



This semi-annual newsletter is published by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center, 14119 Broad Street, Brooksville, FL 34601-4525, Tel: 352-796-9600, FAX: 352-799-7305.

Let's Hear It For The Plants!!!

Ivan, Dennis, Katrina... To the residents of Gulf Shores, Alabama, these names have greater significance than for many in the United States. These three hurricanes devastated this coastal community, destroying the protective dune network that, according to Mr. Richard Billiet of Gulf Shores, used to block the view of the Gulf from his front porch. Now he has no problem seeing the water. It was these dunes, though, that saved most of the houses on this stretch of beach. After the clean-up operation, the need to start rebuilding the protective dunes prompted Alabama NRCS personnel to request assistance from the Brooksville Plant Materials Center (PMC) in providing information on adapted plant materials and planting technology.

On May 24-25, 2006, just prior to the start of hurricane season, the Brooksville, FL Plant Materials Center hosted the *Alabama Coastal Dune Restoration Workshop and Field Day* in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The Workshop/Field Day was a cooperative effort between the Brooksville PMC staff, Alabama NRCS, the Baldwin County Soil and Water Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Approximately 60 participants attended the workshop and field planting which reached federal, state, and local agencies, private landowners, conservation groups, and middle and high school students.

On the first day the participants, learned about the USDA-NRCS, Plant Materials Program's coastal restoration plant development efforts from Janet Grabowski, Manager of the Brooksville PMC. In addition to the coastal materials 'Northpa' and 'Southpa' bitter panicum, 'Flageo' and 'Sharp' marshhay cordgrass, and 'Flora Sun' beach sunflower (above right), developed by the Brooksville PMC, Janet also provided information about plant materials available from the Golden Meadow PMC in Louisiana. Then Dr. Deborah Miller, Restora-



tion Ecologist at the University of Florida, West Florida Research and Education Center in Milton, FL, discussed her research in coastal ecology and the need from a habitat stand point to ensure that coastal plantings are more than monocultures of seaoats. Following this talk, Dr. John Hovanesian, president of CNPS, Inc., a company that specializes in commercial coastal restoration plantings and a member of the National Plant Materials Program Advisory Committee, provided information regarding the nuts and bolts of commercial scale coastal restoration projects. Projects that covered miles of beach front and needed millions of plants were described. Additionally, Mr. Rob Tawes of the US Fish and Wildlife Service gave a presentation dealing with endangered species considerations, beach access, and permitting.

The next day, participants had the up-close-and-personal experience of planting over 2,000 plants adapted to the Alabama coastline on a Bureau of Land Management beach site. The plants were provided by the Brooksville PMC or donated by Dr. Hovanesian and CNPS, Inc. In addition to learning the differences between the plants, everyone learned about the critical issues of sand fence placement for sea turtle nesting habitat, and plant spacing to minimize erosion potential. The latest planting method using hydrated polymer gel and slow release fertilizer was also demonstrated. Throughout the program, the Brooksville PMC staff emphasized that dune restoration did not need to be left to the professionals. Individual homeowners, residence associations, local schools, etc., could all contribute to the restoration of a functioning coastal dune environment for both humans and wildlife.



¿Habla Español?

The PMC has had its general information brochure translated to better serve our Spanish-speaking customers. If you would like a hard copy of this brochure,

please contact the PMC at (352) 796-9600 or Mimi Williams, Plant Materials Specialist, at (352) 338-9544. We hope to also have it available on our web site in the near future. Translation is a difficult process for us because we do not have a native speaker on staff and have to rely on outside individuals for this service, but we realize that we have a significant Spanish-speaking customer base and would like to provide at least a limited number of our most important publications in this format. If you have an opinion about which of our publications you feel should rank high in the priority list for translation, please let us know.

Upcoming Meetings

Florida Nursery and Allied Trades Show – September 28-30 - Orlando

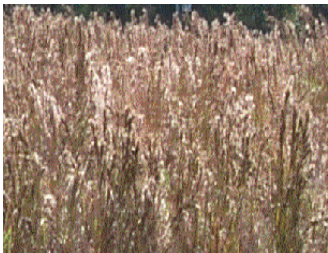
5th Eastern Native Grass Symposium – October 10-13 – New Cumberland, PA

33rd Annual Conference on Ecosystem Restoration and Creation – November 2-3 – Plant City

*Plant Materials Technical Committee – November 7-8 – PMC
FL Pastureland Ecology Training – November 29-December 1 – PMC*

2006/7 Plant Materials Available

The PMC has two new releases that will be available for distribution to commercial growers for the 2007 growing season. These releases are **Ghost Rider Germplasm purple bluestem** (left) and **Morning Mist Germplasm hairawn muhly** (right), a white flowered selection. Seeds of Ghost Rider and plants of Morning Mist can be requested from Mimi Williams, Plant Materials Specialist, at (352) 338-9544.



Seeds and/or plants of the following PMC releases are also available for production purposes. These plants were selected to meet conservation needs and are recommended by USDA-NRCS for planting throughout

the Florida PMC service area. Contact the PMC for additional information at (352) 796-9600.

- ◆ **Floral Passion blazing star**
- ◆ **Miami, Stewart, and Wabasso switchgrass**
- ◆ **‘Flora Sun’ beach sunflower**
- ◆ **‘Northpa’ and ‘Southpa’ bitter panicum**
- ◆ **‘Sharp’ and ‘Flageo’ marshhay cordgrass**
- ◆ **Citrus maidencane**
- ◆ **‘Florigraze’ and ‘Arbrook’ perennial peanut**
- ◆ **‘Chapingo’ Mexican teosinte**
- ◆ **Martin and St. Lucie eastern gamagrass**
- ◆ **Brooksville 67 and Brooksville 68 perennial peanut**

Sunrise at the P.M.C.

*It's the gray light of dawn
Before the sun shows it's face
And the world is waking up
Like a magical place*

*A screaming cry.
To it's mate on a limb.
Soon she'll take off,
fly up and join him.*

*It's the time when the world
goes from nocturnal to day.
Some animals going to bed
Some getting up to feed and play*

*Sitting on an old snag.
Is a hawk called "Red Shoulder"
For his size and confidence
There's no bird that is bolder*

*An owl in the woods
With a haunting "Whoop Whoop"
It's good morning to some
But it's good night to you.*

*Robins and Killdeer hunting
for bugs and seed.
As fat as they are
It must be a steady need.*

*The deer legs are hidden
In the mist near the ground.
They look like they're on a pond
Just swimming around*

*If you ever watched
An Eagle fly by
Then you know
Why he's the "King of the sky"*

*The sun finally comes up
for all the world to see.
It burns off the morning mist
And the deer tend to flee*

*Curlews, sparrows and
even field mice.
It's all one big circle
of nature and life.*

*Hear the "talk, talk, talk"
of an old Turkey Tom.
Like ghost in the woods
"Where did they all come from?"*

*The sun's all the way up
It's another beautiful day
Guess I'll start in now
Earning my pay.*

*A hawk rides the currents
of the wind overhead.
When he banks for a turn
You can see his tail's red.*

*These are some sights I see,
At the start of my day.
But without conservation,
it could all go away.*

By
Ed Black
2005

Look up the Brooksville, FL PMC at <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov> or <http://www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flplantmaterials.html>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.