

Fish & Wildlife News



Florida
Wildlife
Federation
Since 1936

Volume 37, Issue 3

Summer 2022

FWF *Annual Awards*

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Parting Thoughts

For the past two years I have had the privilege of being the Chair of this venerable organization. It has been an unusual period, as most of our board meetings were by zoom. We now have resumed in-person meetings, with a board that is knowledgeable, diverse and engaged.

The Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) continues to fight for the preservation of Florida's natural habitat and for clean water. There is a sense of urgency as the board and staff of FWF are keenly aware of the unprecedented habitat conversion/destruction due to development and its impact on ours, the third most populous state. I am frustrated by the lack of progress on some of our goals and initiatives, due in large part to the Legislature's lack of funding and leadership. That frustration is exemplified by our ongoing lawsuit over the continuing failure of our elected leaders to acquire natural areas authorized by voters via Amendment 1 in 2014, thereby thwarting the expectations of citizens of this state who overwhelmingly supported this measure.

That frustration, however, is mitigated when I think about what this state would look like were it not for the efforts of members of this organization. We would have a jet port in the middle of the Everglades and a Cross Florida barge canal. The acquisition of the Big Cypress National Preserve might not have occurred were it not for the lobbying efforts of FWF and others to convince

Congress to acquire and fund it. In Palm Beach and Martin counties, the Jones/Hungryland natural area has signage acknowledging a former leader of FWF, John C. Jones, as instrumental in its creation and in the establishment of over three million acres of public land across Florida.

In May, I had the opportunity to canoe in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge with fellow board member Jay Exum and two of his college friends. This protected area serves as an epicenter for carnivorous plants. Camping out on open platforms, we saw no other human beings until we approached the take-out on the third day. A thunderstorm on the second evening was so formidable that frogs jumped out of the swamp onto the platforms and attempted to take cover in our tents! We were serenaded by the constant bellowing of innumerable frogs until the storm subsided. One cannot help but feel a sense of deep appreciation for the perseverance of concerned citizens, scientists, lawmakers, and conservationists who saved this national treasure. It is these special places FWF wishes to save for future generations.

If you care about the world we are leaving for our children and grandchildren, please support the Florida Wildlife Federation.

Wishing you a happy and healthy rest of 2022.



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FWF Conservation Award Winners

FWF Award Winners were recognized at the Celebration of the Wild and Annual Conservation Awards Banquet on June 4 in Stuart.

Environmental Advocate

Margaret Spontak

Conservation Communicator

Benjamin Studt

Land Conservationists

Dr. Steve and Betsy Updegraff

Conservation Research

Nature Coast Biological Station

Water Conservationist

Miami Waterkeeper

Marine Conservationist

Shana Phelan

Youth Conservationist

Allison Ramos

Public Servants

Orange County Mayor and

Board of County Commissioners



FWF President & CEO Preston Robertson (left) and Youth Conservationist, Allison Ramos (right).



FWF Vice President, Sarah Gledhill (left), Conservation Communicator, Benjamin Studt, and FWF President and CEO, Preston Robertson (right).

In Memory of Nancy A. Payton

The Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) and Southwest Florida recently lost a true and dedicated advocate and fighter for native wildlife and habitat.



Nancy A. Payton

In 1994, FWF opened its first Southwest office in Naples to work primarily on growth management, habitat preservation and the survivability of the rare Florida panther. Nancy Payton was chosen to staff the office in the important role of Field Representative. She soon became an environmental force to be reckoned with in Collier County and beyond. She held that position for 24 fruitful years.

Nancy was known to be well prepared for the multitude of meetings she attended on behalf of

FWF. If a decision-maker misspoke factually, she would open her notebook and say, no this is what you said or promised at our previous meeting. Nancy carried the facts, backed up with a stick if necessary. She was no wallflower and was dedicated to saving what made Southwest Florida special.

In 2018, just prior to her retirement, Nancy was publicly recognized for her many years of work by the Collier County Commission. The honor of which she was most proud was the establishment of the Nancy Payton Preserve purchased through the Conservation Collier program in 2006. Few individuals are so honored during their lifetime. Nancy Payton



FWF Regional Policy Director, Meredith Budd (left), Nancy Payton (center) and Franklin Adams (right) at Collier County BCC Proclamation of 'Nancy Payton Day.' (2018)

made a positive difference for ourselves and future Floridians; the Florida Wildlife Federation continues to build on her past achievements.

If there ever was a stalwart conservationist, it was Nancy. She was also a good friend and compatriot to all at FWF.

Rest in Peace.



Dear Federation Members & Supporters:

First some good news! At the request of Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) and many other concerned organizations and citizens, the Governor has vetoed Senate Bill 2508, which would have stymied efforts to fix the cherished Everglades ecosystem. We also are glad to report that the Governor also vetoed House Bill 741, which would have inhibited individual home solar users. By this latter action, the cause of expanding personal solar power may continue. Thanks to all who voiced their concerns over these bad bills!

On the federal front, the U.S. House of Representatives recently passed the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA). This bi-partisan legislation, which FWF and many disparate groups across the political spectrum have supported for years, is now to be voted upon in the U.S. Senate. At present, climate change, habitat loss and invasive species have taken a severe toll on our native birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and insects. Indeed, thousands of wild animals are at risk, with populations plunging. One-third of bird species in North America are in urgent need of conservation, including Florida's king rail, a large marsh bird whose population has dropped by almost 90% from historic totals, to the once ubiquitous bank swallow, which has also lost 90% of its population

nationally. Even the beautiful goldfinch, so looked forward to by birders as a migrant, has declined by almost 30% since the 1960s. RAWA is the opportunity to stem this slide into oblivion by funding efforts to keep upwards of 12,000 native species on the landscape.

The heating of the planet is

Change cites our state several times as the place where the financial costs are even now being counted. In Miami-Dade County, flooding caused by sea level rise has caused real estate values to decline by over \$500 million, and our incredible coral reefs are dying due to bleaching. Ongoing algal blooms and red tides are being exacerbated by warming seas. In Tallahassee, we are having heat advisories that were not part of our experience years ago. Many American industries have realized the need to minimize greenhouse gas (CO2) pollution. While we lag behind Europe in this regard, it is hoped we can step up the pace to secure a sustainable nation.

Our Annual Banquet at Hutchinson Island near Stuart was a success, even with the lingering impacts of COVID and severe weather. It is always heartwarming to recognize individuals and organizations across the state who have made a positive difference for ourselves and future Floridians. Citizen activists have always been an important part of the conservation of our resources.

Action item: Please call our U.S. Senators and ask them to support the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. Sen. Marco Rubio – (202) 224-3041; Sen. Rick Scott – (202) 224-5274. Thanks!

Preston T. Robertson



Species: King Rail

hitting us right between the eyes here in the Sunshine state. This should be no surprise owing to our position on the continent and being mainly a low-lying peninsula surrounded on three sides by water. The United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Florida Wildlife Federation Annual Awards *continued*



Land Conservationists Dr. Steve and Betsy Updegraff.



FWF Vice President, Sarah Gledhill (left), Marine Conservationist, Shana Phelan, and FWF President and CEO, Preston Robertson (right).



FWF Vice President, Sarah Gledhill (left), Mike Allen of Nature Coast Biological Station (Conservation Research Award Recipient), and FWF President and CEO, Preston Robertson (right).



FWF Regional Policy Director, Meredith Budd (left) and Water Conservationist of the Year, Miami Waterkeeper (right).



Vote for District Directors

Please vote online at floridawildlifefederation.org/vote/

Only current members may vote. Voting ends September 9, 2022.

"Eight District Directors (one for each district) shall be elected by the Individual Associate and Corporate or Business members. Nominations for those eight District Directors shall be published to the Individual Associate and Corporate or Business members in the form of a ballot at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. Such ballots shall be received by the Federation's principal place of business no later than fifteen days prior to the annual meeting; otherwise, the votes on such ballots shall not be counted. The ballots shall be tabulated by the Federation's employees, verified by the Organizational Affairs Committee, and announced at the conclusion of the other elections. The eight District Directors so elected shall be the nominees who received the most votes and neither declined their nomination nor were elected to another office or directorship." — FWF Bylaws, article XI, section B – as amended September, 2005.



Water Beyond Borders

Starving manatees, blue-green water, public health advisories, and canceled beach vacations are all symptoms of loving our state too much without considering our impact. As urban development near coastal ecosystems increases, so do impacts to the environment as infrastructure alters the natural landscape. Stormwater systems divert water away from rainfall sites and move rainwater over impervious surfaces into drains and directly into waterbodies. Consequences from traditional stormwater infrastructure include increased nutrients from fertilizers, pollutants from automobiles, and large volumes of freshwater flowing into waterways without treatment. These issues cause nutrient overloading, increased algal blooms, poor water quality, and changes in estuarine ecological function that impact Florida's wildlife and tourism-based economy.

Fortunately, the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida (RCI) is looking at bold ways to curb water pollution through the adoption of Low Impact Development (LID) ordinances developed by the Water Beyond Borders initiative. LIDs use different infrastructure techniques to use or mimic the natural hydrology of an area. LID techniques include bioswales, permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels and green roofs. Most techniques can be adapted for large-scale or small-scale projects.

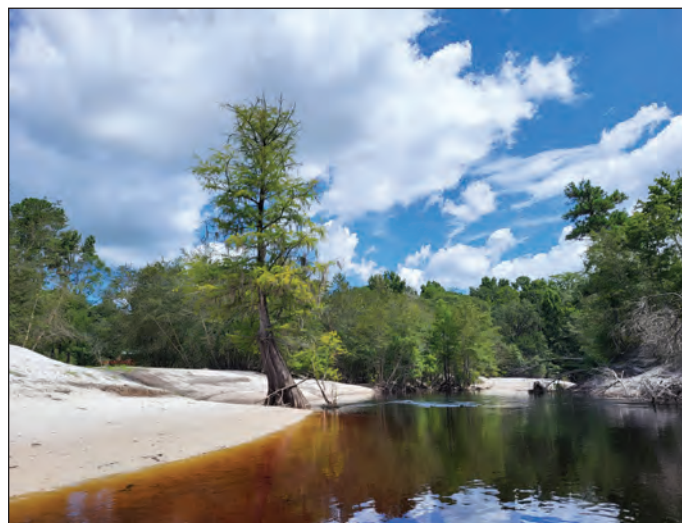
The goal of the Water Beyond Borders initiative is to create a model ordinance for LID that each municipality in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia can adopt, implement and enforce. The ordinance is constructed as a framework that

allows each municipality to tailor the regulations to individual community needs.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) created the RCI to consider policy issues. In October 2011, RCI and NEFRC collaborated with the people of Northeast Florida on First Coast

Vision, a vision for growth and development in Northeast Florida over the next 50 years. The vision asked what the First Coast could be like in 2060 concerning nature. First Coast Vision answered, "Nowhere are our assets more obvious than in our natural environment and we embrace the challenge of ensuring that they are protected in the long term."

The plan supports water conservation, green infrastructure, and the importance of waterbodies meeting water quality standards. To further these goals, in August 2015, NEFRC assigned water as the 2017 policy issue to RCI, after collaboration with the RCI Board of Directors, and agreed that efforts should include both Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia. RCI assigned the topic to its Natural Resources Committee, led by Professor Quinton White of the Marine Science Research Institute of Jacksonville University and FWF's 2015 Marine Conservationist of the Year.



St. Mary's River Image courtesy of St. Mary's River Keeper

Pivotal to the initiative was the notion that interstate cooperation would increase our effectiveness by increasing our constituency, broadening our best practices and lessons-learned experience, and ensuring that the opportunities presented by each State's good practices could be shared and regularly communicated by our partnership.

After forward momentum was hindered by the global pandemic, our conversations have kick-started once again with energy and a commitment to protect the St. Mary's watershed from incompatible development. Looking ahead, RCI's members and partners are advancing the LID to garner support at local, regional and state levels.

As a representative for FWF, Sarah Gledhill has served as a member of the RCI Board of Directors since 2012 representing regional environmental and land use perspectives.

Florida Wildlife Federation Annual Awards *continued*



FWF Vice President, Sarah Gledhill (left), Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings, Christine Moore, Orange County Commission (Public Servants), and FWF President and CEO, Preston Robertson (right).



FWF Vice President, Sarah Gledhill (left), Environmental Advocate, Margaret Spontak, and FWF President and CEO, Preston Robertson (right).



Featured Animal

Florida Native – Eastern Glass Lizard

The Eastern glass lizard (*Ophisaurus ventralis*), is a fairly common resident throughout the state, preferring flatwoods and wetlands, especially in sandy areas. They are sometimes seen even on the beach. While they look like snakes, they are in reality legless lizards as they have eyelids and external ear openings. With tails that break off to confuse a potential predator, the thought was they must be made of glass! The tail grows back over time. This creature feeds on crickets, grasshoppers, spiders and a variety of insects. The glass lizard can grow up to 43 inches in length and sports light brown or yellowish to greenish coloration. Take a careful look under a log next time you are in the woods. You may get to see one.





Wildlife Crossings Connect the Landscape to Help Recover the Endangered Florida Panther

The endangered Florida panther currently lives only in Southwest Florida in less than 5% of its historic range. The Florida Wildlife Federation uses the Florida panther as the guiding species for the organization's conservation efforts across the Southwest region. As an umbrella species, protecting panthers and their habitat, in effect, protects a wide variety of native plants and animals. To best protect the panther and other native species, the Federation not only focuses on habitat preservation, but also ensuring that wildlife habitat is connected through corridors and wildlife crossings.

Increased development leads to an increased need for roads. Unfortunately, roadways present a significant barrier to wildlife movement, and vehicle strikes on roads are the leading cause of mortality for the panther. As of July 2022, there have been seventeen reported panthers killed by vehicles. This is why wildlife crossings play such an important role in protecting and recovering this endangered species.

Crossings are effective at reducing the number of panthers killed on Florida's roadways when they are strategically located, constructed with the appropriate dimensions and when fencing is also implemented. Fencing is a key component to a functioning wildlife crossing because the fencing helps to guide wildlife to the crossing entrance. Just as important as the dimensions and fencing are for any crossing, the land use designation on either side of a potential crossing is equally as important. In order to ensure habitat

connectivity, there needs to be large areas of preserve land on either side of any crossing to ensure success.

The Federation has helped to secure over 50 wildlife crossings in the state and continues to advocate for additional crossings on Florida's roads. The panther is a wide-ranging species and must be able to move freely northward if we are to meet recovery goals set forth by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Wildlife crossings are the key to connecting habitat areas, especially since Florida's landscape is heavily fragmented by busy roadways. **Support the Florida Wildlife Federation's efforts to secure additional wildlife crossings by donating at <https://floridawildlife.org/donate/>**

FWF releases final report: *Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Connectivity Planning for the Corkscrew Road Area*.

The area surrounding Corkscrew Road in Lee and Collier Counties is not only an important area for surface water storage, but also for wildlife habitat. It is commonly used by panthers, black bears and other wildlife. Understanding that there will be future development of this area, it is essential that a viable habitat conservation and connectivity plan be created and implemented. As such, the Federation engaged with transportation ecologist Dr. Daniel Smith to produce a data-driven and landscape ecology-based final report



Florida panther at City Gate Wildlife Crossing, courtesy of fStop Foundation

to guide development that is compatible with conservation goals and allows for continued panther use and functional habitat connections between the current state, county, and private conservation lands on both sides of Corkscrew Road. The report is complete and has been distributed to various transportation and planning stakeholders. With this report as a reference, development can be guided into areas most appropriate for development while protecting and maintaining the most important wildlife habitat corridors for the region. The report can be accessed here at <https://floridawildlife.org/wildlife-conservation/#studies>.



Endangered Florida panther walking along habitat areas surrounding the Corkscrew Road corridor



Photographer: Bryant Turff; Animal: Florida Manta Ray



Featured Natural Area

Blowing Rocks Preserve

Situated on the coast in Southeast Florida is a most unique and enjoyable public space: Blowing Rocks Preserve. Only 73 acres in size, the Preserve contains a very rare geological feature in that sedimentary rock, called Anastasia limestone, juts out into the Atlantic Ocean. When the tide comes in and slams into this outcropping, the salty water can gush up to fifty feet in the air! Indeed, this is the largest such natural structure of its kind on the entire eastern seaboard. The limestone, also known as coquina, is comprised of shells, corals, fossils and sand. Not only is the Preserve a wonderful destination for a family trip, but the beach provides habitat for a variety of shore birds. Location: 574 South Beach Rd., Hobe Sound, Florida 33455; (561) 744-6668.



Photographer: Sarah Gledhill



Poison Ivy

If I had to pick one plant that I believe everyone should be able to identify, poison ivy would be at the top of that list. Yet, when in the great outdoors or in people's yards, I am often reminded that this is a plant that often eludes even the most well-informed.

To be fair, it can blend in pretty well. Birds and other animals enjoy its fruits. Deer even browse its leaves. It can be strikingly beautiful in the fall as it turns a consistent scarlet red. Unfortunately, it is the oil contained in the sap that give many of us a very persistent, uncomfortable, and potentially dangerous rash. The oil is called urushiol. According to the Center for Diseases control "When exposed to 50 micrograms of urushiol, an amount that is less than one grain of table salt, 80 to 90 percent of adults will develop a rash." Basically, what this means is, don't get any of it on you. If you do, you want to act immediately.

So, the most common difficulty I find with poison ivy is that people do not know how to identify it. Remember the old adage, "leaves of three, let it be." Actually, it has three leaflets, as all three leaflets together is a leaf. Individual leaflets measure from two to four inches long and are lobed and pointed at the tip. If you see five leaflets, it is Virginia creeper, a common vine you find growing in trees, or on the ground. Poison ivy grows similar to Virginia creeper. It also is commonly a vine, growing up a tree. It also is common under the shade of trees growing as an upright plant up to knee high (*this is often referred to as poison oak*). The vine form can get to be a thick stem a few

inches in diameter and be somewhat "hairy." These hairy aerial rootlets are especially useful for winter identification. There are other vines that can also have a hairy appearance, but it is always best to err on the side of caution. In winter,



even though the plant is leafless and dead looking, it is still very toxic.

If you think you are likely to get exposed to poison ivy, prepare by protecting yourself by what you are wearing and using the lotions on your skin that prevent rashes. Lotions and creams containing the active ingredient bentoquatam (e.g., *Ivy-Block*) should be used before you

get exposed. When properly applied, 15 minutes before exposure, the symptoms may be eliminated.

If you are removing it from an area, I suggest long pants and long sleeved shirts, fully enclosed shoes, with plastic or leather gloves covering your hands. If vines or branches are growing above, protective eye wear and a wide-brimmed hat should also be worn. Avoid brushing up against the plants as much as possible during removal operations. Protective clothing should be removed and put in the laundry as soon as possible. Don't mix these clothes with other laundry - the irritating oil can be transferred.

If accidental exposure to poison ivy occurs, a ten percent water solution of potassium permanganate applied 5-10 minutes after exposure may prevent rashes. It should be followed by repeated washes with soap and cool water to remove the oily sap. And yes, there are many folk-remedies out there, but few work for everyone. If you get a severe reaction don't hesitate to get to a hospital or consult with qualified medical professionals.

Also, it is good to remember that urushiol has no effect on other animals, but pets may get this oil on their hair and carry it to us.

If you are feeling smug because you are not allergic to poison ivy, remember that your reaction can change in your lifetime. Best not to test this.

Stan Rosenthal is Forest Advocate with the Florida Wildlife Federation and Extension Agent Emeritus with UF/IFAS Leon Extension.

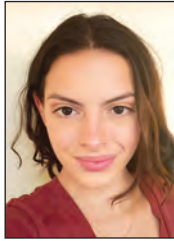
Gopher Tortoises

There are many beautiful animals native to the state of Florida. One species that is native to the Sunshine State that is often forgotten is the gopher tortoise.

The gopher tortoise received its name because of its digging abilities. Gopher tortoises dig burrows that are usually six feet deep and fifteen feet long. This is possible due to their front legs that are shaped like shovels. These burrows are not only used by gopher tortoises, but also by more than 350 other species. Burrowing owls, gopher frogs, rabbits, snakes and mice are some of the animals that use these burrows.

Gopher tortoises can live from forty to sixty years in the wild. They are herbivorous creatures who often bask in the sun on sunny days but stay in their burrows when it is cold outside.

While the gopher tortoise can be found in all 67 counties in Florida, their population has significantly declined compared to historical levels. They are considered a threatened species under the Florida Endangered and Threatened Species Rule, the main threat to the species being habitat loss and fragmentation. It is important that we continue to ensure that gopher tortoises have proper living conditions and remain protected so they do not become endangered in the state. Gopher tortoises are beautiful animals, and if they become extinct, there are numerous species that will not live as they rely upon the gopher tortoise.



Allison Ramos

Hay muchos animales hermosos nativos del estado de Florida. Una especie nativa del Estado del Sol que a menudo se olvida es la tortuga terrestre de Florida (*Gopherus polyphemus*).

La tortuga terrestre de Florida recibió su nombre debido a sus habilidades para excavar. La tortuga terrestre de Florida cavan madrigueras que generalmente tienen seis pies de profundidad y quince pies de largo. Esto es posible gracias a sus patas delanteras que tienen forma de palas. Estas madrigueras no solo son utilizadas por las tortugas terrestres de Florida, sino también por más de otras 350 especies. Las lechuzas de madriguera, las ranas tuza, los conejos, las serpientes y los ratones son algunos de los animales que

utilizan estas madrigueras. Las tortugas terrestres de Florida pueden vivir de cuarenta a sesenta años en la naturaleza. Son criaturas herbívoras que suelen tomar el sol en los días soleados, pero permanecen en sus madrigueras cuando hace frío afuera.

Si bien la tortuga terrestre de Florida se puede encontrar en los 67



Photographer: Katarina Lancaster; Location: Jupiter, Florida; Species: Gopher Tortoise

condados de Florida, su población ha disminuido significativamente en comparación con los niveles históricos en el estado. Se consideran especies amenazadas según la Regla de Especies Amenazadas y en Peligro de Florida, la principal amenaza para la especie es la pérdida y fragmentación del hábitat. Es importante que sigamos asegurándonos de que las tortugas terrestres de Florida tengan condiciones de vida adecuadas y permanezcan protegidas para que no se pongan en peligro en el estado. Las tortugas terrestres de Florida son animales hermosos, y si se extinguen, hay numerosas especies que no vivirán ya que dependen de la tortuga terrestre de Florida.



Land Trusts

Sometimes Nature sets us back on our heels. We can marvel at a clear creek, a healthy pine forest or open prairie. Green spaces and natural areas are vital for wildlife, water quality, our economy and quality of life. For these special places to remain in a rapidly growing state, we need to conserve natural areas, large and small.

Throughout Florida, land trusts work to protect, conserve and restore land for present and future generations benefitting people and wildlife. These private, non-profit organizations work with landowners, community groups, state and local agencies to conserve natural and agricultural land.

Orange Lake Overlook sits just south of McIntosh on U.S. 441. The history of this beautiful vista includes nearly a century of working citrus groves, with later cattle ranching and even an art gallery featuring works inspired by Florida landscapes and wildlife. In 2019, the local community came together to support Alachua Conservancy Trust (ACT) in purchasing part of the property. Today, a 71-acre preserve provides habitat for eagles, sandhill cranes, Sherman fox squirrels and hiking trails for the public. Since 1988, ACT has helped preserve more than 56,000 acres in North Central Florida, directly participating in the purchase of nearly 24,000 of those acres.

Gibbons Nature Preserve is a 60-acre site in Hillsborough County, containing Bell Creek, oaks, pines and cypress and mixed hardwood wetlands. To preserve this land they



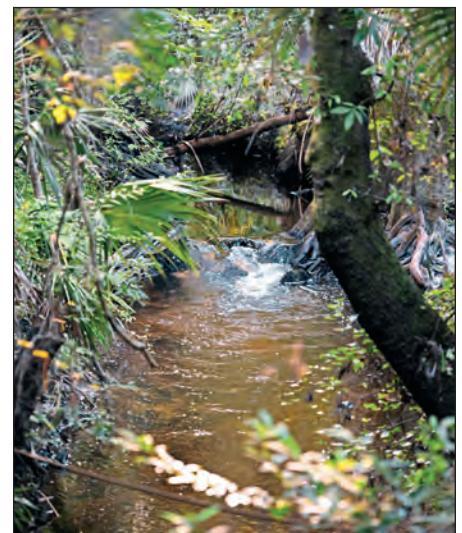
Photographer: Kim Davidson; Location: Orange Lake Overlook

explored as kids, members of the Gibbons family donated it to the Tampa Bay Conservancy (TBC). Over 100 plant species have been identified here by the Suncoast Native Plant society and this tract not only provides habitat for wildlife but helps protect water quality in the Alafia River. Founded in 2001, TBC is committed to protecting lands important to local communities and working to provide solutions for landowners whose needs might be best met by a local organization.

The Toni Robinson Waterfront Trail is a loop through scrub habitat, oak forest and mangroves along the Indian River Lagoon. The Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) was formed in 1990 when Toni Robinson first had the idea to form such an entity. Her namesake trail was created in cooperation with an adjoining neighborhood. At first concerned about a public trail nearby, the neighbors later became trail advocates, with IRLT purchasing 30 acres of surrounding property. A later generous donation from a local

family expanded the conservation lands to over 50 acres.

These are only a few success stories of many from the numerous land trusts in our state. These organizations welcome volunteers, sponsors of events and educational programs and landowners interested in options such as conservation easements, donations, property purchases and estate planning. The Alliance of Florida Land Trusts assists local organizations in their work.



Bell Creek, Photographer: Helen Scott



FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S *Wild Florida Sweepstakes*

Play the Wild Florida Sweepstakes Today!

When you play the Wild Florida Sweepstakes, presented by the Florida Wildlife Federation, you're supporting vital programs such as land conservation and habitat and wildlife protection right here in Florida.

Play today for your chance to win \$20,000 or five second place prizes valued at \$50 each! Go to:

<https://floridawildlifeederation.org/play-the-sweepstakes/>

Thank you for helping keep Florida wild!



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

When you Start With a Smile, we can facilitate wildlife crossings statewide which protect wildlife and humans.

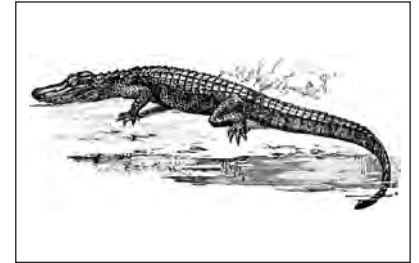
Visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1398265> to sign up!



FLORIDA WILDLIFE **Kids'** Quiz

by Marney Richards

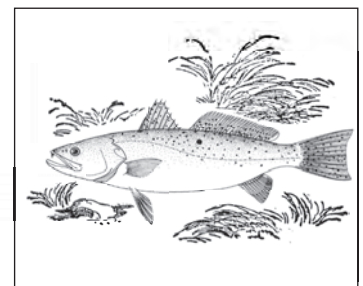
1. How are alligators and crocodiles different?



2. Have you seen a tall brown wading bird with white spots on the back and sides and a downcurved bill?



3. What saltwater fish has a dark gray or green back with spots extending to the tail?



See page 14 for answers and more information.



Thank You to Our Donors

Thank You for Your Generous Support!

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

Join or Renew with FWF Today!

Please go to
floridawildlifefederation.org
or call **850 656-7113** to
JOIN or RENEW Today!
Thanks!

Answers to **FLORIDA WILDLIFE Kids'** Quiz

1. Alligators are usually dark gray with shorter, rounded snouts. They prefer freshwater environments, but sometimes are found in brackish water and rarely in saltwater. Crocodiles are grayish green with long, narrow snouts. They live in coastal areas of South Florida, usually in brackish or saltwater, sometimes in ponds and creeks in mangrove swamps. Crocodiles only exist in South Florida. Both are excellent hunters with keen day and night vision and sensitive hearing. Alligators and crocodiles can be dangerous and should be avoided.

2. Limpkins live in the shallows of rivers, streams and lakes and in marshes and swamps. Their downcurved bills help to pry open apple snails before eating them. They also eat insects, worms, lizards and crustaceans. They can climb trees and balance on floating vegetation!

3. Spotted seatrout, or speckled trout, live in coastal waters over sand bottoms or seagrass beds. They usually grow to about 14 inches, with the largest recorded catch in Florida nearly 39 inches and over 17 pounds! These are good eating fish - be sure to have your Florida fishing license and check the regulations for your area.

How Did You Do, Florida Kid?



Mossy Gator; *Photographer:* Steven Oliemuller



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