



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

January 2015

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DEADLINE APPROACHES FOR PHOTO CONTEST SUBMITTAL

TIME IS FLYING — YOU NEED TO SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE PHOTO CONTEST.

First prize photos in all categories will be awarded a one year parking sticker at the Lee County Parks and Boat Ramps. (Locations can be found at www.leeparks.org.) Second and third place photos will receive a certificate for merchandise in the Friends Corner Store at the Interpretive Center.

The rules and entry information are available at the Interpretive Center at the Slough and online at www.sloughpreserve.org.

Winners will be notified by February 14, 2015 and awards will be presented at a Photo Contest Celebration to be held at the Slough Interpretive Center at 10:30 am on February 28, 2015. Winning photos will be displayed for 2015 at the Slough Interpretive Center.

Entries will be accepted until 3:00 pm Saturday, January 31, 2015 at the Interpretive Center at the Slough, 7791 Penzance Blvd. in Fort Myers. If there are any questions, please call the Friends at 239-533-7557.



Pot Luck Fun
See Page Seven
Photo Tim Dengler

SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED FOR FRIENDS 2015 GATHERINGS

A wide range of topics will be covered at the 2015 Gatherings of Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. Topics range from the environment and quality of life to sustainability and responsibility. We will hear about the Slough and get tips for photographing the wonders it contains. Please join us.

January 28—Geoff Coe, Fort Myers Photographer

February 25—John Kiseda, Sustainability Educator

March 25—Robert Repenning, Land Stewardship Manager, Lee County

April 22—Nicole Johnson, Director of Governmental Relations for the Conservancy of Southwest Florida

All programs are free and open to the public. However, seating is limited. Please contact the Friends to reserve a seat prior to the day before the program at sloughconnections@gmail.com or (239) 533-7557.

Programs are scheduled for 7:00 pm at the Interpretive Center, Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, 7751 Penzance Blvd in Fort Myers.



Photographers getting that one perfect shot for the contest at the Slough

FRIENDS 2015 GATHERINGS SPEAKERS

Geoff Coe, a Fort Myers based photographer and one of the judges for the Friends Photography contest, will be the speaker at the Friends Gathering at 7 pm, Wednesday, January 28, 2015.

Geoff specializes in fine art images of birds and their natural habitats and behaviors. All of his subjects are photographed in the wild, in locations up and down the US East Coast, without the use of bird calls, lures, or baiting. Many of his landscape and avian images are photographed from his 14-foot kayak.

Geoff has been selling his work at outdoor art festivals throughout Florida and the northeast United States since 2008. His work is in private collections in 47 states, Germany, and the UK. He also offers half-day and full-day photo workshops, and is a sought-after speaker.



John Kiseda will be the speaker for the February 25, 2015 Friends Gathering. A Florida resident since 1990, John attended Central Michigan University in their Outdoor/Environmental Education Program. Prior to moving to Southwest Florida, John served in various teaching and director positions at a number of school-based outdoor education centers and private nature centers in the mid-west. John has received the 1999 Audubon Society of Southwest Florida: Conservation Award for Education, was a finalist for the 1994 State of Florida: Governor's Environmental Education Award, and earned the 1993 National Association of Counties: Environmental Education Achievement Award.



John recently retired as Sustainability-Education Coordinator for Lee County Parks and Recreation, where he established department environmental policies and trained staff and volunteers to provide educational programs for the general public. John was responsible for creating the educational and volunteer programs at both The Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve and Manatee Park in Lee County. He established the Eco Living Center at Rutenberg Park, and created the community oriented Mangrove Gathering Eco Cafes.

John promotes environmental awareness of the Southwest Florida bio-region by presenting community speaking engagements, informational workshops and events, and training sessions for educators and the public at large. John is a member of The International Ecotourism Society, an associate member of The Institute for Earth Education, and a habitat steward for The National Wildlife Federation. John has also completed training with the National Association for Interpretation as a Certified Interpretive Guide, and with the Florida Master Naturalist Program's Coastal Systems and Freshwater Wetlands Modules.

Bob Repenning, Land Steward Coordinator for Lee County Parks and Recreation, will be the speaker at the March 25, 2015 Friends Annual Meeting.

Bob received a Bachelor's of Science Degree from Stockton State College in New Jersey and a Master's of Forest Resources and Conservation from the University of Florida. Mr. Repenning has studied human impact on wildlife communities and worked for the State of Florida as a land manager for 20 years. He was the manager of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic and State Buffer Preserves managing lands in Sarasota, Charlotte and Lee Counties. His duties included the preparation and review of land acquisition projects, land management of acquired lands, and aquatic preserves. He has planned and overseen the construction of trail systems and public access facilities to natural areas. He is currently the Land Stewardship Coordinator for Six Mile Cypress Preserve and Lakes Park in Lee County.



FRIENDS 2015 SPEAKERS (CONTINUED)

The speaker for the Friends April 22, 2015 gathering will be Nicole Johnson, the Director of Governmental Relations for the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. Nicole will present her program on *ECO-nomics – Understanding the Relationship Between our Environment, Economy and Quality of Life*.

A native of Jacksonville, Illinois, Nicole received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Carroll University in Waukesha, WI. Her degree consisted of a double major in Physical Geography and Psychology. Nicole continued her education at the University of Illinois at Springfield, where she received a Masters of Arts degree in Environmental Studies, with a specialized focus on land use planning. After graduation, Nicole worked for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, where she assisted in implementation of the Illinois Emissions Reduction Market System, through creating and presenting educational seminars on the system.



In 1997, Nicole accepted a position at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, as the Environmental Policy Specialist. Since that time, she has been promoted and currently holds the position of Director of Governmental Relations, responsible for the Conservancy's growth management program. As the Conservancy's spokesperson for policy issues related to growth management she testifies at local, regional, and state public hearings. Nicole has worked on local issues, such as the Collier County Rural Lands Stewardship Area, the Hendry County Rural and Agricultural Lands Study and the Lee County Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource Area Overlay.

FRIENDS EXCURSIONS CONTINUE IN 2015

By Janet Bunch

The Friends fieldtrip excursions continue in 2015. Specifics will be provided at the time of sign-up, which as usual will be one month prior to each trip. Maximum number of participants remains 12, and it's first come, first served on each one. When sign-up is opened, information on degree of difficulty, length of trip, requested attire and any other pertinent information needed by participants, will be provided.

People who want to be on the email list for the individual field trips MUST contact me via email at janetbunch@yahoo.com. Registration starts over each season, so just because you were on the list last year, doesn't mean I know that you are still interested. This way we avoid sending unnecessary notifications to folks who have no interest or aren't around for the trips. Any questions? Contact me at the above email.

Tuesday, January 20—Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area

Our own fabulous Bob Repenning has graciously agreed to lead us on a walking tour of a section of the Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area in Charlotte County. This is a textbook illustration of a completely restored pine flatwoods ecosystem, and if we're REALLY lucky, we might even get a sighting of the red cockaded woodpeckers that make their home there.



Giant Frigate Birds roosting in the Estero Bay Preserve. Photo from the October 2014 Friends field trip

Tuesday, February 17—Wild Turkey Strand

Wild Turkey Strand Preserve is another of the WWII sites that have artifacts left from that period. It also is located within the Lee County Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource area. Land Steward Laura Greeno will be able to talk to us about one of the Preserves where our drinking water actually comes from. This is one of C2020's most beautiful preserves, so this will be a great outing.

Tuesday, March 10-Fort Myers downtown walking tour

We'll be taking advantage of a downtown walking tour, provided by TrueTours, of the history of Fort Myers. This will be good information, some of which might be new to some of us and will be fun to boot. There will be a \$12 fee for this one, but we are each being given a paper fan (to keep us cool) that has coupons for discounts to some of the downtown restaurants. This tour is about an hour and a half, from 10:30 until noon.

Meander Musings

By Jeff Montgomery

One of the interesting observations to be made at this time of year regards the phenomenon of leaf drop. While our slough is nowhere near as denuded as the north is, there is a significant loss of canopy at this time of year. Our birder friends are grateful for this as they struggle to identify the LBJs (little brown jobs) that flit nervously in the treetops. Some find the loss of leaves to be depressing, a sign of death. Similarly, the emergence of new leaves in the spring serves as a metaphor for rebirth and renewal. But, have any of us really considered this event and the significance it has on arboreal ecology?

Through the fog of some 45 years since I was in college, I vaguely recalled that leaf drop was triggered by the length of the day. Since I often dozed through my botany courses, I can't be sure if we actually were taught that or my memory is faulty. At any rate, it does not appear that this is true. Leaf drop can be triggered by any number of events; drought, flooding, cold, insect attack, viruses, etc., but NOT by the length of the day. These are the reasons we see maples in the slough that look like they are in fall mode, while others only a few feet away are in spring mode with new tender growth.



**Bald Cypress
Ibis Marsh**

Leaves are very expensive structures for plants to maintain. While they are the only source of food for the plant, they are subject to attack from insects and weather and plants have to expend a great deal of their sugar resources to repair and keep them healthy. When the repair costs get too great, the plant builds a layer of scar tissue called an abscissa to allow the petioles to separate from the branch. The chlorophyll is deconstructed and stored in the roots, revealing the colorful carotenes and phycoerythrins that were masked by the green chlorophyll to be revealed as fall foliage.

In doing this, the deciduous trees extend their range further north or into higher elevations where they could not survive continuous subfreezing temperatures. In the case of our bald cypress trees, leaf drop allows them to survive the dry season without desiccation. The phenomenon is not limited to trees; look at how many of our vines and bushes shed their leaves at this time of year. We are currently seeing the golden polypody drop its leaves. Even our "live" oaks shed a significant amount of their foliage this time of year.

Rather than finding leaf drop to be depressing, we should instead look at it as another remarkable adaptation that plants have evolved to create maximum gain and minimal risk for themselves.



Golden Polypody



Bur Marigolds

Along the Winter 2014 Boardwalk

by Dotty Brown

Trees bare of needles or leaves open the canopy to let sunlight reach the understory. Ferns push fiddleheads of new growth. Shrubs and wildflowers sprout leaves and buds for new bloom. Nocturnal predators like owls, bats and night herons more easily spot the movements of their favorite prey like scurrying mice, hopping rabbits, crayfish, crabs and insects. The low arch of the sun's course across the winter sky lengthens shadows into picturesque designs not seen in another season. Shafts of sunlight creep into crevices and under the boardwalk planks.

A leaden grey sky enhances the gold of the Bur marigold's blooms that dot the banks of Gator Lake and Otter Pond. The slough vegetation takes on deep color, unsaturated by the sun's reflections; a photographer's delight, an artist's dream for painting on canvas! The diverse plumage of migrating birds, particularly warblers, challenges the ornithologists.

Lengthening daylight hours energize the urge for reproduction. The rookery is soon the site of intense nesting activity.

Come, enjoy the wonder and awe and see it on the faces of those who visit the seasonal displays.



UPCOMING SLOUGH PROGRAMS



All About Alligators Saturdays, January 3, February 7 and March 7, 2015, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

Amazing Bladderwort Tuesdays, January 6 and 20, 2015, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm



Basket Making Class Saturday, April 18, 2015, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Drawing Inspiration First and third Fridays, January 2 and 16, February 6 and 20, March 6 and 20 and April 3 and 17, 2015, 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Friends Gathering Wednesdays, January 28, February 25, March 25 and April 22, 2015 at 7:00 pm
Speakers See Page Two

Full Moon Walk Saturday, January 3 at 5:45 pm, Tuesday, February 3 at 6:00 pm, Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30 pm and Friday, April 3, 2015 at 7:45 pm

Primitive Cordage, Saturday March 14, 2015, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Primitive Plants Saturday, May 9, 2015, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm



Primitive Shelter Saturday, January 10, 2015, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm



Skull ID 101 Tuesdays, January 13 and 27, 2015, 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm



Slough Yoga Session Tuesdays, January 6-27, February 3-24, March 3-31 and April 7-28, 2015, 9:00 am to 10:15 am

Youth Bird Walk Second Saturdays, January 10, February 14, March 14, and April 11, 2015 8:00 am to 10:30 am



Reservations are required for most programs. There are also fees for some of the programs. Register online at leeparks.org or by calling Lee County Parks and Recreation at (239) 533-7440 or (239) 533-7275

New Guided Walk Procedures

Visitors planning to join the daily and twice daily 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 walk begins 30 minutes prior to the start at the entrance to the boardwalk. The entire party must be present at the Trail Host Station to sign up. Each guided walk lasts about 90 minutes and will cover three-quarters of a mile on a raised, fully-accessible boardwalk trail.

Guided Walk Schedule

January-March: Daily - 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
May-October: Wednesdays only - 9:30 a.m.
April, November and December: Daily - 9:30 a.m.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!

Dr. & Mrs. William B. Akerly
Gretchen Barsness
Marlin Berkland
Bill Black C
Tom & Bev Brown
Richard Burwell
Kim Coopridner
Susan Crawford & Jeff Rosemann
Michael & Nancy Frazier
Robin Gardner
Brian & Bonnie Hogan
Lucy Jacoby
Ward & Norah Johnson
Garn Mennell C
Pay Moyer
Charles O'Connor
Nancy Olson
Wiley & Betty Parker C
Steve & Theresa Roake
Elizabeth Schallenberg C
Walter & Cathy Sedlacek C
Jean & Bill Scholz
Vivian Seelie
Mark Smith
Steven Smith
Dorit Solomon
Mary Lou Weddle

C" denotes Charter Member, persons who were first year members of the Friends.

Welcome New Members

Lin Brandis
Barbara Bonday
Mike & Linda Daniels
Jill Erickson
Jane Grethel
Lee Kennan
Katherine Licopoli
Bettejane McCracken
Will & Marcia O'Hara

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Dotty Brown
Janet & Bruce Bunch
Toby Clark
Shannon Daniels
GE Matching Grant
Wiley & Betty Parker
The Rempalas
Schwab Charitable Trust
Heather Weber

Continued Vigilance Required on Proposition 1 Funds

By Janet Bunch

In November, Proposition 1 passed with more than 75 percent of the vote, assuring funding for acquiring and protecting Florida's environmentally sensitive areas.

In December, legislators in the majority party began talking about using Proposition 1 funds for non-conservation purposes.

Perhaps this should come as no surprise, given that the legislature cut environmental spending from \$300 million annually to less than \$9 million as recently as 2012. Fortunately, the same coalition of nature organizations that got Proposition 1 on the ballot will be monitoring the situation closely. Eternal vigilance is the price of environmental progress in Florida.

Individuals can also play a role in assuring that Proposition 1 funds are not diverted to non-environmental uses. Google your way to your state senator and representative's email address. Send them a note before the March legislative session begins. Let them know you support Proposition 1 and expect them to use the funds for the reason stated in the amendment—restoring and protecting, rivers, lakes, springs, and natural lands.

With Conservation 2020 in Lee County, we've already seen politicians divert funds collected for environmental uses to the general fund. Let's not let it happen on a statewide basis after the voters have so clearly spoken.

Friends Fund Replacement of Canvas Shelter at Wood Duck Pond



Before and After Pictures of the Canvas Shelter at Wood Duck Pond



SHOP AT **FRIENDS CORNER** in the **Interpretive Center** or on line at

www.friendscorner.qbstores.com

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Hi to all of the Friends

Another new year. Happy New Year to all.

It was a busy year for the Friends. Our membership is growing and the support is amazing. Thanks to the wonderful support of members and donations we were able to provide thousands of dollars in support to the Slough and staff this year.



A really obvious example is the new shelter at Wood Duck Pond. I've included pictures of the new canvas shade. The old shelter was damaged and drooping. Replacement costs were in excess of three thousand dollars. This was something that just wasn't in the Lee County budget coffers.

We again paid for twelve campers to go to camp and provided the summer intern with a small stipend for her help.

Our annual report in March will have a list of all that was accomplished in 2014.

Now is the time to get those pictures in for the contest. We have already gotten quite a few and the completion is again going to be fierce. One of the judges is the speaker for the January meeting. Maybe he can give you a few tips on what they are looking for in a winner. I haven't picked out mine for the staff category yet.

A big focus this year has been the store, Friends Corner. It's a way to support the Slough from anywhere. We all need a new shirt or hat! Please shop at our store or online as a way of supporting the Slough. All of the profits go towards things like camp and canvas.

See you in the Slough. CB

Potluck Potshots



Advisory Board

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Cadkin Foundation

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



TWEET WITH FRIENDS
@FriendsofSixMil



JOIN FRIENDS TODAY!

Membership Level (Please Check One)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

- Student (\$10)
- Individual (\$20)
- Contributing (\$50)
- Supporting (\$100)
- Associate (\$250) - 1
- Sustaining (\$500) - 1, 2
- Corporate Sponsor (\$500) - 1, 2
- Patron (\$1,000) - 1, 2, 3

- 1 - includes parking sticker for 18 Lee Co. Facilities.
- 2 - includes choice of wet walk or moon walk for ten guests.
- 3 - includes table or rocking chair naming opportunity

In addition I would like to contribute

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

TOTAL\$ _____

**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 web site: www.sloughpreserve.org Phone 239-533-7557 Online store: friendscorner.qbstores.com

Newsletter email: sloughconnections@gmail.com

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.

**We Know Who You Are:)
Friends renewing their membership need only send a check noted for membership. Please include a note if there is a change in your email address. It is not necessary to fill out a new membership form. Thank you for all of your support.**

**QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, REQUESTS TO
sloughconnections@gmail.com**

**Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
7791 Penzance Blvd.
Fort Myers, Florida 33966**