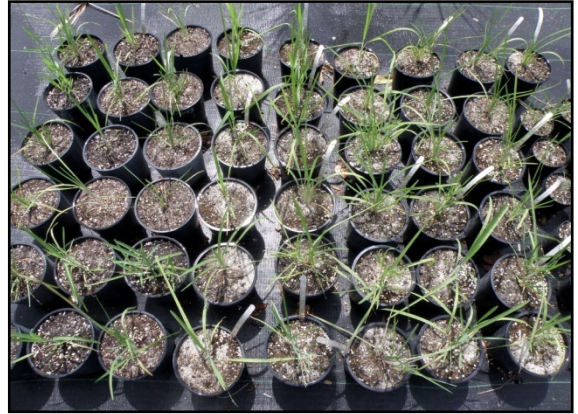
* To learn more about non-native, invasive pest plants and how they affect our wild areas, please visit www.fleppc.org.

GRASS RESTORATION STUDY

Grasses are a major contributor to the composition of our native pine rocklands. At Fairchild, we've been conducting germination trials on seeds of several native pine rockland grasses to better understand the germination requirements of these species.

As a result of these studies we currently have 316 seedlings representing 11 different species growing in our greenhouses. These plants will be used for our Connect to Protect program to provide beautiful native grass additions to our planted pine rockland gardens, as well as for field restoration projects

to be conducted by Fairchild in collaboration with Miami-Dade County.



Seedlings from germination trials growing at FTBG

NATIVE PLANT PROFILES

Crenulate lead plant (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *crenulata*)

The Crenulate lead plant is a shrub endemic to Miami-Dade county pinelands. This plant is heavily dependent on fire, so if you have it in your yard do not be afraid to simulate fire by cutting it back to the ground. Within a week or so new shoots will begin to grow.



Recently pruned plants growing at FTBG

Pineland heliotrope (*Heliotropium polyphyllum*)



Cuttings growing at FTBG

Pineland heliotrope is a showy perennial herb native to Florida and the Bahamas. This plant provides a nectar source for small butterflies and is easily propagated by cuttings.

Pineywoods dropseed (*Sporobolus junceus*)

This beautiful grass is native to pinelands of the southeastern U.S. Pineywoods dropseed can be found at several native nurseries and may be propagated by division or seed.

