



Florida Fish & Wildlife News

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Chair's Message

Jay Exum

Greetings Florida Wildlife Federation Members and Supporters!



The Florida Wildlife Federation has had a prominent role in conservation land acquisition across the state for decades. We are still fighting for dedicated funding for Florida Forever and proper allocation of funds from the Water and Land Legacy Conservation Initiative (Amendment 1 from 2014). Historically, statewide efforts to protect natural lands have been supported by local conservation initiatives. Local governments have provided hundreds of millions of dollars for conservation acquisition to protect locally significant natural communities.

FWF staff and board members are active in local conservation efforts to protect habitat for species such as the Florida panther and Florida scrub jay; areas important to groundwater recharge; and watersheds that support the Everglades and productive estuaries along the coasts. Our efforts have involved fundraising, technical support and collaboration with landowners to establish conservation easements on private properties with important resource values.

About 20 years ago, I had the pleasure of assisting Pasco County with the creation of a comprehensive strategy for habitat conservation through the identification of critical ecological corridors. I am proud to say the County has been striving to meet the objectives defined by the plan ever since. New Florida Wildlife Federation board member Dr. Rene Brown is now Pasco County's Natural Resources Manager. Dr. Brown recently oversaw the acquisition of 318 acres in the North Pasco (Starkey) to Crossbar Ecological Corridor. With this

acquisition, the County has been able to protect over 1,700 acres of contiguous conservation land in this



Animal: Sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis*)

corridor alone. Additionally, in December, the Natural Resources Division purchased 843.5 acres in two Ecological Corridors. These two important acquisitions represent a regionally significant conservation resource for present and future generations.

There is still a lot of pressure on the environment from growth in Pasco County and strategic land acquisition is imperative to protect large swaths of natural lands there. Similar circumstances exist across the state as growth and road construction fragments and isolates important corridors. I urge you to get involved with local conservation initiatives to protect large-scale, connected habitats in your cities and counties. Through coordinated efforts across regions, these initiatives can augment previously protected habitats.

Let us know how we can help.

Cover photo information on page 5



Florida Fish & Wildlife News

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Animal: Florida Panther Photographer: Elie Wolf
Location: Homosassa Springs State Wildlife Park

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Put the Brakes on the Toll Roads

At the end of the 2019 Legislative Session, legislators passed a law that will create three new massive toll roads in what remains of rural parts of the Florida peninsula. These roads were not part of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) plans but were mainly supported by road builders and potential developers. The three roadways, totaling 330 miles, have been fast-tracked for completion even as existing routes need refurbishing. **Indeed, Florida's present transportation infrastructure is ranked 40th in the nation as to overall effectiveness and condition. Shouldn't we focus on these existing needs?**

One rationale for these roads is to assist in hurricane evacuations, but this makes little sense. Florida emergency management directs Floridians to shelter in place or go to a safe location in your own county. Being on the road during a hurricane is a bad idea.

What are the actual costs for these toll roads? The existing Suncoast Parkway toll road does not get enough use to pay for itself and is subsidized by users of the Florida Turnpike. It is a good bet that the proposed toll roads will have to be paid for by drivers on other roads, in other words, the taxpayers. **The footprint of the toll roads themselves will destroy approximately 52,000 acres of undeveloped land and will no doubt lead to increased suburban sprawl.** Unfettered sprawl is even more likely as growth management was eviscerated by the elimination of the Department of Community Affairs, which previously added some guidance to development plans. More sprawl means more water consumption, less land for water recharge and additional pollution to our rivers, springs and remaining wetlands. **As water has finally been recognized as a priority, these roads are a major step backward on the path to a clean and abundant water supply.**

Moreover, small towns and small-town life will be impacted as either potential job-producing customers will be by-passing local businesses, or these communities will be forever changed, turned into yet another strip mall laden "anywhere." Old Florida will indeed be lost, replaced by a hot New Jersey.

Wildlife will no doubt suffer as road kills will increase. **Our endangered Florida panther and all types of native species will pay the price for these roads, which will serve to fragment existing habitats and conservation areas.**

In lieu of spending our tax dollars to finance these roads, why not do as many other populous states and nations have done and put our money behind mass transit. Bullet trains are now common in other parts of the globe and as a long state, a train that parallels existing interstates would lessen pollution, move people safely, and get people out of their cars.

It is hoped the toll roads idea will be put aside and a more sustainable, Florida-friendly effort will be initiated. Once these roads are built, it will be too late.

Preston T. Robertson
President and CEO



Come to our Annual Meeting

Guest Speaker



Senator Bob Graham



Marriott Resort Hutchinson Island
Stuart, Florida
June 6, 2020

More details to come at www.fwfonline.org



Dear Federation Members and Supporters:

The 2020 Legislative Session has begun, having commenced on January 14 and expected to end in mid-March. As Floridians, regardless of political affiliation, we face major crises that only get more critical with each year of inaction. Water quality and quantity has finally made it to its proper place as an issue on the state level and with our population approaching 22 million, we need to act now. Our water supply is not infinite, and with ongoing pollution, much of that water is contaminated. One only needs to look at the harmful algae blooms to see what weak laws and enforcement lead to. After the water is contaminated, the rest of us have to pay to clean it up.

One of the most cost effective ways to retain sufficient clean water for ourselves and the environment is by the protection of natural lands. Not only do natural lands not use water like developed areas do, they actually recharge water into our aquifer. Natural lands also provide much needed habitat for our wildlife. Florida has many species that occur only in our state, such as the rare Florida panther and the scrub jay. **To make sure that the next generation may enjoy its birthright, we must move now to conserve our remaining special places.** That is why FWF has been involved in the Amendment 1 lawsuit. Amendment 1, 2014's Water and Land Legacy Amendment, was to provide sufficient funds to acquire sensitive lands for the betterment of the whole state. We will continue to fight for what 75% of voters supported, full funding for the Florida Forever land protection program, even as the

Legislature continues to ignore the will of the people.

One pending Florida Forever effort is the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape project. FWF is presently advocating for the permanent conservation of the 2,200 acre Amtel

“As Floridians, regardless of political affiliation, we face major crises that only get more critical with each year of inaction.”

Farm tract which lies on the north side of the Caloosahatchee River in Glades County. The land will ensure that panthers, which swim across the river, may disperse northward. The acquisition will also expand upon nearby existing conservation lands in Southwest Florida.

Another issue that will impact the entire state is the three planned toll roads. These toll roads will bring sprawl to the remaining rural parts of the peninsula and undoubtedly spur sprawl. That sprawl will lead to more water usage and the further degradation of our environment. It has even been stated by reliable sources that these roads may well spell the end for the Florida panther and will no doubt lead to the death of many other native species, including black bears. Existing toll roads have not paid for themselves, so one has to wonder exactly who these massive

roads will actually benefit. One of the roads goes through the Big Bend area from Tampa to tiny and historic Monticello, Florida on the Georgia state line, where it is facing local opposition. This northerly toll roads will parallel an already existing highway. These citizens of Old Florida like it the way it is – we don't all want to live in a mega city.

Aside from the Legislature, the Federation is focused on improving environmental education, and you can help. I am sure each one of you knows a child or even an adult who could use a refresher on the fact that we as humans are part of the natural world, not separate from it, and our actions or inactions have consequences. Indeed, there is only one planet. To conserve our resources is to ensure a sustainable future.

Lastly and importantly, we are facing a world of climate change and severe weather. **We have had the hottest temperatures in recorded history these last few years, and there is no sign this situation will abate.** Greenhouse gases such as CO2 trap heat in our atmosphere and this fact has been recognized in advanced nations for years. It is hoped that our state and federal leadership will move to decrease our reliance on fossil fuels and promote renewable energy to stave off the worst impacts.

Actions you can take: Contact Governor Ron DeSantis and ask him to please oppose the toll roads and support full funding for the Florida Forever program. He may be reached at (850) 717-9337.

Preston Robertson

Thoughts from Generation Z

Hi, I'm Allison Ramos, and I am a student at Florida State University. My hometown is Satellite Beach, a city on a barrier island on Florida's east coast.

In 2018, high concentrations of red tide arrived in my city, which was worsened by pesticide and fertilizer runoff. In addition to dead fish washing up along the shore, people in my community began to suffer from respiratory issues due to the red tide.

While this event was what made me more mindful about how my choices impact the world around me, it is crucial that others also become aware of how our decisions affect the environment. The wildfires in Australia, the increased intensities of recent hurricanes, and cities flooding due to sea level rise are not just coincidences, thus, we should not treat them as such.

As a community, nation, and as a human race, we ought to remember that there is only one world in which we all inhabit. Climate change affects everyone and is not a crisis that only one country, class, or political party can fix. From buying reusable products to following environmental legislation, it is more important than ever to make decisions for the next generation, whose quality of life will be determined by how we act today.



Allison Ramos

Hola, me llamo Allison Ramos y soy estudiante de La Universidad Estatal de Florida. Mi pueblo natal es Satellite Beach, una ciudad en la isla de la barrera en la Costa este de Florida.

En 2018, altas concentraciones de marea roja llegaron a mi ciudad, que se agravó por la escorrentía de pesticidas y fertilizantes. Además de los peces muertos que aparecen en la orilla, algunas personas en mi ciudad sufrieron problemas respiratorios debido a la marea roja.

Si bien este evento fue lo que me hizo más consciente de cómo mis elecciones impactan el mundo, es crucial que otros también se den cuenta de cómo nuestras decisiones afectan el medio ambiente. Los incendios forestales en Australia, el aumento de la intensidad de los recientes huracanes, y las inundaciones de las ciudades debido a la erosión de las playas no son solo coincidencias, por lo tanto, no debemos tratarlos como tales.

Como comunidad, nación, y raza humana, debemos recordar que solo hay un mundo en el que todos habitamos. El cambio climático afecta a todos, no es una crisis que solo un país, clase, o partido político necesita arreglar, lo que a menudo se olvida. Desde comprar productos que puedan ser reusados hasta seguir la legislación ambiental; es más importante que nunca tomar decisiones para la próxima generación cuya calidad de vida estará determinada por cómo actuamos hoy.

Cover Image - 2019 Photo Contest Winner



Wildlife - Overall Winner: **The Florida Panther**
Photographer: **Elie Wolf**
Location: **Homosassa Springs State Wildlife Park**

"I am smitten with the beauty of the Florida panther. This one makes a home at Homosassa Springs State Wildlife Park. These cats are under terrible threat due to intense pressure from habitat loss and vehicular collision."

— Elie Wolf



Climate Change – What Can One Person Do?

Our climate is changing dramatically, and we can certainly see the impact in Florida. Coastal cities experience flooding during what we used to think of as normal high tides or summer thunderstorms, and many have suffered disastrous effects from stronger hurricanes. We see more algae in our rivers, changing rainfall patterns, more very hot days and changing bloom times in plants and trees.

The problem is huge, and many factors contribute to the increase in greenhouse gases that has caused our planet's climate to alter so quickly. It's easy to think that the only solutions must come from government and big business. Yet, a report from an organization that's been involved for decades in finding and implementing solutions that focus on what individuals can do suggests there's a big role for people to play.

The organization *Rare/Center for Behavior and the Environment* looks at things that individuals can do to make a positive impact. **As individuals and households and communities, we can learn steps to make substantial change.** The report's solutions are placed into four categories: **food, agriculture, transportation and energy consumption.** In the next few issues of FFWN, I'll share some of the solutions.



Photographer: Nancy Moreland Location: Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park

“Wasted food generates nearly the same amount of carbon emissions as road transportation!”

We love food, so let's start there. It might surprise you that the #1 solution in the food category is reducing waste. **Wasted food generates nearly the same amount of carbon emissions as road transportation!** In the U.S. most of our food is wasted once it gets to us. When we buy more than we can use or toss food into the trash headed to the landfill, we are making waste.

Please check online for the shelf life of various foods - I find it's nearly always longer than I expect.

For example, the site *WebMD* shows eggs are okay for 3-5 weeks from the “sell by” date, pasta and low-acid canned foods like green beans keep up to five years!

Composting is a great way to keep food waste out of landfills, which is important because food breaking down in landfills produces the greenhouse gas methane. **Composting** done right can convert food scraps and plant

materials to a form that can enrich soil without producing methane. Our local UF/IFAS County Extension offices offer classes and information on composting. Check their websites for information.

Eating a more plant-based diet is another significant step we can take. Having meals with veggies, fruits, whole grains and legumes, and less animal protein will go a long way to decreasing greenhouse gases. Getting some of the protein we need from plants and opting for smaller portions can have some added health benefits, too.

Choosing locally grown and produced food is another positive change we can make. Most Florida counties now have locally-grown markets. You can check sites like <https://www.localfarmmarkets.org/FLfarmmarkets.php> to see what's close by. In addition to buying from

a wonderful farmers' market, I'm lucky to be able grow some food in a front yard veggie garden. Several years ago, my neighbors converted part of their large lawn to garden beds and offered some beds to friends to share. Our neighborhood

now hosts four of these small "community gardens."

To help solve the climate crisis, maybe we need to adopt what our grandparents did – **grow what you can, share with neighbors and don't waste anything.** Making

change can be difficult, but it's good to know there are things we can do to help move to a better future.

Mamey

2019 Photo Contest Winners



Flowers: Pine Lilly Photographer: Brian Kamprath
Location: Hal Scott Regional Preserve



Landscape: Mist and Moss Photographer: Kristian Bell
Location: Sarasota



Featured Animal

Florida Native – Key Deer

(Odocoileus virginianus clavium)

The Key deer is an endangered subspecies of the common white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Existing solely in the Florida Keys, male Key deer only grow up to 75 pounds and stand 30 inches at the shoulder. Females are even smaller and have a low reproductive rate. Similar in appearance to more northerly deer, Key deer bucks' antlers are whitish when in velvet. With little fear of humans, these diminutive deer are susceptible to being struck by cars, attacked by dogs or even drowning in a ditch. Easily able to swim between islands, they need to be close to freshwater. Nearly extinct in the 1950's the population now hovers around 750. The National Key Deer Refuge on Big Pine Key provides habitat for these rare creatures, but development is always a threat, as is more frequent severe weather. Location: Florida Keys, Monroe County



Animal: Key Deer Photographer: Linda Eve Diamond
Location: Big Pine Key



Save Our Habitats and Water

Last year, Senate Bill 7068 created the Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES). This bill requires the state to build three toll roads under a short time frame with little direction.

One of these toll road corridors, the Southwest Central Connector, will impact nine counties across Southwest Florida, including regions identified as core breeding habitat for the endangered Florida panther.

Building the Southwest Central Connector toll road will not only cause irreparable damage to our precious natural resources and impede water quality improvements, but it will undoubtedly inhibit the recovery of the panther.

A similar project to the Southwest Central Connector was proposed and rejected by the Florida Turnpike Enterprise in 2007. It was known as the Heartland Parkway. It was rejected because there was no need, and the proposed toll road did not meet the statutory requirements to qualify as a toll road based on insufficient revenue projections. In fact, the Heartland Parkway was projected to be 83% unfunded based on toll revenue.

Even though there has not been a single study demonstrating that these roads are needed or that they will be a worthy investment, the planning effort for the three proposed toll roads has already been appropriated \$135 million for the next two years. Lawmakers are spending our tax dollars frivolously on this project rather than directing our limited financial resources toward documented real infrastructure and environmental needs.

The Federation opposed M-CORES in the 2019 legislative session and continues to oppose the project moving forward. M-CORES does not protect our state's rural character or our critical agricultural and natural resources, and this process needs to be replaced with a rational transportation planning approach that utilizes a needs-based analysis and prioritizes the conservation of our state's resources.

The Federation is closely monitoring the M-CORES process and engaging in public meetings to voice opposition. The construction of these toll roads will cause irreparable environmental damage, and the Federation will continue to provide technical guidance regarding these detrimental impacts.

Panther Conservation Night at the BB&T Center

For the second year in a row, the Federation participated in the Florida Panther hockey team's Panther Conservation Night. This annual

event features educational tables with information from various local conservation organizations, and we are proud to be a partner. The evening also includes in-game facts and highlights to educate hockey fans about the endangered Florida panther. I sat down with FOX Sports sideline reporter Jessica Blaylock to talk about FWF's work protecting this critical species. You can check out the video clip on the Florida Wildlife Federation's YouTube page.

Humans and Wildlife: Sharing the Landscape

The area known as the DRGR (Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource) in southeast Lee County is under tremendous growth and development pressure. It is an area comprising about 85,000 acres and is impacted primarily by expanding development. It is an important area not only for surface water storage but is also heavily used by Florida panthers, black bears and other wildlife. Increased development is leading to significant habitat loss. A



Panther conservation night

fragmented landscape combined with increased traffic and increased human population all have the potential to adversely impact the panther and all wildlife.

Sprawling residential development in this region not only limits the suitable habitat areas necessary for wildlife to thrive but also increases the potential for human-wildlife interaction and/or conflict. With such expansive residential development encroaching on wildlife habitat, education on co-existence is an important tool to help reduce conflicts.

The Federation is teaming up with fStop Foundation to embark on an initiative to educate and assist local stakeholders on the importance of habitat connectivity for the wide-ranging panther. This initiative will engage local residents to curate wildlife camera footage from within their own communities. The collected footage will be used to create an education tool to promote the importance of a shared landscape between humans and wildlife. Both participant involvement and this educational tool will lead to a better understanding and appreciation for wildlife and their habitat needs and hopefully reduce conflicts between people and wildlife.

A First-Hand Look at Panther Friendly Fencing



FPL solar facility

The Florida Power & Light (FPL) Hammock Solar Energy Center is located near LaBelle, Florida and produces enough zero-emission energy to power about 15,000 homes. The Federation worked closely with FPL during the planning phase to ensure the solar center avoided impacts to wetlands and other sensitive areas. Additionally, we advocated for the site to allow wildlife to move freely across the landscape. FPL recognized the importance of habitat connectivity, and as such, the Center was constructed with panther friendly fencing. This means panthers are able to traverse the fence and, therefore, the site does not fragment

potential habitat used by panthers and other wildlife. The Federation had the opportunity to visit the Hammock Solar Energy Center this fall to see the panther-friendly fencing first-hand.

Continued Support for the Florida Panther Festival

The annual Panther Festival is a family friendly event hosted at the Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens and celebrates Southwest Florida's local wildlife. While at the zoo, guests have the opportunity to see Athena, the rescued orphaned panther that now resides at the zoo, as well as enjoy outdoor exhibits by conservation partners, including the Florida Wildlife Federation. The Federation has long supported this educational event and will continue to support it in the future.



Panther festival



FPL fencing



Rebuilding Our Forest

Hurricane Michael wiped out millions of trees when it cut a wide path across Northwest Florida. A year later, many landowners are struggling to figure out how to pay for the costly cleanup and restoration that's threatening to uproot their future. **Some three million acres of trees were destroyed or damaged** when the devastating hurricane buzz-sawed through the eastern edge of the Panhandle on October 10, 2018. Private landowners are struggling with how to pay for the costly cleanup and replant new trees. Even with federal aid and selling some of the damaged trees to loggers, they are faced with a cost many cannot afford.

Thanks to a \$40,000 Gulf Power Foundation Amplify! grant awarded to the Florida Wildlife Federation, two landowners who live east of Panama City, Brenda Ward and Bruce Huffmaster, are receiving much-needed help to deal with this situation. Ms. Ward suffered the loss of 147 acres of mostly slash and longleaf pine and Atlantic white cedar. Nearly every tree, roughly 25,000, were either twisted, snapped or dangerously leaning. Like many of the trees within Michael's path, her trees are rotting, attracting pests and creating a wildfire hazard. Nearly every one of them needed to be cleared and new trees planted.

Ms. Ward has already spent thousands of dollars clearing trees from around her house and



Brenda Ward was in the direct path of Hurricane Michael's eyewall that wiped out the beautiful forests she used to love looking at from her screened porch.



Bruce Huffmaster, left, talks to Stan Rosenthal, Florida Wildlife Federation Forest Advocate.

road. The grant dollars will pay for the rest of the clearing and a prescribed burn to prepare the land for the planting of up to 600 longleaf pines per acre.

Hurricane Michael also blew down about 20 percent of Mr. Huffmaster's 65 acres of healthy longleaf pine in various stages of growth. The damaged trees scattered throughout the thick stands pose a unique challenge as loggers' machines cannot reach timber to be removed without harming healthy trees.

With the grant, the job that would have taken Huffmaster years to do will now be reduced to a matter of weeks by hiring a crew that can knock the job out by hand in several days. Without this action, Mr. Huffmaster's

property is at risk of declining and not reaching its potential as habitat.

Gulf Power's Mike Markey stated **"Florida Wildlife Federation is providing support and education for the replanting of damaged areas in longleaf pine.** Gulf Power has been a long supporter of replanting longleaf pine in Northwest Florida, which is key to supporting threatened and endangered species."

Both landowners inherited their property from family and have been working to restore native species to enhance wildlife populations and get a greater return on timber they sell to sustain their land management.

Mr. Huffmaster stated that "these kinds of sites are not as common as they used to be with all of the development in the state. The bird population has been reduced by 30% in the last decade, and **we'd like to create a pocket of native habitat for all of the birds and deer and other wildlife to live, breed and thrive. I want my grandchildren to be able to see and enjoy the native ecosystem.**"

Florida Wildlife Federation thanks Gulf Power and private landowners who strive to keep part of natural Florida intact for future generations.

Stan Rosenthal

2020 Arbor Day Celebration

Thank you to everyone who came out to the annual Crawfordville Arbor Day Celebration and Tree Giveaway! The event was hosted by the Wakulla County Garden Club and sponsored by the Florida

Wildlife Federation and the National Wildlife Federation. We gave away 900+ trees and several hundred longleaf pine seedlings.



Marty Quinn and Diane Hines sign-in two Wakulla County residents for their free trees.



Chris Mason and Beth Hakemoller discussed the Florida Wildlife Federation's goals with many people while they waited in line.



FWF/NWF Volunteers Jaye Sousa, Marty Quinn, Claudia Farren, and Diane Hines worked at the event. ##



Betsy Rudden and Andrea Carter welcomed participants to the 2020 Arbor Day Celebration at Hudson Park in Crawfordville, Florida.



Allison, Aaliyah and Lyla Williams of Crawfordville



Cindy, Aiden and Jaida Shiver with sweetbay magnolia and chinquapin oak trees.



Dr James Cooper, tree advisor, helps Amber and Isabella Hopkins each choose a free tree.



Cassidy Gavin Walsh from Crawfordville with his free tree.



Jeannie Brodhead explains how to plant a tree with Wakulla County residents.

2019 PHOTO CONTEST

2019 Photo Contest Winners

FWF is pleased to announce the winners of the 2019 Photo Contest. This year, we were grateful to once again have the renowned photographer John Spohrer as our

judge for the contest. Thank you to all the photographers who participated, and to John for taking the time to review the hundreds of photos entered. You will find other

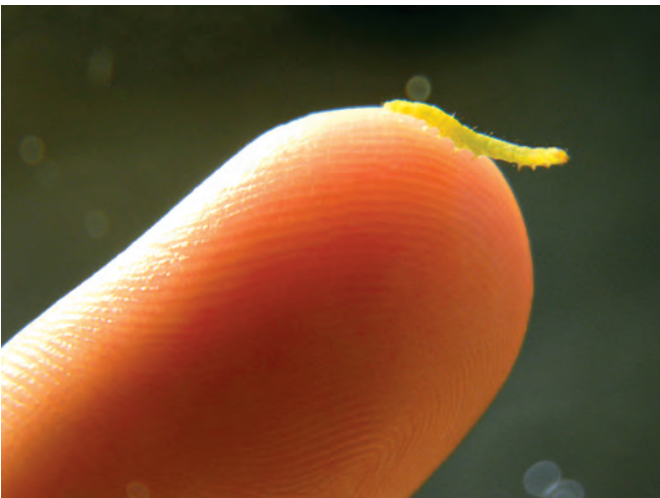
winning photos from the contest throughout this publication. Visit www.snappiephoto.com to view the winners online and we hope you enter the contest in 2020!



Portrait: Hand-off Photographer: **Lauren Johnson**
Location: **Admiral Mason Park, Pensacola**



Birds - Runner Up: Terminator Photographer: **Lauren Johnson**
Location: **Fort Pickens National Park, Pensacola**



Kids Category: Inching Along Photographer: **Jackson Stalvey**
Location: **Ormond Beach**



Sunset-Sunrise: Wild Orlando Sunrise Photographer: **Brian Kamprath** Location: **Orlando Wetlands Park**

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Florida Wildlife Federation whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.

When you Start With a Smile, we can facilitate wildlife crossings statewide which protect wildlife and humans. Visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1398265> to sign up!





FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S *Wild Florida Sweepstakes*

Congratulations to the Winner of the 2019 Wild Florida Sweepstakes!

The annual sweepstakes helps the Florida Wildlife Federation raise funds to pursue vital wildlife and fish programs that ensure that we all may continue to enjoy Florida's wondrous outdoors.

The drawing was held Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 3pm at the Florida Wildlife Federation Headquarters, 2545 Blairstone Pines Drive, Tallahassee, Florida and was supervised by Carroll and Co. Inc., Certified Public Accountants.

Vickilee and Butch Johnston of Satellite Beach were the winners of this year's FWF sweepstakes. After having played the sweeps loyally for 17 years, they finally chose to buy their own flats boat this year, months before being drawn as the winners of the \$20,000 grand prize! Managing properties from Palm Bay to Titusville and renovating their own place has kept the boat out of the water so far, but they are determined to change this soon. Their schedule also made it challenging to find a moment they were available for a recognition photograph. Winning the FWF sweepstakes will allow them to pay off their new boat and help cover some of the many projects they have going on. As Vickilee said, "this came at the perfect time for us. You have no idea how much we needed this help right now!" The entire FWF family sends congratulations to the Johnstons for their timely win, and our appreciation for their support of the FWF initiatives over all these years.



2019 winner, Vickilee and Butch Johnston of Satellite Beach, accepting their prize from FWF Board Member Jim Schuette.



Preston Robertson, FWF President and CEO (right), with Stephen Roeder, CPA, Carroll and Company, who pulled the Grand Prize ticket.

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE Kids' Quiz

by Marney Richards

1. What bird is nicknamed "snake bird"?



2. What very long snake shares the burrow of gopher tortoises?



3. Have you ever seen a very fast skink with a bright blue tail?



See page 14 for answers
and more information.

Donor Profile

Laurie Mackey

Throughout her lifetime, Laurie (Gordon) Mackey generously donated her time, strength, education, skills, and resources to be of help to others. As a teacher and as an award-winning Florida Master Gardener, she worked diligently in efforts to protect and preserve the natural environment. Laurie valued her role as a steward in ensuring a healthy future for all life on this Earth. She believed in and wished to further the goals and visions of the Florida Wildlife Federation. As her final legacy, she bequeathed her Michigan Farm Bureau Insurance annuity to the Federation to help fund its important work

Thank you, Ms. Mackey.



Laurie Jean Mackey



Featured Natural Area



Wakulla Springs State Park

Due south of Tallahassee is Wakulla Springs State Park, a 6,000 acre paradise which is the location of the world's largest and deepest freshwater spring. The 1954 filming location for the *Creature from the Black Lagoon*, Wakulla Springs also boasts a lodge and miles of trails. The wildlife at this park is outstanding, with a wide variety of fishes and birds that frequent the springs. Limpkins, cormorants, and ring-necked ducks, as well as manatees, alligators and gar can be seen on the park-managed boat trips. The spring has suffered from pollution and FWF litigated to save the springs in past years. The settlement of our lawsuit

brought relief from some environmental ills, but more needs to be done to save this unique jewel. It is well worth the trip to see this Florida icon. Location: 465 Wakulla Park Drive, Wakulla Springs, FL 32327; 850 561-7276.



Photographer: Charles F. Thornton Animal: Manatee

Answers to FLORIDA WILDLIFE Kids' Quiz

1. The anhinga is a Florida resident with a long, slender neck that sticks out of the water, which is likely how it got this nickname. They eat small fish, shrimp, amphibians, crayfish and even young alligators and snakes! Anhingas can swim underwater and spear fish with their sharp beaks. You can see them perched on a branch, with their wings outstretched, to dry off before flying.

2. The Eastern indigo snake is a bluish-black, non-venomous snake that can reach up to 8 feet long. The snake is one of many animals that use gopher tortoise burrows and the female indigo usually lays her eggs there. It's important to remember that most snakes are harmless and very beneficial to the habitat where they live.

3. It could be one of three similar skinks, but the **Southeastern five-lined skink** is the most common skink in Florida. Young ones have five whitish stripes and a very bright blue tail but lose these colors as they mature. These skinks live in many habitats but prefer places like stumps to hide. They eat insects, spiders and small invertebrates

How Did You Do, Florida Kid?



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IN MEMORIAM

Donations have been received in memory of:

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by Joan Hill

Richard Swann

by Joseph and Patricia Synder

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by Victoria Brady-Brust

The Federation thanks you for your thoughtful contributions. We express our sympathy to family and friends of those who have passed away.

2019 Photo Contest Winners



Waterscape: Seen an Alligator Fly Photographer: **Kelly Del Valle**
Location: **Orlando**



Mobile: Magical Morning Photographer: **Ilona Popov**
Location: **Tampa**

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2019 Photo Contest Winner



Recreation: Hang Ten Photographer: Kay Wells Location: St. Augustine Beach



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