



January 2016

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DR. EVERHAM TO DISCUSS MOSQUITO SPRAYING IMPACT

Dr. Win Everham, Associate Professor and Chair of the Division of Ecological and Social Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University will be the speaker at the Friends Gathering at 7 p.m., Wednesday, January 27, 2016.

His presentation will address the consequences of mosquito insecticide on non-mosquito species.

Dr. Everham teaches field-based ecology courses, including General Ecology, and Environmental Biology, a graduate level course in Advanced Ecology, Caribbean Environments, and African Environments courses, and the science methods course, Scientific Process. Dr. Everham's research interests are in forest ecology, particularly the response of forest ecosystems to disturbance. This work has included modeling landscape climate patterns in the Adirondack Mountains, hurricane disturbance dynamics in the Caribbean, old field and fire succession in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the impacts of exotic invasion and exotic removal in forested wetlands of Florida, fire ecology in exotic infested systems, and the ecosystems in southwest Florida that were disturbed by hurricanes Charlie and Wilma.



Since arriving in Florida in 1996, Dr. Everham has served in a variety of capacities on community organizations including Chairman of the Estero Bay Agency on Bay Management, member of the Fort Myers Beach Marine Resources Task Force, member of the Conservancy of Southwest Florida Environmental Education Committee, and member of the Institute for Food and Agriculture Immokalee Field Station Agroecology Advisory Board. Currently he is a Board Member for the Calusa Nature Center, and Co-President of the Southwest Florida Council for Environment Education.

The event is free and open to the public, however, **space is limited**. For reservations please email carolyn_babb08@comcast.net or phone the Friends at (239) 533-7557 and leave a message.



PHOTO CONTEST DEADLINE JANUARY 31

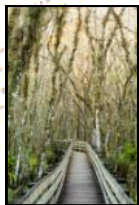
Entries for the Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve annual photo are due this month. Photographers may submit three photos until January 31, 2016, at 3:30 p.m. Prizes will be awarded at a reception at the Interpretive Center February 27, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. There are five categories: Animals, Plants, Open (photos other than animals and plants), Altered and a Youth category (Ages 17 and under). Each photographer may submit three photos for one \$10.00 entry fee.

Top prize in each category provided by Lee County Parks and Recreation is a one year Lee County Parking Sticker good at 18 parks and boat ramps in Lee County. Second and third place winners will receive gift certificates good for purchases in the Friends Corner Shop at the Interpretive Center at the Slough.

Award winners will be notified by February 14, 2016.

Winning photographs and videos will be on display at the Slough Interpretive Center. Photo are also used for post-cards sold at the Friends Corner and for advertising and educational purposes.

If there are any questions please check the website at www.sloughpreserve.org or call the Friends at (239) 533-7557 and leave a message.



Speakers Scheduled for 2016



January 27, 2016 - Dr. Wyn Everham, Associate Professor and Chair of the Division of Ecological and Social Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University will be the speaker at the Friends Gathering at 7 p.m. Wednesday, January 27.

His presentation will address the consequences of mosquito insecticide on non-mosquito species.

February 24, 2016 - Dr. Serge Thomas, Assistant Professor of Environmental Science at Florida Gulf Coast University. Dr. Thomas is an assistant professor and program leader for environmental studies within the department of marine and ecological sciences at FGCU. Dr. Thomas specializes in the ecological study of manmade and natural shallow tropical aquatic ecosystems in southwest Florida.

His presentation will focus on the biology of retention ponds.



March 23, 2016 - Robert Repenning, Land stewardship coordinator for Lee County, Florida Mr. Repenning will be giving his State of the Slough 2016 address with a focus on “Thirty Years of Resource Management in the Slough.”



Mr. Repenning was born in Chicago and moved to southern New Jersey when he was five. He has been interested in nature as far back as he remembers. His first naturalist job was at 14 as a nature camp counselor. After getting a degree in biology from Stockton State College in New Jersey he moved to Gainesville, Florida where he worked five years for various agencies and companies studying the environment. He obtained a Master’s degree in Wildlife Conservation from the University of Florida and worked for the University as a researcher until moving to Cape Coral in 1985 to manage coastal waters and lands for 20 years with the State of Florida. He was instrumental in the preservation and restoration of thousands of

acres of coastal land in Lee and Charlotte Counties.

He has worked for Lee County for eight years as a natural resource manager applying his years of experience to the management of the Six Mile Cypress Slough on a shoestring budget. He also provides valuable input on environmental issues at Lakes Park and other Parks and Recreation sites throughout the County. The slough has increased in size from 2200 acres to 3500 acres since he arrived. Bob serves on the education committee of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council and has two grown children, both of whom work with animals.

April 27, 2016 – Alexis Horn, Sierra Club Panther Habitat Campaign Coordinator Ms. Horn, a native Floridian, has worked in the environmental field for over ten years. She has worked as an endangered species biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, receiving the Employee of the Year Award for proactive work. She has also been an adjunct professor of biology and environmental science and ran the Florida Panther Campaign for the national Sierra Club.



Friends Schedule Three 2016 Excursions

The Friends trips continue into 2016 with the exciting destinations listed below. So far our trips to CREW for a wildflower walk and to Galt Preserve with Ranger Mickey Miller were outstanding. Transportation will still be in the official Friends slough van, driven by Bruce Bunch, and Friends members, Jeff Montgomery and Suzanne Frechette, also driving if needed.

Check out the following trips and reservation information:

Sat., Jan 2: 9 a.m. Clinic for the Rehabilitation Of Wildlife. There will be a behind-the-scenes tour of the facility on Sanibel Island and a chance to learn about the services they provide to injured wildlife in our area. There is a \$20/person fee for this adventure.

February 16: 9 a.m. Gordon River Greenway in Naples. Our guide will be Alec Sulecki from Conservation Collier. The Greenway ties together a water quality project on the Gordon River, Freedom Park, and a wonderful multi-use pathway of a couple miles. Many spiders might be seen on this jaunt!

March 15: 9 a.m. - noon. Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area with Bob Repenning. This is a reprise of last year's wildly successful adventure, with registration priority going to those who did not get to go last year.

As is usual on these trips, this article constitutes the ONLY official notification of the complete schedule. Folks who are interested in the field trips must email Janet Bunch at janetbunch@yahoo.com directly so she can put you on her email list. Registration for the individual trips opens a month in advance of each trip.

When registration for each trip opens, complete details of trip length and difficulty, gear and clothing recommendations, and any other information will be emailed to those on the excursion list. Maximum number of participants on each trip is 12, which insures that everyone has a good experience. Janet keeps a wait list but since cancellations are at the last minute, so are calls to those on the wait list.

PLEASE DO NOT SCHEDULE OTHER ACTIVITIES TO FOLLOW AFTER THESE FIELD TRIPS! Return time is not scheduled or predictable. If you have any questions, please call Janet at 239-691-3251.

Buckeye Butterfly at
Galt Preserve



Ranger Mickey Miller



Wildflowers at CREW

Meander Mistletoe Musings

By Jeff Montgomery

Late Fall is the time when the foliage in the Slough thins out and we can get a better look at the epiphytes and warblers. Since we are in the holiday season, what better time to talk about mistletoe? There are about 1300 species of mistletoe worldwide, but only one in Florida - American or oak mistletoe (*Phoradendron serotinum*). The plant is a hemiparasite, meaning that it is a functional parasite most of the time, but can also manufacture its own food using its own chlorophyll. It drills into the host plant with modified roots and literally sucks the water and nutrients out of the host. Eventually, the plant will kill off the end of the branch it sits on and severe infestations can kill the entire tree.

The plants can grow into spherical colonies known as “witches brooms” that are visible as green globes in the naked host trees at this time of the year. These growths play host to many different species of birds and small mammals. The white berries, which are toxic to humans, are a favorite food of birds. Each berry contains a single sticky seed, which adheres to the birds' bills and feathers. When the birds come to roost at night, they rub off the seed onto the branches, planting the seeds on their roosts. Since



Mistletoe at Otter Pond

the roosts were often covered with bird droppings, the plant's name is derived from the Anglo Saxon words for “dung stick”, a reference to where the plant could be found.

So, how did a ruthless parasite with toxic fruit and “witches brooms” come to be associated with the season of giving and good will towards all? The answer can be found among the ancient Druids of the British Isles. Since the mistletoe was green when the rest of the forest was “dead” and the plant grew high in the trees, closer to heaven, it was considered to be sacred and symbolic of the promise of spring to come in the dead of winter. On the sixth day of the moon, Druid priests would climb an oak, cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle, sacrifice two white bulls and create an elixir to guarantee long life and fertility. Long after Britain converted to Christianity, mistletoe remained a sacred plant despite the church's efforts to stamp it out.

The custom of kissing under the mistletoe is our present-day reflection of the ancient druidic worship of the plant. The promise of fertility and the coming of spring explains the tie to the new year and its celebration. May your new year be happy and fruitful.

Along the Winter's Boardwalk

by Dotty Brown

“The cormorants are back!” someone exclaimed excitedly. There the cormorants were on the raft nearest the amphitheater! Each year we welcome back our winter bird families just like we welcome our human snow birds. Knowing their names makes them all the more a part of our Slough family. The oven bird has been seen along with many of the warblers, the kingfisher, the diving pied-billed grebe... now you see him...now you don't...and where will s/he appear again? The rookery becomes actively occupied. Great egrets, anhingas, white ibis share the rookery nesting season. Bring binoculars to closely observe the adults teaching their young to fly, bathe, and catch their own first meal.

The open canopy of the understory during the short daytime winter days brings sunshine to the understory vegetation. The ferns produce their fiddlehead shoots. Iris produce their leaves to prepare the show of bloom. Acorn buried by the squirrels that have not been found for their lunch may germinate and give us a new oak tree.



COME! VISIT THE SEASONAL CHANGES IN THIS WONDERLAND!

2016 SLOUGH WINTER PROGRAMS

All About Alligators Saturdays, January 2, February 6, March 5, and April 2 - 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Drawing Inspiration: Postcards from the Slough Fridays, January 1 and 15, February 5 and 19, March 4 and 18 and April 1 and 15 - 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Family Play and the Earth Workshop Saturdays, January 30 and March 26 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Florida's Felines Saturday, February 13 - 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Friends of the Slough Gatherings Wednesdays, January 27, February 24, March 23, April 27 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Full Moon Walk Saturday, January 23 - 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., Monday, February 22 - 6:30 - 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 22 - 7:45 - 9:15 p.m., Thursday, April 21 - 8:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Native Plant Stroll Tuesdays, February 9, March 8, and April 12 - 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Photo Contest Entry submittal through January 31

Skull ID 101 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, January 12 - March 22 - 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Slough Yoga Tuesdays, January 5 - January 26, February 2 - 23, March 1 - 29, April 5 - 26 - 9:00 - 10:15 a.m.

Southwest Florida Butterflies Saturdays, January 16, February 20 and March 19 - 11:00 - 12:00 p.m.

Youth Bird Walk Saturdays, January 9, February 20, March 12 and April 9 - 8:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Reservations and fees may be required for programs.

Register online at www.LeeParks.org or by calling

Lee County Parks and Recreation at

(239) 533-7440 or (239) 533-7275

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. 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 a.m.

January-March: Daily - 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

May-October: Wednesdays only - 9:30 a.m.

POT LUCK FRIENDS



The Edison Strings



Youngest Friend Nathaniel



Friends enjoying friends



**What's a potluck without
Gator Jell-O Jigglers?**



Lining up for the feast



**Special cake for
Heather's birthday**



Potluck prizes always a treat



Potluck prize winner Neil

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!

Barbara Bonday
Brenda Brooks
Tom and Bev Brown
Scott Cooper
Kitty Engels
Michael and Nancy Frazier
Krekel Green
Brian and Bonnie Hogan
Richard and Andrea Houle
Ward and Norah Johnson
Gretchen and Bill McCaw
Garn Mennell C
Gretchen Monti
Will and Marcia O'Hara
Nancy Olson
Wiley and Betty Parker
Walter and Cathy Sedlacek C
Mark Smith
Steven Smith

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

Welcome New Members

Kenneth and Carol Boyd
Arlene Creeden
Sharon Desrosiers
Jill Heffron

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Alan and Jackie Cadkin -
honoring Heather Gienapp
Scott Cooper
Kitty Engels
Richard and Andrea Houle
Garn Mennell
Pelican Preserve
Walter and Cathy Sedlacek
Mark Smith

FRIENDS CORNER STOCKED FOR THE SEASON

By Theresa Roake

Friends Corner is ready for the upcoming "Season". The bookshelves have been restocked and there are some great new titles. Carolyn Babb has found some wonderful children's books. *Moonlight Animals* by Elizabeth Golding has some great information about creatures that are active at night. It even includes a "flashlight" to help children locate animals in the pictures. In addition, there are woodland creature Christmas ornaments and some new jewelry as well. Denim shirt inventory has been replenished. You can even buy a replica of the beautiful new artwork on the exterior of the Slough's Interpretive Center.

Come in and check out the new merchandise and make a purchase to help the Slough.



SLOUGH INSPIRES ARTISTS

Friends member Suzanne Frechette is currently guiding a group of artists in a sketching class that meets at the Slough twice a month. Their work is a result of the inspirations they have received while drawing at the Slough. The artists have agreed to let the Friends use some of their drawings on cards that will be for sale in the Friends Corner.



Original Artwork by
Susan Beavers



Original Artwork by
Suzanne Frechette



Original Artwork by
Susan Handke

Advisory Board

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Cadkin Foundation

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast University

Carol Newcomb-Jones

Wiley M Parker, A.I.A.
Parker./Mudgett/Smith
Architects, Inc.

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**Parks and Recreation
Liaison**

Heather Gienapp, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve

Connections Staff

Carolyn Babb, Editor

Bruce Bunch, Copy Editor

**Slough Commercial Aired on
Local Television Stations**

Fort Myers area television viewers may have seen the public announcement funded by the Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve for the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve this summer. A 30 second public announcement highlighting all the wonders of the Slough was produced at the beginning of the summer and was aired over 200 times in the months of October and November. Often there will be visitors in the Interpretive Center who say they have lived in the area for a long time and didn't know about the Slough or the Interpretive Center. The announcement is designed to inform the area residents of the Slough, the hours of visitation and the possible sightings if they visit. After the initial cost to film and narrate the commercial it is being aired at no charge to Lee County or to the Friends.



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Happy New Year to all of the Friends. I hope that your 2015 ended great and the new year is starting even better.



The "season" is off and running at the Slough. There were a lot of German and French Canadian visitors this summer and that seems to be the same so far this winter. It already seems so busy!

On my morning walk recently I was able to show a non-English speaking visitor a black crowned night heron waiting patiently for a photo opportunity to occur. The German visitor was able to say thank you in English and point out the fact that he had goose bumps on his arms. It really made my day. Just like WOW at the spotting scope is the same in any language, so are goose bumps.

We already have photo contest entries from Germany and England. If you haven't sent in your photos yet, be sure to get them selected and sent. The competition is stiff but you never know what the judges might like this year!

See you in the Slough. CB

Great Blue Heron Picnic Shelter Readied for Season



Lee County Parks and Recreation painters have spruced up the Great Blue Heron Picnic shelter at the Slough parking lot. The shelter is almost eight years old and was showing some fading from the Florida weather. It was one of the items that the Friends helped fund at the time of the construction of the Interpretive Center.



FOLLOW FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK

**FRIENDS OF SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH
PRESERVE**



TWEET WITH FRIENDS

@FriendsofSixMil



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 (\$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

**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

2016 FRIENDS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

You are cordially invited to submit your best pictures to the sixth annual Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve photography contest. This event is an opportunity for you to share your beautiful views of this very special natural area and its *native* wild-life.

Mail (or drop off) your photo(s), entry form, and entry fee (\$10 per photographer) to Six Mile Slough Preserve Photo Contest, 7791 Penzance Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33966, between November 1, 2015 and January 31, 2016 (contest closes at 3:30 p.m.

The contest is open to amateur photographers only (may not possess a professional photographer tax identification number for the sale of photographs).

Photos must have been taken at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

The contest is not open to Friends' Board members, the contest judges, or the staff of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

Each contestant may submit up to **three photos**. Photos may be submitted in any of the categories below:

Plants

Animals (including insects)

Open (any photo that does not belong in one of the above categories)

Youth (Age 17 and under)

Altered Images (Plants, Animals, or Open)

Permitted Modifications (for categories 1-4, above)

- Red-eye removal and spot editing
- Use of filters to sharpen, soften, blur, despeckle, or remove noise
- Use of corrective functions to improve the natural appearance of the image, such as levels, contrast, brightness, curves, intensity, tone, hue, saturation, lightness, value, color balance, and tint.
- Judges reserve the right to reassign a photograph to a different category, or disqualify it.

Altered Images (Category 5)

Photographs manipulated for artistic purposes by applying digital and/or traditional special effects (i.e. hand coloring, toning, bleaching, collage and photo composites, and filters applied to approximate other artistic techniques such as fresco, pen or pencil renditions, etc.).

Photos must be printed on the paper of your choice, 8" x 10" or 8" by 12". Please select a 6-character code and write it on a sticky Post It Note; attach it on the back of each of your photographs. Note each code on your entry form.

For a photo in which a person is recognizable, you must secure a model release from the subject or, in the case of a minor, the subject's parent or guardian and provide it to Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve upon request.

Judging

Entries will be judged on the basis of creativity, photographic quality, and effectiveness in conveying the beauty and/or unique character of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve in one of the contest categories. Judging will be anonymous. The contest judges will not have access to the entry forms.

First, second, and third place will be awarded in each category.

Miscellaneous

Award winners will be notified by February 14, 2016 and awards will be presented February 27, 2016 at a Photo Contest Celebration to be held at the Slough Interpretive Center. Winning photos will be displayed at the Slough Interpretive Center.

Prints will become the property of Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. The Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is not responsible for lost or damaged photos.

By entering the contest, photographers agree that Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve may display winning photos and may make and retain copies of the photographs for educational purposes and fundraising without any fee or other form of compensation.

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is designated by IRS a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, and registered as charitable organization # CH13822 in compliance with Florida Division of Consumer Services requirements.

2016 PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Name _____ AGE? (17 and Under) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please mark your personal code on a post it note (or similar) and attach to the back of the photo (s) being submitting.

Category:

Plants:

Photo #1 code _____ Photo #2 code _____ Photo #3 code _____

Animals

Photo #1 code _____ Photo #2 code _____ Photo #3 code _____

Open

Photo #1 code _____ Photo #2 code _____ Photo #3 code _____

Altered

Photo #1 code _____ Photo #2 code _____ Photo #3 code _____

Youth

Photo #1 code _____ Photo #2 code _____ Photo #3 code _____

Send your photos (Maximum of three photos) to Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Photo Contest, 7791 Penzance Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33966, by January 31, 2016. Be sure to include a check for your \$10 entry fee made out to Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. You will be notified by February 14, 2016 if you have won or placed in the contest. Thank you for entering and good luck!

Photo Release Form

Permission to Use Photograph in 2016 Photo Contest sponsored by Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough

I grant to Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough ("the Friends") the right to take photographs of me and my family in connection with the above-identified event.

I authorize the Friends, its assigns and transferees to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically.

I agree that the Friends may use such photographs of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

I have read and understand the above:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

Signature, parent or guardian if under 18: _____