

Florida Fish and Wildlife News



Florida Wildlife Federation

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FFWN is printed on recycled paper, ISSN 1520-8214

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Volume 31, Issue 2

Affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation

May 2017

Legislative Wrap-Up

by Preston Robertson

This year's Legislative Session came to an end three days late, and we may well be seeing a special session in the near future as Governor Scott has expressed concerns about a number of things in the budget. In other words, he may veto some or all of it, likely forcing the Legislature to reconvene. The Session in general was not as open and transparent as most would have liked, and powerful monied interests continue to get their way. There is nothing new in that. New were the overt attacks between our elected leaders,

likely due to many of them seeking higher political positions. It seems election campaigns are now nigh on continuous, which is not necessarily a good thing for governance. Below are some conservation-related highlights from the Session.

Not the Will of Voters

Once more, our elected leaders failed to do what the voters of this state asked them to do: fund Florida Forever and land conservation. In November 2014, 75% of us went to the polls and supported Amendment 1, the Water and Land Legacy Amendment. We voted to save those places that make Florida a special place to live, protect our waters and retain open space for wildlife and ourselves. Since that election day, the Florida Legislature has given us the back of its hand. They have done what they personally think best, not what we, their constituents, voted for.

The Florida Constitution give us, the citizens of this state, the right to amend our constitution when we so choose. It is not an easy thing to do, nor should it be. But when it does happen, it is expected that the Legislators will do what the voters tell them to do. Florida is not an oligarchy, where a select few govern the rest of the 20 million plus who reside here with no regard for public

LEGISLATIVE *con't page 6*

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80th Annual Conservation Awards



Gray Foster receiving Youth Conservationist Award



Richard Fulton, Joe Atterbury and Gary Lickle (Outdoorsman Award)



Debbie Sobel, Conservationist of the Year

FWF held its 80th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet on April 21 at the Wyndham Grand Hotel at Harbourside Place in Jupiter, Florida. One of our long-term members, Nathaniel Reed, commented that FWF had a "very impressive group of Award Winners" this year. Indeed, the fourteen Conservation Award Winners of 2017 were outstanding in every way. It was privilege to meet them and provide their award statuettes at the recent event. The special evening began with a Cocktail Reception, Silent Auction and Art Exhibit by Peter R. Gerbert. Preston Robertson, VP and General Counsel, and Sarah Owen Gledhill, FWF Planning Director, were the Award Presenters at the Banquet. Brief remarks were made by Manley Fuller, FWF President, and Rick Abbott, Chair of the FWF Board of Directors. Closing remarks were made by Jay Exum, FWF Vice Chair.

INSIDE:

MESSAGES FROM THE CHAIR AND PRESIDENT.....	2-3
NEWS AROUND THE STATE.....	4-9
8TH ANNUAL KIDS' HABITAT CONTEST.....	9
80TH ANNUAL CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS.....	11-14
FWF FISH OR CRUISE SWEEPSTAKES.....	16
CONSERVATION CALENDAR.....	16

official publication of the
Florida Wildlife Federation
P.O. Box 6870
Tallahassee, FL 32314-6870
www.fwfonline.org

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

by Rick Abbott



Some Good News for Florida

In 1880, Thomas Alva Edison and his team improved the design and performance of the earliest incandescent lamps and created the first commercially viable light bulb. At the big event to unveil his work, all but one newspaper printed an article entitled "Death of the candle." A single newspaper published an article entitled "The greatest invention since the wheel." My point is that the press, liberal or conservative, sells papers with mostly negative news as the headlines. This is the way it has been for decades. These are the times we still live in. The bigger the target, the more the article is read.

For the last 20 years when I get home from work, I read my mail (bills) then look at the newspaper. After months of

being bombarded with bad news I can sometimes go into my shell and tune out. One thing that rejuvenates this old brain of mine is the annual FWF Conservation Awards Banquet. This year was no different. To be frank, this was one of the best groups of conservationists and one of the best banquets that I can remember. I left the April 21 Banquet in Jupiter feeling refreshed and alive again, ready to promote the cause of conservation in Florida, knowing just how important this is for all Floridians.

Each Conservation Award Winner was chosen because of the amazing things they have done to help the state of Florida. I was particularly struck by the young award winners Adam Morley (Living Green Award) and Gray Foster (Youth Conservationist of the Year) who are not just coming up with great ideas, but putting them into action. It is truly impressive to see people living their values and working every day to help improve their communities.

Attending the Annual Awards Banquet has always left me feeling enthusiastic and ready to support the Florida Wildlife Federation's conservation efforts in any way that I can. I hope you will attend one of the banquets in the future (tickets are available to all). The invitation to the past Banquet was published on the back page of your February issue.

It is reassuring that there are individuals and organizations across Florida working to conserve our natural resources. You can learn more about each of the award winners starting on page 11. To all the Award Winners, I say THANK YOU very much. I consider you heroes and an inspiration to all.

Thank you to the following organizations and individuals for their generous monetary and in-kind gifts to assist with the 80th Annual Banquet expenses and the Silent Auction.

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WYNDHAM DEERFIELD BEACH RESORT (DEERFIELD BEACH)
WYNDHAM GRAND JUPITER (JUPITER)
HAWKS CAY RESORT (DUCK KEY)
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FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

2545 Blainstone Pines Drive; P.O. Box 6870
Tallahassee, Florida 32314-6870
850-656-7113; FAX 850-942-4431

www.fwfonline.org E-mail: dhines@fwfonline.org

Affiliated With National Wildlife Federation

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF

CHAIR

Rick Abbott
3233 Heather Hill Road
Tallahassee, FL 32309
850-284-4300

VICE-CHAIR

Joseph Atterbury
5393 Penneck Point Road
Jupiter, FL 33458
561-371-0532

VICE-CHAIR

Jay H. Exum
2253 Peachleaf Ct, Longwood,
FL 32779
321-229-5653

VICE-CHAIR

John Jopling
5323 NW 92nd Way
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352-538-4154

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850-591-5416

DISTRICT I DIRECTOR

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3616 Oakbrook Lane
Panama City, FL 32408
503-338-0420

DISTRICT II DIRECTOR

Jenny Brock
311 Old Magnolia Road
Crawfordville, FL 32327
850-459-9341

NORTHEAST REGION

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

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2020 SE 32nd Place, Gainesville, FL 32641
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DISTRICT III DIRECTOR

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244 Dorothy Land Rd.
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561-301-4883

DISTRICT IV DIRECTOR

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120 Casa Mirella Way #1208
Windermere, FL 34786
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Chiefland, FL 32626
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SOUTHERN REGION

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Martha Musgrove
2432 Edgewater Drive, West Palm Beach, FL 33406
561-965-9409

DISTRICT VII DIRECTOR

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5665 Summit Blvd
West Palm Bch, FL 33415
561-312-3918

DISTRICT VIII DIRECTOR

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761 15th St. NW
Naples, FL 34120
239-455-1567 H

EIGHT AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Ned Stone
2012 Coral Shores Dr ive
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306
954-205-9595

Tom Evans, Jr.
1000 Warwick Lane
Wilmington, DE 19807
302-656-0880

Bobbie Lindsay
212 Caribbean Road
Palm Beach, FL 33489
561-797-9405

Ray Carthy
U.F. Coop Unit
PO Box 110485
Gainesville, FL 32611
352-213-5851

To be appointed

To be appointed

Terry Gibson
4394 NE Skyline Drive
Jensen Beach, FL 34957
772-285-7683

Billy Causey
30939 Delgado Lane
Altosna, FL 32702
305-809-4670

STAFF

TALLAHASSEE OFFICE

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Manley K. Fuller, III

Vice President for Conservation & General Counsel
Preston T. Robertson

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Membership & Database
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Lynn Jones

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Administrative Assistant
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Education Consultant
Claudia Farren

FWF SW FL OFFICE
SW Florida Field Representative
Nancy Payton
2590 Golden Gate Pkwy, Ste. 105
Naples, FL 34105
(239) 643-4111

Policy Consultant
Jay Liles

Communications Specialist
Cole Sousa

Florida Fish & Wildlife News
Producer/Editor:
Danny Gwynn-Shapiro

Habitats Coordinator
Pat Pearson

Planning Director
Sarah Owen Gledhill

FWF NE FL OFFICE
88 Riberia St., Ste. 400
St. Augustine, FL 32084
(904) 347-6490

The Florida Fish and Wildlife News is published quarterly by the
Florida Wildlife Federation
2545 Blainstone Pines Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301.
ISSN: 1520-8214

EDITOR in CHIEF
Manley K. Fuller, III

CONTACT US AT
dhines@fwfonline.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Manley Fuller



Dear FWF members and supporters,

I would like to thank you for your support of Florida Wildlife Federation's conservation work. Your support is critical to our mission of conserving fish and wildlife and the habitats on which they depend. I also want to let you know what an honor it was on April 21 to recognize an outstanding group of conservationists who love Florida and its unique natural resources at our 80th Annual Conservation Awards Banquet in Jupiter, Florida. On the following evening, FWF Vice Chair Joe Atterbury and his wife Liz graciously hosted the FWF Board of Directors, staff and guests at their home in Jupiter for an excellent dinner. It was a pleasure meeting so many members and supporters that weekend as well as spending time with the Conservation Award Winners.

The Florida Wildlife Federation is a leading advocate for landscape scale habitat conservation across Florida. This is the reason we were major supporters of the successful 2014 Water and Land Legacy Amendment and we continue to fight in the courts and in the court of public opinion for a proper allocation of those dollars by the Florida Legislature. We believe that it is wrong for the Florida Legislature to fail year after year to provide significant funding for conservation lands protection and acquisition, because over 70 percent of Florida voters voted to have the Legislature do this in 2014.

Conservation lands acquisition and stewardship programs are good for Florida's economy and our environment. We have to keep making that point. Maintaining and building upon

our existing conservation lands, both public and private, helps protect our watersheds and provides opportunities for wildlife movement. Our public conservation lands and waterways provide great places to enjoy outdoor recreation and these lands provide habitat for fish and wildlife. We will be working with legislators like Senator Jack Latvala next year to raise the state's contributions for the scientifically-based conservation lands programs. We also are pursuing a judicial remedy and guidance for our elected officials to meet their constitutional responsibilities.

In the 2017 legislative session we were able to make substantial progress on Everglades Restoration with the passage of Senate Bill 10 which paves the way for much needed storage, treatment and conveyance of water south from Lake Okeechobee into the Everglades. This will help reduce destructive Lake Okeechobee discharges during high water conditions. We especially appreciate the excellent work of Senate President Joe Negron (2017 Legislator of the Year), Senator Robert Bradley (chief bill sponsor) and Senator Jack Latvala (Florida Senate Appropriations Chair) in making this bill a reality. Florida Wildlife Federation worked closely with conservation and fishing allies on this critical legislation.

An issue that arose during the 2017 legislative session was the erroneous claim that significantly raising Lake Okeechobee water levels could reduce harmful east and west coast discharges. There are several serious flaws in that reasoning. While the lake dike rehabilitation program is proceeding and will be completed by 2020, the strengthening of the dike underway now is to reduce dike failure under current water levels. If lake levels were raised significantly, the probability of dike failure would once again increase. Remember that Lake Okeechobee can fill faster than it can discharge water. Also, raising the lake levels above the current approved high water levels threatens the lake's vibrant wetlands and fisheries by overtopping the marsh. Death of the marsh would release a tremendous amount of nutrients from decaying plant materials into the water column. Rather than stacking up water in the lake we need additional storage south, east, west and north of the Lake. SB 10's passage is a critical step. You can't solve the ecosystem's problems by raising the lake lev-

PRESIDENT con't page 10

FWF Scholarship Update

Dear FWF Members,

Another academic year has flown by! The Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department at the University of Florida has just awarded \$5,000 from FWF Scholarship Funds at the UF Foundation to graduate and undergraduate students at the annual WEC picnic. Twenty-two student applications were received this spring for the FWF Scholarship Awards. From this group, four individuals were selected for this year's awards. In this issue of FFWN, I'd like to tell you about one of these future leaders of fish and wildlife conservation in Florida.

Diane Episcopio was awarded \$1,500 at this year's WEC year-end picnic event. She is a first-year Master's degree student. Diane earned her BS in Biology cum laude from UF in fall 2016, and worked as field technician studying Sherman's fox squirrels before beginning her graduate program last fall. She studies the human dimensions of wildlife ecology in hopes of better connecting scientists with the public. Diane's Master's degree research will survey and analyze the public's knowledge, opinions, and attitudes towards exotic and invasive species in Florida. Her work demonstrates that successful conservation efforts often rely on communication amongst a network of collaborators, from private landowners and scientists to resource managers and residents. Diane's ultimate goal after graduation is to some day run her own not-for-profit organization "dedicated to translating science for the public in a way that successfully motivates appropriate and necessary behavioral changes in Florida." She is a member of the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society and, in her spare time, enjoys hiking, reading, movies and visiting Florida's springs.

I think you will agree with me that students like Diane Episcopio, whether they specialize in research, wildlife management or other critical aspects of fish and wildlife conservation, are very important to the future of wildlife leadership in Florida. FWF is proud to continue the annual awards to students in the UF Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department.

Manley



Left to right in the front row, FWF Scholarship winners Diane Episcopio, Don Hardeman, Jr. and Gaby Placido. Left to right in the back row, Dr. Eric Hellgren (UF WEC Chair), Dr. Bill Giuliano (UF WEC Undergraduate Faculty Coordinator) and FWF Scholarship winner Zach Holmes.

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

You may also send your donation to the FWF office, P.O. Box 6870, Tallahassee, Florida 32314. Attn D. Hines.

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REPORT

by Nancy Anne Payton, Southwest Florida Field Representative



Providing Safe Passage North to the Caloosahatchee River

As of May 9, 2017, thirteen Florida panthers were killed by collisions with vehicles on Keri Road (CR832) in Hendry County. An additional three panthers were killed by collisions with vehicles near the intersection of Keri Road and CR833.

Keri Road, between SR29 and CR833, is the only east/west road between Collier County and the Caloosahatchee River that has not been studied for wildlife crossings. Major landholders abutting Keri Road are Alico and the State of Florida (Okaloacoochee Slough conservation network).

This spring, Florida Wildlife Federation contracted with Dr. Daniel Smith, University of Central Florida, to conduct an assessment of Hendry County wildlife habitat and the travel corridors used by Florida panthers, black bears, and other native wildlife. The assessment will provide recommendations on Keri Road safe crossings needs.

Keri Road was selected based on critical need determined by road kills, telemetry data, public conservation lands, and habitat corridors. This assessment will complement and expand the 2006 Eastern Collier Wildlife Movement Study, also



Florida panther crossing Keri Road, Hendry County



funded by the Federation. Dr. Smith was the principal investigator on the Eastern Collier study. This study is frequently referenced by land use planners, transportation planners, and wildlife agencies; and since 2006 four crossings have been built and several are in planning stages.

Field activities will include the following procedures:

a. Conduct analyses for each local habitat corridor verified through use of existing telemetry and roadkill data. Use this information to target specific road segments for field research activities.

b. Monitor for all wildlife road kill on targeted Keri Road segments twice per week for 32 weeks (in four seasonal blocks of eight weeks each). When encountered as part of the overall survey route for checking road kill, large animal road kills will be recorded outside of these target locations.

c. Set up remote infra-red camera stations at selected sites to monitor large animal highway crossing or approach events. Monitoring locations will be selected from road kill and telemetry data, where suitable vegetation is present or other appropriate habitat intersecting the road sections of interest. Each photographic station will include an array of multiple cameras radiating outward and parallel to the road, and will be checked once per month.

d. Conduct wildlife track monitoring on select locations twice weekly for 32 weeks (only applicable where suitable soil exists). Graded paths or sand tracking beds will be constructed at key locations along the right-of-way adjacent to the road surface.

Analysis of field data will include use of GIS information and results from previous telemetry and tracking studies conducted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and other agencies. Statistical analyses will be conducted to associate road kill and track densities with environmental and highway use attributes such as adjacent vegetation types, hydrology, physical characteristics of roads and adjacent rights of way, speed limits, and traffic volumes. Effects of land use/land cover on roadkill and track densities will be tested as well as photographic captures of panthers and other native animals.

A final written report will be submitted upon completion of the assessment and will clearly outline the methodology, summarize the findings, and discuss the meaning of the results. The assessment is anticipated to take up to two years.

Explicit recommendations will be

provided regarding habitat corridors and need for Keri Road wildlife crossings to minimize roadkill, reduce movement barrier effects, and optimize functional connectivity for Florida panthers, black bears, white-tailed deer, river otters, amphibians and reptiles, and other native species of concern.

The Federation expresses sincere appreciation to the foundations and individuals who made this important assessment possible.

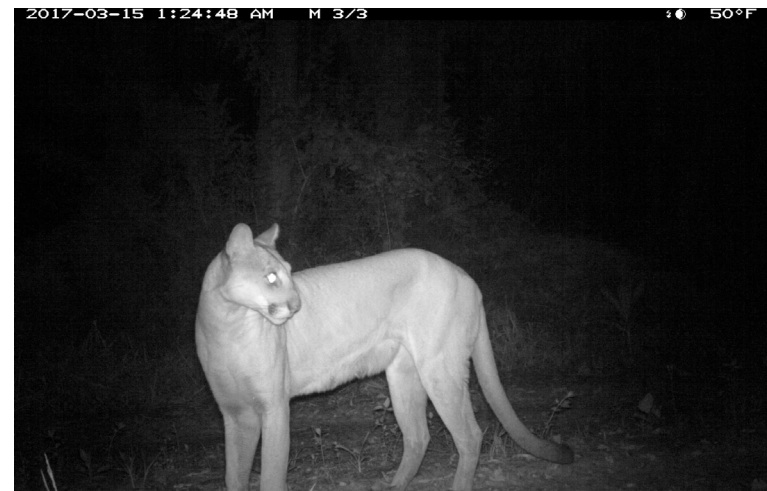
Female Panthers Documented in Central Florida

Three wild female panthers have been photographically documented north of the Caloosahatchee River at:

1. Babcock Ranch Preserve Wildlife Management Area in Charlotte County,
2. Platt Branch Wildlife and Environmental Area in Highlands County, and
3. Avon Park Air Force Bombing Range in Polk and Highlands Counties.

This is the first official documented evidence of female panthers in Central Florida since 1973. Below are March 15, 2017, photographs of a nursing female and one of her kittens. Photos were taken at Babcock Ranch Preserve Wildlife Management Area and are courtesy of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The female's photograph is stamped 1:24:40 am and the kitten's photograph is stamped 1:24:58 am.

The Federation has several ongoing programs and projects focused on habitat connectivity and wildlife crossings in Central Florida. Southwest Florida Field Representative Nancy Payton serves as chair of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Panther Recovery Implementation Team's Transportation SubTeam. The SubTeam is evaluating panther movement and identifying road segments that are candidates for wildlife crossings.



Panther photos by FWC

Confronting the I-4 Barrier

A major goal of Florida panther recovery is growing the Florida panther breeding population beyond South and Central Florida.

However, **the extreme width and volume of traffic on I-4 create a near absolute barrier for Florida panthers and other wildlife to safely cross.** Existing creek systems where structures are required for water conveyance represent prime examples to restore and/or promote wildlife connectivity as well.

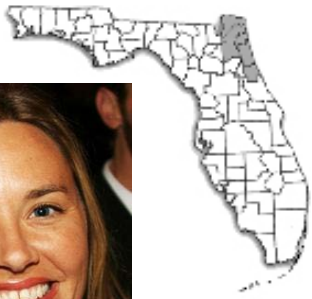
In response to Florida Department of Transportation District 5's study of I-4, the Federation sent a letter this May recommending that terrestrial wildlife ledges for large animals be built under the existing I-4 Reedy Creek Bridge and that small animal shelves be considered for one or more of the Davenport Creek culverts. In addition, the letter noted that the Reedy Creek and Davenport Creek corridors will require wildlife fencing to direct animals to the safe crossings.

The Federation is working with Florida Department of Transportation District 1, multiple government agencies, and conservation colleagues to identify habitat linkages and I-4 road segments that are candidates for wildlife crossings. The current discussions are focused on securing a crossing at I-4 Saddle Creek between SR 33 and the eastern terminus of the Polk Parkway.



NORTHEAST FLORIDA REPORT

by Sarah Owen Gledhill, FWF's Planning Director



Educating the Public about Gopher Tortoises

FWF has been working hard to design, manufacture and install gopher tortoise educational signs in our coastal areas and upland recreation sites. Installation day is almost here! All too often we get reports from citizens who witness well-intentioned beachgoers placing gopher tortoises into the ocean thinking they are sea turtles. The problem is **gopher tortoises** live in the dunes and **DO NOT SWIM**. We have been working with our partners the Saving Florida's Gopher Tortoises orga-

nization to provide signage to local governments to help stop this unfortunate practice. Please see below for a draft rendering of the signs. Fernandina Beach is going to be the site of our first coastal installation and St. Johns County will be picking up a few signs as a well.

Regarding the upland recreation sites, we have received reports of people harassing gopher tortoises that have burrowed adjacent to or in close proximity to playgrounds and ball parks. Some of these situations have been simple harassment, but others have been violent. We must learn to co-exist with these animals in a peaceful and thoughtful way. Our upland signage will go into more detail about tortoise burrows and the special role they play in the life-cycles of many other native species (known as commensals). St. Johns County will receive our first upland signage as soon as we finish up design and manufacturing.

We would not have been able to succeed in this effort without the generosity of our members and supporters who donated directly to this campaign. If you are interested in donating please access the donation page here: <https://goo.gl/zMk49y>

We Have a Right to Enjoy the Beach

We all love our beaches and enjoy the right to use them. They provide not only special enjoyment for Floridians, but draw literally millions of job-creating visitors to our state. This past legislative session, the Federation along with its allies, worked hard to oppose language that would prohibit what is called "Customary use." Customary use is the doctrine which facilitates the public enjoying our beaches from the high watermark (high tide) to the water, therefore allowing Florida residents and visitors the ability to enjoy a beach or shoreline, even if that beach fronts private property.

The legislation we fought against would have **prohibited any local government** from adopting ordinances designed to protect customary use of the beach. Prohibiting citizens from accessing state-owned land (our shorelines) would harm our tourism-dependent economy. Visitors expect to see clean beaches, unfettered by no trespassing signs, chain fencing and the threat of arrest.

Introduced as an amendment to an existing bill towards the end of the 2017 Legislative Session, the amendment language was first made public with little time for stakeholder input. Thankfully, due to the timeline necessary for bill passage, the legislation died. The Federation fully anticipates this misguided effort to come back next year.

FWF stands by the right of Floridians and visitors to access our most valuable natural places, like our beaches. We ask you to stand with us and engage your elected officials on this and other important issues.



Gopher tortoise



IN MEMORIAM

Donations have been received in memory of:

Vicki Lynn Thomson

by Donna Dial

Val Grabowski, Sr.

by Decks & Docks

Jill Simpson Carrier

by Claudia Farren



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



Preston Robertson
Vice-President for Conservation &
General Counsel

LEGISLATIVE from page 1

input and the public good. At least it shouldn't be.

The Florida Forever program, what Governor Bush once called the most popular thing the Legislature does, **received zero dollars from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.** Read that: the LAND ACQUISITION TRUST FUND. To anyone else that fund is supposed to acquire land, but not to the Legislature. To them, that money is to pay government salaries, buy cars and purchase insurance, just about anything but conserve what remains of the natural areas of this state. We are talking of millions of dollars, none of it from new taxes, that were to be set aside to ensure our children and grandchildren could live in Florida, not a hot New Jersey.

The Florida Wildlife Federation has been in litigation over the misuse of Amendment 1 dollars for many months. Civil cases take a long time, and we are fighting against attorneys who are being paid by the taxpayers of this state. Ironical, isn't it? We are hopeful that we will conclude the trial portion of this matter this year, but expect appeals and more time, money and effort. **Wouldn't it have been nice if the politicians simply did what we asked them to do?** Florida Forever funded at historic levels (\$300 million) would be a minute part of the \$83 billion budget. To add insult to injury, the Legislature decided to retain \$1.4 billion in a "rainy day" fund. Every year without Florida

Forever means the price of land rises and more asphalt spreads.

Our fight continues in court. **Please consider donating to the Federation to help us in this important effort. Go to www.fwfonline.org.**

Everglades and Estuaries

On a much more optimistic note, Senate Bill 10, shepherded by Senate President Joe Negron, passed and was signed into law by the Governor. FWF recently presented President Negron with an award for his work on this bill, which went through many versions before final passage. The Federation and its allies were up to our necks in working with the Senate and the House to ensure not only that progress was made to build a water-cleaning reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee, but that the bill did not do further damage to what we tried to accomplish with the passage of Amendment 1 in 2014.

Although the proposed reservoir will be smaller than originally anticipated, we see SB 10 as finally kick-starting Everglades restoration, diminishing the polluted discharges to the Caloosahatchee and the Indian River Lagoon and sending much needed clean water south to rehydrate the Everglades, the Biscayne Aquifer and Florida Bay. One-third of Floridians rely on the Biscayne Aquifer for potable water.

Many thanks to all who expressed their opinions to the Legislators!

Preston T. Robertson



Jay Liles
FWF Policy Consultant

Reservoir Signals Change in Environmental Politics but Congressional Battle Looms

On May 9, 2017, Governor Rick Scott signed into law Senate Bill (SB) 10, authorizing up to \$800 million in state bonds for construction of an Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee. This was, by most accounts, the largest environmental win in recent Florida history. Prior to passage of SB 10, the Florida Legislature has been reluctant to fund anything beyond debt service for completed land acquisition, modest private easements on farmlands and minimal springs restoration. As we have reported on numerous occasions, the Legislature continues to short-change Florida Forever funding, ultimately deciding to put zero dollars in this premier land conservation program during the 2017 Legislative Session.

We have learned over the past few years that we must take our victories where they present themselves and the

southern reservoir was certainly a turn for the better. We can only hope that in the future, policymakers will, once again, see Florida in the same light as their former senate colleague and current Orange County Commissioner, Lee Constantine, who so aptly stated, "No one ever moved to Florida for the strip malls."

The EAA reservoir was a major legislative initiative of Senate President Joe Negron. He saw first-hand the damage caused polluted discharges east and west of the Lake and the green slime they created in the Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee River. He had heard about the economic and environmental damage lack of clean flows south have caused in Florida Bay. His championing of the reservoir earned him the admiration of many in the environmental community and Florida Wildlife Federation's top legislative award as the Legislator of the Year for 2017.

FWF played a significant role in helping craft language for the final bill and in shepherding support for the measure. Teaming up with the Everglades Foundation and coalition members, we fomented a steady parade of outdoorsmen and women, fishing guides, small business owners, and residents who gave a face to the problem.

While the victory is tangible and the momentum is certainly important to the environmental work we do, it is by no means the last chapter in this saga. SB 10 directs the South Florida Water Management District to jointly develop a "post-authorization change report" with the Army Corps of Engineers for the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) to "revise the

RESERVOIR con't page 7

Land Saved by Local Conservationists

Jim and Ginger Visconti are two people every one would like to meet. They are truly lovely individuals. As a way to leave something for future Floridians, the Viscontis recently placed a perpetual conservation easement over their wooded property in Jefferson County, east of Tallahassee, thereby ensuring that this land will never be impacted by development. These acres will continue to provide wildlife habitat and water recharge to the benefit of us all. Many thanks to the Viscontis for their generosity and selfless foresight!

*Ginger Visconti, Manley Fuller,
Jim Visconti and Preston Robertson*



RESERVOIR from page 6

project component for implementation of the EAA reservoir project". The change report must then garner Congressional approval. In other words, the bill sets up a Congressional fight to amend the CEPP and continue federal funding for the larger Everglades Restoration Plan that has been in the works for decades.

Our efforts have been supported by a number of Members of Congress from Florida over the years. It was heartening to see newly-elected Congressman Brian Mast leading efforts to pass the bill. Congressman Mast represents the 18th Congressional District which encompasses coastal areas from Palm Beach through Martin and St. Lucie Counties. He should be a strong advocate for the change

report and deserves our thanks for his service to country and his willingness to serve in Congress. We will need a lot more members like Congressman Mast to step up.

It is easy to think of Florida's Everglades and the eight million residents of Southeast Florida as a regional concern. That would be an environmental and economic mistake for all Floridians and for the nation as a whole. We must continue this fight until the Everglades is restored. **Call your Member of Congress. Tell them to support the EAA Reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee and continue to support full funding for the Central Everglades Planning Project.**



Manley Fuller joins Captains for Clean Water in saluting those who traveled to Tallahassee to support Senate Bill 10 and funding for a Reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee.

Video: <https://youtu.be/6dADHJJ4vJo>

New Wildlife Legacy Club Members:

Lloyd Schiller, Jupiter

New Eagle Club Members:

Peter R. Gerbert, Dade City

New Life Members:

William Wallace Gibson, Jensen Beach

Thank you for your generous support!

**Legacy Club Members are those who have donated \$5,000 or more in a single gift.
Eagle Club Members are \$2,500 donors and Life Members are \$1,000 donors.*

In Memoriam

John H. Hankinson, Jr.

1948-2017



Photo by Betsy Kellenberger

It is with great regret that I report that a dear personal friend and a great friend of the environment, John H. Hankinson, passed away recently. A number of Florida Wildlife Federation members and I attended his wonderful memorial service in Ocala. He was buried at the Prairie Creek Preserve near Micanopy.

-Manley Fuller

John's professional career revolved around the inter-relationship of land and water resources, protecting watersheds to assure there would be clean and abundant water in the future. Early in his career, he served as the Director of Planning and Acquisition

at the St. Johns River Water Management District where he focused on the acquisition of critical watersheds, such as the Upper St. Johns River Basin, Lake Apopka and the Ocklawaha River Basin. Working with public and private partners he participated in the acquisition of over 200,000 acres of environmentally important lands in Florida. In 1994, John was appointed as Regional Administrator of EPA's office in Atlanta, overseeing federal wetland regulation and state implementation of delegated Clean Water Act programs in eight southern states. John promoted comprehensive watershed and coastal aquatic ecosystem management including the Florida Everglades, National Estuary Programs, and efforts to establish a compact for the Apalachicola/ Chattahoochee/ Flint (ACF) river system. Following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, he was asked to serve as the executive director of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force where he worked with 11 federal agencies and five states to develop a strategy for restoration of the Gulf of Mexico. Hankinson was semi-retired but continued to work occasionally as a consultant for environmental management and policy projects. His desire to restore the Ocklawaha River to be a free flowing system continued to be a passion.

In addition to his professional career, John was widely known for his talent as a blues harmonica player, producing a dozen CDs with several bands, including *Johnny Matanzas and the Hombres* and *The Non-Essentials*. He was a friend and mentor to many musicians throughout his life. John had an extraordinary cadre of friends. He maintained close ties with scores of his friends from Florida Presbyterian and from UF. His business associates quickly became his personal friends and the circle of musicians he jammed with was ever expanding. In both his professional and personal pursuits he constantly elevated those around him to be the best they could be. His generous spirit and infectious laughter will be sorely missed.



Claudia Farren
Education Consultant

Certify Your Habitat Through the Garden for Wildlife Program

Every habitat garden is a step toward restoring resources for wildlife.

Certifying wildlife habitats in Florida where people live, play, work, learn and worship continues to be a key goal for the Florida Wildlife Federation. Together with the National Wildlife Federation, we encourage all our members and supporters to plant native species and apply sustainable practices in their home gardens, churches, workplaces and neighborhood parks. The Certified Wildlife Habitat application has been updated and it's easy to achieve certification.

The **five habitat requirements** are food sources, water sources, places for cover, places to raise young, and sustainable gardening practices. Examples of each requirement are:

- Food sources: berries, fruits, nectar and bird feeders;
- Water sources: birdbath, rain garden, shallow dish or lake;
- Hiding places and shelter: ground cover, a roosting box, rock wall or an evergreen tree;
- Places to raise young: mature trees, host plants for caterpillars or dense shrubbery;
- Sustainable gardening practices: use native plants, eliminate chemicals from your garden, collect rain water, have a compost pile, practice Xeriscape landscaping, use mulch and ground cover to retain soil moisture or control exotic species.

These are just a few examples of the basic requirements to achieve certification. The FWF wildlife habitat team has placed articles, photos, and other resources on the [FWF website](#) to help you through the process.

After completing the application, you pay a \$20 fee to National Wildlife Fed-

eration which uses the money to increase the number and diversity of Americans who are active in gardening for wildlife. Florida Wildlife Federation receives \$5 to be used for the benefit of our own Florida wildlife. From May through December 31, 2016, 362 Floridians certified their habitats through the updated program.

Certify your special place through the Florida Wildlife Federation's Habitat page. Using the link at the bottom of the page insures FWF receives a portion of NWF's certification fee to help vital wildlife habitats in Florida.

Update on Certified and Registered Habitats in Florida

Home gardens are not just the only places being certified. Others include schools and colleges, businesses, government buildings, farms, roadside right of ways, communities, places of worship, museums and other educational environments and parks.

As of May 15, 2017 there were 208,554 total certified habitats in the U.S. with 14,050 in Florida.

Florida's Certified Communities (15)

In September 2005, Broward County tied with Arlington County, Virginia to be the first two counties in the nation certified as Community Wildlife Habitats. Since then, Broward County has become a "hotbed for wildlife habitat activity" according to Patrick Fitzgerald, Senior Director of Community Wildlife at National Wildlife Federation. The other **certified** Florida communities are Coconut Creek, Lighthouse Point, Oakland Park, Parkland, Pompano Beach, Wilton Manors, Melbourne Beach, Plantation, Ft. Lauderdale, Coral Springs, Cooper City, Collier County, Hollywood and Davie.

Congratulations to Nancy Payton, SW Florida Field Representative for FWF, and all those who worked to make Collier County the newest certified community in Florida. Their celebration was May 16. Collier County is currently the sixth largest Community Wildlife Habitat in the nation. In addition, since October, Hollywood, Cooper City and Coral Springs – all cities in Broward County – reached certification and are planning celebrations this summer and fall.

Florida's Registered Communities (14)

Fourteen communities are currently **registered** with NWF and are working toward certification. It usually takes two years to achieve. Registered communities are Sunrise, Amelia Island Plantation Community Association, Audubon

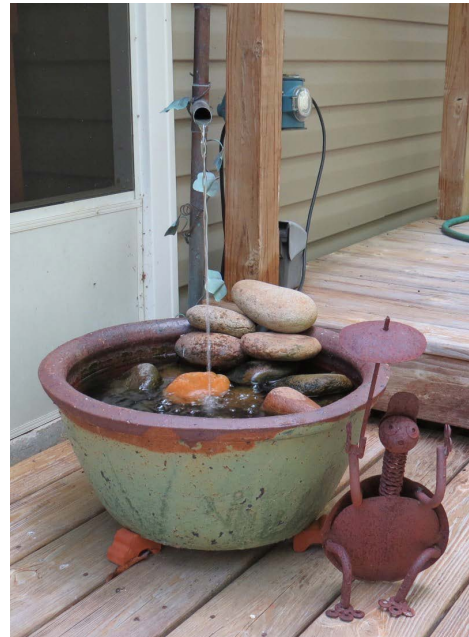
Park Garden District, Southwest Ranches, Hallandale Beach, Columbia County, Deerfield Beach, Callahan, Pembroke Pines, Lakeridge, Plantation at St. George Island, Bluewater Bay, Miramar and Lauderhill.

Certified Schoolyard Habitats in Florida (458)

The newest school to win FWF's Annual Kids Wildlife Habitat Contest is Champion Academy of Distinction Charter School in Pembroke Pines. See Pat Pearson's article on the next page of this publication.



Habitat requirement #1 – food source.



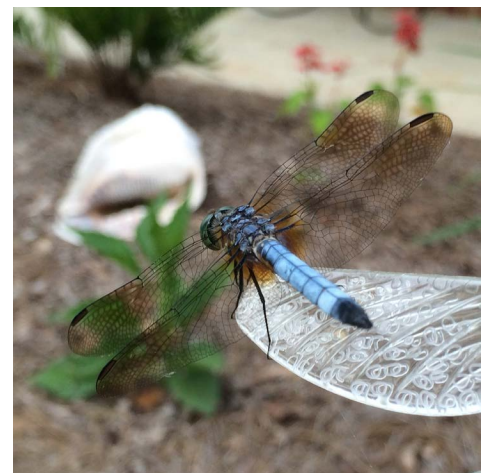
A home-made water fountain provides a water source for birds.



This blue bird box provides shelter. The baffle protects the nest from snakes and squirrels.



Bright red colors attract butterflies and hummingbirds to your habitat.



Blue dashers perch horizontally and are abundant across much of the U.S.



Important message from the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

ALERT!!! Milkweed plants that have been treated with systemic neonicotinoids have a deleterious affect on butterflies, bees, and will kill caterpillars! Please, be aware and on the lookout for these tags placed in plants - **and do not buy them!**

Photos by Claudia Farren.

8th Annual Kids' Wildlife Habitat Contest

by Pat Pearson
FWF Habitats Coordinator

The Championship Academy of Distinction Charter School in Pembroke Pines, Florida was the winner in the Florida Wildlife Federation's 8th Annual Kids' Wildlife Habitat Contest. FWF Director Captain Ned Stone presented the award on Friday, April 21, 2017, to third grade teacher Mrs. Jany Moline and her group of students who are responsible for the creation and continuing care of the habitat. The school principal is Ms. Paulina Reyna.

Mrs. Moline and her class, working with other teachers, parents, school administration, and with PTO financial support, have accomplished the building of a habitat that all can enjoy. Students brought rocks, planting pots and stepping stones from home, and created birdhouses and birdfeeders to place in the habitat.

The habitat was deliberately planned and built near the school's front entryway so all students and teachers can enjoy seeing native birds and butterflies every day. The garden has all the necessary components for attracting and sustaining Florida's native and migratory birds and butterflies and is also used as an outdoor classroom for other subjects, giving students what must be a welcome break from being indoors. According to medical experts, lack of fresh air and outdoor activities contribute to many physical problems that plague today's children. Nature lessons that students acquire while working in the garden and observing the life cycles and behavior of the garden's birds and butterflies help them to appreciate our state's wildlife. Displays of artwork, and evidence of student-acquired building and decorating skills add another dimension to the lessons in gardening and nature that take place in the habitat, adding to the development of the whole, well-rounded child.

Continuing her enthusiasm and interest in sharing the benefits of Championship Academy's habitat, Mrs. Moline planned a "Garden Party" for all who had contributed to the creation of the habitat, complete with printed invitations, showcasing

the school's two dancing and baton twirling groups, the Dancing Dolls and the Titanettes. This party was part of the award presentation by Captain Ned Stone. Captain Stone brought the school several gifts and some books to be placed in the school library, and thanked them for their efforts to support Florida's wildlife. The party and celebration was also attended by District 6 Vice Mayor, Mr. Beam Furr, the Director of Charter School Management, Ms. Jody Perry, the President of Charter School Solution, LLC, Ms. Cyndi Dotson, the CEO of Championship Academy of Distinction, Mr. Gustavo Prats, PTO President, Ms. Antonia Magloire, and Championship Academy Board Member, Mrs. Melissa Buscamante.

The statewide FWF Kids' Wildlife Habitat Contest is open to all children in Florida 12 years old or younger who have helped to establish/maintain a garden where food, water, cover and a place to raise young is made available for Florida's wildlife, and where practices are used that improve the site without chemical fertilizers/pesticides.

Honorable Mentions were awarded to Ridgecrest Elementary School in Largo, and to J. H. Workman Middle School in Pensacola for their entries in the contest.



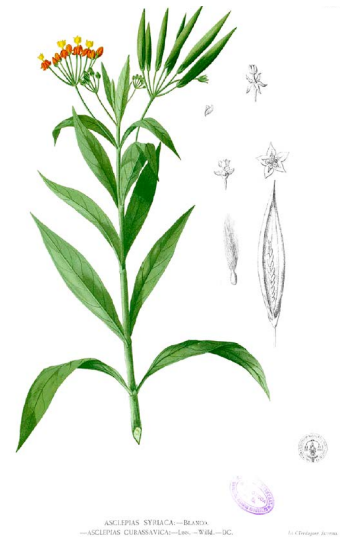
Captain Ned Stone, At-Large Director for Florida Wildlife Federation, presents the award for 1st place in the FWF 8th Annual Kids' Wildlife Habitat Contest to an assembly of students, parents and guests.



Ned Stone with teacher Jany Moline



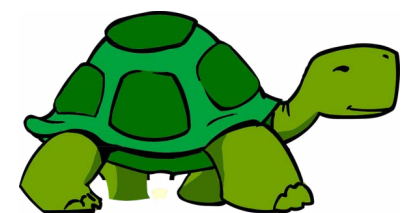
FLORIDA KIDS' QUIZ



1. Why should you (and your parents) be careful about the kind of milkweed plants you buy for your garden?



2. What should you do if you find a baby bird or egg on the ground?



3. What should you do if you know where a gopher tortoise has a burrow?

See page 15 for answers and more information.

PRESIDENT from page 3

els a foot or more above the regulation schedule; you will actually make the problems worse if you do so.

FWF Vice-Chair Dr. Jay Exum and I attended the meeting of the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society in Orlando recently, and we heard some great presentations of wildlife research both in Florida and internationally. FWF continues to contribute to the Society's student scholarship program and I got to see a number of good friends. Jay helped organize some great field trips to local wildlife habitats which continue to exist along watercourses in the greater Orlando area.

Wildlife researchers have documented increases in both Florida manatee and Florida black bear populations. Also, female Florida panthers have been officially documented north of the Caloosahatchee River. (See *Nancy Payton column for more.*) We appreciate that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation has done extensive additional research and analysis of the major black bear management units and have documented significant population increases except in the Ocala region where the growth is much slower. That subpopulation experiences a lot of road mortality and a number of animals have been euthanized because of becoming dependent on human food sources. The Commission is now focusing on reducing the human food habituation problem where there has been recent progress and revising the bear management plan. The issue of hunting will be deferred until 2019 when it will be addressed in the updated management plan.

In closing I want to thank and acknowledge the generosity of Robert Murtagh and Ginger and Jim Visconti for including Florida Wildlife Federation in their planned giving. We also greatly appreciate others who have made significant tax deductible donations to Florida Wildlife Federation. If you are preparing or revising your will, have appreciated investments or are considering other types of charitable giving, please consider donating to the Florida Wildlife Federation. Please contact me if you would like to discuss and we will be glad to assist you.

Thank you,

Manley



Peter R. Gerbert, Wildlife Artist



Ned Stone, Cameron Jaggard and Richard Kuepker



Award winner Adam Morley and family



Wolcott Henry



Sarah Gledhill and Linda Stanley



Diane Hines, Lloyd Schiller and Brooke Samples



Marilu and Carla May Morgan



Jay Thomas accepting award for his father



Preston Robertson and Jay Exum



Tessa Kleck and Mary Oglesby



Josh and Michelle Forman



Lynn and Earl Jones

THE FEDERATION'S 80th ANNUAL CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

The Federation's annual selection of conservationists is one of the oldest and most prestigious conservation awards programs in the state. Honorees are selected from nominations made to the Federation's board of directors and are chosen for their dedicated efforts on behalf of Florida's fish and wildlife and native habitats. The 80th Annual FWF Conservation Awards Banquet was held on April 21st at the Wyndham Grand Hotel at Harbourside Place in Jupiter, Florida.

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Debbie Sobel



schools, churches and clubs and was permitted to transport preserved sea turtle artifacts for educational purposes.

In 1992, she attended her first International Sea Turtle Symposium in South Carolina and has rarely missed one since. She has traveled to Australia, Peru, Mexico, Costa Rica and many other countries to attend and assist

with these meetings.

For the past twenty plus years, Debbie has presided over a large team of volunteers on Singer Island who conduct daily sea turtle nest surveys. She is on the beach every week and will talk to anyone about issues affecting sea turtles, inspiring a passion in others and converting many to become volunteers and conservationists!

Debbie is brilliant when it comes to information about, and a passion for, protecting sea turtles. Her ability to inspire others to volunteer is extraordinary. Debbie is highly deserving of the FWF Conservationist of the Year.

At the age of ten, Debbie Sobel witnessed baby sea turtles crawling away from the sea toward artificial light and their own destruction. She collected as many wastebaskets full of hatchlings as she could and carried them back into the surf. Her heart and soul were forever recruited to the cause!

For over twenty years, Debbie has enthusiastically committed her time and energy as a gift – not only to sea turtles, but to all who share her interest in, and love of, nature. In 1990, Debbie became the Florida Permit Holder for Golden Beach in Miami-Dade County where she monitored sea turtle nesting for five years. She began giving “turtle talks” at

WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Jim Boxold



Jim Boxold is a native Floridian. In the 1990's, he worked as a staffer for Congressman Porter Goss. As the Congressman's Legislative Director, he played a key role in Congressional approval of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program (CERP) in 2000. Jim later served in Cabinet Aide positions for Governor Jeb Bush, Ag Commissioners Charles Bronson and Adam Putnam. As a Cabinet Aide, he was focused on state land issues, including land management and conservation land acquisitions under the Florida For-

con't...

Jim Boxold's mother and brother accepted the award for him.

con't...

ever program.

In 2004, Jim was named Secretary of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). As head of FDOT, Jim responded to the Florida Wildlife Federation's letter asking for fencing and wildlife features on the nine miles of Alligator Alley, which is the most dangerous to Florida panthers due to motor vehicle deaths. His response came quickly with the installation of new wildlife exclusionary fencing by FDOT within

a year to protect more panthers from deaths on that section of the highway. Jim put the focus on improving FDOT's wildlife crossing programs and having the agency become proactive in identifying installation opportunities.

While he was Chief of Staff and then Secretary of FDOT, the department reached an agreement with the National Park Service to bridge a portion of Tamiami Trail, which will help improve the natural flow of water in the Everglades.

LAND CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

John Browne



of Environmental Protection (FDEP), where he supervised land acquisition and negotiation for conservation purchases through Preservation 2000 and its successor program, Florida Forever.

In 2000, John moved to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Florida Forest Service. He has since served as the Forest Service Liaison to the Governor and Cabinet, staff to the Florida Land Acquisition and Restoration Council and is a member of the Governor's East Central Florida Corridor Task Force to determine criteria for infrastructure siting and recommendations for the size and scope of new transportation corridors. As the administrator of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, a program which has received, since inception, over \$77 million for the acquisition of perpetual conservation easements, he has guided the protection of timberland, ranches and farms. This popular program seeks to ensure that our working lands will stay as they are in the face of development pressures and will continue to provide habitat benefits.

For his commitment to protect and conserve Florida's environmental resources, the Florida Wildlife Federation chose John Browne as its Land Conservationist of the Year.

John Browne currently serves as the Land Programs Administrator for the Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He is a lifelong Florida conservationist at heart and a fifth-generation Floridian. John hails from Apalachicola. He has spent his career ensuring that we retain the natural attributes that make Florida a special place to live.

After serving in the U. S. Air Force, John began his professional years protecting Florida's woods and waters. In 1994, he joined the Florida Department

LAND CONSERVATION & PLANNING AWARD

Mike Byerly



Mike Byerly

Mike Byerly of Micanopy was the recipient of the Land Conservation and Planning Award.

After serving on several local advisory committees, Mike Byerly was elected to the Alachua County Commission in 2000 and has been re-elected to an unprecedented fifth term. He has been Chair of the County Commission, Chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization and Chair of the Alachua County Library District Governing Board. He presently serves on the board of several local non-prof-

it organizations, including Friends of Payne's Prairie and Current Problems, a local organization that advocates for clean water.

He has taken on tremendous efforts against sprawl. Recently, as leader of the Stand by Our Plan group, he fought against a gigantic development proposal for the rural eastern part of the county. He emerged victorious in that endeavor. He has also been working to mitigate poorly planned road construction projects and a proposed 10,000 acre phosphate mine siting effort that would harm springs, wildlife habitat and water quality.

For nearly two decades, Mike has been instrumental in the development and adoption of a range of public policies that protect Alachua County's natural resources. He developed the Open Space ordinance that permanently preserves 20 percent of land in all new developments. He also secured dedicated funding for an aggressive bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure program and is working on a multimodal transportation network.

Currently, Mike is working on an overhaul of the County's stormwater ordinance that will greatly reduce pollutant runoff from development.

FLORIDA LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

Senator Joe Negron



Senate President Joe Negron

Senator Joe Negron is a native Floridian and practicing attorney who resides in Stuart. He was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2001 and the Florida Senate in 2009, becoming Senate President in 2016. Senator Negron has always recognized the need to

preserve Florida's Everglades, an internationally recognized and unique ecosystem.

Most recently, as Senate President, Joe Negron has been the leader in pursuing legislation for development of a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to diminish the pollution-laden discharges to the Indian River Lagoon and the Caloosahatchee River and to increase clean water going south to the Biscayne Aquifer, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

An outstanding and patient leader in the Florida Senate, Senator Negron has long known the importance of protecting Florida's natural resources and its water supply and that the environment is closely tied to the state's tourism industry and economy. Moreover, President Negron has been highly involved in programs in his local community, receiving numerous accolades over the years.

CONSERVATION COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch



Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch has lived in Martin County for almost her entire life. She has spent her career as teacher, realtor and public servant. In 2008 she was chosen to serve as a Commissioner for the Town of Sewall's Point. Later,

she became the Town's Mayor where she had many environmental and human safety-related achievements. Her areas of greatest achievement involved lower insurance costs for homeowners and working to have electric lines placed underground along the A1A corridor. She volunteers for River Kidz, a Sewall's Point youth movement.

As a longtime advocate for the Everglades region, Jacqui writes a daily blog called the "Indian River Lagoon," which has more than 2,800 subscribers and is followed by many state agencies and individuals across Florida. Her blog tracks algal growth and toxic plumes, information and political commentary. She uses aerial photographs to provide evidence of what she writes about. Her work is featured in Eco-Voice, TreasureCoast.com and more. Jacqui takes a cohesive approach to explaining environmental challenges which include history, land use and water-related issues. Her blog may be viewed at www.jacquithurlowlippisch.com.

YOUTH CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Gray Foster



Gray Foster, a 9th grader at Palm Beach Day Academy, was selected to receive the Youth Conservationist Award. Gray is a young environmentalist and future leader working to protect Florida's marine resources. This young man provided convincing research and background on the devastation caused

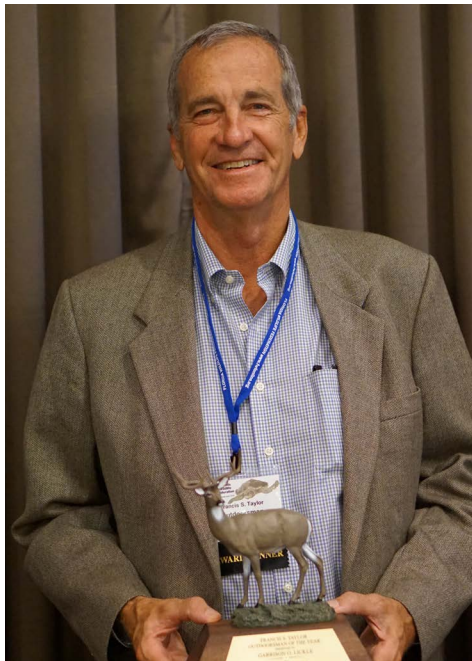
by single use plastic bags to the Palm Beach Town Council. His testimony resulted in a Resolution being adopted by the Town of Palm Beach asking the Florida Legislature to repeal the law prohibiting "home rule" so that Palm Beach could legally ban single use plastic bags. Also resulting from Gray's efforts, the Town of Palm Beach is in the process of adopting an ordinance to ban the release of inflated balloons in their coastal community.

Gray Foster is not only a budding conservationist, but he also enjoys a variety of other interests at school, including soccer. Last year he played a role in the play "Of Mice and Men" which earned him the White Jacket Award given to performers who go above and beyond what is required. In his free time, Gray enjoys the outdoors, especially surfing, paddle boarding and mountain biking.

For his dedication and efforts to make his community a better place to live and to protect Florida's beaches and marine life, the Florida Wildlife Federation recognized Gray Foster as its Youth Conservationist of the Year.

FRANCIS S. TAYLOR OUTDOORSMAN OF THE YEAR

Garrison “Gary” Lickle



record of community service in and around the Palm Beach region. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of The Everglades Foundation.

As an accomplished fisherman, hunter, diver and pilot who has flown all over the world, Gary has seen the degradation of natural resources first-hand. Gary has been described as a citizen activist who is on top of the major issues of the day. He is involved in water quality matters, efforts to control the invasive lionfish and has participated in expeditions tracking whale sharks off the coast of Mexico. He has even made the extraordinary effort to travel to Kenya with other pilots to teach the local people how to deter poachers who slaughter elephants and rhinos for their tusks and horns.

For his many accomplishments on behalf of conservation efforts, and for his enthusiasm for the natural world, the Florida Wildlife Federation was very proud to name Gary Lickle as its Francis S. Taylor Outdoorsman of the Year.

Gary Lickle has been an outdoor adventurer and environmentalist all his life. He is a long term resident of Palm Beach and is the President and CEO of Chilton Trust Management with more than 30 years of experience in fiduciary wealth management. Gary has a long

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

Florida Native Plant Society



Left to right: Brian Said, Winnie Said, Ron Blair, Catherine Bowman, Andy Taylor and Anne Cox.

The Florida Native Plant Society was founded in 1980. The mission of the Society is to promote the conservation, preservation and restoration of Florida's native plants and native plant communities. In 2016, Florida Native Plant Society members donated 34,000 hours of time in support of this mission.

The current president of the organization is Catherine Bowman who resides in Central Florida. Each Florida Native Plant Society president serves a two-year term which changes with the annual conference in May. An all-volunteer Board of Directors, from across the state, oversees the Society. There are 37 Chapters and 3,900 members statewide. The chapters host educational and outreach events in their local areas. At

the annual conference each May, the Florida Native Plant Society awards grants dedicated to “Research and Conservation projects.” Since these programs began, the Society has provided more than \$100,000 in funding for conservation and research in Florida. These supported projects led to 45 peer-reviewed articles.

The Society strongly supports conservation land acquisition and land management that enhances suitability for native plants, including the use of prescribed fire and the removal of invasive, exotic plants. The organization advocates for public policies that protect our native flora, especially rare species.

The Florida Wildlife Federation considers the Florida Native Plant Society to be an important partner in the protection of the state's natural resources and was very pleased to name the organization as its Conservation Organization of the Year.

LIVING GREEN AWARD

Adam Morley



Adam Morley was born and raised in southern St. Johns and Flagler counties, most notably spending time on the beautiful Princess Place Preserve. His passion for the natural world was ingrained from an early age. He has surfed and sailed in Northeast Florida's waterways and in the Atlantic Ocean for all his life. He also enjoys camping, fishing and hunting. He calls himself an “interpretive naturalist” as his greatest passion is educating others, especially children and young adults, about the environment and what to do to save it.

Adam works as an environmental educator with St. Augustine EcoTours, teaching visitors about the ecology of this historic area, and about the wildlife that inhabits the sea, the shore and the inland forests. He is also a U.S. Coast

Guard-certified boat captain. In 2008, he started his own recycling company, ANJ Recycling in St. Augustine. Later he sold the company which is still thriving today.

Currently Adam owns his own solar and electric business, and he practices what he preaches. He and his wife built their own 100% solar-powered “Tiny Home” out of a converted shipping container. He drives an electric car, refuses to use single-use plastics of any kind, and reuses everything that can be reused. Serving on a number of environmentally-focused executive boards, including The Friends of Anastasia State Park, Friends of Tomoka Basin State Parks, Friends of A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway and North Florida Coastal Caretakers, Adam is deeply involved in his community. At one time Adam ran for State Representative in hopes of serving as a voice for the state's waterways, springs, parks and natural resources. More recently, he crowd-funded the purchase of a barge called the “Litter Gitter Trash Barge.” The effort reached its goal to obtain a used boat. The watercraft has been retrofitted with lean rails and equipment for utilization of large collection bins for collected trash. The vessel conducts public waterway cleanup “tours” in the Northeast Florida region.

For his efforts to protect Florida's environment, the Florida Wildlife Federation named Adam Morley as the recipient of its Living Green Award.

MARINE CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Wolcott Henry

Wolcott Henry pictured pages 10 and 14.

Wolcott Henry is a highly-regarded professional nature photographer capturing images in Florida and in faraway places around the world such as Asia, Australia and islands in the Pacific. Mr. Henry captures the individual personalities of oceans by diving to great depths and photographing fantastic images. His underwater photography documented the negative impacts of humans on fragile reefs and the overall marine environment. His goal has been to inspire others to protect marine fishes, wildlife and ecosystems.

Wolcott Henry was a collaborator with Dr. Sylvia Earle on famous marine photography books, including the children's books *Hello Fish!* and *Sea*

Critters. Mr. Henry and Dr. Earle co-authored the National Geographic Society's book *Wild Ocean: America's Parks Under the Sea*.

Mr. Henry is the President and Chairman of the Board of the Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation, which has provided critical funds to a wide variety of conservation projects in Florida, Alabama and in other areas, including the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River regions. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Marine Sanctuary Program in 2011.

The Florida Wildlife Federation was very pleased to honor Wolcott Henry with the Marine Conservationist Award for his lifetime of dedication to furthering the cause of conservation in Florida and around the nation.

ENVIRONMENTAL PHILANTHROPY AWARD

The Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation



Angel Braestrup and Wolcott Henry

The Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation began making grants to environmental causes in 1987 with a mission to help save waters, wildlife and natural resources through funding local and regional projects. The President and

Chairman of the Board of the Foundation is Wolcott Henry of Jupiter. The Foundation's Executive Director, Angel Braestrup, has been with the organization since 1994 and maintains offices in Washington, D.C.

The Munson Foundation has been focused on the eastern United States and the Caribbean as well as the District of Columbia. Florida and Alabama nonprofits have been the recipients of grant funding, including the Florida Wildlife Federation. The Foundation has directed many of its resources to the South Florida ecosystems, including the Everglades, Biscayne Bay and Florida Bay. Munson Foundation grants have improved the long-term prospects for fish and wildlife, and our endangered rivers, estuaries and oceans, in Florida and many other parts of the country.

As a state and nation dealing with so many critical conservation issues, it is refreshing to know that the Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation stands on the side of sustainability. The Florida Wildlife Federation was very pleased to present its Environmental Philanthropy Award to the Munson Foundation.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Everglades Law Center



Jason Totoiu and Lisa Interlandi

The Everglades Law Center (ELC), founded in 1995, was chosen to receive the President's Award for their ability to provide high quality legal assistance to advocate, negotiate, and, when necessary, litigate to protect and restore the ecosystems of the Florida Everglades. "The Everglades Law Center has suc-

cessfully and ably represented the Florida Wildlife Federation on a number of critical issues over the last 22 years," Mr. Fuller said. Some of the important litigation and actions by the ELC over the years has included: Stopping the expansion of nearly 20,000 acres of lime rock mines in the Everglades Agricultural Area, preventing the construction of a commercial airport that would have been located between Everglades and Biscayne Bay National Parks, and successfully challenging numerous developments that violated Florida's growth management laws. They led the efforts to relocate the Scripps Biotech Campus from its originally proposed site in Western Palm Beach County to its current location in Abacoa. The relocation allowed Scripps to utilize an existing campus rather than stimulating urban sprawl out towards the Everglades.

Currently the Everglades Law Center is challenging expansion of the Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant due to potential threats to natural resources, public lands, the health of our groundwater

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resources and vulnerability to sea level rise.

ELC worked with area residents, the Palm Beach Citizen's Association and allies to successfully oppose a dredging project to widen and deepen the Palm Beach channel which would have posed

a major threat to manatees and marine fish habitat as well as fishing, diving and recreation.

ELC is staffed by Executive Director and General Counsel Jason Totoiu, Senior Staff Counsel Lisa Interlandi, and Ansley Samson, of Counsel. These fine attorneys are at the forefront of saving South Florida's special places.

FWF CONSERVATION HALL OF FAME TWENTY-NINTH INDUCTEE

Jim Thomas



Jim Thomas, Conservation Hall of Fame (on right)

Jim Thomas, a fifth generation Floridian, has rightly earned the title of Defender of Lake Apopka. He grew up in the Tampa Bay area and as a child often traveled with his family to fish for bass in the once-thriving Lake Apopka. Jim later saw first-hand the devastation wrought by man on this ecosystem that had once provided habitat for countless species. His dedication to environmental protection has included not only Lake Apopka, but all of Central Florida as it disappears under development pressure.

Jim received a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida State University and a Master's degree from the University of North Carolina. In 1973, he founded Biosphere Consulting, Inc., in Winter Garden, an environmental consulting firm engaged in environmental assessment and ecological restoration programs for both upland and wetland projects. The firm runs a native nursery and has also become heavily involved in environmental management.

As Founder and Past President of the Friends of Lake Apopka, an advocacy group dedicated to the

restoration and long-term management of the fabled lake, Jim spearheaded policy actions and funding efforts to bring the lake back to its past glory. As past President of the Oakland Nature Preserve, he has shepherded the conservation and sound management of a 123-acre natural tract on the south shore of the lake. The

Preserve provides environmental education to children and adults, particularly as to water protection and how local citizens can make a positive difference.

Jim is also Past President of the Orange Audubon Society and the Friends of the Wekiva River. Jim served on the Board of Directors of the Florida Wildlife Federation for eight years, and always provided environmental expertise and a passion to make Florida, and the world, a more sustainable place. He has undertaken numerous battles on behalf of the environment in our state, always promoting sound growth and ecological restoration.

With Central Florida as his backyard, he never has to worry about a lack of issues to confront. From water quality to urban sprawl and the suppression of invasive exotic species, Jim has continuously worked to preserve our natural resources and our quality of life. For his lifetime of service and achievements for conservation in Florida, the Florida Wildlife Federation was proud to induct Jim Thomas into its Conservation Hall of Fame.



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 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Please send me my *FFWN* by ☐ Mail ☐ Email

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

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FWF's 2017 Photo Contest

Categories for Kids and Big Prizes!

The Florida Wildlife Federation is pleased to announce the third year of its FWF Photo Contest, which we re-named **The Lou Kellenberger FWF Photo Contest** in memory of this past board member and friend. The Contest celebrates the enjoyment of taking photos in Florida's great outdoors which promotes FWF's mission to encourage citizens to participate in sustainable outdoor recreation.

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, a tablet (Kindle Fire), \$50 Visa gift cards and more! Ten total winners will be selected. 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, 2017. Entry fees 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, six category winners will receive a \$50 Visa gift card 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 31st, 2017.

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

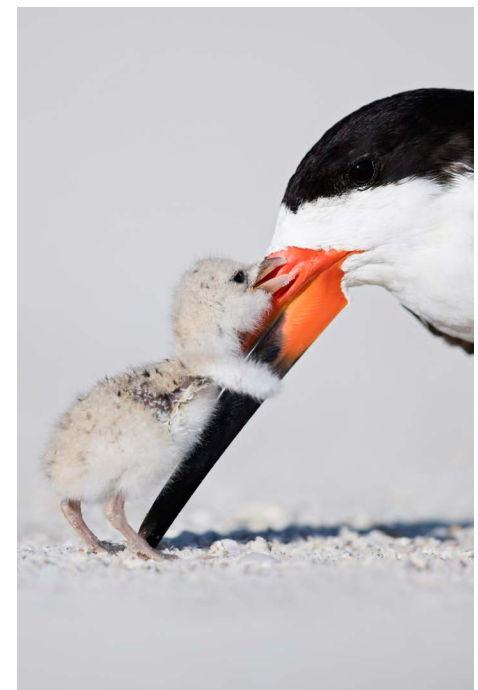


Photo by Thomas Chadwick.

Answers to Florida Kids' Quiz

1. Be careful because many milkweed plants have been treated with systemic (that means "contained within the plant's system") neonicotinoids (that is a poison), and are deadly for butterflies and bees. Home Depot stores and others are known to be selling these plants, so make sure not to buy them or plant them. Ask the clerk for plants that do not have neonicotinoids.

Also you should not buy or plant another milkweed called "Tropical milkweed" (*Asclepias curassavica*) which is also harmful because it carries a virus.

2. People used to believe you should not touch them, but that has proven to be untrue. If they are placed back in their nest, the parent birds will continue to take care of them even if you touch the babies or eggs. However, you should ask an adult to help you as eggs and baby birds are very fragile.

3. You should leave the burrow and the gopher tortoise alone. It knows how to take care of itself. Sadly, some people have picked them up and put them in bodies of water. Do not do that. Gopher tortoises are land animals and can't swim.

How did you do, Florida Kid??!!

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. 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 Member

William Herrington, St. Augustine
Fran Wright, Zephyrhills
Robert Serfozo, Cocoa
James Cutcher, Orlando
Earth Care Ministry, Gainesville
Rita Skrocki, Melbourne

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



Robert E. Murtagh

For Wildlife

A lifelong outdoor enthusiast, Bob Murtagh's leisure time took him to Yellowstone, diving in the Cayman and Hawaiian Islands, and hiking in Canada, Ireland and Midway Islands. He was particularly amazed by the unique wildlife he encountered, including the Bagaboos (elk) in Canada, Midway's Gooney birds and the canaries left behind when the US Navy departed the island in World War II. But his true love has been the sea turtles of Hawaii.

Bob's conservation philanthropy began locally in Palm Beach County where he supported loggerhead turtle rehabilitation and research, and education programs at the Grassy Waters area where he led canoe trips for urban kids on their first forays beyond the inner city.

Robert Murtagh joined FWF in 1994 and has had a continuous history of giving to the organization over the years. Born in Long Island, New York, it is in Florida where he decided to support FWF "while I still can." He admits that his exposure to wildlife around the world has "soaked in" over time and he wants to make a positive difference.

Through a charitable gift annuity, Mr. Murtagh found a way to sustain FWF over the long haul, get a guaranteed income for the rest of his life, and lessen taxation on securities he owned—a win-win-win formula that fully embraces his lifelong love for the environment. Thank you, Bob, for your generosity and thoughtfulness to the Florida Wildlife Federation.

Please join with Bob and help make sure current and future residents can enjoy a healthy, clean and abundant Florida, which helps not only our environment, but also our economy.

A charitable trust or bequest benefitting the Florida Wildlife Federation, or a charitable gift annuity similar to Bob's, is relatively 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**.

Conservation Calendar

June 22, 2017

Fish or Cruise Sweepstakes
Drawing at 3:00 pm
FWF Tallahassee Headquarters

July 10-11, 2017

FWC Commission Meeting
www.MyFWC.com/Commission

September 22 & 23, 2017

FWF Board of Directors
Annual Business Meeting
Tradewinds Guy Harvey Resort
dhines@fwfonline.org

September 27-28, 2017

FWC Commission Meeting
www.MyFWC.com/Commission

November 4, 2017

Florida Panther Festival
Naples, Florida
www.floridapantherfestival.com

LAST CHANCE! Drawing for 5th Annual "Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes held on June 22, 2017!

The Florida Wildlife Federation is pleased to announce the 5th Annual "Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes which started in January. **Here's your chance to win a Fantastic Travel Prize: A Costco Travel Cruise in the Carribean (you select the cruise you want), OR a Fishing Trip at Sitka Point Lodge in south-**

eastern Alaska, OR you may decide to take the \$10,000 cash prize ... Your choice!

The drawing will be held at the FWF offices on Thursday, June 22, 2017.

To enter the "Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes or for more information visit www.fwfonline.org.

Ticket contributions are \$5 each, or 6 tickets for \$25. You can also order 15 tickets for \$50 or 35 tickets for \$100. Please support the Florida Wildlife Federation by participating in the 2017 "Fish or Cruise" Sweepstakes!

FWF Director Jenny Brock catches big fish!

