



## 2020 Florida Rare Plant Task Force Meeting Call for Papers

*"The Growth of Rare Plants: from horticulture to wild recruitment to tissue culture"*

Meeting dates: April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>

Meeting venue: The Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Naples, FL

Co-hosted by Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Bok Tower Gardens, Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens, and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Bok Tower Gardens, and the Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens are pleased to announce the 2020 Florida Rare Plant Task Force Meeting sponsored by the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry. Each year, the Rare Plant Task Force of Florida serves as the place for Florida's professional plant conservation community to share ideas and discuss, prioritize, and coordinate ongoing plant conservation efforts around the state.

**Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** will consist of presentations on the meeting theme of *"The Growth of Rare Plants: from horticulture to recruitment in the wild to tissue culture,"* and will include the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Florida Plant Conservation Alliance (FPCA) section to discuss safeguarding endangered species in Florida, along with a lunchtime tour and after-meeting social at the nearby Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens.

**Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>** will consist of a variety of half-day field trip adventures to local native habitats and points of interest.

This year, we invite abstracts for oral presentations and posters focusing on propagation, cultivation, and both *in situ* and *ex situ* growth of rare, threatened, and endangered plants. All plant conservation-related submissions will be considered based on merit.

Registration information will be distributed in early 2020, and registration forms and updated information will be available through the Bok Tower Gardens website at that time.  
<https://boktowergardens.org/conservation/rare-plant-task-force/>

**Please submit abstracts to Philip Gonsiska [pgonsiska@boktower.org](mailto:pgonsiska@boktower.org) by December 31, 2019.**

**Please forward this announcement to any interested parties!**

**To submit an abstract for an oral or poster presentation please limit content to 250 words and follow the following sample format.** Indicate whether this is an oral or poster presentation. Oral presentations will be 15 minutes in length. Presenters are encouraged to allow up to 5 minutes for questions.

### **Sample Abstract Format**

**Eric S. Menges**, Archbold Biological Station, **B. Pace-Aldana**, The Nature Conservancy, **Sarah H. Crate**, Archbold Biological Station, and **Stacy A. Smith**, Archbold Biological Station, "Ecology and Conservation of the Endangered Legume *Crotalaria avonensis* in Florida Scrub."  
emenges@archbold-station.org (ORAL PRESENTATION)

We analyze the ecology of the highly endangered Florida scrub plant *Crotalaria avonensis* (Avon Park harebells) based on data collected from 1998-2014. This perennial herbaceous legume occurs at 3 sites and prefers microsites with less vegetation cover and more bare sand. At an unprotected site, populations have declined in size, but dynamics have been more stable at the 2 protected sites. Marked plants have shown high survival, slow and inconsistent growth, and occasional plant dormancy (usually 1-2 years). *C. avonensis* is reproductively challenged, with very low rates of fruit set and infrequent visitation by required pollinators. The hard seeded fruits germinated at 13-56%, with scarification increasing germination rate. Unscarified seeds formed a persistent seed bank for at least 3 years. Seedlings recruited rarely, had moderate survival, began flowering at 4 years of age or later, and reached the size of median adult plants in 6-8 years. Herbivores affected 7-53% of plants in a given year, but plants showed rapid compensatory resprouting. Caging plants reduced herbivory and increased survival, growth and flowering. Plants resprouted after fire and mechanical disturbance with higher survival and growth, but repeated disturbances by vehicles caused increased mortality. *C. avonensis* remains extremely endangered due to its limited range, small population sizes and miniscule seedling recruitment. We recommend fire management, protection from herbivory, and introductions and augmentations to help this species recover.