



Central Region Update

Below are FMNP classes and other interesting opportunities and events coming up in your area. The inclusion of any non-FMNP event does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the FMNP or University of Florida IFAS. Please consult the announcements below for contact information to get details about events and FMNP classes. Please DO NOT REPLY to this message. Contact and Unsubscribe links are at the bottom of the newsletter.

In This Issue:

1. FMNP Instructors Recognized with Award
2. Area Programs & Events
3. FMNP Alumni Outing
4. Grads to Action - Volunteer and Job Opportunities
5. Instructors' Corner - Instructor / Student Contract

1. FMNP Instructors Recognized

Duval County Master Naturalist Program Receives Outstanding Environmental Achievement Award

Duval County Extension instructors Brad Burbaugh and Carol Wyninger were recently honored for their tireless efforts to connect people to Florida's unique natural areas.

Carol has been a FMNP instructor since 2002. Brad joined the team in 2007 and since then they have worked hard to promote a lasting conservation ethic among the citizens of Duval County.

Congratulations, Brad & Carol!



The City of Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board's awards were established in 1975 honor outstanding environmental accomplishments.

2. Area Programs & Events

Florida Seafood Safety & Sustainability

2011 Brown Bag Lunch Webinar Series

WHERE: Webinar Series
WHEN: 12:15pm–12:45pm
May 18 - Snapper
Sept 21 - Spiny Lobster
Nov 16 - Oysters

MORE INFO: Contact Bryan Fleuch, Fleuch@ufl.edu

The FREE webinar series will educate seafood lovers about the sustainability and safety associated with some of Florida's most commercially valuable seafood products. The series will help consumers make informed decisions about purchasing and eating Florida Seafood.

Publicize your events here!

Do you offer events or programs that might be of interest to FMNP Grads?
Send details to us at info@masternaturalist.org.

Announcements must be received no later than the 15th of the month prior to your event

3. FMNP Alumni Outing

Circle B Bar Reserve

WHERE: Lakeland
WHEN: May 14, 2011
MORE INFO: Contact Jamie Reynolds, (941) 637-8284 or ssffml@yahoo.com

On May 14 FMN alumni are invited to visit the Circle B Ranch in Polk County just for fun - birding, and sharing, and learning. The Circle B Bar reserve is a former ranch on which the pasture lands have been restored to their former marsh conditions which provides habitat for a tremendous bird population. Additionally there are an oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp, and a lake. It's conservation and protection plays a part in the health of the Peace River watershed. We will take a tram ride at noon with Tabitha Biehl-Gabbard, Environmental Lands Stewardship Coordinator. Let's plan to be there by 11:00 to visit and chat and be assembled for the tram ride. Tabitha is adding this extra Saturday tour just for us. So please let me know how many of you will be attending. If you wish to carpool we will meet in the Winn-Dixie shopping center at the intersection of Bermont Road & Highway 17 east of Punta Gorda at 9:00 AM.

4. FMNP Grads to Action

Volunteer - Brooksville Ridge Conservation Volunteer Program

WHERE: Sumter, Citrus, Hernando, and Pasco Counties
MORE INFO: Contact Annemarie Hammond, (352) 754-6722 or Annemarie.Hammond@MyFWC.com

The Brooksville Ridge Conservation Volunteer Program, managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, focuses on conservation projects that affect listed species and their habitats on public and private-partner lands. The program pairs volunteers with field biologists and land managers on long-term conservation projects. Volunteers with a passion for the environment can help by removing invasive plants (big need this spring through fall), monitor wildlife, and assist with habitat enhancement projects.

Volunteer - Friends of Mead Garden Summer Day Camps

WHERE: Winter Park
MORE INFO: Contact Stacey Matrazzo, (407) 590-5321 or camp@meadgarden.org

The Friends of Mead Garden are seeking volunteers to assist with their new "Young Naturalist" and "Earth Defenders" summer camps. These unique day camps aim to instill children 9-13 with an understanding of Florida's natural environment. Camps run from June 20 through August 5. Master Naturalists who enjoy spending time outdoors with children are needed to help teach individual sections, as well as to help with daily camp management.

Volunteer - Scrub Jay Monitoring in Ocala National Forest

WHERE: Ocala National Forest, Marion & Lake Counties
MORE INFO: Claire Sunquist, FWC Volunteer Coordinator Claire.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225

Volunteers will collect data about family groups of Scrub-jays within the forest. Volunteers will be trained both in a classroom setting and in the field. The Northeast Region Scrub-Jay Volunteer Program is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

Volunteer - Jay Watch 2011

WHERE: Marion, Lake, Volusia, Orange, and Brevard Counties
MORE INFO: Claire Sunquist, FWC Volunteer Coordinator Claire.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225

Jay Watch is a citizen science program monitoring threatened Florida scrub-jays with the goal of providing information for more high-quality habitat for more scrub-jays. The Nature Conservancy, Archbold Biological Station and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission have partnered to run Jay Watch for the 2011 field season. Volunteers can help monitor Scrub-jay populations around the state and contribute data to inform managers about how to help scrub-jays. Trainings will occur in May and they surveys will run from mid June to mid July.

Volunteer - Snail Kite Stewardship Program

WHERE: Lake Toho, Osceola County
MORE INFO: Claire Sunquist, FWC Volunteer Coordinator Claire.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225

Volunteers will spend time on the water and at boat ramps educating the public about Everglades snail kites, their breeding and feeding behaviors, nesting requirements and asking people stay outside the 500-foot buffer zone. Volunteers may also replace signs and install kite feeding platforms. Training will be provided.

Volunteer - Wood Stork Monitoring

WHERE: St. Johns, Osceola, Volusia, Orange, and Brevard Counties
MORE INFO: Claire Sunquist, FWC Volunteer Coordinator Claire.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225

Volunteers can help monitor nesting wood storks all around the state. Volunteers will conduct monthly monitoring at particular nesting colony sites and determine activity of the nests from a distance. Contact the volunteer coordinator to find out more about monitoring a colony near you.

Volunteer - Bear Aware Canvassing

WHERE: Marion, Lake, Volusia and Seminole Counties
MORE INFO: Claire Sunquist, FWC Volunteer Coordinator Claire.Sunquist@MyFWC.com, 352-732-1225

Volunteers will canvass residents where communities are in need of education to reduce bear. Volunteers will work in small teams with the FWC Volunteer Coordinator to share information with neighborhood associations and individual homeowners in the regions where human-bear conflicts occur. Bear Aware Canvassing Volunteers are a critical part of the future of black bears in Florida. Without public awareness and support, human-bear conflicts will continue to increase. By educating homeowners to take action to prevent problems,

5. Instructors' Corner

Instructor / Student Contract - Betty Staugler, Florida Sea Grant Agent

We developed an Instructor/Student contract in Charlotte County in order to ensure students have a clear understanding of class expectations. We implemented it primarily because our evaluations indicated that students wanted more time in the field; however, in some classes, excessive student talking was causing delays that kept us in the classroom longer than we desired. The contract was seen as a way to highlight the need for balance. We also use the contract to illuminate other expectations (both student and instructor) key to successful adult learning. We read the contract the first day of class.

The first section of the contract provides students with an overview of how the class will unfold (lectures and videos, field trips and student synthesis). We also include items that address student's basic physiological needs for food, safety and water. This first section helps ensure that we as instructors don't forget to go over these core items which are critical first steps in the learning process, particularly for students new to the FMNP program.

The second section outlines expectations for instructors and students. Instructors (three in Charlotte) all agree to the expectations outlined in our section and we ask the students to in turn agree to the expectations in their section. We also encourage the students to take ownership of the contract by recommending changes (additions or deletions) as they deem appropriate.

The contract is working well in Charlotte County as it sets the tone for learning on day one. It also provides students and instructors with a mechanism to address common classroom distractions that may take away from an individual's learning experience.

* A PDF copy of Betty's contract can be found on the instructor page of the FMNP Website.

