

## Preserve Native Plants



by joining the Florida Native Plant Society, the only organization dedicated to conservation and restoration of Florida's native plant communities.

Shouldn't YOU and your colleagues be members?

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There is strength in numbers.

We fund native plant research and education. Membership includes quarterly magazine, *The Palmetto*. And more.



Florida Native Plant Society

[www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)

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## Invasive Plants

in Natural and Managed Systems:

Linking Science & Management and the

7th International Conference on the

Ecology & Management of Alien Plant Invasions

November 3-7, 2003  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

<http://www.esa.org/ipinams-emapi7/>

## CONTROL Invasives, IMPROVE the Neighborhood and RECLAIM the Park

by Roy Alexander

Exciting changes are in the works for three-acre Shamrock Park in urban Charlotte, NC. The lower third of the site is being converted from a "wasteland" heavily overgrown with exotic invasive plants into a demonstration garden for native plants and wildlife-friendly landscaping. The area includes a small creek that collects water from both springs and seeps in the upper part of the park as well as runoff from streets and fifty-year-old residences in this central-city neighborhood. The creek was dubbed "Vanishing Creek" because it emerges from a culvert beneath the upper portion of the park and disappears into another culvert as it exits the park.

Experts from Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation removed woody invasive species on September 13, 2002. The process involved cutting out dense growth of invasives such as ligustrum, mulberry, and Russian olive, as well as thinning of poplar, cherry, and black gum. Cut stumps were treated with Rodeo and poison ivy was sprayed to allow access to the creek by children. This access was facilitated by a crew of neighborhood residents who constructed a footpath along the creek complete with crossing logs and a stairway at the south end.

On the advice of Dr. Larry Mellichamp, neighborhood member, UNC Charlotte botanist and Director of the Cullowhee Conference on Native Plants, a native plant garden in the lightly wooded adjoining area



is proposed. The garden will demonstrate the advantages of using native shrubs, herbaceous plants, and ground covers in landscaping. Signage is being developed detailing the benefits of native plants such as water conservation, reduced pesticide usage, etc.

Funding and materials for these improvements are to be provided by the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department and the UNC Botanical Garden. Additional funding may come from Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency.

Roy Alexander, neighborhood representative for the project, is enthusiastic about the payoffs from the undertaking and stated, "We not only get more usable recreation space in our little park, but we get an ongoing educational resource to help us learn how to landscape our homes according to environmentally sound principles."

You can contact Roy Alexander of the Charlotte, NC Weed Team at [sueroy@prodigy.net](mailto:sueroy@prodigy.net)