



City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road
Sanibel, FL 33957

Meeting Agenda - Final Vegetation Committee

Thursday, July 2, 2026

1:30 PM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

1. Call To Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

- a. Motion to excuse absent member(s):

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Adoption of the May 7, 2026, meeting minutes

Attachments: [May 7, 2026, meeting minutes](#)

5. Public Comment

6. Old Business

- a. Education Article - Java Pulm

Attachments: [Java Plum the Purple Invader](#)

- b. Education Article - Carrotwood

Attachments: [Carrotwood No Physical Description](#)

7. New Business

- a. Committee Review of Existing Education Articles

8. Reports

- a. Natural Resources Liaison Report
- b. Chairpersons' Report
- c. Committee Member Report

9. Next Meeting Date

- a. Thursday, September 3, 2026 at MacKenzie Hall

10. Public Comment

11. Adjournment

RULES OF CIVILITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In recognition that public discourse is essential to the democratic system of government on April 16, 2002, Sanibel City Council adopted a Proclamation embracing civility in public deliberations. These rules were updated February 22, 2007.

Therefore, Sanibel City Council sanctioned these rules for public participation while conducting meetings and workshops:

1. Speakers are permitted to deliver his or her comments without interruption.
2. Speakers and debates should focus on issues, not on persons or personalities.
3. Persons are encouraged to participate in the governmental process.
4. To allow time to hear all points of view, speakers are allotted 3 minutes each time they are recognized.
5. Sidebar discussions while others are speaking are not permitted in Council Chambers. These discussions are to be removed from the chamber so as not to be disruptive to those conducting and following Council business.
6. Only the speaker recognized by the Chairperson has the floor. Speakers should raise their hand to be recognized. Speakers should identify themselves for the record. Speakers should utilize the microphone so that their comments can be recorded.
7. Anyone wishing to speak on an issue is given an opportunity to speak before speakers are recognized for an opportunity to speak a second time on an issue.
8. We seek to understand one another's points of view.
9. Anger, rudeness, ridicule, impatience and lack of respect for others are not acceptable behavior. Demonstrations in support or opposition to a speaker or idea such as clapping, cheering, booing or hissing or intimidating body language are not permitted in Council Chambers or workshop facilities.
10. We should all take initiative to make things better. Our goal is to foster an environment, which encourages a fair discussion and exchange of ideas without fear of personal attacks.

As approved 022007
Sanibel City Council

In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding, to include hearing impairment, should contact Scotty Lynn Kelly, City Clerk, no later than one day prior to the proceedings at (239) 472-3700. For additional assistance if hearing impaired, telephone the Florida Relay Service at 711.

Citizens may request to receive Sanibel City Council and Planning Commission meeting agenda directly via e-mail. Citizens wishing to receive a copy of the agenda via e-mail may do so by visiting the City's website at www.mysanibel.com. Additionally, citizens may register to receive City announcements such as press releases.



City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road
Sanibel, FL 33957

Meeting Minutes - Draft Vegetation Committee

Thursday, May 7, 2026

1:30 PM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

1. Call To Order

The meeting convened at 1:30 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Wyskowski led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Committee Member Barbara Boyce, Committee Member Barbara Horvath, Committee Member Barb Wyskowski, Committee Member David Muench, Committee Member Pamela Miller and Committee Member Vincent Simonelli

a. Motion to excuse absent member(s):

All committee members were present.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Adoption of the March 5, 2026, meeting minutes

Committee Member Muench moved, seconded by Vice Chair Miller to adopt the March 5, 2026, meeting minutes. The motion carried,

5. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

6. Old Business

a. 2026 Earth Day Event Report

Chair Wyskowski spoke to the 2026 Earth Day Event and provided a brief overview of the event turnout. Discussion ensued regarding visitation to the Vegetation Committee table.

Natural Resources Liaison Rachel Rainbolt requested recommendations from the Vegetation Committee to improve future Earth Day events. The committee suggested additional signage related to vegetation, as well as signage displaying event hours and

the rotation schedule for the Plant Walk.

7. New Business

a. Vegetation Committee Article - Carrotwood

The Committee discussed comments and corrections to the Carrotwood article.

* Removal of "habitat invasion" due to duplicate information.

Rachel Rainbolt spoke to adding images to the final draft of the article. Discussion ensued regarding a future FISC article, potentially focusing on Milkweed.

Discussion ensued regarding educational information and the Committee's responsibility for providing educational materials to the public, including articles.

Discussion ensued regarding the invasive species list and whether the Committee is responsible for adding or removing species from the list. Rachel Rainbolt explained the process for updating the invasive species list. Discussion continued regarding Carrotwood and its codification.

Discussion ensued regarding the Washington Fan Palm potentially becoming an issue on the island and the possibility of it being the subject of a future Committee article.

Discussion ensued regarding educating homeowners on mulch used in landscaping, specifically free mulch obtained from landscapers. The Committee discussed concerns that improperly cured mulch may contribute to the spread of invasive species.

8. Reports

a. Natural Resources Liaison Report

Rachel Rainbolt provided the following updates to the Vegetation Committee:

* At the May 5, 2026, City Council meeting, Council approved the second reading of the vegetation standards related to commercial buffers.

* Community Park Planting: More than 60 canopy-category trees are being installed this week.

* Roots and Resiliency applied for funding pertaining to the Causeway Boulevard corridor planting project.

* Staff is finalizing the dune planting project.

Discussion ensued regarding the vegetation buffer standards and the recently adopted amendments.

b. Chairpersons' Report

Chair Wyskowski spoke to a potential guest speaker, Mark Young, who has been involved with the Causeway planting project. The proposed topic would focus on native trees being installed along the Causeway in Lee County.

Chair Wyskowski continued discussion regarding additional potential guest speakers for future meetings.

c. Committee Members Report

Nothing to report.

Discussion ensued regarding coordinating with the City's Public Information Officer (PIO) on the development of a Rain Garden video for the Vegetation Committee.

Discussion ensued regarding the planting component of the planting grant fund.

9. Next Meeting Date

- a.** Thursday, June 4, 2026 at MacKenzie Hall

10. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

11. Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:06 P.M.

Java Plum: The Purple Invader

Introduced by the USDA in 1911 as an ornamental landscape plant with edible fruit, the Java Plum (*Syzygium cumini*) originated from Asia and India. It quickly adapted to Southwest Florida's warm tropical climate. This evergreen tree has smooth glossy opposite leaves with short, pointed tips. Its pinkish white flowers are clustered at the stem tips. Abundant dark purple fruit with lavender flesh is used for medicinal properties and a food source in some parts of the world. This tree quickly grows up to 80 feet and is long lived. Its dense foliage forms canopies that shade out young native plants and it produces a prolific number of seeds that are quickly dispersed by mammals and birds in Sanibel's environmentally sensitive areas. Seedlings develop quickly in natural areas. Falling plums litter and stain pavements, ferment rapidly, and create a foul odor. Java Plum is not considered salt tolerant, so hurricane Ian, tropical storm Debbie, hurricane Helene, and hurricane Milton curbed its growth and development for a few years.

Java Plum is listed as a category I invasive species by the Florida Exotic Pest Council (FLEPPC). A category I indicates that the plant is altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing the plant community structure or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives. The biodiversity of our island is negatively affected by invasive plants on our sanctuary island.

The best method to eradicate this tree is hand pulling seedlings. Mature trees should be cut to the ground and the stump immediately treated with Ortho MAX, Garlon, or similar products. This treatment may have to be repeated.

There are several Florida native trees that could easily replace a Java Plum in your yard: Strangler Fig, Live Oak, Mastic tree, or Gumbo Limbo. These native replacement trees provide a food source and cover for our wildlife.

Please remember that Java Plum is only one of the eight regulated invasive plants on Sanibel. The others include Mother-in-Tongue, Brazilian Pepper, Ear Leaf Acacia, Exotic Inkberry, Melaleuca, Lead Tree, and Air Potato. These eight species are not permitted to be grown, sold, or propagated on Sanibel, and upon the issuance of a City Development Permit, they are required to be removed from the parcel which must be maintained free of these plants in perpetuity. To view pictures of the Invasive Exotic Plants "Worst of the Worst" or the City's "The Alien Invasion" brochure, visit the City's website at <http://www.mysanibel.com/Departments/NaturalResources/Vegetation-Information/Exotic-Vegetation/Other-Invasive-Exotic-Vegetation> or contact the City's Natural Resources Department at 472-3700.

What's Up Doc? The Invasive Carrotwood in Southwest Florida Ecosystems

The integrity of Florida's native ecosystems is continually challenged by the introduction and spread of non-native, invasive plant species.

Among the most aggressive invaders is the carrotwood tree, *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*. While its ornamental qualities—such as its evergreen foliage and attractive, colorful fruit—led to its introduction, these same characteristics now fuel its invasive success.

Carrotwood, an evergreen tree native to Australia, New Guinea, and Indonesia with a height of up to 35 feet, represents a significant ecological threat across Central and South Florida, with its impact acutely felt in the diverse natural areas of Southwest Florida.

Introduced as an ornamental in the mid-20th century, this species has escaped cultivation as its seeds are readily dispersed by birds. It has rapidly established itself, leading to the degradation of sensitive coastal and terrestrial habitats. Carrotwood invades natural areas, forming dense monocultures and displacing native flora, making it a threat to critical coastal ecosystems such as mangrove ecosystems.

Southwest Florida, characterized by its unique blend of pine flatwoods, cypress swamps, coastal dunes, mangrove habitats, and marshes, is particularly vulnerable to invasive encroachment. The rapid proliferation of carrotwood threatens the biodiversity and ecological function of these fragile areas, leading to its classification as a Category I invasive species by the Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC) and as a Noxious Weed by the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS).

Carrotwood specimens have been documented in Florida as early as 1955 in eastern Florida, with a separate introduction occurring in Sarasota in 1968, leading to large-scale propagation as a landscape tree. By 1990, wild seedlings began appearing in natural areas across both Florida coasts. The primary mechanism for its widespread dispersal is the ingestion of its brightly colored fruits by birds, which then deposit the seeds widely away from the parent plant. This bird-mediated dispersal has allowed it to colonize habitats throughout central and south Florida.

The ecological threat posed by carrotwood stems from its aggressive growth habit and its ability to dominate native plant communities, forming dense monocultures which alter ecological function. By out-competing and crowding out native plants for essential light and nutrients, carrotwood drastically alters the understory habitat structure. This reduction in native species diversity directly impacts wildlife that depend on the native flora for food and shelter. Coastal ecosystems, such as mangrove swamps—critical nursery grounds for marine life and habitat for wading birds—are under special threat due to carrotwood establishment. The alteration of species composition in these already stressed coastal areas increases overall ecosystem stress.

Due to its status as a prohibited Noxious Weed, the introduction, possession, movement, or release of carrotwood without a permit is illegal. Effective management requires preventing its establishment and removing existing populations by hand pulling seedlings, cutting and chemical treatment to prevent resprouting, and application of an herbicide containing glyphosate or triclopyr directly to the freshly cut

stump. Complete eradication is challenging due to the tree's resilience and ability to regenerate from root fragments.

Do not dispose of the carrotwood with your vegetative waste- place it into heavy duty black plastic bags and place it with your regular trash for landfill disposal, not yard waste, to prevent spreading. Following removal, replacing the invasive tree with a native species such as Yaupon holly is recommended to aid in ecosystem restoration.