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LOOKING FOR THOSE LAST MINUTE PHOTOS!



Photo by Carolyn Babb

The deadline for this year's photo contest is fast approaching. We now accept pictures throughout the year but the deadline for each year's judging is January 31st by 3:30 pm. First prize is an annual parking pass good at Lee County Parks, boat ramps and some beaches. Even better, we may turn your photos into postcards for sale in Friends Corner and your photo could be on a refrigerator near you or mailed to some distant shore.

The Photo Contest Reception will take place in the Interpretive Center at the Slough on Saturday, February 16th at 10:30 am. Please join us as we congratulate the winners and view all the beautiful photographs.

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Diverse Topics Featured at 2019 Friends Gatherings

By Charles O'Connor

We have an interesting range of topics for our Friends' Gatherings in 2019. We'll learn how to attract birds to our own habitat, learn more about reptiles, discover new things about creatures that lived here in prehistoric times, and review a year in the Slough. Presentations start at 7 p.m. but please come early to socialize if you like. To reserve your spot, send an email to Theresa Roake troake@comcast.net or call the Friends at (239) 533 7557. Dates are as follows:



January 23: Justin Proctor of BirdsCaribbean - Creating Bird Friendly Landscapes

BirdsCaribbean (<https://www.birdscaribbean.org>) is the largest regional organization dedicated to the conservation of wild birds and their habitats in the insular Caribbean (including Bermuda, the Bahamas and all islands within the Caribbean basin). Justin has a B.Sc. in Marine Biology from the University of Maine and a Master's degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University. His love of birds would ultimately send him on a crash course with the Laboratory of Ornithology in Ithaca, NY. He works extensively with aerial insectivore species, specifically swallows and swifts, from northern Canada down through Argentina. He is the Vice President of BirdsCaribbean, and Managing Editor of the Journal of Caribbean Ornithology (JCO).



February 27: Dan Quinn, Biologist, FWC - SWFL Invasive Animals

Dan Quinn is the lead nonnative wildlife biologist for FWC in Southwest Florida. Originally from Kansas City, MO, he graduated with a B.S. in Biology from Truman State University and received his M.S. in Wildlife Conservation from the University of Georgia. He has worked and conducted ecological research domestically and abroad and has spent the last 7 years working in the field of wildlife conservation in the Southeastern United States. His current projects focus on priority invasive wildlife such as Nile Monitors, Tegus, and Pythons.



March 27: Roxanne Taylor, Land Steward, Lee County - State of the Slough

Roxanne Taylor is as she puts it: "The new Bob". Roxanne is the Slough's new Land Steward. She is responsible for the natural areas management of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, Six Mile North, and additional preserves. Roxanne has a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Central Florida and a Master's degree in Environmental Management from Portland State University. She is a Professional Wetland Scientist and a Certified Ecologist. Roxanne previously worked at the South Florida Water Management District for more than 10 years as an environmental analyst and project manager. She has experience in wetland enhancement, restoration, mitigation and creation.



April 24: Dr. Charles O'Connor - Florida's Incredible Prehistoric Animals

Dr. Charles O'Connor, Board Member and Education Director for the Friends will be our speaker in April. Dr. O'Connor is a native Floridian and an amateur paleontologist. He was an assistant in the Vertebrate Paleontology Laboratory at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, one of the premier Pleistocene fossil museums in the nation. He has received the Golden Apple Award, SW FL Audubon Educator of the Year Award, Ding Darling Conservation Award, and was a Lee County Environmental Teacher of Year for his classroom science activities and community environmental education work. He has taught community and school groups for over 20 years. There will be a large teaching collection of vertebrate fossils on display.

President's Notes

By Theresa Roake



Winter is in full swing at the Slough. The canopy is a little bit more open so wildlife is a little easier to spy with your little eye. On a walk this week I had a number of visitors ask if the trees are okay as many are bare. My reply with a smile: "It's just Old

Man Winter". When the temperature reaches the upper 70's or even 80's, it can be hard for our northern visitors to believe that it's winter.

Winter also means more visitors and more activities at the Slough. We hope to see you at all our Friends Gatherings. The first one is Wednesday, January 23rd at 7pm with Justin Proctor who will be talking to us about how to attract birds to our backyard. Staff has lined up some great programs as well. Please check out the new Abstract Art program with Heather Caldwell. I had the opportunity to participate in this program and had a blast. Speaking as someone lacking the artistic painting gene, it was a great new way to experience the Slough and create something unique.

Hope to see you on the trail soon.

Along the Boardwalk

Winter 2019

By Dotty Brown

The DRY SEASON of winter directs our attention to the shrinking depths of the ponds and Gator Lake. The shore birds walk and feed from the wider berms. Puddles form in the valleys of Ibis Marsh. Ibis dabble there for food. Did you see an Ibis in a group with some of its brown juvenile feathers? On a sunny warm day an alligator was on the close Gator Lake raft. An Anhinga with developing 'piano key' feathers sat in the brush close to the Gator Lake boardwalk eyeing its surroundings. A Black Crowned Night Heron stood quietly by shallow water ready to roil the water to attract some curious critters good for lunch! Spatterdock's yellow blooms brightened Otter Pond where we may again see the Limpkin nest.



WATCH and ENJOY

The dry season show has begun!

FOLLOW FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK
[FRIENDS OF SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE](#)



TWEET WITH FRIENDS
 @FriendsofSixMil



Hike the Trails at Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North

By Jason Boeckman
Conservation 20/20 Coordinator

In the summer of 2018, public access opened for the first time to visitors at Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North. This preserve is located directly north of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, providing a crucial hydrological link to improve water flow into the Slough from the north. The land that encompasses Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North historically functioned as the headwaters of the Six Mile Cypress Slough.

Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North was acquired between 2010 and 2011 using funds from Conservation 20/20, Lee County's environmentally sensitive land acquisition and management program.

The 1,219-acre preserve includes nearly 8 miles of marked hiking and equestrian trails through predominantly pine flatwoods, oak hammock and cypress swamps. The large size of the preserve and diverse communities make it an important area for wildlife.

Hiking can be enjoyed anytime of the year, although trails may be slightly wet or flooded in sections during the summer rainy season. Be sure to pack plenty water and wear a hat or sunscreen. There is some shade along the hiking trail.

A large-scale hydrological restoration was completed last year to rehydrate dry sections of the preserve and allow water to flow more naturally south into the Slough. The restoration was a joint project between Conservation 20/20, the South Florida Water Management District and the Florida Department of Transportation.

As a result of water displacement that occurred for the construction of roads and homes, more water started to flow north into the Orange River and surrounding residential communities. Engineers created a system of

flow ways and constructed a basin lake on the preserve to hold more water during the wet season. This restoration now allows water to flow more naturally south again through a system of culverts beneath State Route 82, which separates Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North from the Six Mile Cypress Slough.

An added benefit of the basin lake is that it also provides important wetland habitat for a variety of waterfowl, including wood storks, black-necked stilts and egrets, and sensitive wildlife species, such as the endangered Everglades snail kite.



Photo by Jason Boeckman

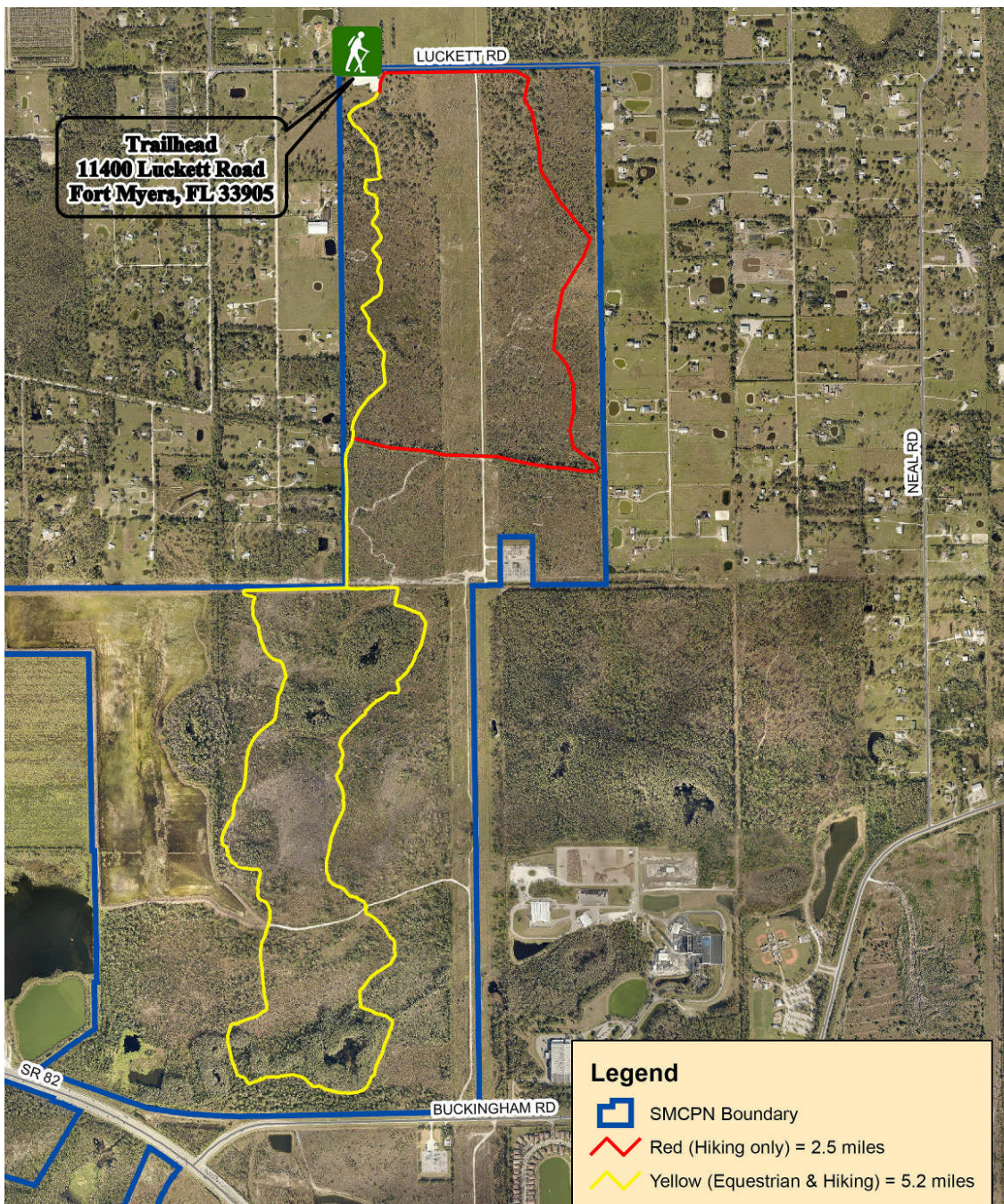
Additionally, the preserve includes a portion of an abandoned railroad grade that once transported military supplies to the former Buckingham Army Air Field during World War II. Although there are no remnant structures onsite at this preserve, visitors can tour remnant structures from the airfield base nearby at two separate Conservation 20/20 preserves: Buckingham Trails Preserve and Wild Turkey Strand Preserve.

(Article continues on Page 5.)

Hike the Trails at Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North (Cont'd)

The public entrance to Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North is located on the northeastern boundary of the preserve. The entrance provides a large parking area for vehicles and equestrian users. There is no cost for parking or entrance. The preserve does not include a restroom facility.

Directions: From Interstate 75 Exit 139, travel east on Lucket Road/County Highway-810 for 0.3 mile. Turn left to travel north on Country Lakes Drive for 1 mile. Turn right to travel east on Tice Street for 1 mile. Turn right to travel south on Staley Road for 1 mile. Turn left onto Lucket Road Extension to end at 11400 Lucket Road Extension, Fort Myers.



To learn more about the preserve, visit www.Conservation2020.org/preserves.

Leaping Lizards!

By Ben Shearer

Green anoles (*Anolis carolinensis*) are the only anole species native to the United States. The male is typified by a bright red dewlap and a bright lime green color. Here in Southwest Florida we also have a subspecies (*Anolis carolinensis seminolus*) that has a gray dewlap. Sometimes called American chameleons, green anoles are not members of the chameleon family at all, but rather they are members of the iguana family. While green anoles do change colors, from greens to browns and in some cases to blues, color change is caused by environmental conditions, stress, and competition, not by an adaptation to blend into its surroundings. Brown anoles (*Anolis sagrei*), first observed in the Florida Keys in 1887 and in Lee County in 1977, are native to the Bahamas and Cuba and indeed seem to be ubiquitous now in all Florida counties. The green anoles seem to be adapting to the introduction of their southern cousins by moving higher up into the trees (they are tree lizards to begin with) and by growing larger adhesive pads on their feet, which some theorize may also be an adaptation for hurricane survival.

Remember that when we stroll through the Slough, we are walking through green anole territories and they are very territorial. Male territories usually measure from 500 to 1,000 square feet: male territories are larger than female territories and larger anoles have larger territories. Female territories are most often completely within the boundaries of a male's territory and the males tend to linger inside the female's part of its



Photo by Barbara Shearer

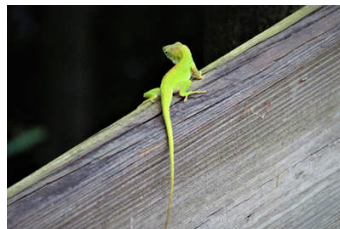


Photo by Barbara Shearer

territory. Males defend their boundaries against interlopers by bobbing their heads and inflating their bright-red dewlaps. Fights may en-

sue characterized by vicious biting about the head. Females are known to get into the act too. When the time is right, however, the male's head bobbing and dewlap presentation have quite another effect, creating a Beach Boys-like excitement in the female and a state of exhilarated anticipation, kind of like finally hearing the dinner bell after baling hay in the hot sun all day. The giddy female green anole lets the male bite her neck and mount her. The male, sporting two reproductive organs called hemipenes located inside his vent, turns them out and fertilizes her eggs, using his hemipenes alternately for subsequent couplings.

Each year the female green anole lays six to nine eggs, which are less than a quarter inch high, in clutches of one or two. She lays them in rotting wood or moist leaves in the hope that the sun will incubate them. That marks the end of all parenting. The gestation period is five to seven weeks, at which time, with luck, a juvenile anole weighing less than an ounce will emerge. Adults reach sexual maturity at 8 to 9 months and can grow from 4 to 8 inches in length, with their autotomic tails being half their length. If an anole's tail is detached, usually under duress, it continues to wiggle for a few minutes. It takes about 60 days for the tail to grow back.

Green anoles are opportunistic eaters—they'll eat about anything that will fit into their mouths. Snakes, birds and larger reptiles are their main predators, but fortunate green anoles could live to 8 years-old in the wild, although predation puts the average closer to 5 years. When you see a green anole don't think you're looking at just another leaping lizard. No, you're looking at a unique American wonder that survived a parentless youth and made it to walk the boardwalk.

SLOUGH PROGRAMS WINTER 2019



All About Alligators Saturdays, February 2, March 2 - 11:00 am -12:00 pm



Bird Walk Saturdays, Monthly Dates To Be Determined - 8:00-10:30 am



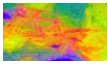
Friends Gatherings Wednesdays, January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24 – 6:30-8:30 pm



Full Moon Walk Saturday, January 19 - 6:00-7:30 pm, Monday February 18, 6:15-7:45 pm, Wednesday, March 20 7:30-9:00 pm, Saturday April 18 7:45-9:15 pm



Photo Contest Submissions for this year's contest through January 31



Slough Abstract Art Saturdays, January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20, May 18 – 11:00 am-1:00 pm



Slough Yoga Tuesdays, January 8-January 29, February 5-26, March 5-March 26, April 2-30 - 9:00-10:15 am



Guided Walk Procedures

Visitors planning to join the guided walks will need to arrive early. To enhance the visitors' experience, guided walks are limited to the first 20 people to check in, first come, first served (no groups of six or more). Check in for guided walks begins 30 minutes prior to the start at the entrance to the Boardwalk. The entire party must be present to sign up. Each guided walk lasts about 90 minutes and will cover three-quarters of a mile on a raised, fully accessible Boardwalk. Public guided walks are free with paid parking of \$1 per hour per vehicle. Groups of six or more should call (239) 533-7555 to arrange a group tour.

Guided Walk Schedule

April, November and December: Daily 9:30 am
 January-March: Daily 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 pm
 May-October: Wednesdays and 4th Saturday 9:30 am

What's New In Friends Corner

By Donna Cressman

Season is here! There are a number of **new** items in the store. All profits go to the Slough. Here's what's in store for you:

Books:

Ollie Finds a New Home, the Story of a Burrowing Owl in Cape Coral by Roseanne Pawelec. Children can learn about the lives of burrowing owls as well as receive some good life lessons. *Florida State Parks, a Complete Recreation Guide*. Learn what is available in our beautiful state parks, with maps and photos.

Hello Florida by Martha Day Zschock. Toddlers learn some fun things about our state.

Postcard Packs: Selection of our award-winning cards, **10 for \$1.00!**

Jewelry: Beautiful lightweight butterfly necklaces made of handpainted wood including Monarch and Eastern Tiger Swallowtail varieties.

Handy Gifts for Guests: Small flashlight with Ibis logo, easily fits in pocket or purse. Cell phone wristlets prevent losing the phone in the Slough or anywhere else. New coffee mugs and lanyards for cell phones are also available.

POTLUCK PICS

By Theresa Roake

A great time was had by all. Nathaniel Gienapp arrived early to help us transform the Interpretive Center into a holiday playground. Carolyn Babb distributed some fabulous door prizes and delicious food was consumed. And of course a party would not be complete without music. The Edison Strings played all the holiday favorites and even a rendition of *Sweet Caroline* in honor of Carolyn. Can't wait for next year. (Photos courtesy of my Iphone 5S; yes it still works.)



Edison Strings Perform Holiday Classics



Best Buds Kathleen Cadle & Bruce Bunch



Don & Claudia Stohler Toast

Renewing Members :
Thank you for
your continued support!

Kathleen Cadle	Matt & CC Mattingly
Arlene Creeden	Dave Minnick
Tim Denger	Gretchen Monti
Mary Denison	Kris & Bob Nelson
Eileen Fonferko	Alice Oldford
Suzanne Frechette	Stacy Prater
Brian & Bonnie Hogan	Alouise Skehan Pyle
Richard & Andrea Houle	Cathy & Walter Sedlacek
Brenda Hurd	Barbara & Ben Shearer
Joseph & Kathy Imler	Mark Smith
Ward & Norah Johnson	Steve & Judith Smith
Terri Krass	Steve & Margaret Ulrich
	Mary Lou Weddle

Welcome New Members!

Bill Doolin
 Jim Duff
 Sylvia and Mike Hermreck
 Jose Juves
 Tom Mahoney and Madeline
 Maxeiner
 Sara Maliva
 Richard Martinez
 David and Nancy Rummel
 Theresa Pote
 Gayle Sheets

Additional Donations
Gratefully Received:

David Flatten in honor of
Kay Flatten

In Memory of:
Craig Campbell
Debbie Horan



JOIN FRIENDS TODAY!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

In addition I would like to contribute _____

\$ _____ additional for the Friends use at
the Slough.

TOTAL\$ _____

Membership Level (Please Check One)

- Student (\$10)
- Individual (\$25)
- Family (\$50)
- Benefactor (\$100-\$249)
- Patron (\$250+) - *

* Includes parking sticker for qualifying Lee County
Facilities if requested.

HOW CAN YOU HELP WITH YOUR TIME?
I AM INTERESTED IN HELPING WITH:

Mail to Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough, 7791 Penzance Blvd, Fort Myers. FL 33966

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Corp. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity. Registration Number CH13822 Florida
Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is a not-for-profit advocacy and support organization committed to preserving, protecting and promoting Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve for future generations through education and community partnerships, working together with Lee County and South Florida Water Management District. The Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is a critical wetland system having positive value in inspiring and educating its visitors about wetlands and their roles in preserving the environment and local quality of life. Friends' vision is to maintain the Preserve's positive community influence in perpetuity.