



Connections

Newsletter for Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

January 2017

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Photo Contest Rules
Photo Contest Entry Form

PRIZES AWAIT PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

HAVE YOU SUBMITTED YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE PHOTO CONTEST?

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

The rules and entry information are included in this newsletter and on line at www.sloughpreserve.org.

Award winners will be notified by February 11, 2017 and awards will be presented at a Photo Contest Celebration to be held at the Slough Interpretive Center on February 18, 2017. Winning photos will be displayed for 2017 at the Slough Interpretive Center.

Entries will be accepted until 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 31, 2017, 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.

SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED FOR FRIENDS 2017 GATHERINGS

A wide range of topics will be covered at the 2017 Gatherings of Friends of the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. Topics range from the biodiversity crisis in Florida to rattlesnake research at FGCU. We will hear about 2016 at the Slough and combating invasive plants and animals in the region. Please join us.

January 25- John Cassani—Ecologist, Waterkeeper Alliance

February 22—John Herman—Biology Professor, FGCU

March 22—Robert Repenning, Land Stewardship Manager, Lee County

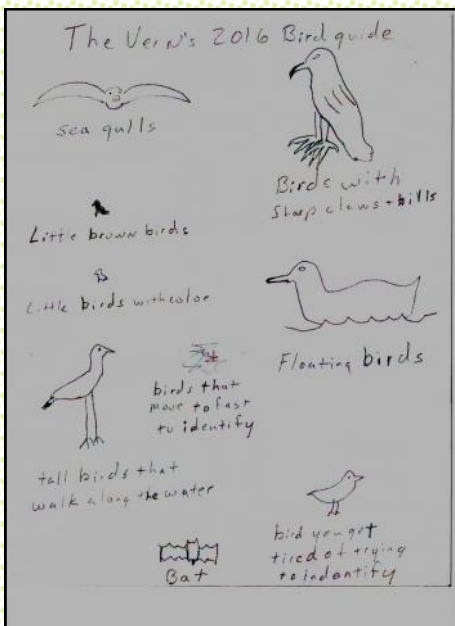
April 26—Annisa Karim, SW Florida Cooperative Invasive Species

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

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

Details for the programs are on Page Two.

Bird Watching Made Simple



This great bird identification guide comes from a bird watching group in Ohio.

Speakers Scheduled for 2016

January 25, 2017 - John Cassani is an ecologist for the Calusa Waterkeeper Alliance. He will be discussing the biodiversity crisis with an emphasis on Florida. Mr. Cassani has university degrees in Biology and Fish and Wildlife. He worked as a manager for Lee County from 1978 to 2014. He has research interests in the areas of exotic species and biodiversity.

Calusa Waterkeeper Alliance includes the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary, Lake Okeechobee, Nicodemus Slough, Charlotte Harbor, Estero Bay, the Lee County near shore Gulf of Mexico and much of the associated watersheds.



Frigate birds roosting
in Estero Bay

February 22, 2017 - John Herman, a professor at Florida Gulf Coast University will be discussing his local rattlesnake research. The presentation will include his research project tracking rattlesnakes on the FGCU campus and addressing questions on wildlife management and conservation through this research. Dr. Herman has a PhD in Ecology from the University of Toledo. He currently teaches courses at FGCU including biological science, general ecology and reptile and amphibian evolution.



Dr. Herman and friend

March 22, 2017 - Robert Repenning, Land stewardship coordinator for Lee County will be giving his 2017 State of the Slough address.

Mr. Repenning has a Masters 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 works for Lee County 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.



Bob and rescued ball python

April 26, 2017 – Annisa Karim, a member of the Southwest Florida Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) will be giving a presentation on combating invasive plants and animals, an introduction to regional efforts and reporting options.



Ms. Karim speaking at the
Six Mile Cypress Slough.

Ms. Karim has a Masters degree from the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida. She was a research associate for Dr. Martin Main and helped develop the curriculum for the Florida Master Naturalist Program. She joined the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation as a biologist in February of 2009. She is currently the Manager for the East District of the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation.

UPCOMING SLOUGH PROGRAMS

All About Alligators Saturday, January 7, 2017, 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Butterfly Gardening Tuesday, January 10, 2017, 10:00—10:30 a.m.

Drawing Inspiration: Creative Responses to the Slough: Image and Word
Fridays, January 6 and 20, 2017, 12:30—3:30 p.m.

Earth Skills Primitive Fire Saturday, January 28, 2017, 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Friends of the Slough Gatherings Wednesdays, January 25, February 22, March 22 and April 26, 2017,
7:00—8:30 p.m.

Full Moon Walk Wednesday, January 11, 6:00—7:30 p.m., Friday, February 10, 6:30—8:00 p.m., Saturday, March 11, 2017, 6:30—8:00 p.m.

Photo Contest Entry submittal closes January 31, 2017 at 3:30 p.m.

Skull ID 101 Fridays, January 6 and January 20, 2017, 1:30—2:30 p.m.

Slough Yoga Tuesdays, January 3 - January 31, 2017, 9:00 a.m.— 10:15 a.m.

The Seasoned Slough Tuesdays, January 3 and 17, 2017, 10:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m.

Youth Bird Walk Saturday, January 14, 2017, 8:00—10:30 a.m.

**Reservations and fees may be required for programs.
Register online at 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.

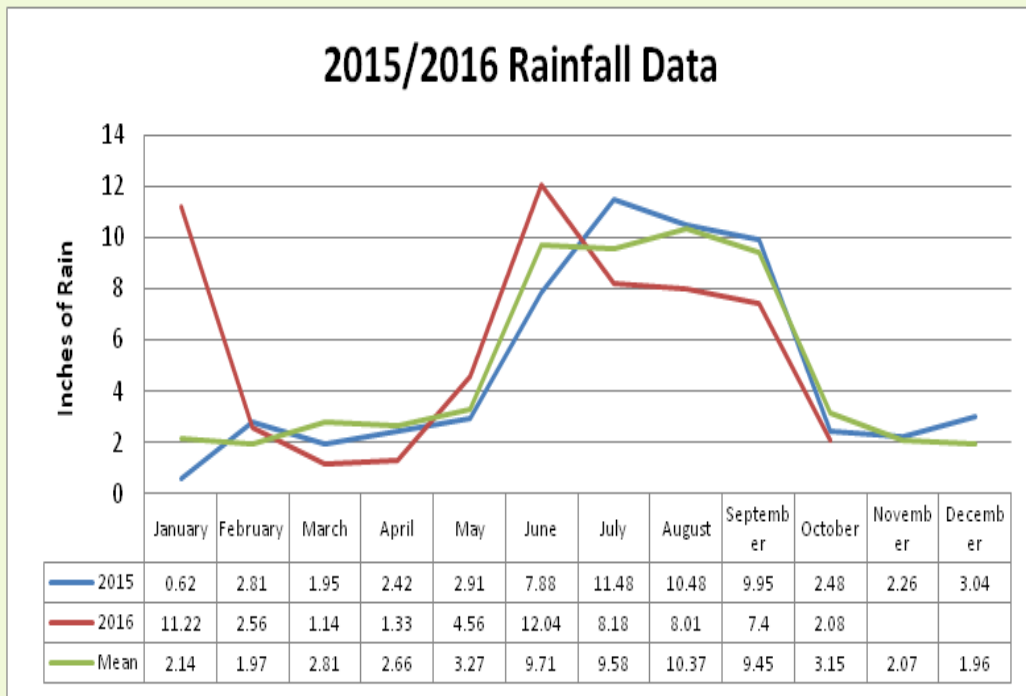
Guided Walk Schedule

April, November and December: Daily - 9:30 a.m.
January-March: Daily - 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
May-October: Every Wednesday and 4th Saturday of the month- 9:30 a.m.

Water, Water, Every Where

by Bob Repenning

The slough and all of southwest Florida had a wet dry season in 2016. Lee County Department of Natural Resources has rain gauges all over the county. The 23 year average for rainfall in January was 2.14 inches of rain. This past January Lee County had 11.22 inches of rain breaking the January record for the previous 22 years by 7.12 inches. February was also above average followed by March and April that were over an inch below average allowing it to dry enough to allow slough personnel to get some work done at the end of the wet season but this still meant the ponds never dried out and algae and other aquatic vegetation just kept growing. The wet season started in May with the rainfall being 11.4” above average and June followed with over two inches above average. Since then the rainfall has been 1-2 inches below average bringing in an early dry season that is dry. We were in an El Nino (wetter than normal) and are now in a La Nina (drier than normal). We can expect an extra dry season. This means maybe the ponds will dry out and allow the bottoms to get oxygen and the decomposition of the built up dead vegetation on the bottom will break down. If this happens it means a cleaner pond bottom for next year.



**Otter Pond in October of 2016. Algae and coontail plant growing on the top of the water.
Photo Carolyn Babb**

POT LUCK SNAPSHOTS



Fifty seven Friends attended the potluck.
Photo by Tim Denger



Nathanial and Jon Gienapp enjoy the evening.
Photo by Tim Denger



The Interpretive Center was full of Friends and food.
Photo by Tim Denger



Dr. Neil Scheffler and Mr. Anibal Gurri enjoy the evening.
Photo by Carolyn Babb



The Edison Strings, Rafael Ruiz on violin and Skylar Key on cello provided the evening entertainment.
Photo by Carolyn Babb



The potluck was also the birthday of Slough Supervisor, Heather Gienapp
Photo by Carolyn Babb



Retiring Treasurer Frank Murray and Friends President Carolyn Babb
Photo by Tim Denger

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Renewing Members: Thank you for your continued support!

Lequita Adkins
Brenda Berg
Karen Bledsoe
Brenda Brooks
Tom and Beverly Brown
Tim Denger
Mary Denison
Krekel Green
Susan Handke
Brian and Bonnie Hogan
Lucy Jacoby
Ward and Nora Johnson
B and G McCaw
Peter and Cynthia Ochsner
Nancy Olson
Karen Schallenberg
Walter and Cathy Sedlacek
Stephen Smith
Mary Lou Weddle
Erin White

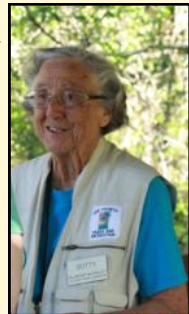
Welcome New Members

Darmae Brown
Amber Crooks
Christine Grannis
Deborah Gunden
Pat Hirt
Billy Holleran
Ricky Kreeger
Rob Loflin
Bill Matturro
Lynn Placek
Stacy Prater
Pat Richards
Jim Sernovitz
Julie Shanahan
Janet Spann
Barry and Barbara Wernikoff

Along the Boardwalk Winter 2016-2017

by Dotty Brown

The mingling of moist southern breezes with infrared cooling of a cloud-free humid air mass at night can lead to fog. Fog becomes a cloud at ground level, but with a different origin with cooling air mixing with humid air masses. Spider webs are decorated with strings of beads. Tips of pine needles hold droplets reflecting rainbows in the first sun rays. Understory ferns launch new fronds with fiddleheads. Colors of young growth inspire the artist and photographer to capture their tones. Our Rookery is humming with bird mating rituals, nestlings hatching, adults food gathering and exem-



plifying by antics the movements for flying. 'Tis a season to be alert to the reproduction of our native flora and fauna.

Come! Don't Miss It!!



Golden Polypody
Fiddleheads

Additional Donations Gratefully Received From:

Kara Gordon and Darcie Scheffler in honor of their father, Neil Scheffler on his 70th birthday
Linda Kutney
Jennifer McClain—the rock garden in memory of Jeanne Meyer
Pelican Preserve Walk group guided by Brain Hogan
Yes On Conservation 20/20
Walter and Cathy Sedlacek

Friends Welcome Two New Board Members ...

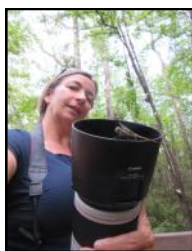
Lyn Brown

Having retired as a first and second grade teacher for 28 years, Lyn Brown, has been a guide at the Slough for four years. The guiding helps continue her love of teaching. Working at the desk on Sundays, Lyn wanted to give more in her service to the Friends, so she agreed to be the Membership Chairman. She has lived in Fort Myers 30 years. Having travelled to all seven continents, she continues to find new and unique places to visit.



Sabine Vandenhende

“I was born and raised in Belgium, the country of the best chocolates, waffles, frites, beers. In 2010, after a career of over 26 years with the US Army Civilian Human Resource Agency in Belgium, I moved to the Florida Keys with my husband and my two sons. It was life changing. Not being the inactive type I decided to volunteer. I started by assisting a French High School teacher with her AP French students and a 4th grade teacher with a 10 year old Haitian boy who didn't speak a word of English. It was my volunteer work with the Marine Conservatory to save stranded pilot whales and my friends of the Key Deer Refuge Photography club that sparked my interest in the Florida wildlife. I knew when moving to Fort Myers I wanted nature related volunteer work. Only one week after we relocated to Fort Myers I discovered the Six Mile Cypress Slough and felt an immediate attraction to this little jewel where I have been volunteering for almost a year now. I am thankful for everyone's willingness to share their knowledge and for the Slough's excellent training program as it feeds my hunger to learn more about Florida's nature and wildlife. The Slough also offers me a real photographic inspiration, a real gift for an amateur photographer. Besides my volunteer work and photography I love to travel, explore new places and to discover new cultures. I hope that as a Friends board member I can make a small contribution to the maintenance of our environment, which unfortunately is under constant threat.”



... and Say Happy Retirement to Another

Frank Murray

It is so hard to say happy retirement to our long time treasurer, Frank Murray. He has done such a superb job for the Friends. He will be staying on the Advisory Board because he always has good advice about everything. If he didn't know the answer the board could always be sure that he would have it shortly. Frank joined the board eight years ago when he blinked as previous president, Joyce Sanders asked his wife Mary to be our Membership Chairperson. The board could be confident that every penny that has been obtained from membership, a donation or Friends Corner store revenue was accounted for and tracked by Frank. He will be missed but we know how to find him. Thanks again Frank.



Advisory Board

Jacquelin Cadkin
Cadkin Foundation

Dr. William Hammond
Florida Gulf Coast University

Frank Murray

Carol Newcomb

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

Board of Directors

Carolyn Babb
President

Charles O'Connor
Vice President

Jean Scholz
Treasurer

Theresa Roake
Secretary

Donna Cressman

Jeff Key

Lyn Brown

Terri Krass

Steve Tutko

Sabine Vandenhende

Parks and Recreation Liaison

Heather Gienapp, Supervisor
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Preserve

Connections Staff

Carolyn Babb, Editor

Bruce Bunch, Copy Editor

Conservation 2020 Update

by Janet Bunch

In case you were wondering what all the whooping and hollering was on Election Night, besides the Donald Trump supporters, it was all of the Conservation 2020 supporters who were overjoyed at the resounding success of this year's ballot initiative for renewal of the program!

In 1996, at a time when Lee County had very few protected natural areas, a group of concerned citizens banded together to propose a program for the county to acquire and preserve critical lands.

Twenty years later, Lee County voters again weighed in at the ballot box, where 84% of those casting ballots, approved continuing the program. When all the votes were tallied, C2020 tied with two other initiatives (one in GA and one in CA) for the greatest support for a local ballot measure in the entire country, according to a report from the Trust for Public Land.

We should all be proud of what we've done and what we will have to continue to do. Development pressures continue as more and more people move to Lee County.

The County has released the Conservation 2020 annual report, the link to which is:

[leegov.com>departments>parks & recreation>conservation2020>about conservation2020>view conservation2020 annual report newsletter](http://leegov.com/departments/parks_&_recreation/conservation2020/about_conservation2020/view_conservation2020_annual_report_newsletter)

The excellent staff of Conservation 2020 has done a lot of good work over the years, and Lee County is a much better place because of them. Thank them the next time you bump into one of them.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Hello Friends!

I was reminded recently by two visitors from northwest Alaska of how lucky we are to have this paradise as our home.



A botanist and her photographer husband spent a day at our slough marveling in the beauty and wonder of this oasis right here in Fort Myers. I stopped myself in mid conversation about how brown and quiet it was in winter. She couldn't get enough of our green and he was amazed by our birds. Oh, how lucky we are.

At the Otter Pond viewing deck the other day I watched the current Otter Pond resident, a common gallinule, warn his friend the pied bill grebe, about a threat to their well being. The gallinule started squawking and the grebe swam over to see what was the reason for all the fuss. A visitor pointed to a tree where a large red shouldered hawk was staring down on the two birds. The gallinule kept squawking as the two birds huddled together. What an unlikely pair! But it just goes to show you that there is safety in numbers. The hawk flew away, lunchless.

It's photo contest time. Take a look at all of those shots you made this year on your walks and visits. It might be the big winner and you will be famous.

See you in the Slough. CB

FOLLOW FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK

FRIENDS OF SIX MILE CYPRESS SLOUGH PRESERVE



TWEET WITH FRIENDS

@FriendsofSixMil



JOIN FRIENDS TODAY!

Membership Level (Please Check One)

Name _____

- 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

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

- 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.

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

TOTAL\$ _____

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**

2017 FRIENDS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

You are cordially invited to submit your best pictures to the 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* wildlife.

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, 2016 and January 31, 2017 (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 11, 2017 and awards will be presented February 18, 2017 at a Photo Contest reception 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.

2017 PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

ENTRY FORM

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Name _____ AGE (If 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, 2017. 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 11, 2017 if you have won or placed in the contest. Thank you for entering and good luck!

Photo Release Form

Permission to Use Photograph in 2017 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: _____