

THE FLORIDA MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

A Natural History Training Program



Central East Region Update

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1. FMNP Newsletter Survey

Tell Us What You Think!

The FMNP Program Office is in the process of identifying ways in which we can improve our communications with instructors, students and supporters. By determining which efforts are effective and which are not, we will be better able to provide you with the information you find most useful. This will also help us to improve the efficiency with which we manage program services and activities.

The first item up for review is the FMNP Newsletter. As you know, our Newsletters are currently published monthly. We are interested in finding out how many of you read the FMNP Newsletter each month, and whether or not a quarterly Newsletter may be more appropriate, among other things.

Tell us what you think! **Please take a moment to answer a few questions about the FMNP Newsletter by completing a brief (5 questions) survey [here](#).** Username: **misc** Password: **fmnp12?** (don't forget the question mark!)

Thank you!

2. Instructor's Corner

FMNP Instructor Uses Needs Assessments to Help Guide FMNP Class Planning

How do you plan for your FMNP classes?

Rosalyn Kilcollins, Coastal Training Program Coordinator for the [Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) and veteran FMNP Instructor, uses a "needs assessment" to assist her in evaluating interest among potential participants for FMNP classes. Prior to scheduling an FMNP course, Rosalyn sends a survey via "SurveyMonkey.com" to potential students to determine their educational needs and preferences. This process identifies whether enough people are interested in the course, the days on which they prefer to have class, and dates the majority of potential students would not be available, among other things.

This process of conducting such assessments has been key to helping the Apalachicola NERR's Coastal Training Program provide FMNP Courses that meet the needs of potential students and keeping class enrollment high. Since many of the Coastal Training Program's students are coastal resource policy-makers, providing them with access to science-based information, such as that presented in the FMNP, is critical to effective natural resource management in the region.

You can view the survey Rosalyn sent prior to scheduling an Upland Habitats course last year [here](#). You can use this as a guide to create your own survey with [SurveyMonkey.com](#) or similar online survey providers. Thanks to Rosalyn for providing this contribution to the FMNP Instructor's Corner.

Biodiversity Hotspot: The Florida Panhandle

Did you know that the Florida Panhandle is considered one of the most biologically diverse areas in the country?

[Biodiversity Hotspot: The Florida Panhandle](#) (BioScience, October 2008, Vol. 58 No. 9) discusses some of the habitats that occur in northwest Florida and the incredible biodiversity contained within them. Some of the factors that have contributed to the high species richness in this region are also described, with commentary from local expert biologists and ecologists. Conservation and restoration efforts, which have been crucial to maintaining the ecological integrity of northwest Florida, are outlined, as are the environmental pressures that threaten to disrupt the area's delicate natural balance.

The article is a great resource for introducing students to the uniqueness of the Florida Panhandle and its ecology. Thanks to Instructor Bryan Fluech for sharing the article with us!

Receive a Free FMNP T-Shirt if We Publish Your Class Activity, Exercise or Tip in Our Newsletter!

FMNP Instructors - Help us provide information that may be useful to other instructors in this section each month. We want to know about any activities, exercises or tips that you have incorporated into your FMNP classes that have enhanced the learning experience of your students. Submissions can be emailed to info@masternaturalist.org. Please include your name, mailing address and t-shirt size (men's or women's). Thank You!

3. Area Programs & Events

Red Stag Ranch Tour for Florida Master Naturalists

What: East Central Florida Regional Co-facilitators, Ken Gioeli and Wren Underwood, have organized a special tour of the Red Stag Ranch in Okeechobee County for Florida Master Naturalists. The tour will include visits to a hardwood hammock and working cattle ranch.

When: March 10, 2012
Begins at 8:00 a.m.

Where: Red Stag Ranch
Eastern Okeechobee County (5 miles east of US 441 on State Road 68 or 19 miles west of I-95 on State Road 68).

Cost: \$55/person. Pre-registration required. Cost includes lunch (most likely BBQ w/sides). Master Naturalist are welcome to register guests.

Please visit <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/2840773831> to register online.

Advertise your events here!

Do you have an event or program that might be of interest to FMNP instructors or 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.

4. Volusia County Freshwater Wetlands Class

October 5-November 9, 2012
Registration closes September 27, 2012
(Course Code: fw12-04)

[Register](#)

Facility Information

Volusia County Agricultural Center: Auditorium
3100 East New York Av. DeLand, FL 32724

Instructor Information

David Griffis
Organization: UF/IFAS Volusia County Extension
Phone: 386-822-5578
Fax: 386-822-5767
Email: dgriffis@ufl.edu

5. Brevard County Coastal Systems Class

April 7-May 26, 2012
Registration closes on April 1, 2012
(Course Code: cs12-12)

[Register](#)

Facilities Information

Riverwalk: A Family Park: Riverwalk Nature Center
5355 US Highway 1, Rockledge, FL 32955

Day 3 and 4 only

Barrier Island Center
8385 S Highway A1A, Melbourne Beach, FL 32951
Phone: 321-723-3556

Instructor Information

Brandon Smith, Environmental Program Coordinator, Brevard County Parks and Recreation
Assistant Instructors: Cheryl Caldwell, Lead Interpretive Guide, Brevard Zoo and
Katrina Morrell, EEL Education Coordinator

Organization: Brevard County Parks and Recreation
Phone: 321-433-4490
Fax: 321-433-4492
Email: brandon.smith@brevardparks.com
Web Site: <http://www.brevardparks.com/nature>

6. Volusia County Coastal Systems Class

February 17-March 23, 2012
Registration closes on February 9, 2012
(Course Code: cs12-10)

[Register](#)

Facility Information

Marine Discovery Center: Classroom
520 Barracuda Blvd. New Smyrna Beach, FL 32169

Instructors Information

Chad Truxall, Managing Director
Assistant: Lou King, Education Coordinator
Organization: Marine Discovery Center
Phone: 386-428-4828
Fax: 386-428-4825
Email: chad@marinediscoverycenter.org
Website: <http://www.marinediscoverycenter.org>

7. Volusia County Coastal Systems Class

April 13-May 18, 2012
Registration closes on April 5, 2012
(Course Code: cs12-02)

[Register](#)

Facility Information

Volusia County Agricultural Center: Auditorium
3100 East New York Av. DeLand, FL 32724

Instructor Information

David Griffis
Organization: UF/IFAS Volusia County Extension
Phone: 386-822-5578
Fax: 386-822-5767
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