



Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284 ❖ Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

March 2014

website: www.fssr.org email: info@fssr.org ph: 772-202-0501

The mission of the Friends of St. Sebastian River is to maintain and improve the health and beauty of the St. Sebastian River and its watershed.

THINGS THAT DON'T GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT: OWLS, BATS & OTHER NOCTURNAL ANIMALS

Join **Beth Powell, Indian River County Conservation Lands Manager** at our meeting this month, to discover the amazing adaptations of our nocturnal friends of the night. Learn about how they are able to successfully hunt and live in the darkness of night and why they are so important to our ecosystems. Our native nocturnal animals will be the primary focus, but don't be surprised if she has a few amazing facts about the lions of Africa or the bats of the Amazon.

We will also be conducting an evening walk later that week, to look and listen for owls and bats. The walk will be Friday, March 28 starting at 7 PM – the location is yet to be announced. We will have more information about the walk at the meeting, and emailed to our members.

The meeting is **Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 PM** at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd in Sebastian and all are welcome to attend. For more information, please visit our website at www.fssr.org.

CITY OF SEBASTIAN ABOUT TO STRENGTHEN FERTILIZER ORDINANCE

The City of Sebastian revisited its fertilizer ordinance once again last month, and took action that should lead to its fertilizer ordinance being more aligned with those adopted by many communities throughout the Indian River Lagoon. The proposed changes of the improved ordinance will include the major changes and restrictions advocated by the Indian River Lagoon Coalition, and many other groups concerned with the water quality and critical nature of the habitat of the lagoon.

The Sebastian City Council voted 3 to 2 on the initial reading of the improved ordinance. The final reading and public input on the adoption of the changes will take place at the Council meeting on March 26, which starts at 6:30 PM. Please attend this meeting and show your support for our river and the lagoon.

ST. SEBASTIAN RIVER RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATE

The first documentation of our St. Sebastian River research project is now available on our website! The document is entitled "Little Hollywood" and was self-published by Barbara Maltby, Historian for the community of Little Hollywood. Barbara published this document in 1992 and distributed it locally among the residents of the community at that time. Barbara no longer lives in the area, but we were able to locate her to get permission for use of the information.

Barbara and her late husband Gordon were strong advocates for the protection of the river, and Gordon, along with one of our past Board members – George Koraly, were vocal advocates for the dredging of muck from the river, which occurred a few years ago.

Please visit the newly expanded "Library/Newsletters" page of our website for a link to this publication, and more information about our project.

MORE WAYS YOU CAN HELP THE LAGOON – CREATE A BIRD-FRIENDLY YARD

We love our lawns. In the United States more than 45 million acres – an area eight times the size of New Jersey – are carpeted with them. And we're adding 500 square miles of turfgrass every year. Maintaining all that lawn is a huge undertaking and, for many, a source of personal pride. Annually, the average U.S. homeowner spends the equivalent of at least a full workweek pushing or driving a mower.

You could say the quest for perfect lawns – richly green, closely cropped, weedless, and insect-free – is almost as American as baseball. But this national preoccupation comes at a cost. Consider how many gallons of water and pounds of pesticides it takes to keep lawns lush.

View the July/August 2013 Audubon Magazine article entitled “Creating a Bird-Friendly Yard” at www.audubonmagazine.org/articles/living/creating-bird-friendly-yard, for more information. It includes a 9-step guide on how to transform your yard into a more wildlife and environmentally friendly habitat. You will also find more information about changes you can make for a healthy neighborhood, at the “Audubon At Home” website here - <http://athome.audubon.org>.

OCEAN CONSERVANCY’S GOOD MATE GREEN BOATING PROGRAM

As a boater... you are a true steward of our ocean, lakes and waterways. This firsthand experience on the water also puts you in a unique position to be a leader in water protection.

You also know the damage carelessness can inflict on rivers, lakes and the ocean. Discarded fishing lines or plastic bags wrap around a propeller, or large floating items scratch or damage a hull. Pollution from cleaning products, sewage, and oil or fuel takes a toll on water quality. Pollution makes the things we love to do on the water—swimming, fishing and watching wildlife—somehow less complete and less inspiring. Marine pollution poses health hazards to humans as well.

To learn more about what you can do to protect our waterways while on the water, and to access the “Good Mate” manual, visit the Ocean Conservancy’s website at www.oceanconservancy.org/do-your-part/green-boating.

FLORIDA STATE PARKS AND BEACHES GUIDE

In our March 2013 newsletter, we mentioned a new website – the Florida Coastal Access Guide to state parks and beaches. The guide is now also available as a smart phone app – visit www.floridastateparks.org/resources/mobileapp.cfm for more information.

NEW PHONE APP DESIGNED TO HELP MANATEES

A Florida-based corporation, EarthNC, through their conservation venture Conserve.IO, has teamed up with Save the Manatee Club to help boaters reduce the chance of hitting and harming manatees in Florida waterways, with the free “Manatee Alert App.” This smart phone-based map displays instructive visual alerts, notifying boaters when they are approaching manatee speed zones. It also helps facilitate the reporting of injured manatees and manatee harassment to the proper authorities to ensure urgent help where needed. - See more at www.savethemanatee.org/news_pr_manatee_app_alert_8_13.html

BE A CITIZEN-SCIENTIST: HELP FWC MONITOR HORSESHOE CRABS SPAWNING ON BEACHES

A ritual dating back millions of years takes place again this spring on Florida beaches. Spring marks horseshoe crabs’ mating season, and biologists with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) want the public’s help identifying spawning sites.

Beachgoers will likely have the best luck spotting mating horseshoe crabs around high tide, just before, during or after a new or full moon. The conditions around the full moon March 16, and the new moon on March 30 will create ideal opportunities to view the spawning behavior of horseshoe crabs.

Mating crabs “pair up,” with the smaller male on top of the larger female. Other male crabs may also be

present around the couple. Beachgoers lucky enough to spot horseshoe crabs are asked to note how many they see and whether the horseshoe crabs are mating. If possible, the observer should also count how many horseshoe crabs are mating adults and how many are juveniles (4 inches wide or smaller).

In addition, biologists ask observers to provide the date, time, location, habitat type and environmental conditions – such as tides and moon phase – when a sighting occurs.

The FWC asks the public to report sightings through one of several options. Go to MyFWC.com/Contact and go to “Horseshoe Crab Nesting Activity” for the “Submit a Horseshoe Crab Survey” link, then select “Florida Horseshoe Crab Spawning Beach Survey.” You can also report findings via email at horseshoe@MyFWC.com or by phone at 866-252-9326.

Horseshoe crabs, often called “living fossils,” are an important part of the marine ecosystem. Their eggs are a food source for animals. Birds, such as red knots, rely on horseshoe crab eggs to fuel their long migrations to nesting grounds.

Horseshoe crabs have also proved valuable to human medicine. Pharmaceutical companies use horseshoe crab blood to ensure intravenous drugs and vaccine injections are bacteria-free and sterile. Scientists are also using horseshoe crabs in cancer research.

For more information, visit the FWC website at <http://myfwc.com/research/saltwater/crustaceans-marine-arthropods/horseshoe-crabs/>.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January was our usual Annual Meeting, at which this year’s Board of Director candidates were elected by the current membership. Congratulations to Tom Bauer, Jane Schnee and Lynn Stieglitz, all of who were incumbents. And as provided by our Bylaws, Officers were chosen at our February Directors meeting, with no change in office-holders. Thanks to all for your help and support of our organization. If you are interested in being more involved, please let us know. We can always use additional assistance with ongoing projects and your ideas for new ones! However you choose to be involved would be appreciated.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

January 1, 2014 – February 28, 2014

Balance 1/1/14	\$2842.92
Receipts	75.00
Total	2917.92

Disbursements	258.31
Balance 2/28/14	\$2659.61

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$1213.12
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 PM
Things That Don’t Go Bump in the Night: Owls, Bats, etc.

Beth Powell, IRC Conservation
 Lands Manager

FSSR

North IR County Library
 1001 Sebastian Blvd.

info: www.fssr.org

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Wednesday, March 26, 12:45 PM
Turtle: The Incredible Journey

Free movie - www.turtle-film.com
 Harbor Branch Oceanographic Inst.

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce
 info: [www.fau.edu/hboi/community/](http://www.fau.edu/hboi/community/events.php)
[events.php](http://www.fau.edu/hboi/community/events.php) or 772-242-2559

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Thursday, March 27, 7 PM
Science Sea Stories and Out Takes

Dr. Edie Widder, Ocean Research &
 Conservation Association

The Emerson Center
 1590 27th Ave, Vero Beach

info: 772-778-5249 or
www.theemersoncenter.org

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Wednesday, April 16, 7 PM
Bird Diversity in the Indian River

Lagoon – From Anhingas and Avocets to Warblers and Willets

Greg Braun, Sustainable
 Ecosystems International
 Harbor Branch Oceanographic Inst.

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce
 info: [www.fau.edu/hboi/community/](http://www.fau.edu/hboi/community/events.php)
[events.php](http://www.fau.edu/hboi/community/events.php) or 772-242-2559

Please visit the “Meeting Info/
 Events” page of our website
 for more events!

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NOTE: The date on your mailing label is the month/year when your dues are next due. Thank you.

APPLICATION FORM

The Friends of St. Sebastian River depends on member support for programs of conservation and education.

Youth (under 18) free — Individual \$10/year

Family \$15/year — Corporate \$50/year

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Special interests, concerns or expertise: _____

Please mail your completed application and dues to:

P.O. Box 284, Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

This newsletter is available on our website and delivery by email for current members. We encourage email-only delivery to save funds and paper! Email us at the address on the front to request email delivery.

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

Officers for 2014

President Tim Glover
Vice President Buzz Herrmann
Secretary Gayle Heath
Treasurer Bill Brennan

Directors for 2014

Tom Bauer Jane Schnee
Lynn Stieglitz Bruce Zingman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mark and Carol Bondy
Robert and Sharon Stephen

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association
Tropical Kayak Tours