

THE FLORIDA MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

A Natural History Training Program



North Central Region Update

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1. FMNP Launches New Partnership With the FTA

Partnership Enables Master Naturalists to Assist FTA in Bringing Program Knowledge to Florida Trail Users

We are excited to announce that the FMNP has established a partnership with the [Florida Trail Association \(FTA\)](#). The FTA is a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to developing and maintaining hiking trails for public use, most notably the 1,500-mile Florida Trail, designated as a National Scenic Trail in 1983.

The goal of the FMNP FTA partnership is to provide environmental education programs to Florida trail users throughout the state. These programs will focus on the ecology, wildlife and natural history of the various natural communities that selected public trails traverse. Florida Master Naturalists will lead interpretive hikes and presentations coordinated by local FTA chapters on an on-going basis throughout the year.



If you are a FMNP graduate interested in participating in FMNP FTA partnership chapter-sponsored events, please contact a FMNP liaison in your region. Contact information for the liaisons is listed in the table below.

We are still in need of liaisons for the Northwest, Northeast and Central regions. If you are interested in serving as a FMNP liaison, please contact Heather Ferrand at info@masternaturalist.org.

FMNP Liaisons	Counties Represented
Northwest: Liaison(s) needed	Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Washington, Holmes, Gulf, Calhoun, Jackson
North Central: · David Morse, morseda@embarqmail.com · Sam - CC Sammelmann, ccsam221@gmail.com · Steven Babcock, stevenbabcock@gmail.com · Debbie VanVleet, info@happyourskayak.com · Lesley Cox, dan-lesley@att.net	Franklin, Liberty, Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Taylor, Madison, Dixie, Lafayette, Suwannee, Columbia, and Hamilton, Alachua, Gilchrist, Levy
Northeast: Liaison(s) needed	Baker, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler, Union, Bradford
Central East: · Marcia Kopp, marciakopp9@aol.com · Joanna Huffman, jhuffmansigner@comcast.net · Kathy Petteruti, kmpetteruti@yahoo.com · Mary Starzinski, marystarkp@gmail.com	Volusia, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Okeechobee
Central: Liaison(s) needed	Polk, Hardee, Highlands, Sumter, Lake, Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Marion
Central West: · Joan Landis, Lead, iclandisoutdoors@gmail.com ; (813) 390-5823	Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Sarasota, Desoto
Southwest: · Janet Bunch, janetbunch@yahoo.com · Sherri Newes, sherrinewes@yahoo.com · Carole Talkowski, cattalk6@yahoo.com	Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Glades, Hendry
Southeast: · Elisabeth Hoffman, echoboca@bellsouth.net · Mike and Lynn Thompson, ma12thom@bellsouth.net	Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe

The FTA is in need of hike leaders for the 2013 Florida Crane and Nature Festival to be held in Alachua County. The Florida Crane and Nature Festival is an event that celebrates the migration of the Whooping and Sandhill Cranes to north Florida and includes guided tours to national and county parks. The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

January 19-20, 2013

- Saturday morning (9 am-12 pm)
- Paynes Prairie/Lachua Trail
 - UF Beef Fields/Cow-to-Cranes
 - Kanapaha Prairie
 - Kanapaha Gardens

- Saturday evening (1:30 pm-4:30 pm)
- Paynes Prairie/Lachua Trail
 - UF Beefs Fields/Cow-to-Cranes
 - Barr Hammock
 - Bike-to-Birds

- Sunday morning (9 am-12 pm)
- Watermelon Ponds
 - Orange Lake
 - Newnan's Lake

Birders and naturalists are needed to lead hikes. Meals will be provided at the Paramount Hotel in Gainesville for all hike leaders. Hike leaders will also be invited to attend a formal dinner.

This event is being coordinated by the state office of the FTA. For more information about volunteer hike leader opportunities with the Florida Crane and Nature Festival, please contact*:

Cintha Gaxiola
 Sponsorship Coordinator
 Florida Trail Association
 352-378-8823 (Office)
cgaxiola@floridatrail.org

* For local FTA chapter-sponsored event volunteer opportunities, please contact a FMNP liaison from the table above.

2. Florida SEE Seeks Ecotour Assessors for Ecotour Provider Certification Program

Ecotour Assessors Needed Throughout the State to Help Promote Ethical Ecotourism

Florida SEE and the FMNP invite you to join other Master Naturalists who have already become certified ecotour assessors to promote ethical ecotourism in Florida. Florida SEE is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to maintaining a professional code of ecotourism ethics in order to encourage an awareness and stewardship of Florida's natural and cultural heritage.



Volunteer ecotour assessors conduct site visits and ecotour reviews across the state. Assessor training is FREE and all site visits and tour fees are reimbursed to assessors by Florida SEE. In order to become an assessor, you must be a Florida SEE member. For information on the Certification Program and Florida SEE membership, please visit www.floridasee.org.

Assessor training sessions are conducted via webinar. Training sessions are scheduled for:

- Wednesday, September 12, 2012 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, or
- Wednesday, September 19, 2012 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Training sessions include an overview of the Florida SEE mission and Certification Program, as well as procedures for assessing ecotour providers. Ecotour assessors will need to provide proof of their personal vehicle insurance and be willing to complete at least one assessment per year.

To RSVP, please contact:

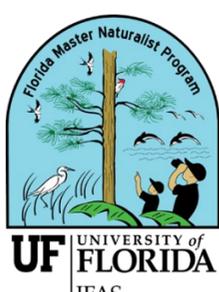
John Kiseda, Executive Director
 (239) 432-2163
johnkiseda@floridasee.org

3. FMNP Freshwater Wetlands Student Manual Revision Update

Updated Freshwater Wetlands Student Manual Coming Soon!

We have been hard at work this summer updating and editing the Freshwater Wetlands student manual. Although the process has progressed more slowly than we would like at times, we are excited about the new content and improvements that have been made. We are approximately halfway through the revision process and hope to have the manual completed by the end of the year.

We would like to extend a special thank you to all of those individuals who have helped us with the revision by contributing valuable insight, photos and graphics, corrections, and suggestions.



www.MasterNaturalist.org