



Florida Fish & Wildlife News

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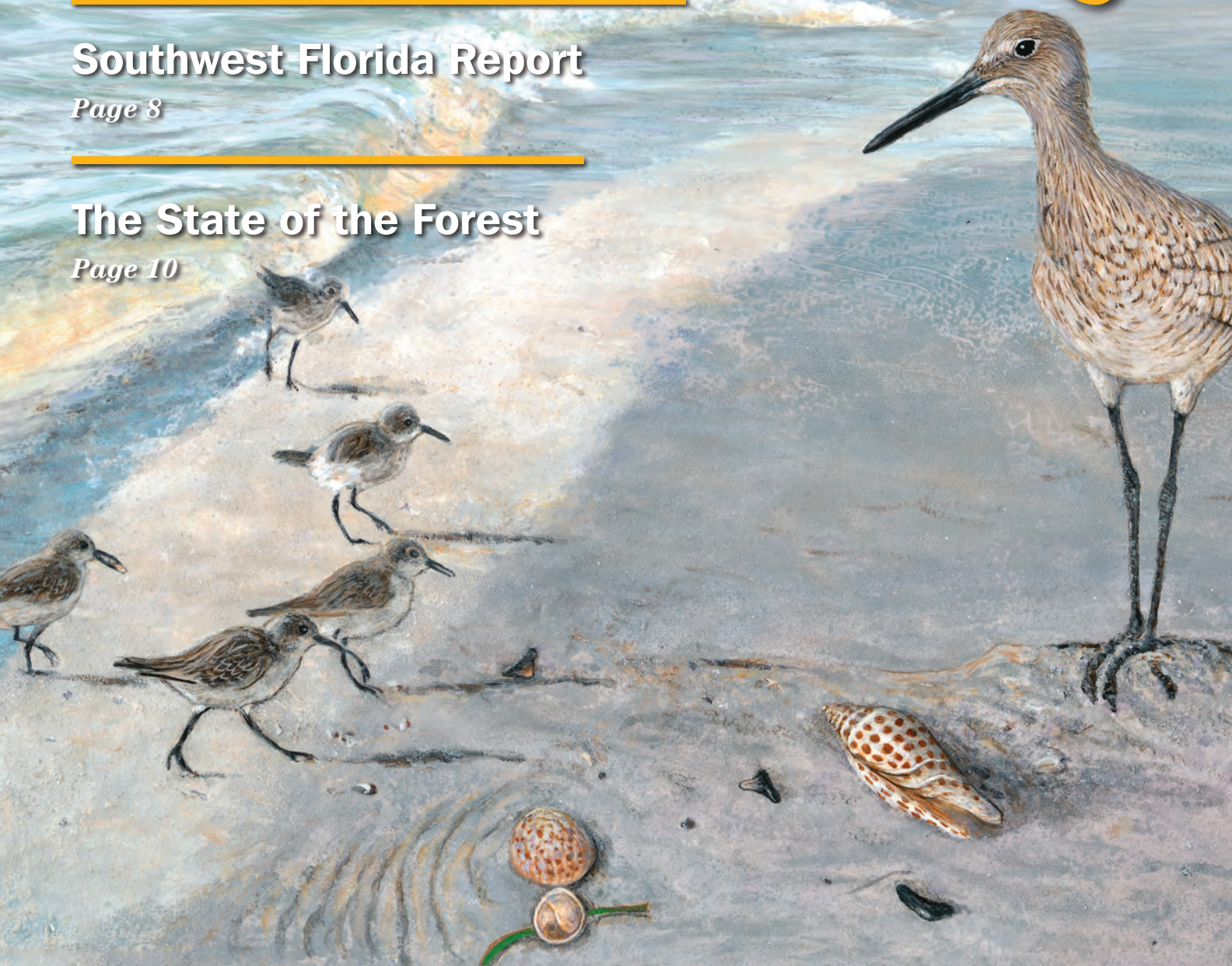
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Chair's Message

Jay Exum

Greetings Florida Wildlife Federation Members and Supporters!

As I write this, I am hoping that Florida is past the peak of Covid-19 cases. And by cases, I mean people - people who have lost their lives, suffered substantial economic impacts and, at the very least, had their entire routines completely disrupted. It is unprecedented in all of our lifetimes, and is economically, emotionally and psychologically unsettling.



Roseate spoonbills on the Wekiva River

As impactful as it has been to us, there is a certain element of stability that surrounds us. The natural environment is mostly unaffected. In fact, the woods are quieter, roads are safer for wildlife and beaches are less hectic for nesting sea turtles.



American alligator on the Wekiva River

There is comfort and solace in the natural environment. Wild places can be uplifting, fulfilling and calming in their indifference to some of the things that are most troubling to us, including a global pandemic. As soon as you can, I

suggest that you take advantage of the stress-reducing benefits of nature. State lands and local parks



Osprey nest on Lake Norris

may be closed, but if you have access to a local greenway or trail, or if you can enter a park from an area with open access, seek respite there.

As I write this, we all are also just a few days away from Earth Day. One way I celebrate is to make sure I spend time outdoors, and this year is no exception. My plans to kayak and camp in the restored sections of the Kissimmee River had to be cancelled, but I still have taken the opportunity to paddle local rivers and lakes, and hike through forests and floodplains. Watching turkeys gobble and strut, experiencing the pandemonium of a wading bird rookery and hearing male alligators bellow in the last few weeks have been a fantastic distraction, a return to normalcy and a needed psychological boost. I encourage you to take some time to venture outside, celebrate Earth Day, enjoy the spring, and stay healthy.

Jay H. Exum

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Florida Fish & Wildlife News

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Tidal Discoveries Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*), Sandpipers (*Calidris minutilla*), Junonia Volute (*Scaphella junonia*), sharks-teeth, and other specimens of shells! **Peter R. Gerbert**, Acrylics with Texture on Gessobord

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EARTH DAY 2020

In 1970, Richard Nixon was president and the Vietnam War was going full force. Protest were being conducted to support minority rights, women's rights and the anti-war movement. That year also saw the first Earth Day.

Earth Day was the result of years of independent efforts by folks concerned about our environment. Rachel Carson' book *Silent Spring*, about how chemicals were eliminating bird populations and negatively impacting humans, became a national bestseller in 1962. Lead gasoline fumes spewed out of every car and truck tail-pipe in the United States and industrial smoke stacks belched pollution. There were many groups opposed to this situation, but it took two Senators, Democrat Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin, and Republican Pete McCloskey from California, to make Earth Day real. **These two led a bi-partisan effort to clean up our air and water to the benefit of all, no matter party affiliation.**

Due to the work of Nelson and McCloskey, and thousands of local activists, the first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970. 20 million Americans (10% of the population) took part in events to highlight the need to place restrictions on pollution. That success facilitated the creation of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and passage of the Clean Air Act later that same year. In 1972, the Clean Water Act was passed, and in 1973, the Endangered Species Act was passed into law. These laws have saved not only wildlife but made for a much cleaner and safer environment for all Americans.

It can only be hoped that our present elected officials see the wisdom to save the planet for future generations.

In Florida, the Clean Air and Water Acts have helped to protect us from many of the most deleterious effects of pollution, but, of course, we still have a ways to go. Unregulated growth and sprawling development, the elimination of sensitive habitats and wide-spread pollution are still to be found in the Sunshine State, as our population nears 22 million. In light of these challenges, the Federation continues to act to preserve what makes Florida special.



St. Lucie River

With so much bad news it is good to be able to share some good news. The ongoing restoration of Picayune Strand State Forest, depicted later in this issue, is one example. Another is the recovery of the St. Lucie River in Southeast Florida. The St. Lucie flows east from massive Lake Okeechobee. It is a waterway that has suffered years of harmful algal blooms as nitrogen-laden water has been pumped from the Lake into the river at times of high water. The contentious pumping of polluted water has raised concerns from many in this part of the state debating how to properly manage our water supply.

Two years ago, the St. Lucie was the site of a blue-green algae explosion which emitted neurotoxins that posed a threat to residents and the economy. As the algae bloom grew, it took the dissolved oxygen out of the water, thereby killing aquatic species such as fish. Since that horrible time, there have been no releases of polluted water from the Lake due to low water levels and lack of rain. No new influx of pollution has allowed the river to come back. Oysters are spawning and conches are present. Even seagrasses are starting to be more plentiful as they can get sunlight instead of being overtopped by algal mats.

The St. Lucie show us that if we stop the harm, our ecosystems can indeed return to a healthy and more natural state.

Preston T. Robertson
President and CEO



FWF Annual Awards' Banquet Postponed!

Please be aware that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Florida Wildlife Federation Annual Awards Banquet has been postponed from June 6, 2020 to summer 2021. We shall recognize the same award winners proposed for 2020. Updated information shall be made available in early 2021. Thanks!



Dear Fellow Conservationists:

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take lives and upend our daily routines, the Federation hopes you and yours are staying cautious, washing your hands and practicing social distancing. Truly, we are all in this together.

The present situation is a stark reminder that no matter our ideological beliefs, we are all susceptible to what happens in our environment. As we must adapt to the coronavirus, we must also adapt to, and address, the realities of other threats, such as algae blooms, climate change and sea level rise.

The 2020 Legislative Session ended in mid-March. FWF pushed strongly for full funding for the Florida Forever Program, and the budget passed by both the Senate

“As many more of us are starting to grow our own food, we’re finding a tie to the land that our food comes from.”

and the House of Representatives included \$100 million for that program and \$8.7 million for the Rural and Family Lands program. While these amounts are less than we hoped for, and far short of what the voters asked for in 2014 as part of the Water and Land Legacy Amendment, we are pleased that at least both critical programs

received funding. Sensitive natural areas will be preserved for us and future generations through these appropriations.

One positive bill that passed, Senate Bill 1042, will create an Aquatic Preserve off the coast of Citrus, Pasco and Hernando Counties on the Gulf of Mexico. It has been many years since such protection has been given to coastal waters, and it is highly beneficial that this area, which is replete with sea grass beds, has additional protective measures. Sea grass beds are the nurseries of the sea as they provide cover for smaller aquatic species to grow before they move offshore. Sea grasses also absorb carbon dioxide, a known greenhouse gas. Senate Bill 1450 also passed, which slightly



Animal: Sandhill crane Photographer: Brian Kamprath Location: Orlando Wetlands Park

increases civil fines for those who discharge pollution.

Unfortunately, several bills we opposed passed, including Senate Bill 1794, which greatly increases the threshold for ordinary citizens to have proposed amendments to the state constitution placed on the ballot. Also passing was Senate Bill 172, which gives the Legislature, not local governments, the power to decide what potentially polluting sunscreen lotions can be used on the beach.

As many of us are working from home, now may be the time to go outside and appreciate the natural world. Take a walk in the park (while maintaining distance from others). Try to identify some

tree and animal species. If you have a yard, see if you can identify what plants are native and provide food for wildlife and which ones are invasive and alien to Florida. Put up a bird feeder and bird bath and watch the squirrels scramble to gain access.

As many more of us are starting to grow our own food, we're finding a tie to the land that our food comes from. Sustainable gardening is a joy and provides nutritious meals we don't have to leave home for.

With the pace of life slowing, it may well provide an opportunity to enjoy simpler pleasures.

As summer approaches, the Federation remains focused on expanding environmental education

and knowledge about the wonders of our natural resources. We continue to strive to ensure that ourselves, our children and all future Floridians can experience beautiful and clean beaches, healthy freshwater springs and sustainable forests, all with abundant wildlife. Our advocacy also continues with our elected leaders and those who control what our Florida will be in the years ahead.

Again, we hope you are well during this time of uncertainty, and we truly appreciate all the support the Federation has received.

Be safe.



Cover Image



Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*), Sandpipers (*Calidris minutilla*), Junonia Volute (*Scaphella junonia*), sharks-teeth, and other types of shells!

“My goal with this piece is to capture the weight of the water and the power of the ocean. It is not a crashing wave, but a colorful wave rolling in before it breaks on the shore. The changing tides reveal some wonderful shells and many sharks-teeth on this south Florida beach.”

– Peter R. Gerbert

Tidal Discoveries

© 2020 Peter R. Gerbert, Acrylics with Texture on Gessobord

This original acrylic painting was commissioned by private collectors, and it is now available as a very Special Edition Print - signed & numbered by the artist only to 50, with 3 Artist proofs. Canvas prints are printed with archival inks, spray-coated with UV varnish and can be stretched for framing without glass. Order your signed print today, framed (ready to hang) or unframed, by following this link:

www.PeterRGerbert.com

Your print will come with a Certificate of Endorsement by the Florida Wildlife Federation. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this Limited Edition Print will directly benefit conservation efforts in Florida.



Nature and Public Lands

Just 30 minutes from home, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, due south of Tallahassee, feels almost in the backyard. While the Visitors' Center is closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Refuge remains open for now. The place is vast, approximately 68,000 acres spreading across three counties. The Refuge is accessible to the public, and there are many trails to walk or bike while keeping a safe distance from others.

My visits are often solo and meandering. My pace, if alone, is always slow - there is so much to see and hear. Even in a landscape so familiar that scenes are etched in memory, things are always changing. On a recent walk, I

paused to wait for an alligator crossing the path, and later watched a bobcat creep from the road's edge into deeper woods. Changing seasons bring migratory birds passing through and new seasonal residents on the ponds, along trails and in the forest canopy. Late March brought a wildflower bloom, with butterflies, moths, bees and all kinds of insects.

When the pace slows, small details tend to catch my attention. How light changes during the day and seasons, how air feels on the skin, how sounds shift with the activity of birds and insects. When we come to a favorite place often enough, we can recognize the rhythms of nature. It becomes

treasured as familiar, while still bringing interest and surprise.

St. Marks Refuge, one of the oldest wildlife refuges in the nation, is a gem that draws visitors from around the country and the world. Florida is home to many outstanding natural areas, national and state forests, parks and beaches, local parks and preserves. How did these places come to be? Where did the idea of setting aside and preserving public land come from?

We owe much of our thanks for the concept, and reality, of public lands to Theodore Roosevelt. A life-long hunter, Roosevelt witnessed and wrote about the loss of habitat and species as early as the late



Location: St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge Photographer: Marney Richards

1800's. At a time when many saw our natural resources as limitless, he was increasingly concerned with conservation. As President, Roosevelt used his authority to protect wildlife and public lands, often over the objection of Congress. He established the U.S. Forest Service, hundreds of national forests, parks, monuments, game preserves and federal bird reserves (which later became national wildlife refuges). Over 23 million acres of public land were protected during his administration.

Early on when I started hiking and camping in parks and forests close to home and across the country, I assumed that our local, state and national lands would always be there for us. Public lands, large and small, open to everyone,

are an essential part of our heritage. Now I understand that they need

“ We owe much of our thanks for the concept, and reality, of public lands to Theodore Roosevelt. ”

our continuing support and advocacy.

Many of our beloved places are currently closed do to a crisis that has changed how we live, but they will reopen. They will provide us places to wander and explore. By immersing ourselves in nature, we'll

see both the familiar and the new. If we can get outside at all, I hope we continue to find a sense of wonder in the natural world.

“We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune.” – *Theodore Roosevelt*

Resource:

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-and-conservation.htm>

The series, Climate Change – What Can One Person Do?, will return in a later edition.

Marney



Featured Animal

Florida Native – Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*)

One of our most beautiful birds, the roseate spoonbill has a most unusual bill – it is shaped like a flat spoon! Reaching about 2 1/2 feet in height, and with a 4 1/2 foot wingspan, spoonbills may be seen near water or stalking about in shallow wetlands or ponds. The curious bill allows them to feed using what is called “tactolocation.” The birds open their mouths and sweep back and forth along the watery bottom until they hit upon something to eat. Spoonbills eat small fish, crustaceans, aquatic invertebrates and even leeches. Once hunted for their plumes to make ladies’ hats, these rosy pink birds can now be seen throughout the state where their food can be found. Spoonbills build large nests made of sticks, and construction commences when an adult male provides the first stick to the female. The babies have downy white feathers and will grow the spoon-shaped bill at about two weeks old.



Animal: Roseate Spoonbill Photographer: Mike Johnson
Location: Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge



Picayune Strand State Forest: Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Picayune Strand State Forest is an integral part of the Everglades ecosystem. Historically, this hydric forest sustained wetland communities like cypress swamps, pine flatwoods and wet prairies for several months throughout the year. In the 1940s and 1950s, the land was logged for cypress trees and when the logging was complete, the land was purchased for development by the Gulf America Land Corp for what was intended to become the “largest subdivision in the world.” To create this large-scale development, known as Southern Golden Gate Estates, a canal system was excavated and a

road network was built. As a result, Southern Golden Gate Estates drastically altered the local hydrology.

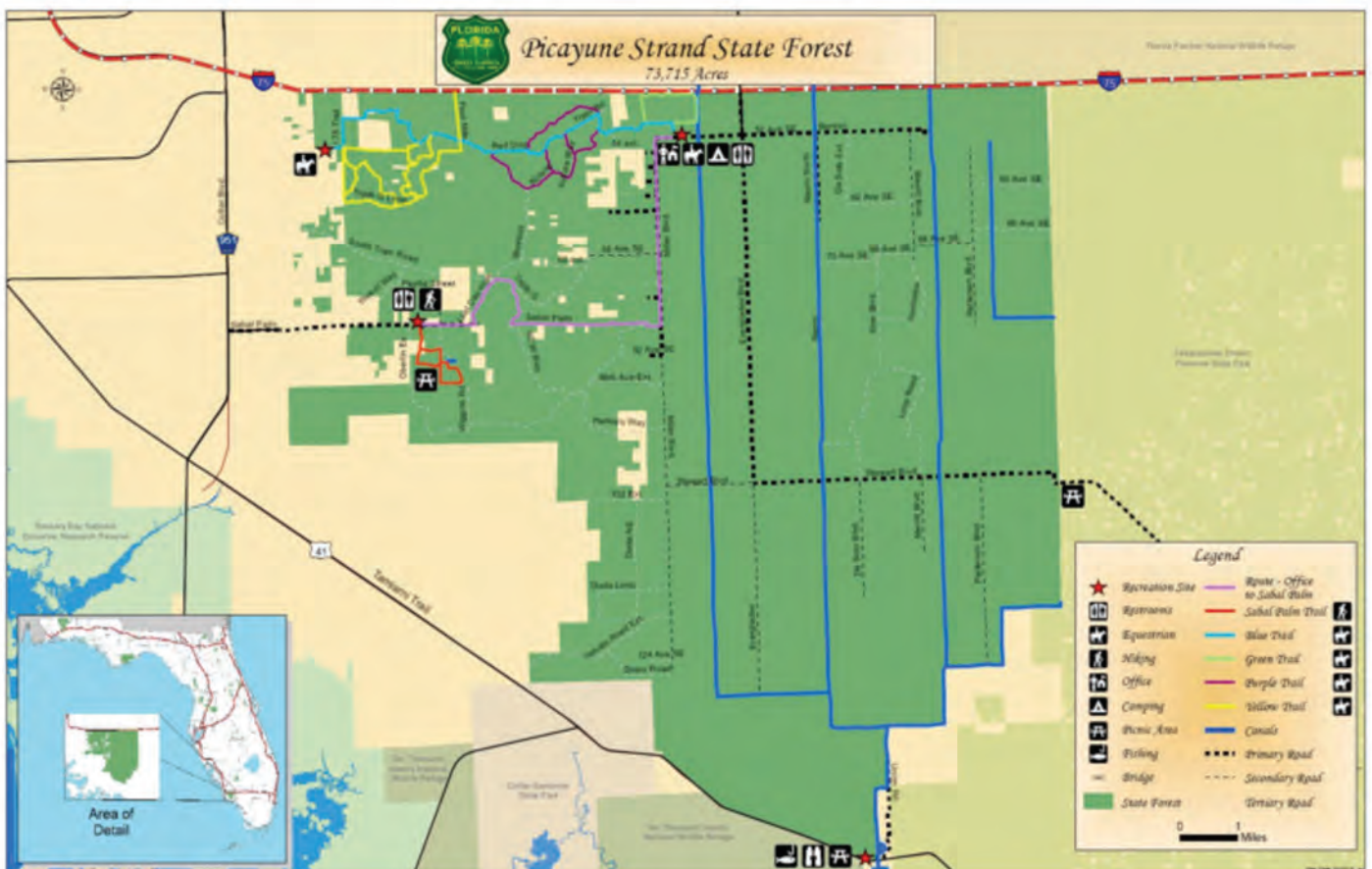
Selling the Dream

Southern Golden Gate Estates was advertised to potential buyers across the United States with the lure of buying a ‘Piece of Paradise’ on the Gulf coast. Potential buyers were offered free roundtrip transportation to view the properties, but these were all conducted during the dry season when the land appeared buildable. In fact, many people who purchased Southern Golden Gate Estates lots

never actually saw their newly acquired property in person. The new landowners who did come to see their properties eventually came to find that their land was inundated for much of the year and nearly impossible to build upon. As such, few homes were actually constructed in this proposed subdivision.

Buying Back the Land to Achieve the Real Dream

By the 1970s, it was obvious that the extensive canal system and roadways built throughout Picayune Strand were having detrimental effects on the region’s natural



Picayune Strand State Forest

communities, both hydrologically and on the various wildlife species that use the region. This was recognized by both State and Federal agencies, and soon the land was identified for needed restoration. In order to achieve this lofty goal, the land would need to be purchased. This was an incredibly complex undertaking as it involved acquiring land from over 17,000 landowners! The first parcels of land in Picayune Strand were purchased in 1985 using Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) funds. In 1998, the federal government provided \$25 million to the State in order to complete the acquisition of the Forest. The Picayune Strand State Forest was officially named in May 1995.

Restoration is Underway

The effort to restore the natural hydrology of the Forest began in 2007. It is known as the Picayune Strand Restoration Project (PSRP) and it is the first Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) project to begin construction. The goal of the PSRP is to restore the region back to its natural condition. To achieve this goal, the Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District are working together to remove roads that impede sheet flow and plug canals that drained what should have been wet. The PSRP calls for plugging 48 miles of canals, removing 260 miles of crumbling roads, and the construction of three major pump stations. Once completed, the PSRP will recreate natural water flows, historic water level conditions and ecological connectivity to the surrounding natural lands.



Animal: Florida Panther Photographer: Max Freund

Removing Roads, but Still Encountering Road Blocks

Today, the PSRP is nearly 70% complete and is poised to be the first completed CERP project. However, even though 80% of the PSRP costs have been expended, only 30% of the ecological benefits are being realized. This is due to the need for a structure known as the Southwest Protection Feature (SWPF). The SWPF will include levee and water conveyance structures that are needed to protect adjacent property owners from flooding when all three pump stations are operational. Right now, only one of the three pump stations is moving water south across the landscape. Until the SWPF design is finalized and the features implemented, the easternmost canals cannot be plugged and full ecological benefits cannot be realized. With input from all relevant stakeholders, the Army Corps of Engineers designed these features and submitted a permit application in early April with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Florida Wildlife Federation is reviewing the permit submittal and will provide comments in advance of any approvals.

A Restored Future

Florida Wildlife Federation has consistently advocated for the funding necessary to fully implement the PSRP and has engaged with the relevant agencies throughout the years to positively influence project planning all in an effort to maximize the project's ecological benefits. Restoring Picayune Strand State Forest presents an incredible opportunity to fix what people harmed. At completion, this project will restore 55,000 acres of land— a

matrix of wetlands, marshes and upland habitats that provide invaluable habitat to an array of wading birds, the endangered Florida panther, black bears, and many other native wildlife species. A restored Picayune Strand brings us one step closer to a restored Western Everglades. It will connect and positively impact the adjacent natural lands of Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Big Cypress National Preserve, Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, Collier Seminole State Park, and Collier County's Natural Resource Protection Area known as Belle Meade.

The Federation is committed to ensuring that this project moves forward, but is equally as committed to ensuring the SWPF (and the overall project) do not have adverse impacts to the water quality of the downstream estuaries. We continue to engage through the public process and are eagerly anticipating the day that we can realize the full ecological benefits of the restoration project. Only then will the Western Everglades be able to return to its natural state.



Bees and Flowers

The other day a friend of mine was lamenting a Facebook conversation that was going on between two people that seemed to frustrate her. It went something like this: “I raise bees and just wanted to bring to your attention that the white flowers that you have in your yard are Spanish needles (*Bidens alba*) and they really help my beehives.” The other person was annoyed with this and said something like, “Okay, I will let them grow for another week but then I am going to mow them down. They look too weedy to me and they have those dreadful stickers.”

What I found interesting was that both were looking at their yards from such a different perspective. The beekeeper obviously saw the bees, butterflies, and other nectar insects from a point of responsibility. It was her duty to share her land with these animals. The other person likely looked at the property as if nothing else was important but what she wanted for herself.

The important point here is that we all need to work together to use our land for what we need, but also to remember that we are sharing this land with other living things. Our landscapes (woodlands, wetlands, prairies, and lawns) should be awash with wildflowers. While our lawns can serve many needs, be a place to play, provide defensible space to protect our homes from wildfires in rural areas, etc., areas of neatly mowed lawns are what ecologists call biological deserts; they



Animal: Sweat bee Photographer: Claire Goodowens

produce very little food or cover for wild things. The beekeeper had recognized this and was encouraging cooperation.

Spanish needles grow throughout the state of Florida. Not only do bees use the plant but so do many types of butterflies, including gulf fritillary and monarch butterflies. Interestingly, our state butterfly, zebra heliconian (*Heliconius charithonia*) uses the flower for both nectar and pollen. Our state butterfly's host plant is another Florida native, purple passionflower (*Passiflora suberosa*). Host plants are really important as each species of a butterfly's larva (caterpillar) can only feed on specific plant species.

Besides the insects, many

songbirds use the seeds of Spanish needles. Think of it as raising your own bird food.

I myself have a couple of healthy beds of Spanish needles. I have them in low traffic areas, so I won't get the seeds stuck to me. On still mornings, I delight in watching the flowers bobbing up and down as bees, butterflies and other insects collect nectar from their flowers. Then there is the question of how many are enough. It takes approximately one million flowers to make a pound of honey. An enlightening thing to do is go through your landscape and count the flowers. See if that is enough for all the bees in your neck of the woods.

Stan Rosenthal

Being Outdoors Thoughts from Generation Z

Due to the coronavirus disease, most of us are unable to go to work, school or restaurants. However, these circumstances have given many people the opportunity to enjoy nature more. Going outside to exercise is a great way to relieve stress during this time, and nature allows us to appreciate its beauty in so many ways.



Allison Ramos

Since returning home, I have walked on the beach with my family, biked around the neighborhood, and run next to the river. Before the stay-at-home order, I rarely did these activities. I took nature around me for granted, and I preferred to stay indoors. This crisis made me realize that no matter what you decide to do while outdoors, it will lift your mood in times of stress. While I surround myself in these parts of nature, others can go hiking, play in the yard with their family, or even garden.

During a global pandemic, one can feel depressed, worried and scared. These are difficult times, and it is important to stay safe and healthy. Being outdoors can improve one's physical health as well as their mental health, all while keeping at a safe distance from others.

Debido a la enfermedad por coronavirus, la mayoría de nosotros no podemos ir al trabajo, la escuela o los restaurantes. Sin embargo, estas circunstancias le han dado a muchas personas la oportunidad de disfrutar más de la naturaleza. Salir a hacer ejercicio es una excelente manera de aliviar el estrés durante este tiempo, y la naturaleza nos permite apreciar su belleza de muchas maneras.

Desde que regresé a casa, he caminado por la playa con mi familia, paseé en bicicleta por el vecindario y corrí al lado del río. Antes de la orden de quedarse en casa, rara vez hacía estas actividades. No apreciaba la naturaleza, y prefería quedarme en mi casa. Esta crisis me hizo darme cuenta de que no importa lo que decidas hacer mientras estés al aire libre, te levantará el ánimo en momentos de estrés. Mientras me rodeo en estas partes de la naturaleza, otros pueden ir de excursión, jugar en el patio con su familia o incluso en el jardín.

Durante una pandemia global, uno puede sentirse deprimido, preocupado y asustado. Estos son tiempos difíciles, y es importante mantenerse seguro y saludable. Estar al aire libre puede mejorar la salud física y la salud mental, al tiempo que los mantiene a una distancia segura de los demás.

**TELL
THEM**



**TOLL
ROADS!**

Please Contact Governor Desantis!

Tell the governor not to waste money on three unneeded massive toll roads proposed to be built through the last remaining rural parts of the Florida Peninsula. These toll roads will bring sprawl and further degrade water quality and habitats and may well spell the end for the Florida panther.

You may reach Governor DeSantis at 850-717-9337 or via email at GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.com.

Thank you!

2020 PHOTO CONTEST

Calling Florida Photographers!

The Florida Wildlife Federation is pleased to announce the sixth year of the **Lou Kellenberger FWF Photo Contest**. The Contest celebrates the enjoyment of taking photos in Florida's great outdoors and promotes FWF's mission to encourage citizens to participate in sustainable outdoor recreation. Note that there are several categories which may be entered. Enter the contest in 2020!

Members, supporters and friends of FWF are encouraged to

enter, noting anyone may enter the contest with the exception of FWF staff. Entrants have an opportunity to win \$300 in cash or a Kindle Fire tablet! It has never been easier to capture images in Florida's outdoors – use your camera, smartphone, or tablet to document the wild world around you. Enter your most compelling nature images and photos of Florida today at www.snappiephoto.com. Entries will be taken from now until December 31, 2020.

Entry donations are \$5 for one

photo, \$10 for 3 photos, and \$25 for 7 photos. One Overall Contest winner will be selected for the First Prize of \$300, a Second Prize winner will receive a Kindle Fire tablet, and the kids' contest winner will receive an outdoor backpack. Only digitally uploaded images may be entered. Judging will follow the closing date of December 31, 2020.

Visit www.snappiephoto.com to get started. Contact FWF at (850) 656-7113 for more information.

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

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*

**Play the Wild Florida Sweepstakes
Today and Win \$20,000 in Cash!**

*Five second prize winners will receive a
\$50 Bass Pro Shop Gift Card.*



How to Enter: Ticket contributions are \$5 each. Six tickets for \$25, 15 for \$50, 35 for \$100, and 50 for \$125 (the best value). Watch for your sweepstakes tickets in the mail.



Photographer: Scott Helfrich Location: Blue Cypress Lake

For more information,
read the Wild Florida Flyer
and the Official Rules at
our website,

www.fwfonline.org. To
enter, click the Programs
icon at the top of our
webpage. If you would like
a set of tickets mailed to
you, send an email to FWF
at sweeps@fwfonline.org
or call our toll-free number
(800) 656-3014. Please

provide your full name and complete mailing address to receive a packet
of tickets.

By playing the sweepstakes you help FWF advocate in critical areas
such as **Clean Water**, the preservation of the **Florida panther** and the
sustainability of species like the **Florida black bear**.

Thanks for supporting the Florida Wildlife Federation!



Photographer: Max Freund
Animal: Florida Panther

FLORIDA WILDLIFE *Kids' Quiz*

by Marney Richards

1. You might find this
small toad, a native
of the Southeastern
U.S., in your yard or
garden.



Photo by Norman Benton

2. This large, green
moth has a long
“tail” on each of its
hind wings and 4
eyespot circles.



3. This garden
vegetable is long,
skinny and green and
very easy to grow in
Florida.



*See page 14 for answers
and more information.*

Rick Abbott

Where There's a Will, There's a Way... For Wildlife

Let me introduce myself. My name is Rick Abbott. I am a fisherman, explorer, kayaker, financial advisor, FWF board member, boater, but most importantly, I am a husband and a father. In these difficult and changing times it is very challenging to raise a family with proper values. This task is made easier by enjoying Florida's outdoors together as a family. Whether it is boating and exploring the Chattahoochee River, fishing off the beach at St. George Island State Park or spending a cold December morning in a deer stand, these are activities that are crucial to teaching my children about life.

Preserving Florida's natural habitats is crucial for current and future generations. I know that while I am working my 8-5 job, FWF is constantly pursuing ways to keep the environment healthy and natural for all of Florida's citizens.

I have included FWF in my will. I want to make sure that my



Past President, Rick Abbott

children and their children can enjoy the same Florida that their parents and grandparents experienced. **Please consider FWF in your financial planning.**

Please join with Rick and help make sure we and future residents can enjoy a healthy, clean and abundant Florida,

which helps not only our environment, but also our economy.

A charitable trust benefitting the Florida Wildlife Federation or a bequest like Rick's is easy to arrange, makes creative use of assets and can benefit your family as well as help the Federation.

For more information on how estate planning can benefit both you and wildlife, please contact Preston Robertson at (850) 656-7113.



Rick Abbott with his family

Answers to FLORIDA WILDLIFE Kids' Quiz

1. The Southern toad lives throughout Florida. They are 1.5 – 3 inches long, reddish-brown to gray in color, with spots on their backs and ridges on their heads. They eat ants, bees, crickets, roaches and other invertebrates and live in burrows in the soil or under objects. We can help provide habitat for these amphibians in our yards by leaving a leaf layer around trees and shrubs and in gardens, giving them a place to live and find food.

2. The beautiful luna moth usually lives in forested areas and is active at night (nocturnal). The moth's wingspan ranges from 4.5 inches up to 7 inches! The eyespots on the wings of moths (and butterflies) might be a way to confuse predators, making the moths look bigger and dangerous. Native trees like sweetgum, hickory and persimmon are favorite foods of the moth's caterpillars (larvae). The luna moth is the only moth to have its picture on a first-class postage stamp!

3. Green beans, sometimes called snap beans, grow as a small bush or as vines on poles. You can grow green beans from February to November, depending on where you live. Beans help add nitrogen to the soil. Good bacteria live on the roots and take nitrogen from the air and change it to a form plants can use.

How Did You Do, Florida Kid?



Thank You to Our Donors

Thank You for Your Generous Support!

“FWF’s mission is to conserve Florida’s wildlife, habitat, and natural resources through education, advocacy and science-based stewardship.”



IN MEMORIAM

Donations have been received in memory of:

Curtis Simmons

By Linda Heal

By Jesse McKenzie

By Cindy Frye

By Richard C. Pohlman

By Marilyn Hooten

By Becky Millar

By Debbie

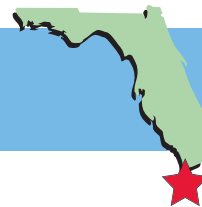
By Darron Berrie

*By Martha and
Welton Underwood*

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



Featured Natural Area



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Created in 1990, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, comprising 2,900 square miles of aquatic habitat, protects a rare and fragile ecosystem. Administered jointly by the State of Florida and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Sanctuary serves to protect the Florida Reef, the only such ecosystem in North America and the third largest reef in the world. It also surrounds 1,700 islands. Fish and wildlife populations include a plethora of sea life and crustaceans, including lobsters. Sadly, the Sanctuary also hosts invasive species as well, including the voracious lionfish. Efforts are underway to preserve the corals as they are being harmed by climate change, rising temperatures and ocean acidification. Not only a beautiful place to see, the Sanctuary is also home to the Eco-Discovery Center, a free exhibit, that teaches visitors about the coastal environment and how to protect it and its inhabitants. At the Center, a 2,500-gallon reef tank is home to living corals and tropical fish. You will be immersed in what life is like under the sea. Location: Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center, 35 E. Quay Rd., Key West, FL 33040; (305) 809-4750.



Animal: Dolphins Photographer: Mary Swann

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Photographer: **Lauren Johnson** Animal: **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** Location: **Pensacola**



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