



Connections

NEWSLETTER OF THE *CONNECT TO PROTECT NETWORK*

November 2010 – Issue 3

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.

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 our third issue of *Connections* we focus our attention on the pine rockland garden at the home of Patty Phares. Patty started gardening in the early 1980's, but it wasn't until after Hurricane Andrew, when she was forced to re-landscape, that she began gardening with natives.



When we asked Patty about her experience with gardening she said, "I have become more laissez faire as I realize that Mother Nature is in charge – not me. Thus I have a high tolerance for volunteers in the garden and imperfections in plants. Failures aren't disasters. I generally don't become too attached to particular plants". She says her garden has evolved and she has come to accept that "some things (plants) work out, and some don't".

We'd like to share some advice Patty gave us recently when asked about her experiences gardening with native plants:

- 1. Choose your site carefully.** If you don't have a site as big as you want, it might be better to split it into small beds in different locations that have better conditions, rather than to try to fight with the inappropriate spot.
- 2. Don't over mulch.** If you do, make it occasional and very light -- do it just before company comes so it will look pretty! Pinelands that are functioning naturally do not have a deep layer of pine needles. Too much mulch creates a moist environment for weeds to germinate, they don't necessarily keep down the weeds. As mulch decomposes, it creates nice, rich soil. That's not what you want for your pine rockland garden.
- 3. Keep up with your weeding.** Weed every month in the summer, and less in the cooler, drier months, be lazy in the winter. Go out in the early morning or late evening for 15 minutes – it's worthwhile. The more you stay on top of your weeding the less work you will need to devote to weeding over time. Learn which "weeds" are aggressive and consider accepting some that are native. Native weeds, like Spanish-needles (*Bidens alba*), are attractive and beneficial to wildlife. Many species of native butterflies will nectar from *Bidens*.

Finally, Patty says "don't strive for too much order".

PLANTS TO SHARE

•Fairchild would like to share some of the extra plants in our collection: *Acacia pinetorum*, *Guettarda scabra*, *Sabal palmetto*, and several species of grasses. Please email Devon Powell if interested. dpowell@fairchildgarden.org

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?



Amorpha herbacea var. *crenulata*
Crenulate leadplant

Private landowners play an important role in the conservation of rare plants. To determine how important a role they play, we would like to find out how many endangered Crenulate leadplants (*Amorpha herbacea* var. *crenulata*) may be growing on private land. If you have this plant growing in your yard and would be willing to participate in our study, please send your name, address, and the number of plants you have growing to Joyce Maschinski jmaschinski@fairchildgarden.org.

With this information we will create a map that shows the number and areas of Crenulate leadplants. It is possible that the plants growing on private land significantly increase the total living plants and help connect the wild populations currently growing in public parks. Thank you for your participation!

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Habitat Restoration Workday

North Shore Open Space Park
(87th St. on Miami Beach)
November 18th from 9:30-1:30
Contact Sam Wright for more info.
swright@fairchildgarden.org

*Fairchild's 70th Ramble

November 12th-14th from 9:30-4:30
There will be several vendors selling native plants, including Fairchild.

NATIVE PLANT PROFILES

Spanish-needles

Bidens alba var. *radiata*

Spanish-needles are a common perennial herb found in North (excluding Canada) and Central America. *Bidens* is the larval host to dainty sulphur butterflies and a nectar source for at least 35 species of butterflies (regionalconservation.org)



Quailberry

Crossopetalum ilicifolium



Crossopetalum ilicifolium is listed as state threatened and is found in south Florida and the Caribbean. Quailberry is a sprawling groundcover that is fairly drought tolerant and can be planted in full sun to partial shade. This plant provides a food source to wildlife.

Walter's groundcherry

Physalis walteri

Physalis walteri is a perennial herb that produces an edible fruit which looks much like a small tomatillo. Walter's groundcherry is drought tolerant and can be planted in full sun to partial shade. This species roots easily from cuttings.



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