

# March Coccoloba Jam 2015

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Coccoloba Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society's Newsletter chocked full of great information.

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## Coccoloba Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, March 10th, 6:30 pm social; 7 pm speaker

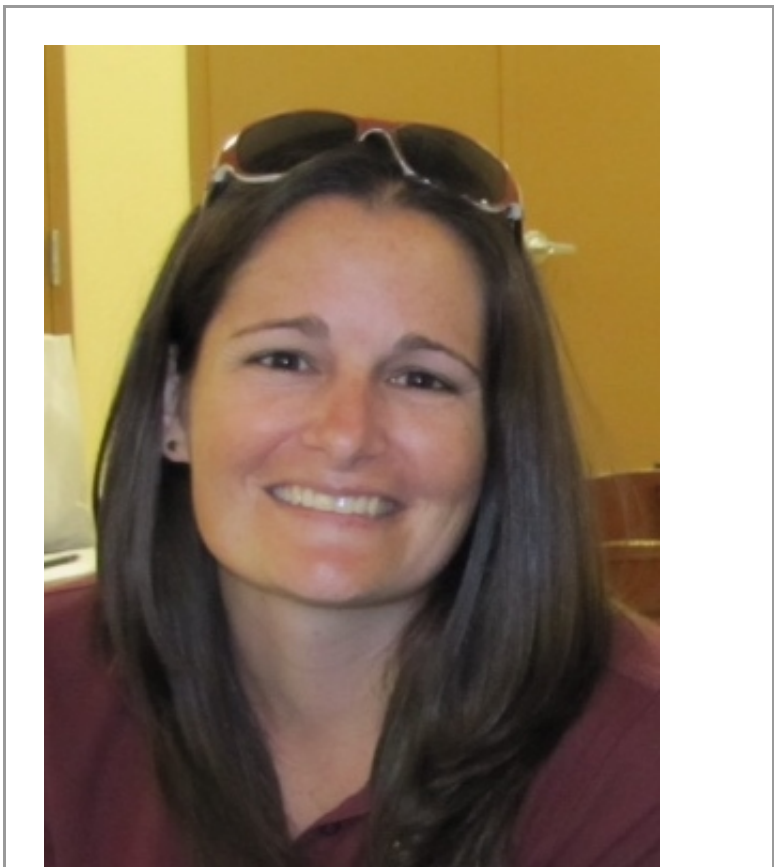
**Page Field Base Operations** 5200 Captain Channing Page Dr., Fort Myers, FL 33907

Note: There will be a meeting for Environmental Art in Schools at 6:30. If interested, please plan to attend.

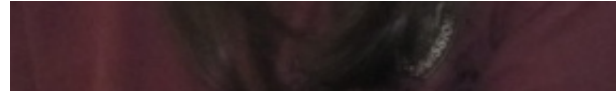


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*Angeline Scotten*

Follow Coccoloba happenings on the web, Facebook, & Twitter!

Check out Coccoloba's website for up-to-date information on chapter events

([www.fnpscoccoloba.org](http://www.fnpscoccoloba.org)).

Like us on Facebook (type in Coccoloba Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society) and follow us on Twitter (@FNPSOCoccoloba) to join the conversation!

## Our March Speaker

### Coyotes in Southwest Florida

Angeline Scotten is a native Floridian, growing up on the east coast in Jupiter. She attended the University of Tennessee and graduated with her bachelor's degree in wildlife & fisheries science in 2009. After graduation, she worked on various field projects in Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina and Virginia. She joined the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in fall of 2012 as a wildlife biologist, Her focus is on nuisance wildlife issues.

Her presentation will cover Florida's newest predator, the coyote. This presentation will cover the coyote's expansion into the state, biology, current research and ways to coexist. There will be an opportunity for the audience to ask questions after the presentation.

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## Get ready to vote for the 2015 Coccoloba Board

The election of the 2015 Board of Directors for the Coccoloba Chapter will occur during our March meeting. Below is a list of recommended officers and Chairpersons. If you are interested in ANY of the positions please contact the board member of your choice.

**President – Martha Grattan**

**Vice President – Roger Bunnell**

**Treasurer – Marlene Rodak**

**Secretary – Ben Johnson**

**Newsletter – Isabella Peedle**

**Chapter Representative - OPEN**

**Fieldtrn Chair – Jim Rodwell**

Membership Chair – Robin Krivanek

Outreach Chair – Pat Moyer

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## A Special Thanks from Manatee Park

Thank you to the many volunteers and organizations who help keep this park as beautiful and as natural as possible. Here are some of the park improvement projects that our volunteers worked on this year. As you can see there was plenty of support for Manatee over the past twelve months!

- The chickee roof re-thatched and the floor was established with pit shell.
- Four new grant funded Habitat Murals were installed. A ceremony recognizing the agencies who funded the murals was scheduled Sat. Nov. 1 (This project was funded by the Coccoloba membership in 2014)



membership in 2014).

- The mural on side of the main building was re-furbished by internationally recognized artist Jaimie Quintero.
- The mural behind kiosk was also refurbished by internationally recognized artist Jaimie Quintero
- The Relatives and Relationship Interpretive sign was updated and replaced.
- A new prop root exhibit is in progress at the fishing pier.
- Amphitheater reconstructed and expanded to accommodate ADA compliant seating and additional seating was added.

So come on down and see what is happening in Manatee Park!

Below: Three manatees share some seagrass.

Bottom left: Volunteers unveil the new signage

Bottom right: Some visitors enjoy the kayaks on a sunny morning at Manatee Park







*Mike Owen, left, and Dennis Giardina, right, will join a Cuban orchid expert at an April 18 dinner program. The three will present an illustrated program on Fakahatchee's "Cuban Connection."*

## April 18 dinner program explores Fakahatchee's "Cuban Connection"

*Bruce Bunch*

The Friends of Fakahatchee will host a dinner program on April 18th at Naples Botanical Garden entitled: "The Cuban Connection: Finding Florida's Lost Orchids." The program will feature presentations by American and Cuban orchid experts who have been working together to return South Florida's "lost" orchids, several species that disappeared due to the habitat destruction and collecting that took place during the 20th Century.

The event begins at 5 p.m. with a tour of the Botanical Garden's orchid pavilion, followed by a Cuban-inspired buffet dinner with island drinks. The Cuban-American team will then present an

illustrated talk on the progress they have made to conserve and reintroduce rare and extinct orchid species. Presenters include Mike Owen, Park Biologist, Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, Dr. Rolando Perez, Director of Science, Soroa Botanical Garden in Cuba and Dennis Giardina, Everglades Region Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Reservations are required at \$50 per person. For directions and reservations, click on “Tours and Events” on this site’s home page. <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/friends-of-fakahatchee-4741210771?ref=eorgbtn>

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## Flower Gas Stations

*Courtesy of Archbold Biological Station*

This dayflower has three kinds of anthers but only one has fertile pollen; this bee-fly found it! Who knew flowers were biofueling so many Florida scrub bugs? Dr. Mark Deyrup, Archbold Entomology Director, sure knows. Deyrup presented ‘The Secret Life of Flowers’ to a rapt audience on November 20. He said ‘None of us are really immune to the beauty of flowers. Their attractiveness distracts us. If we really understood the stories out there, we would say OH WOW!’ Deyrup suggests looking at flowers like gas stations. Insects find gas stations because of the billboard (i.e., the flower structure) with further guidance by fragrances and nectar guides. But sometimes, the gas station hides its pollen goods, or cancels nectar production, or even closes up shop after one day perhaps due to ultraviolet light sensitivity. The insect customer must shop around which increases the likelihood of pollination! ‘There are all sorts of insects fueling up and



around which increases the likelihood of pollination! There are all sorts of insects racing up and going off to do different things. For example, 158 species of predatory insects fuel up at the Saw Palmetto station. Flowers are powering ecological diversity in the whole system'. Oh wow!

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## **The Stranger in Your Backyard**



# THE STRANGER IN YOUR BACKYARD

*Isabella Peedle*

Now that you have added some native plants to your yard and have made it a welcoming place for wildlife, you may get some unexpected visitors. You were hoping for that sassy red cardinal, overjoyed to see that baby bunny, but then . . . you spotted that slow moving, awkward opossum. Uh oh! Is that funny looking animal going to cause a bunch problems? Relax! Opossums are actually part of a free housekeeping program that arrives in Florida friendly yards.

First the basics. Opossums are not giant rats. They are marsupials that tend to be about the size of house cats (ranging from 4 to 6 pounds). They have white, pointed faces, and gray bodies. They are an omnivorous species, usually feeding on various fruits, nuts, snakes, carrion (dead animals), and slugs. They are also immune to snake venom, which means they can consume poisonous snakes with impunity. Like many people, opossums love junk food, so keep a tight lid on the garbage can. Their average lifespan is about two years, but they rarely make it through the first year as they are a fine source of food for larger predators. Owls, eagles, coyotes and foxes all work hard to keep the opossum population in check. Opossums are best known for their ability to “play dead” as a defense mechanism.

Although they may seem like a large nuisance, opossums are actually GOOD for your yard. They will consume any pests you may have, including small rodents, insects, slugs, and snails. They prefer underground burrows and will not move into the attic of your house. Also, they are not dangerous, even if they hiss (this is just bluffing and meant to scare you away.) They are also unlikely to get rabies. So if you are lucky enough to have one visit your yard, enjoy the free clean up services. They typically move on once they have depleted the food sources in your yard.





# The Milkweed Mishap

**This article comes as a courtesy from milkweed victim Nick Bodven**

For some really cool articles and videos on butterflies, check out Nick and Aline's blog at:

<http://nickiebodv.blogspot.com/?view=magazine>

Recently I was collecting milkweed seeds and preparing cuttings for rooting. I was pinching off the leaves, and as I was working my fingers became covered with sticky white sap. Apparently I had transferred some of the milkweed sap from my fingers to my eye. It was not until the next day that I experienced irritation and lost vision in my right eye. If I had been aware that getting milkweed sap in my eye could cause this reaction, I would have simply washed my hands and avoided the entire situation. As of Friday Jan. 23, 100% of my vision has been restored and there seems to be no permanent damage. My physician's professional opinion confirmed the cause was milkweed sap. Because of the serious decline in the Monarch population, butterfly experts recommend planting and growing milkweed to remediate the loss of millions of plants. This means we have thousands of new butterfly enthusiasts handling, making cuttings and planting milkweed for the first time. Milkweed is a not-so-well-known irritant. Therefore, it is important that we share this information. If you experience eye irritation after handling milkweed and suspect milkweed may be the possible cause, I suggest you see a physician and bring this issue to his/her attention. It is unlikely that your physician would suspect milkweed as the cause without this helpful information.

- 1-The key symptoms of milkweed toxicity are blurred vision and irritation.
- 2-Always remember to wash your hands and gloves after handling milkweed.

**Because Southern Florida has a long standing resident population of Monarch butterflies, eliminating or reducing their food source at any time could possibly make this population extinct. Do not cut back any variety of milkweed south of Orlando Florida during the winter months.**



# **FNPS Presents ... Traipsing OK Slough with Jean McCollom**

**Saturday, March 21, 2015**

**from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM (EDT) Felda, FL**

The Okaloacoochee Slough, the forest's namesake, is a 13,382-acre pristine slough that is oriented north-south through the forest. The natural systems of the Fakahatchee Strand and Big Cypress Preserve are dependent on the water supplied by the Okaloacoochee Slough. The Okaloacoochee Slough is one of the few places in South Florida north of the Everglades or Big Cypress National Preserve where the pre-Columbian landscape can still be observed.

This unique natural system provides a large roaming area of contiguous habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The forest is home to listed, threatened and endangered



species, including the Florida panther, Florida black bear, sandhill crane, wood stork and gopher tortoise.

For FREE tickets please check Eventbrite

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/fnps-presents-traipsing-ok-slough-with-jean-mccollom-tickets-15798754500?aff=eac2>



# FNPS CREW Walk with Roger Hammer

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**  
**from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM (EDT) Estero, FL**

The CREW Trust has worked diligently with the South Florida Water Management District and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to ensure public access and recreation opportunities on these public lands we call CREW.

There are exceptional recreational opportunities for people of all ages on nearly 30 miles of hiking trails, with more planned in the future. The CREW project now has three trail systems open to the public, two located off of Corkscrew Road (County Road 850) (see map above) and one located off of Immokalee Road. All three trails are located within Collier County.

For FREE tickets please check Eventbrite

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/fnps-crew-walk-with-roger-hammer-tickets-15965032843?aff=eac2>

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# Minutes of the General Membership Meeting of the Florida Native Plant Society, Coccoloba Chapter Tuesday, February 10, 2015, 7:00 pm

By Ben Johnson, Chapter Secretary

Attendance: 22

Martha Grattan called meeting to order.

Martha introduced guest speaker and internationally renowned artist Jaime Quintero. Jaime shared his background to include education, experience, his work with National Geographic, and travels. Jaime also discussed his techniques and computer generated art versus hand crafted art. He concluded by presenting various pieces of his art to members.

Following Jaime's presentation, there was discussion on how to integrate mural art with native plants and habitats, particularly at various school sites. Karen Maxwell suggested members interested in this discussion meet before the start of the next meeting. Martha Grattan motioned to meet at 6:30 p.m. (during the member social) immediately prior to the next meeting. Fred Geist seconded the motion. Motion passed. Anyone interested in discussing objectives to integrating art/mural painting with various school projects is encouraged to meet at that time.

Marlene Rodak showed pictures of where the native plant project would be taking place at Fort Myers Middle Academy and described the plan for the plantings.

Marlene then gave the current FNPS Coccoloba treasury balance of \$10,820.27. She also stated that there is other revenue pending. Dick, Martha and Marlene also raised \$186 in revenue during the Archbold Station event. Other business as usual, and current financial obligations met.

Martha Grattan reviewed the agenda. She stated the need to have a native plant sale, suggesting the possibility of one being held at Manatee Park in October. Martha then recommended environmental clubs as a good resource to recruit people for workdays. Anyone interested in assisting with recruitment should contact Martha. Committees are needed for presentations to support the increasing Lee County school planting projects. Pat Moyer suggested sign-up sheets at the monthly meetings.

Martha announced upcoming events. There is an Amendment 1 rally Wednesday, February 18 at 11:30 a.m. at the State capitol in Tallahassee. The yard walk for Anna Claveros is happening February 14 from 10 a.m. to noon. There is a workday scheduled March 28 at the Calusa Nature Center.

Ann Whitmore motioned to adjourn. Fred Geist seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

\$46 raised from plant auction following the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Ben Johnson.

Manatee Park

[http://www.leeparks.org/facility-info/facility-details.cfm?Project\\_Num=0088](http://www.leeparks.org/facility-info/facility-details.cfm?Project_Num=0088)

Calusa Nature Center

<http://calusanature.org/>

Jaime Quintero

[http://mfm.floridaweekly.com/news/2007-12-06/15\\_minutes/008.html#.VOgD0S4y1pk](http://mfm.floridaweekly.com/news/2007-12-06/15_minutes/008.html#.VOgD0S4y1pk)

National Geographic

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

Fort Myers Middle Academy

[http://www.leeschools.net/school/school\\_splash.aspx?ssid=52](http://www.leeschools.net/school/school_splash.aspx?ssid=52)

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