Florida Fish and Wildlife News

Florida Wildlife Federation

Keeping the Wild in Florida since 1936!

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Volume 29, Issue 2 | Affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation | May 2015

Pleasant Hill Elementary School Wins 6th Annual Kids' Habitat Contest

By Pat Pearson
FWF Habitats Coordinator

Pleasant Hill Elementary School in Kissimmee was the winner of this year's Kids' Wildlife Habitat Contest. The school celebrated Earth Day with tours for students and visitors, starting at 9:00 AM, featuring a Peace Garden, the Colossal Cabbage project, the Panda Garden Patch and the Panda Critter Watch. At 2:00 PM, Dr. Jay Exum, a member of Florida Wildlife Federation's Board of Directors, was on hand to present the 6th Annual Kids' Wildlife Habitat Award to the children and teachers who worked so hard to establish the habitat at Pleasant Hill Elementary School.

Dr. Jay Exum (center) presented the kids' Habitat Award on Earth Day at Pleasant Hill Elementary School.

The habitat, which is the project of Mrs. Strang's Third Grade Class, was established on a part of school property which was being neglected and collecting trash. The site was chosen by the children themselves; they also did the original clean-up to get it ready to be used to attract birds. The habitat was designed to be expandable so as to attract other Florida wildlife, too.

The students used materials found on the site to fashion bird feeders, and are using as much recycled material as possible to make feeding stations for other critters. The site

PLEASANT HILL con't page 8

Winner of 2015 Kids' Habitat Contest.

FWF produces three great new videos illustrating why Florida Forever should be fully funded.

Watch and share, then use our easy contact tool to email and call your State Legislators.

Help make a difference today!!

www.fwfonline.org/FloridaForever

See the back for details on the 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet, June 13, 2015 at the St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club.

Please mark your calenders and see back page for further information about the events June 12-14, 2015.

If you would prefer to receive this publication via email instead of print, contact dannygs@fwfonline.org. Please include your name and address with your request.

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

For Wildlife

Steve O'Hara and his wife, Jeri.

Steve O'Hara spent his childhood family vacations camping in Florida's state parks and national forests and paddling on Florida waters. He hunted and fished his way through high school and college on Florida lands and waters which were open to public access. These experiences were the foundation for his lifelong devotion to conserving Florida wildlife habitat and keeping it open for public recreation.

In the early 1980s, Steve O'Hara joined the Florida Wildlife Federation and campaigned with other conservationists for public acquisition of the Guana Area a 12,000 acre wildlife habitat with 10 miles of undeveloped riverfront in Northeast Florida. This successful endeavor convinced Steve O'Hara that the Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) was Florida's most effective grassroots conservation organization in large part because it so willingly engages with others in achieving common goals.

Since then, Steve O'Hara has served almost three decades on the Florida Wildlife Federation's volunteer Board of Directors. He has also included the FWF as a beneficiary in his will. "Guana is still my favorite fishing destination. I will soon be a grandfather, and I want my grandchildren and their grandchildren to have places like Guana for hiking, hunting, paddling, and other outdoor recreational pursuits. I will leave them that legacy by helping the Florida Wildlife Federation continue its good work for generations to come."

Please join with Steve 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 Steve'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 your estate plan can benefit both you and wildlife, please contact **Tim Bachmeyer**, FWF Development Consultant, at **561-801-5752** or Manley Fuller, Diane Hines or Preston Robertson at **850-656-7113**.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
by Manley Fuller

Dear Members,

I want to focus this message on Amendment 1, the Florida Water and Land Legacy Amendment that you (and 75 percent of) Florida voters supported in November. To date, the Florida Legislature has not approved what we consider appropriate funding from the Amendment proceeds.

We believe that current legislative budget proposals are problematic in a number of ways. The proposed budget for Amendment 1 dollars heavily supports agency operating budgets in a manner that does not have a clear nexus with the Amendments purpose. There has been a decided lack of support for full funding of Florida Forever and insufficient support for Everglades Restoration. Indeed, there has been substantial opposition to funding conservation and recreational lands acquisition.

The Florida Wildlife Federation is committed to doing whatever is necessary to see that the will of the people is met by the Florida legislature, and that Amendment 1 funds are properly used. We do not support use of Amendment 1 dollars to fund agency operations that were previously funded from General Revenue. We also believe any agency or salary funding from Amendment 1 dollars needs to pass a bright line test where the funding is clearly tied back to the Amendment's purposes.

Without a clear nexus between the Amendment's purposes and agency expenditures, we believe that dollars generated by the Amendment will over time get completely lost in the state government bureaucracy which was not the intent of the voters!

At a minimum, we want this year's Amendment 1 dollars spent to (1) fully fund Florida Forever (at least $300 million dollars) using bonding of $30 million and (2) fund acquisition of lands south of Lake Okeechobee to provide at least 360,000 acre feet of water storage in the Everglades Agricultural Area. $50 million will raise $500 million via bonding. (So by bonding $85 million this year we could greatly benefit the entire state through a vigorous Florida Forever program and provide critical water storage benefitting South Florida and the Everglades!)

In addition, we support funding for long-term Everglades protection, management of conservation lands and waters statewide, springs and other nature-based water quality protections. At its heart, Amendment 1 is focused on critical land acquisitions, both fee and less than fee perpetual (conservation easement). The Legislature needs to hear loud and clear that Floridians support our conservation and recreational lands and expect our elected officials to do so as well.

We and our allies are advocating that the Legislatures in upcoming Special Session prioritize and allocate Amendment 1 dollars properly to benefit Florida's environment and its resource-based economy. Please go to our website, www.fwfonline.org, to follow this more closely and please view our social media efforts on behalf of the Amendment. These videos including, "Will of the People," were made possible by one of our great friends in conservation, M.C. Davis. M.C. is a member of our Conservation Hall of Fame. Thank you M.C.!

Please contact your legislators and emphasize to them that you fully expect them to uphold Florida's Constitution and to support critical conservation goals by acquiring and subsequently managing lands to benefit our natural heritage, protect our waters and provide places for sustainable outdoor recreation during the June special session.

Thank you,

Manley

Editor's note: Please see Everglades Foundation Eric Eikenberg's comments on page 9 regarding the recent rejection of the U.S. Sugar Purchase Option by the SFWMD which includes his reiteration of the ongoing need for new water storage below Lake Okeechobee.

FWF Scholarship Update
May 2015

Dear FWF Members,

On April 24th, the University of Florida Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department (WEC) held its annual BBQ and Student Awards Day at which the FWF Scholarship Fund awarded two $1,000 scholarships. The recipients were Ethan Noel, a Master's degree student and Lauren Diaz, an undergraduate student. I am pleased to tell you a little bit about each student who was selected for the 2015 scholarship award.

Ethan Noel, a Master's degree student in the UF Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, is a native Floridian from Winter Park. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from UF and began his graduate studies last fall. Ethan has worked as a biological technician for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, managing habitat for many protected species, including red-cockaded woodpeckers, Florida panthers, gopher tortoises, indigo snakes and Florida scrub jays. His Master's thesis research focuses on human-Florida black bear conflicts, and will address the anthropogenic food-conditioning of bears by evaluating bear-related garbage policies at the county/municipality, government/industry, and household levels. He collaborates with FWC's Bear Management Program in his thesis research, and hopes to continue working with this state agency after he earns his Master's degree.

Lauren Diaz, a Florida native from Miami, is currently completing the third year of her undergraduate degree program in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. In her scholarship essay, she wrote "I've developed a keen interest in herpetology, and Florida contains a high degree of endemism as well as multiple species that merit special concern, such as the eastern indigo snake and the gopher tortoise...reptiles and amphibians have historically been an unrepresented group in research and management, and I hope to expand our little knowledge on the life history and population health of these animals and make a positive impact on this state. The Florida Wildlife Federation is a prestigious organization that has had a positive impact on environmental policy in Florida, and it would be an honor to be awarded this scholarship!"

Thank you to all FWF members and supporters who contributed to the FWF Scholarship Fund at the University of Florida. Because of your generosity, FWF is able to assist these highly qualified individuals in their studies at the UF WEC Department.

Manley

Pictured left to right: Lauren Diaz and Ethan Noel. These students received FWF Scholarship Fund awards at the Annual UF-WEC picnic.

To make an online donation to the FWF Scholarship Fund, please go to:
https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=013403

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REPORT

by Nancy Anne Payton, Southwest Florida Field Representative

Into the Woods

Again this year, the Florida Wildlife Federation sponsored field trips for Florida Gulf Coast University's (FGCU's) Panther Posse members. Elementary children and their teachers from Collier and Lee counties experience a hiking adventure and exploratory visit to the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW). CREW is a network of public conservation lands in southwest Florida.

Ricky Pires, Panther Posse director, reports that this school year over 4,000 elementary students received interactive wildlife programs and hikes. The programs and hikes were presented by 440 FGCU students and FGCU's Panther Posse staff. Handicapped children are escorted on the hikes in the "panther mobile."

After the hiking adventure, students are each asked to educate two people about local wildlife, wildlife habitat, and the CREW watershed. Student paint a rock, overseen by the school's art teacher, with something special remembered about CREW. The "Nature Rocks" are placed at a special spot in CREW for students to bring family and friends to find. The goal is connecting families with the natural world, local conservation lands, education, science, research, art and fun. CREW was selected because it is free, easy to reach, and open every day.

The Florida Wildlife Federation thanks the Barron Collier, Jr. Foundation for providing a grant to underwrite the CREW adventures.

Panther Posse members with their handmade thank you sign.

Help Establish a Reward Fund

Florida Wildlife Federation is asking for donations to establish a $5,000 Wildlife Reward Fund to have cash readily available to offer a reward or contribute to a reward for information that leads to a conviction of individuals who wantonly injure or intentionally kill Florida panthers.

Last October, this Florida panther, now named Uno, was found wandering Immokalee Road in Collier County emaciated and blinded by shotgun wounds to his face. He was also injured in the hindquarters. Uno was rescued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission after a good citizen reported his condition and location. Biologists concluded that Uno was barely surviving on sniffing down roadkill. Uno now lives at the Naples Zoo and is adjusting well to captivity. Read more and view video of Uno at http://napleszoo.org/panther.

Another panther was not as lucky as Uno. **This March a dead panther was retrieved along Immokalee Road, Collier County, in the same vicinity where Uno was rescued.** The necropsy revealed the panther was killed by a gunshot. There were no signs of death due to collision with a vehicle.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service recently established a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the shooter. Florida Wildlife Federation would like to add to that reward fund.

Please consider a donation to the Florida Wildlife Federation earmarked "Reward Fund." Any amount is appreciated and every dollar makes a difference.

Send checks to Florida Wildlife Federation, PO Box 6870, Tallahassee, Florida 32314 or donate at www.fwfonline.org. Thank you.

Uno – Photo Courtesy of Naples Zoo.

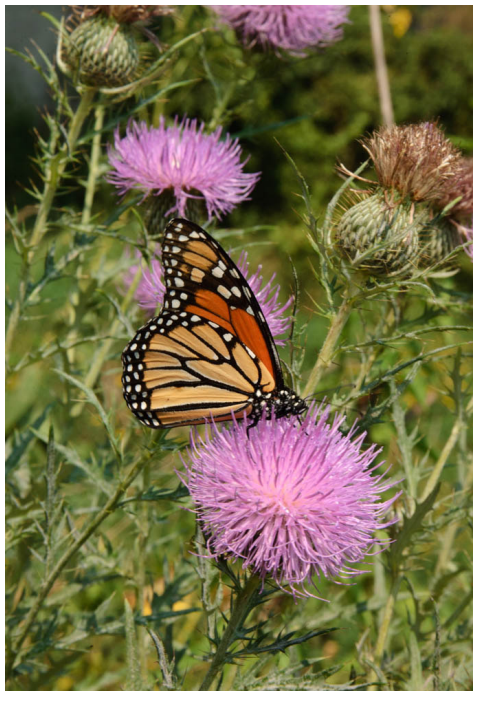
New FWF Blog Post

Written by Claudia Farren with assistance from Bill Boothe of Nature in Focus

Flower pollinators are in decline. The loss of honeybees around the world due to pests, disease, loss of habitat, pesticides, and changing weather patterns has been widely publicized in the last few years. Native bees and other pollinators are also in decline.

Pollinators are a keystone species group; the persistence of a large number of other species depends upon them. As pollinators disappear, the effect on the health and viablilty of crops and native plant communites can be disastrous...

Read the full article at:
www.fwfonline.org/blog

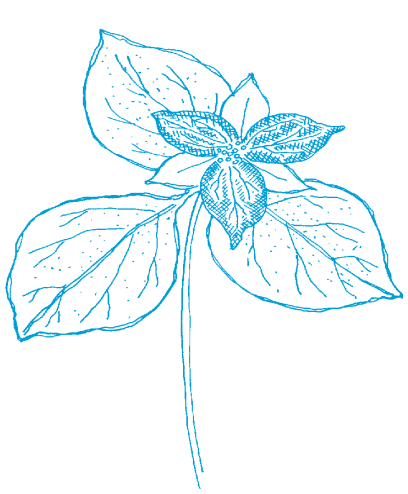


NORTHEAST FLORIDA REPORT

by Sarah Owen Gledhill, FWF's Northeast Florida Planning Advocate

Changing of the Guard at the St. Johns River Water Management District

Recently, five top executives at the St. Johns River Water Management District resigned on the same day. Coincidence? I think not. This was unfortunately an orchestrated event that has swept a lot of institutional memory right out the door. One of those resignations was submitted by Robert Christianson, 25 year employee, who oversaw land management and acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands. The Federation has worked with Robert over the last two decades on a myriad of great projects. His departure is a huge loss to the conservation of our lands that protect water resources.



Planning for Southern St. John's County

When the recession hit, development slowed down. Unfortunately, that also meant all the proactive planning projects slowed down too due to cutbacks and limited resources. Drive around now and no one will disagree that the recession is over and the development industry is booming again. This also means planning for the future of our rural areas is more important. In that regard, the Federation is hoping to reignite a 2008 conversation into a planning study for Southern St. Johns County.

We hope to learn from what the Federation's Southwest Florida office has been able to accomplish in Collier County through their Rural Land Stewardship program and Transfer of Development programs. The Northeast Florida office has also been involved with a sector plan in Clay County. Unfortunately, a sector plan does not create incentives for land owners to protect their property from development. South St. Johns County has a myriad of valuable attributes that we can create "layers" with, such as water recharge, wildlife habitat and agricultural lands. Those layers can help create incentives for property owners to not develop their property.

St. John's County Chairwoman Bennett has been very receptive ear to the community's desire to plan for the southern part of the county through such a program. The Northeast Florida office continues to engage the commissioners and staff.

Bobcats!

With the help of our volunteers, a recent camera data download of our Flagler County **wildlife crossings** captured a bobcat(s) going in both directions.

Florida's Historic Coast Hosts FWF Annual Conservation Awards Banquet

We are proud to host the 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet in St. Augustine this year. We are tailoring all the events to a true Northeast Florida experience. On Friday night, we will have a fish fry along the Matanzas River looking at the sunset behind a 16,000 acre conservation corridor. Saturday night, we will celebrate the achievements of this year's conservation award winners under live oaks at the Rod & Gun Club. The slate of conservation award winners is quite impressive with "rock stars" who have contributed both to our statewide and Northeast Florida natural resources. Our hotel headquarters is the brand new Doubletree Hilton on San Marco Ave. within a five minute walk to all the historic sites downtown has to offer. Bring the whole family and tell your friends! This is going to be a weekend you will not want to miss. **See back page of this issue to purchase tickets to the events.**

Bobcats captured by FWF wildlife crossing cameras.

Preston Robertson
Vice-President for Conservation & General Counsel

Federal land protection: The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

While we have been wrestling with how Florida's Amendment 1 dollars are to be spent, there is another major land conservation issue going on in Washington, DC. In the early 1960's, President John F. Kennedy initially championed what came to be known as the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (LWCF). The LWCF takes royalties paid by oil companies and uses it to expand National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests and other public recreational land across the United States. While $900 million was supposed to be available every year for this fund, it has rarely been appropriated even half of that amount (sound familiar)?

Even with lesser funding, over the past 50 years the LWCF has helped save our special natural places, and could be used to help create the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge in Central Florida and enlarge the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge south of Tallahassee on the Gulf of Mexico. Importantly, some of the money would be earmarked to increase public access.

LWCF is slated to expire this year, so we must make sure it is re-enacted. Thankfully, both Democrats and Republicans in DC are already supporting this idea. Sen. Richard Burr (NC) has proposed **Senate Bill 338**, which would make permanent the authorization for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The bill presently has 10 other Senators as co-sponsors.

Please contact our US Senators, Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio, and ask them to **please co-sponsor Senate Bill 338**. Thanks!

Sen. Bill Nelson: (202) 224-5274
http://www.billnelson.senate.gov/contact-bill

Sen. Marco Rubio: (202) 224-3041
www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact

C-43 RESERVOIR NEEDED FOR SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S FUTURE

The one-time ecological gem known as the Caloosahatchee River originally meandered approximately 70 miles west from Lake Hicpochee to Ft. Myers and the Gulf of Mexico. It was then connected via a canal to Lake Okeechobee and channelized to more rapidly move water. The result has been increased pollution and extremely damaging water releases that have degraded not only the river itself, but the highly productive estuaries of the Gulf of Mexico.

As part of the Everglades region, the problems of the Caloosahatchee have long been an issue of concern in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). CERP was approved by Congress as part of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) in 2000. Many plans have been put forth over the past 15 years to ameliorate the ecological destruction of South Florida, including the construction of what is known as the C-43 Reservoir in Hendry County close to the river.

Upon completion, the C-43 Reservoir (also known as the Caloosahatchee River Reservoir) will help water managers ensure a more natural and consistent flow of freshwater to the Gulf during the dry season. This will allow for greater survivability for sea grasses and all the aquatic species that rely on certain salinity levels. Without viable estuaries, which act as the nurseries for a multitude of sea life, the entire marine ecology of this region is at risk.

While federal, state and local entities have been involved in this process, the new factor in this effort may well be the money that will be received owing to the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster of 2010. As BP has been found grossly negligent in that unprecedented environmental calamity, fine money may be able to be used to help Southwest Florida and the Gulf, including the construction of the C-43 Reservoir. It is time make to this happen.

Preston T. Robertson

Conservationist Mary Olson and one of the several rare native Torreya trees she has saved. This one is located at Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee, Florida. Thanks, Mary!

FLORIDA KIDS' QUIZ

1. What is an important thing you can do to help monarch butterflies whose numbers have declined by 90%?

2. Why is it important to save energy?

3. How can you help little sea turtles to survive?

See page 14 for answers, and more information.

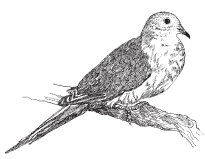
Preston Robertson enjoyed the hospitality of the ladies of the Chattahoochee Women's Club in April. He spoke about the 2015 Florida Legislative Session and Amendment 1.

IN MEMORIAM

Donations have been received in memory of:

John F. McDermott
by Christopher McDermott

Amanda Zewadski Smith and Wilson Ring Smith
by the Smith-Zewadski Trust



Travis Miller
by the Jake Leonard Family

Susan Fishbaugh
by Stroller Newport News Nuclear, Inc.
by Amy Frederick

Suzanne Kibiger
by Cheryl Rittenberry

Dorothy E. Boone
by Roxanne Boone

Capt. Richard Coleman
by Robert M. Jackson, D.V.M

Dr. Chuck Geanangel
by Robert M. Jackson, D.V.M

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

Special Recognition

Our sincere appreciation to Amanda Smith who was kind enough to name FWF as a beneficiary in her will. Her thoughtfulness will help keep the Federation moving forward on behalf of conservation. Our condolences go out to her friends and family. – Manley K. Fuller

New Wildlife Legacy Club Members:

Joseph Atterbury, Jupiter

New Eagle Club Members:

Mary Jane Jeffery, St. Petersburg

Cyrus & Joanne Spurlino, Odessa

Robert M. Jackson, D.V.M., Lakeland

New Life Members:

Michael de V. Flinn, Delray Beach

Ann G. H. Flinn, Delray Beach

Clayton & Anna May Timmons, Palm City

Martha Eggleston, Boca Raton

Douglas Durst, New York, NY

Thank you for your generous support!

**Legacy Club Members are those who have donated $5000 or more in a single gift. Eagle Club Members are $1000 donors, and Life Members are $500 donors.*

Congratulations to those members of FWF who earned GreenStar Certification!

The Federation began its GreenStar Certification program to acknowledge our members' personal commitments to a clean and healthy environment through the use of environmentally beneficial practices in their daily lives. The areas covered on the online Questionnaire include Outdoor Impact, Transportation and Energy, Water Conservation and "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle." In addition, there was a place to describe a person's own activities that were not covered in the Questionnaire. We truly appreciate all those who responded and requested GreenStar Certification. The program is still up and running on our website, www.fwfonline.org. Go to PROGRAMS on the main menu at the top, and you'll find GreenStar Certification on the drop down menu. From there you will be taken to the online GreenStar Questionnaire.

New Green Star Members

Jennifer Van Why, Milton

Cheryl Little, Clearwater

Florida GreenStar Certification
Florida Wildlife Federation

PLEASANT HILL from page 1

is surrounded by chain-link fencing. The fencing is used by the students to hang and display informational material about Florida wildlife they hope to attract and identify in the future. In this way, the scientific knowledge they are gaining can be shared with all students at the school including those who are not directly involved in the maintenance of the habitat.

Pleasant Hill Elementary Science classes are geared to the Florida Education Standards; many of these requirements can be gained by use of the habitat. This effort is coordinated by Ms. Lorraine Ambrose, the school's Science Resource teacher. Working or studying in the habitat also enables students to be active outdoors, which is encouraged by health experts as a way to combat the problems facing today's children.

Florida Wildlife Federation commends the work of these dedicated teachers and students for their forward thinking, their recycling efforts, and their hard work in establishing and tending their habitat, which not only adds to the students' knowledge, but helps to conserve Florida's wild creatures.

Pleasant Hill Elementary School students put up many bird feeders.

A student-made bird feeder.

Outdoor display of habitat information.

2015 Kids' Habitat winners.

Umbrellas provide a little shade in the Panda School Habitat.

Mrs. Strang's 3rd Graders each wrote a thank you letter with Earth Day theme and drawing.

Jay Liles
FWF Policy Consultant

Florida's Sportsmen and Women Have a Key Role in Gulf Restoration

Five years ago, the Deepwater Horizon rig exploded, killing 11 men. As much as 200 million gallons of oil gushed into the Gulf of Mexico. We all watched in horror as oiled dolphins, sea turtles and brown pelicans struggled in the slick. But once the TV cameras left the scene, those images faded from our collective consciousness.

But for wildlife, the disaster is ongoing. A new National Wildlife Federation report describes how dolphins in heavily-oiled Louisiana are still dying at four times the normal rate. Before 2010, the number of endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtle nests were rebounding dramatically. Now Kemp's Ridley nests are on the decline. Sperm whales deep in the Gulf also appear to have changed where they forage for food.

Common sense suggests that dumping millions of gallons into one of the world's most productive ecosystems will have serious consequences; it is clear from previous oil spills that a full recovery could take decades.

Unfortunately, BP continues to dodge its responsibilities. Just last month, the company released a glossy report declaring that the Gulf was essentially healed. But even as BP's public relations team was rolling out this report, the company had a large team of workers on a Louisiana barrier island attempting to remove a 25,000-pound tar mat.

Court proceedings under the Clean Water Act are nearing completion. The oil giant has been found to be "grossly negligent," meaning the company could have to pay up to $13.7 billion in civil penalties for their recklessness. Hopefully, BP will choose to end its stalling tactics and just pay these fines.

The bipartisan RESTORE Act of 2012 sends 80 percent of these Clean Water Act penalties back to the Gulf region. Florida could reap a windfall of billions of dollars. But this does not mean that the restoration of the Gulf ecosystem is guaranteed. While nearly all of the legislative debate around the RESTORE Act focused on improving the health of the Gulf, the final bill mandated that only 30 percent—controlled by a council of Gulf governors and federal agency heads—be spent solely on comprehensive ecosystem restoration.

Most of the remainder of the money will be controlled by state and local governments. Some of this could be spent on a variety of activities—everything from deepening shipping channels to building boardwalks for tourists. In Florida, each of the Gulf Coast counties will make their own decisions about how to use their RESTORE Act money.

To date, most of these counties have not made final plans for how they will spend this money. Early proposals show promise -- Hernando and Monroe have chosen to fund projects such as those to restore coastal marshes, rebuild coral reefs and improve water quality. We can only hope that the other 21 counties will follow suit by making smart, targeted investments in Florida's Gulf Coast.

You can express your opinion to policymakers by going to: www.floridasportsmanletter.com.

At the above site, you can sign on to a letter directed to all decision-makers who will ultimately make the choices for projects to be funded by the BP Clean Water Act fines. If Florida decision-makers take steps now to clean our waters, restore our wetlands and rebuild our oyster reefs, then wildlife across the Gulf will benefit, and so will the state's economy.

2015 Legislative Session - Please Act to Make Sure Amendment 1 dollars are spent how we voted!

On behalf of the Florida Wildlife Federation and its board and members we want to thank you for taking action on conservation issues this year. Your voice is critical to our ability to positively impact the legislative process.

By Preston Robertson

The crazy closing week of the 2015 Legislative Session gives hope that money from Amendment 1 may actually be used for conservation and to fund the Florida Forever program. As you have likely heard, for the first time in at least 40 years, one chamber of our State Legislature left early. At midday on Tuesday, April 28, House Speaker Steve Crisafulli suddenly ended the House of Representatives 2015 Regular Session with three days left in the 60 day Session. The Speaker had apparently given Senate President Andy Gardner 10 minutes notice of this action via email. Many House members were just as surprised as the entire Senate by this tactic. Because no state budget had been passed, a Special Session has been scheduled for June 1-20. It is hard to predict how the House and Senate and the Governor will come to any agreement, but they will have to try. The budget must be completed by June 30.

On Wednesday, April 29, although the House was gone, the Senate met and there was discussion about Amendment 1. For the first time, Senators, particularly Joe Negron and Rob Bradley, both said that Amendment 1 voters wanted money from Amendment 1 spent for land acquisition and the Everglades, and that we need to use bonding to do it. This is great news, and we need to thank these Senators for trying to do the will of the people! Your voices are being heard! They join Senators Altman, Soto and Joyner in openly advocating for this critical funding.

Present budget proposals by the Florida House and Senate still fall far short of full funding for the Florida Forever program: $10 and $15 million, respectively. Past funding was $300 million per year under both Republican and Democratic Governors. The Florida Forever program "acquires and restores" land which is what Amendment 1, which was passed by 75% of voters last November, clearly said to do.

But now that the Legislature will go into Special Session this summer, commencing June 1, we have more time to let our elected leaders know that they must do the will of the people and fully fund Florida Forever!

What you can do

1) As noted above, we need to **thank the following Senators** for their leadership on Amendment 1 and ask them to **please keep fighting for money for Florida Forever and the Everglades!**

Sen. Joe Negron: (772) 219-1665; negron.joe.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Rob Bradley: (904) 278-2085; bradley.rob.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Thad Altman: (321) 868-2132; altman.thad.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Darren Soto: (407) 846-5187; soto.darren.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Arthenia Joyner: (813) 233-4277; joyner.arthenia.web@flsenate.gov

2) Please contact the following legislators and tell them to fully fund Florida Forever!

Senate President Andy Gardiner: (407) 428-5800; gardiner.andy.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Tom Lee: (813) 653-7061; lee.tom.web@flsenate.gov
Sen. Jack Latvala: (727) 793-2797; latvala.jack.web@flsenate.gov
Speaker of the House Steve Crisafulli: (321) 449-5111; steve.crisafulli@myfloridahouse.gov
Rep. Matt Hudson: ((239) 417-6270; matt.hudson@myfloridahosue.gov
Rep. Dana Young: (813) 835-2270; dana.young@myfloridahouse.gov

Importantly, with the regular Session over, Senators and Representatives will be back in their home district offices prior to the Special Session. **Go see your Senator and Representative personally and tell them how you feel about Amendment 1 and Florida Forever.** Go to the FWF website (www.fwfonline.org) and type in your zip code for contact information.

Thank you – together we can do this!

Message from Eric Eikenberg CEO of The Everglades Foundation

Last week, the South Florida Water Management District voted unanimously to terminate the negotiated land purchase of 46,800 acres from U.S. Sugar Corp. This decision by the appointed Governing Board is disappointing, to say the least.

Over the last five months, **thousands of you have voiced your strong support in favor of buying this critical land south of Lake Okeechobee**, emboldened by the overwhelming passage of Amendment 1 last November.

As you know, purchasing land for restoration is not a new concept. The bi-partisan Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan or CERP, signed into law in 2000, specifically calls for an above ground reservoir within the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA). A reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee is essential to protecting the Everglades for generations to come and an integral part of CERP that brought Republicans and Democrats together in a historic fashion to restore this national treasure. The District's vote last week does not change that. The need for this critical project remains the same.

What Everglades restoration needs, right now, is political leadership to implement what scientists over the last 15 years have counseled our elected officials — grow Florida's water supply and keep more freshwater in the Everglades.

The action by the District's Governing Board is a step backwards. There is near-universal agreement that storage reservoirs are needed, and Gov. Scott is working with the Legislature to assure the funding is allocated for restoration projects. What is missing from District leadership is a plan on how it will identify land within the EAA to ensure this much-needed reservoir is built. **The South Florida Water Management District and Gov. Scott are stewards of Everglades restoration and have a responsibility to take actionable steps to achieve it.**

Thank you for donating your time and resources — making phone calls, writing letters, attending meetings and making contributions — in support of buying the land and protecting the water supply eight million Floridians rely on. **Our pressure and advocacy cannot let up.**

Sincerely,
Eric Eikenberg
Chief Executive Officer
The Everglades Foundation

Southern longleaf pines.

Photos by Tyler MacMillan of NWFWMD.

2015 Annual Boating Sweepstakes Casts Off June 10
25th Anniversary Celebration

By Claudia Farren, FWF Sweepstakes Coordinator

The Florida Wildlife Federation is excited to be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of our Annual Boating Sweepstakes. Instead of four boats, the Grand Prize winner will choose ONE of five fabulous prizes: One of two top-selling, family-friendly fishing boats with low emission engines, or a hybrid car, or an A-frame RV that's easy to tow with many of today's fuel-efficient SUVs, **OR $25,000 in cash!** The prizes are: the Sea Hunt Triton 188 nearshore boat, the Blue Wave 2000 Pure Bay boat, the Prius Three hatchback, or the Aliner Expedition camper. Get outside with your family and friends and enjoy all the marvelous outdoor opportunities that only Florida can offer. The Boating Sweepstakes Drawing will be held on December 17th.

Rule the Bay in this high performance, custom fishing boat. **The Blue Wave 2000 Pure Bay** *(20-feet) is ideal for a family outing or the serious angler. With its 8-foot beam, this boat can float in 11-inches of water. Standard equipment includes a leaning post with fold down footrest plus ice chest underneath, multiple live wells, 100% hand-laid hulls, rod lockers, two rear flip seats with storage, stainless steel hardware, unsinkable foam flotation, dry floor drain system and a 10-inch manual jackplate. Package includes a fuel-efficient Suzuki 115 HP fuel injected four stroke outboard engine and a Magic Tilt aluminum trailer.*

Get out on the water in a **Sea Hunt Triton 188** *(18-feet 8-inches) center-console nearshore boat, ideally configured for serious saltwater fishing. The package includes a stainless steel grab rail, windshield, 40-quart built-in console cooler, 105-quart insulated bow storage, 20-gallon aerated livewell, rear boarding ladder, rod holders, hydraulic steering, helm chairs, rear jump seats, recessed cleats (4), and the smooth performance of the Vortex deep-V hull design. Powered with a quiet, reliable Yamaha 115 HP four-stroke engine with stainless steel prop, the prize package includes a Magic Tilt aluminum trailer.*

Introduced in 2010, the **Prius Three Hybrid Hatchback** *continues to offer superior fuel economy with estimated 51 city/48 highway mpg. Due to the unique shape of the hatchback it has a very low drag coefficient of only 0.25, making it one of the most aerodynamic cars in the world. Available high-tech options in the Prius Three model are display audio with navigation; smart key system; subscription-free Entune Apps Suite that includes real-time traffic, weather, Pandora, and Open Table. The 2015 hybrid won a 4-star safety rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Safety features include antilock brakes, seven airbags, and a backup camera.*

The Aliner Expedition—*Aliner's largest model camper—is an easy-to-tow, pop-up RV trailer ready to handle any outdoor adventure. It weighs less than 2,000 pounds and is towable by many fuel-efficient vehicles. The package includes off-road capability, A/C-heat, oven, stove, refrigerator, microwave, euro-style sink, toilet, inside or outside shower, dinette booth, plus your choice of a rear sofa to foldout queen bed, twin beds, or queen mattress. All water tanks and lines are inside the camper so it can be used in winter. Sleeping capacity is four. Expedition is for the whole family or the couple that just wants more room. Smaller Aliner models are also available.*

Outstanding Grand Prizes

SECOND PRIZE: Ten winners will receive a $75 Gift Certificate to Guy Harvey Sportswear which features Guy Harvey t-shirts, Limited Edition shirts, jackets and fleece, Ladies t-dresses and dry-release performance shirts, youth t-shirts and sandals, hats, footwear, towels and backpacks. Guy Harvey merges his stunning art with high-performance and high-quality fabrics, fits and designs.

How to Enter

Ticket contributions are $5 each, 6 tickets for $25, 15 tickets for $50, or 35 tickets for $100. Watch for your Sweepstakes tickets in the mail or play online anytime. For more information, including the official rules, visit www.fwfonline.org and click on the Sweepstakes navigation bar at the top of every page. Then click on 25th Annual Boating Sweepstakes to enter. If you would like a set of tickets mailed to you, send an email to FWF at boatsweeps@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. Specify "Boat Sweeps" in the Subject line.

Green Car Sweepstakes

The Florida Wildlife Federation will not be conducting the Green Car Sweepstakes this year. Thank you to all who participated in the past.

"Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes Drawing to be Held on June 18

The Third Annual "Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes is quickly drawing to a close. Be sure to send in your tickets for your chance to win one of four amazing prizes. The Grand Prize is your choice of five days of fishing for two at the Soldotna Bed and Breakfast Lodge in Alaska; a leisurely cruise through the Panama Canal on a luxurious Holland America cruise ship; a step back in time with a cruise in the Galapagos Islands with National Geographic/Lindblad Expeditions; **OR $10,000 in cash.** The drawing is Thursday, June 18 at Federation Headquarters, 2545 Blairstone Pines Drive in Tallahassee. It will be supervised by Carroll and Co. Inc., Certified Public Accountants.

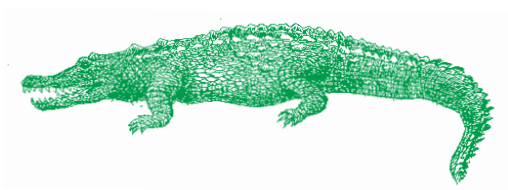
A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE OF FLORIDA. THE REGISTRATION NUMBER ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES TO THE FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION IS: CH-499.

FWF participates in Wakulla Wildlife Festival, April 18, 2015

FWF staff and volunteers from left to right: Beth Hakemoller, Jenny Brock, Michelle Hakemoller and Diane Hines manned the Florida Wildlife Federation booth at the Wakulla Springs Wildlife Festival on Saturday April 18.

Photo by Lou Kellenberger.

It was a very pleasant spring day for the Wings Over Wakulla Wildlife Festival on April 18 at Wakulla Springs State Park. The Florida Wildlife Federation attended again as it has for almost all of the 20 years that the festival has been in existence. FWF volunteers and staff spoke to many visitors about the Florida Wildlife Federation and the importance of monarch butterfly protection. Many children enjoyed coloring monarch butterfly pictures. If you have been involved in similar events, or would like to volunteer to help FWF by setting up a display at your local events, please contact Diane Hines at dhines@fwfonline.org.



Remembering the Federation

If you wish to name Florida Wildlife Federation in your will or estate plan, please use the following language:

> The Florida Wildlife Federation, a nonprofit cooperation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida, with principal business address of PO Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870.

The federal tax identification number is 59-1398265.

Help Us Plan

If your plans already include a gift for Florida Wildlife Federation, please let us know. We will honor all requests for anonymity, and you can always modify your gift if your circumstances change.

For more information please contact **Tim Bachmeyer**, FWF Development Consultant, at **561-801-5752** or **Diane Hines** at **850-656-7113**.

FWF PARTNERS PROGRAM

The Florida Wildlife Federation has a new and exciting dimension to its fundraising program — FWF PARTNERS!

Wildlife Sustainer

Joseph Atterbury

Wildlife Steward

Ann B. Taylor
Everett H. Erlick

Friend of Wildlife

Jeffrey B. Parker
Drs. David S. and Mary L. Oster Granite
Frances D. Wilson
Barbara Hoffman
Sondra Resnikoff
Melissa K. Buhler
Mrs. Ted Parke
James and Cathy Garrett
Frank Orser
Champ Tunno
Jim Shoultz
Claudia Farren
Dr. Theresa Parrott Nenezian

FWF PARTNERS is an annual donor recognition program designed to provide a continuing stream of unrestricted support to FWF year in and year out. PARTNERS gifts will support FWF's most critical priorities.

A PARTNER pledges to make a gift each year to join one of the PARTNERS gift clubs. PARTNERS names will also be acknowledged regularly in FWF communications including the *Florida Fish and Wildlife News*, the FWF website and our annual report. Of course, any PARTNER may choose to remain anonymous.

As an FWF donor, member, or friend you **are now invited to join one of the PARTNERS clubs** according to your capacity and to what FWF's conservation action means to you. The giving clubs are:

FWF PARTNERS	
Conservation Visionary	***$25,000***
Conservation Hero	***$10,000***
Conservation Champion	***$5,000***
Wildlife Sustainer	***$2,500***
Wildlife Advocate	***$1,000***
Wildlife Steward	***$500***
Friend of Wildlife	***$100***

To become an FWF PARTNER, to receive a pledge form, or for more information, contact **Diane Hines** at dhines@fwfonline.org or **850-656-7113**.

The Elusive RCW

by Sharon Denise Stephens

The sun had not risen as I walked the trail at Tall Timbers Research Station near the Georgia/Florida line just north of Killearn Lakes. The morning dew was at its lowest and the humidity was thick. I started to sweat as I made my way to the pine where the elusive Red-cockaded Woodpecker was roosting. Jim Cox, the Director of Stoddard Bird Lab at Tall Timbers, honored my request to see the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) in its natural habitat. I anticipated what I would observe about the woodpecker that would give me knowledge of the foraging habits of this bird.

I had arrived at Tall Timbers at 5:50 a.m. on a Friday morning. RCWs are late risers compared to other birds but humans still have to be early-risers to view them. The overcast sky distorted my view of the path Mr. Cox and the staff took to get to the woodpecker's cavity. The bugs stung my head and forearm but the irritation was minimal compared to what I was about to witness. Words cannot describe how delighted I was when I knocked on the tree and the RCW flew out of its cavity. The equipment I held to net the woodpecker was an extendable fiberglass pole with a large net. My first attempt failed, however, because the bird was quick and successful in its attempt to avoid being captured.

Mr. Cox, however, succeeded in his attempt to capture a banded RCW for observation. Normally Tall Timbers does not catch RCWs that are already banded but Mr. Cox caught

The author holding a RCW.

a banded bird so I could get an up-close observation. He handed the bird to me and, as I held it, I knew it was in distress. I was able to feel its heartbeat in my hand. I held the bird only a fraction of a second because I did not want to cause it further distress. As I gently placed the RCW back on the pine, to my amazement it walked in a zigzag formation back up the tree. I had never witness a bird doing this.

As I learned from Mr. Cox, RCWs will climb when foraging as opposed to flying away. When the RCW made its way back to its cavity, the breeding female and helper in the group came back.

The RCW must drill the outer layer tree bark of solid green pine before it gets to a soft red-heart center. This makes the RCW different from other woodpeckers that excavate dead pines. The cavities drilled by RCWs are used by flying squirrels and woodpeckers that excavate dead pines. And, one will be able to find examples of redheart fungal disease even where the burning has been neglected. Redheart disease serves to soften the pine, which makes seasonal burns crucial to RCW habitat.

Midstory and understory responses to fire are important to RCWs. Frequent fire kills small hardwoods before they have a chance to grow tall. When frequent fire ceases, the hardwoods increase in height and eventually reach a point where they may interfere with woodpecker foraging as well as use of cavity trees. Female woodpeckers prefer to forage on lower trees and hardwood midstory. If hardwoods get much above 15-25 feet and extend over a large portion of the territory, female woodpeckers abandon the territory.

According to Cox, "Fire recycles vital nutrients, such as calcium, that can become trapped in plants. Adequate calcium intake is important for breeding female woodpeckers because the outer shell is composed of calcium; and calcium is important for egg production. The release of calcium following a burn can lead to larger clutches the following years afterward. Prescribed fire has other benefits in the southern pine forests as well, such as releasing natural seed banks and reducing fuel that would create scorching wildfires."

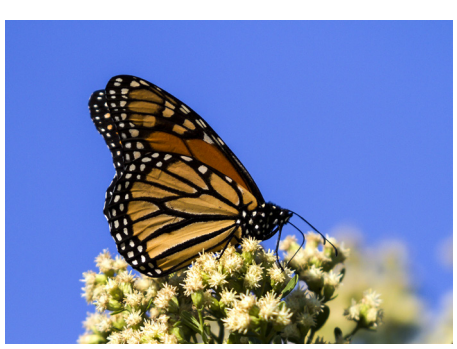
In the southeastern United States where Longleaf Pines are in abundance, RCWs thrive because prescribed burning serves as a prescription to restore the aesthetic beauty of the land. Other birds like chickadees, titmouse, and bluebirds benefit from cavities excavated by RCWs making them a key species that has enormous ecological importance in southern pine forests. Nature is restored when the habitat that RCWs create increases and other animals that rely on their ecosystem replenish the forest. To glimpse a sunrise with an exuberant RCW excavating a southern pine tree regenerates the soul because woodpeckers and plants have become one.

Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy is located near the Georgia/Florida line north of Tallahassee on Lake Iamonia. The Research Station is a widely regarded information resource for the areas of fire ecology, game bird management, vertebrate ecology and forestry. It's recognized as the home of the study of fire ecology and is an advocate to protect the right to use prescribed fire for land management. The Land Conservancy is recognized as one of the nation's leading land trusts, as it has protected traditional land users in north Florida and south Georgia by conserving more than 160,000 acres in this region through conservation easements. Tall Timbers also protects thousands of acres of habitat along the Flint River in South Georgia through conservation easements on private property along the river. The Tall Timbers Land Conservancy is the largest regional land trust in Florida and Georgia. For more information, visit their website at www.talltimbers.org.

Author's Notes: Though this story takes place in Florida, Arkansas also has programs to increase the population and habitat of RCWs. Jim Cox, of Tall Timbers Research Station, was helpful in preparing this manuscript.

FWF's 2015 Spring Greeting Cards

FWF is pleased to feature four outstanding photographs by Karen Willes in our spring card series for 2015. When you send these cards to family and friends, it lets them know of your interest and commitment to fish and wildlife conservation. There are 12 cards and 12 envelopes in each packet. To order packets of these cards you may call toll free at (800) 656-3014. The cards are available online at www.fwfonline.org in the Nature Store. ***FP-540*, Price $10.00, *Member Price $8.95.***



Adopted by the Affiliate Delegate of the Annual Meeting of National Wildlife Federation, March 28th, 2015.

National Wildlife Federation
Conservation Congress
We Believe

America's experience with cherished landscapes and wildlife has helped define and shape our national character and identity for generations. Protecting these natural resources is a cause that has long united Americans from all walks of life and political stripes. To hunters, anglers, hikers, birders, wildlife watchers, boaters, climbers, campers, cyclists, gardeners, farmers, forest stewards and other outdoor enthusiasts, this conservation ethic has evolved and is now integral to our heritage and fundamental to the very pursuit of happiness enshrined at the founding of this great country. It is this heritage that we will defend and pass on to our children. And for all Americans, whether they venture into nature or not, whether they live in the middle of our most densely populated cities or in small towns or rural communities or somewhere in between, we all depend on clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment. Our ties to the land provide spiritual sustenance and a path to virtue; they suggest a perfection in nature that exceeds anything humans can create. As Americans we share a sacred duty and obligation to protect and build upon our conservation heritage for the sake of native wildlife, ourselves, our neighbors, and most of all for future generations.

To this end, we believe…

- Our nation's wildlife, fish, healthy waters, clean air, and public lands are a birthright of all Americans.
- Government has a sacred duty to conserve and steward these public trust resources for all, including future generations, using the best available science and providing robust financial resources.
- Conservation on private land plays an essential role in supporting healthy fish and wildlife populations and providing and connecting their habitat.
- Our nation's healthy lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, marine and coastal waters, forests, and other wild lands are vital to our public health, economy, wildlife, and quality of life.
- Diverse and abundant wildlife habitat is essential for urban, suburban and rural communities.
- We all have a right to enjoy sustainable and responsible outdoor recreation including: hunting, fishing, camping, birding, wildlife watching, hiking, climbing, swimming, boating, and gardening.
- Our nation must address climate change, continue moving toward cleaner energy sources, and make wildlife habitat and communities more resilient to such change.
- We have a national responsibility to get our children outdoors, for their health, their intellectual enrichment, their daily happiness, and to instill a conservation ethic in future generations.

As the National Wildlife Federation – a nationwide federation of state and territorial affiliate organizations and nearly six million members and supporters across the country:

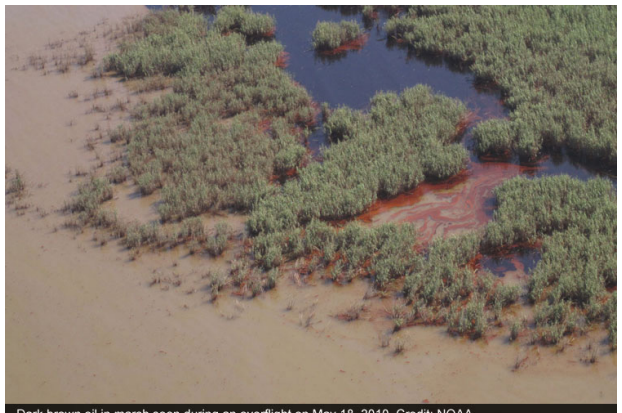
- We embrace a national responsibility to conserve wildlife and wild places wherever they may be and to broaden the conservation movement so that it encompasses America in all its diversity.
- We dedicate ourselves to share respectfully with our neighbors our understanding and appreciation of our natural environment, of conservation, of cultural preservation, and of America's outdoor heritage.
- We commit to nurturing with resources, attention, and talent a diverse national conservation movement that inspires local, state, and national action and engagement on issues that transcend political boundary.
- And we fully accept our profound responsibility to speak up, to advocate, and to engage on behalf of America's wildlife.

Deepwater Horizon Researchers Discuss Their Scientific Research in Tallahassee

By Claudia Farren,
Communications Consultant

For the 5th Anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill three university researchers discussed their latest findings about the impact of the Macondo well blowout on the biology and ecology of the Gulf of Mexico and its shores. The panel discussion took place at the Challenger Center and was sponsored by the Tallahassee Scientific Society.

The first speaker was Dr. Ian MacDonald, benthic biologist and oceanographer of "deep-ocean extreme communities" at FSU's Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science. He has been studying natural oil seeps for years. Gas hydrate droplets in the ocean form a rainbow sheen and dissipate the ripple effect of surface water. Large sheens are visible from the Space Shuttle. By mapping these oil slicks Dr. MacDonald has been able to discern what is happening at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico. Before the Deepwater Horizon oil spill he had discovered 914 natural seep zones. Most are in the northwest off Texas and offshore of Mexico. There's not much in the northeast off Florida, only 7 percent. When the accident occurred in April 2010, he used satellite imagery to challenge the size of the oil spill first reported by BP and government scientists. They later confirmed his findings.


Dark brown oil in marsh seen during an overflight on May 18, 2010. Credit: NOAA.

Controlled burning by the Coast Guard removed significant amounts of the heavy oil. Dr. MacDonald's new research shows that the dispersant used on the remaining oil on the surface and directly at the well head reduced the volume of floating oil by 21 percent but increased the ocean area it covered by 49 percent. This shifted the impact from the upper food chain—dolphins, whales, turtles—to the lower levels of the Gulf—larvae and plankton. On the Gulf's floor, corals were injured but the extent is unknown. On a dive trip soon after the accident several sites showed "circular death of corals". Dr. MacDonald showed photos of pink-colored coral fans. Their centers were brown. When he and other researchers returned in 2014 much of the coral was dead. Other coral reefs were checked surrounding the spill. They had not recovered. He hopes to continue to study the long-term effects of the oil spill on the deep ocean communities of the Gulf of Mexico.

Dr. William F. Patterson III, an Associate Professor at the University of South Alabama and Dauphin Island Sea Lab, spoke about chronic effects and resiliency of reef fish after the accident at the oil well. At the time he was in the middle of a long-term study on the diversity of fish on natural and artificial reefs in the Gulf. The various fish on both types of reefs grow similarly and their diet is similar. His studies were showing that there is a greater diversity of fish on natural reefs. They are species-rich with lots of large and small fish. Artificial reefs have plenty of large fish but very few small ones—the diversity is lower. After the spill, concentrations of all fish declined in the Gulf by Year 3. However, in Year 4, fish populations started to come back. Lionfish, an invasive species native to the South Pacific and Indian Oceans, arrived in 2010 adding a confusing effect on his study. The lionfish are at a much higher density on the artificial reefs than on the natural ones and are increasing in numbers.

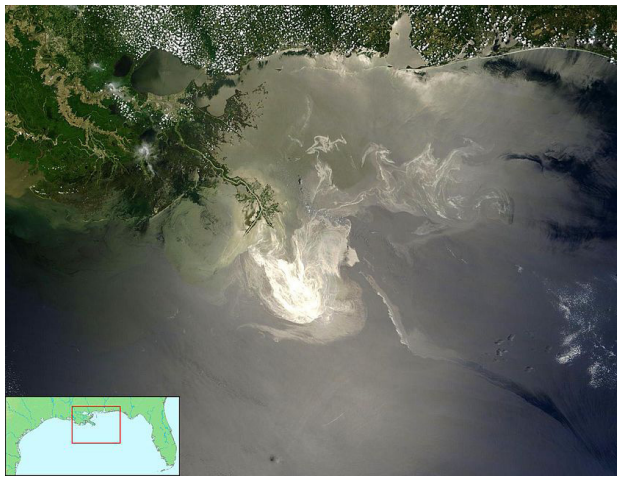
Last to speak was Dr. R. Eugene Turner who is a coastal, wetlands biologist and professor at the Louisiana State University School of the Coast and Environment. He is an expert on the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico and the ongoing impacts of the oil spill, and is studying the effects on the coastal ecosystems in Louisiana. Oil entered the marshes off the coast around June 1 and his team was able to get baseline measurements before the oil came to shore. There has only been a modest weathering of the oil that reached the marsh and they expect to have persistent oiling for decades. He stated, "The shoreline erodes faster with oil and we are not going to get the marsh back."

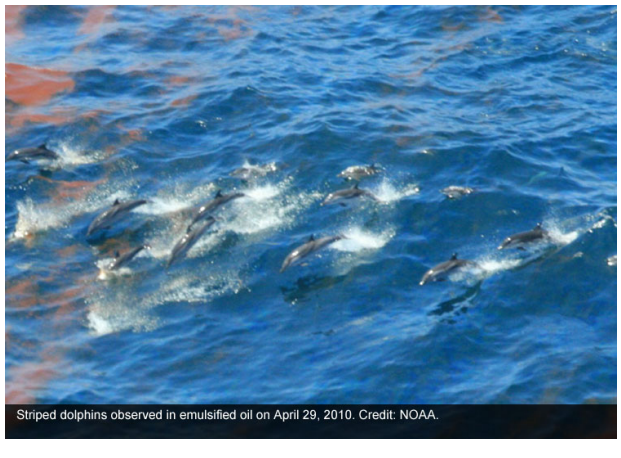
Some of Dr. Turner's other findings: Ants and spiders were killed or left the area, which in turn impacted the seaside sparrow population. Oysters were more damaged after three years than after one. He does not know why. He is also studying loons and their reproductive cycles into the future. The marsh fish have not been affected in a population level, only in an individual level. The dead zone was not worse after the spill.

Comments during the Question and Answer period: All three professors stressed the need for long term studies and suggested the audience write their local, state and federal representatives and tell them to fund scientific studies on fish, mammals, and the interconnectivity of the whole ecology of the Gulf. They were asked if dispersant chemicals should be used in the next big oil spill and they all said they did not know. They'd like to see the results of a long term study covering the whole ecosystem. The professors agreed that booms have no use and were not effective in stopping the oil from coming onshore. Dr. Patterson stated that the fish from the Gulf are safe to eat.

The oil industry continues to do busi-

DEEPWATER con't page 15


Deepwater Horizon oil slick near the Mississippi River Delta as seen from space by NASA's Terra Satellite on May 24, 2010. Credit: WikiMedia Commons.


Striped dolphins observed in emulsified oil on April 29, 2010. Credit: NOAA.

Answers to Florida Kids' Quiz

1. You can plant (or encourage your parents to plant) native milkweeds in Florida to help monarchs on their flight across the Gulf to their winter habitat in Mexico. Native milkweeds are the only plants monarchs can eat to fuel themselves on this long flight. You can also put a shallow dish with some stones in it that are almost covered with water to give butterflies a drink on their journey. Pour out the water every day and refill it to keep mosquitoes from breeding.

2. It's important to save energy because most energy requires the burning of fuels (coal, gas) that create greenhouse gases causing climate change. Greenhouse gases (carbon dioxides) are caught in our atmosphere and heat up the planet (they turn the earth into a "greenhouse"). So be mindful when you use your television sets and computers or gas to drive cars. Solar and wind energy, which do not cause climate change, are becoming more widely used, and that is a good thing for the earth. However, until we have more solar and wind energy, we should try to save energy when we can.

3. Little sea turtles, which hatch from eggs on Florida beaches, are supposed to make their way into the ocean, but can get confused about where the water is because of lights on the beach. They confuse the lights for the moon and will crawl inland instead of out to sea. Any lighted sign that is built directly on the beach will attract them, and they will crawl in the wrong direction and may die. Houses, hotels and motels directly on the beach should shield their lights on the beach side, or turn them off during the turtle hatching season.

How did you do, Florida Kid??!!

DEEPWATER from page 14

ness with inadequate regulations as a result of the Macondo well blowout, explosion, and fire. The Deepwater Horizon spill was just a rehearsal of what we are going to be facing in the future.

***Jay Liles, FWF Policy Consultant, had this to say about the current state of Gulf restoration: "Restoring the Gulf of Mexico will help restore Florida's economy that was also damaged by the spill. By making sure the waters that flow off our lands and into the Gulf are cleaner, we can help keep the Gulf healthy and sustainable. A healthy Gulf should be the goal of every dollar spent on restoration. The Florida Wildlife Federation is working with local advisory groups and other environmental organizations to ensure that the Clean Water Act fines paid by those responsible for this spill go into Gulf restoration."*

Florida Wildlife Federation "FWF"

We welcome you!

To join FWF, a conservation organization dedicated for 75+ years to the health of Florida's fish and wildlife, its waters, native habitats, and sustainable outdoor recreation. We support scientifically based, professional management of natural resources and nature based recreation including hunting and fishing. Ecosystem restoration and recovery of depleted species are also primary objectives. We appreciate your support! Please join today!

Yes I want to join Florida Wildlife Federation in promoting conservation of Florida's natural treasures and the enjoyment of our Great Outdoors! You will receive our publication *Florida Fish and Wildlife News* and periodic conservation updates by mail or email. Thank you.

- ❑ Student.....$15
- ❑ Associate $25
- ❑ Family.....$35
- ❑ Sustaining $50
- ❑ Sponsor.....$100
- ❑ Life Member.....$500
- ❑ Eagle Club Member $1000
- ❑ Wildlife Legacy Club ...$5000+

Please send completed form with check, money order, or credit card information to:

Florida Wildlife Federation
PO Box 6870
Tallahassee, FL 32314
or
Join or Donate online at:
www.fwfonline.org

Enclosed is my payment for $_____

Please charge my payment to:
❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard ❑ American Express
Cards #_____ Exp. Date_____
Signature_____
Name_____
Address_____
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Please send me my *FFWN* by ❑ Mail ❑ Email

❑ Please add me to your list to receive occasional e-mail updates.

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DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE MONARCHS!

By Pat Pearson, Habitat Coordinator

Our monarchs are in trouble. I'm talking about the dire straits that the monarch butterfly is in, with a 90% decline in its numbers within the last few years. Yes, maybe it will be OK. Maybe the programs initiated by government agencies and almost anybody else with some clout will work out in the end, and the beautiful and unique monarch will fly again. Or not.

Please forgive me if I seem skeptical about how slow and ineffectual government seems to be, as in how slowly action on climate change, for instance, seems to be, and how quickly we seem to forget things that are no longer in the news. Wouldn't it be a shame if we forget about the monarch butterflies?

I am still convinced that most good changes that happen in this country start on the grass roots level, and rise from there up to the powers-that-be before they are enacted into effective programs or laws for helping bad situations. That usually takes years of wrangling in legislative bodies before they can be made effective. After all, political contributions must be considered, and I doubt that the monarchs make many political contributions.

So, what's to be done if monarch butterflies are to be helped in any way? We grass roots people can try to help them survive and thrive where we live until larger programs kick in, and give the butterflies what they need to survive. Florida is the last stop for many of the east coast monarchs migrating to their winter home in Mexico. Shouldn't Floridians try to see that they have the necessary milkweeds, which are their only food to fuel their journey? Think about it, and PLANT MILKWEEDS!

Get to know which native milkweeds are good for monarchs, and which are not. Here is the quickest way to propagate plants. I don't know the source of the following information, so I can't attribute it to its writer, but I believe the writer will not mind my repeating it here as it was surely written to aid the monarchs' survival.

GROWING MILKWEEDS FROM CUTTINGS

All **milkweeds** are perennials and some can be grown from cuttings. Cuttings provide a way of producing new plants in a relatively short time and it avoids some of the difficulties of starting plants from seeds. To start cuttings, cut the stems underwater, then coat the bottom of the stem with a strong rooting hormone. The stems should be placed in sand, vermiculite, or potting soil that is kept continuously moist. Cuttings can usually be transplanted in 6-10 weeks. Survival is best when cuttings are made from green stems (1/3 inch diameter) obtained from plants fertilized two weeks earlier.

Soil Types: If you have a choice, light soils are better than those with heavy clay. Well-drained soils are generally best but there are some species, e.g. A. incarnata (swamp milkweed) and A. sullivantii, which do well in saturated conditions.

Where to Plant: Most milkweed species evolved in open areas where they were exposed to full sunlight and they will do best if they are planted in the sunniest areas of your gardens. A few species, such as A. purpurascens, appear to require partial shade.

Conservation Calendar

June 12-14, 2015
FWF Board of Directors Meeting
& Conservation Awards Banquet
St. Augustine
dhines@fwfonline.org
(see back page of this issue)

June 18, 2015
Fish or Cruise Sweepstakes Drawing
FWF Headquarters – 3 PM
2545 Blairstone Pines Dr
Tallahassee, FL 32301

June 23-25, 2015
FWC Commission Meeting
Sarasota
www.myfwc.com/commission

September 2-3, 2015
FWC Commission Meeting
Fort Lauderdale

September 25-27, 2015
FWF Board of Directors Meeting
Tradewinds Resort, St. Pete Beach
dhines@fwfonline.org

December 17, 2015
25th Annual Boating
Sweepstakes Drawing
FWF Headquarters

Florida Wildlife Federation's 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet

June 12-14, 2015. Headquarters: Doubletree by Hilton St. Augustine Historic District

Make reservations for tickets through FWF and overnight accommodations through Doubletree by Hilton.

450th ST. AUGUSTINE • FOUNDED 1565

Doubletree by Hilton in St. Augustine's Historic District

Reserve by May 29th to receive room rate of $129 per night.

The Federation's summer meeting hotel headquarters is the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. Ideally located in the city center, this inviting hotel is within walking distance of the historic downtown district. Full service hotel with pool & free parking for hotel guests. Hotel located at 116 San Marco Avenue, St. Augustine, FL 32084

Call 904-825-1923 for room reservations. Mention FWF or Florida Wildlife Federation to receive group rate - $129 per night. Or, visit www.StAugustineHistoricDistrict.Doubletree.com and use Group Code "FWF" for $129 per night rate.

Friday, June 12th

6:30 pm **Fish Fry along the Mantanzas River**
Genung's Fish Camp
291 Cubbedge Rd, Crescent Beach
($25 per person)

Saturday, June 13th

9:00 am to 4:00 pm **FWF Board of Directors/House of Delegates Meeting**
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room

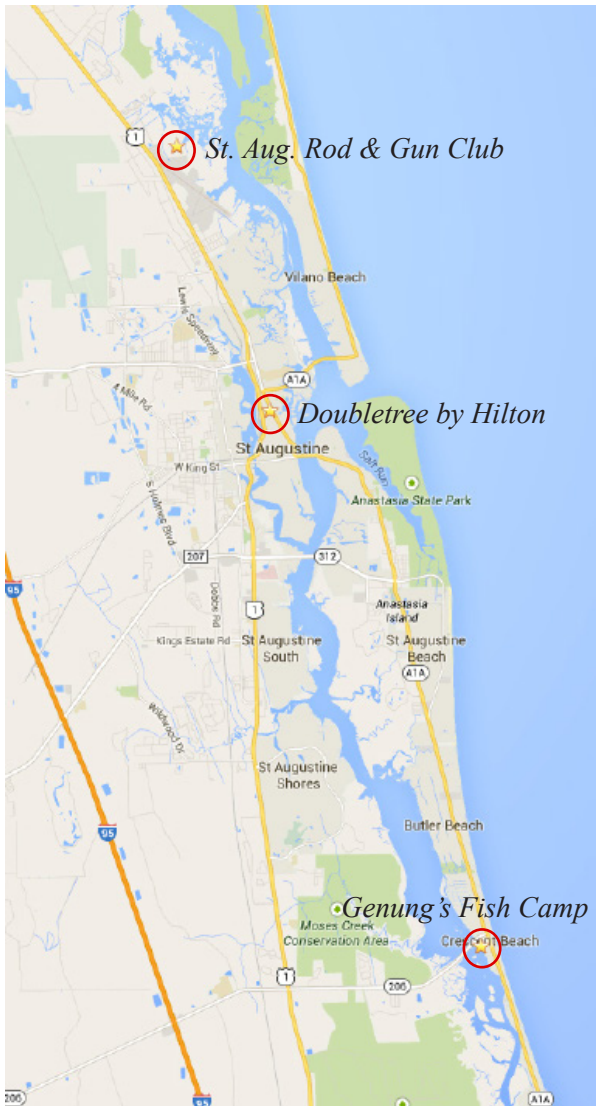
5:30 pm **Cocktail Reception/Hors d'oeuvres**
St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club
Silent Auction and Art Exhibit
by Peter R. Gerbert

7:00 pm **FWF's 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet**
St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club
Dinner & Presentation of Awards
($60 per person)

Sunday, June 14th

7:30 am to 8:30 am **Life Members' Breakfast**
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room
Tickets and registration below
($25 per person)

9:00 am to 12:00 pm **FWF Board of Directors/ House of Delegates Meeting**
Doubletree by Hilton – Anastasia Room



IDEAS For Us: IDEAS For Us will hold their annual board/staff retreat on June 13-14 at the Doubletree in St. Augustine in conjunction with FWF's meeting. They plan to engage in team-building activities, discuss important updates and milestones across the IDEAS movement and develop action plans for the next academic year to engage students in environmental projects around the world. If you are interested in further information about IDEAS or their meeting, contact Chris Castro at chris.castro@ideasforus.org. IDEAS meetings will be held in the Laurel Room.

Name:_____

Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Bill my Discover, AMEX, VISA, MC #:_____

Exp. Date:_____ Security Code:_____ **Total charged**:_____

Signature: _____ Phone #: _____

Email:_____

Please reserve your event tickets no later than **June 3!**
Attn. Diane Hines, Florida Wildlife Federation,
P.O. Box 6870, Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870.
Questions? Email: dhines@fwfonline.org.

Registration Form For Events

Friday, June 12th — Fish Fry - *Genung's Fish Camp, Crescent Beach*
$25.00 per person. Enclosed is $_____ for _____ persons.

Saturday, June 13th — 78th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet – *St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club*, $60.00 per person. Enclosed is $_____ for _____ people for the Banquet. Please make a meal choice for each attendee (indicate number of meals):
Shrimp_____ Chicken_____ Vegetarian_____
Event Includes Cocktail Reception, Awards Banquet and Silent Auction.
Please enter the names of all persons attending with you:_____
_____

Sunday, June 14th — FWF Life Members' Breakfast – *Anastasia Room*
$25.00 per person. Enclosed is $_____ for _____ persons.

Total amount: $_____
Checks payable to Florida Wildlife Federation