



Friends of St. Sebastian River

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

LIVING WITH URBAN WILDLIFE

Our meeting this month will be about how to live harmoniously with native wildlife, in our urban areas, where humans encroach upon their native habitat. In the case of our local river, and unique to the southeastern U.S., that wildlife includes alligators!

Ilka Daniel, Director of Animal Protective Services for the Indian River County Humane Society, and Bruce Dangerfield, former Animal Control Officer for the City of Vero Beach, will give a presentation entitled "Living with Urban Wildlife." Ilka and Bruce will tell about how to minimize intrusion into the habitat of our local wildlife, and how to avoid, and deal with, emergency situations. "Every spring we see a lot of baby birds, baby squirrels and other animals brought to the shelter by residents," Daniel said. "Sometimes they need to be rescued, but unless they are injured, they are usually best left alone."

Many wildlife species can't survive in close proximity to humans, but others have learned to adapt to man's encroachment on their territory and live among us as secretive, usually unseen neighbors. Some people object to this "intrusion," forgetting that wildlife plays an important role in our environment, and that it is, after all, we who are the intruders.

Peaceful co-existence with our wild neighbors is most successfully achieved by allowing these animals their niche in the urban environment while taking measures to prevent them from becoming a nuisance. - excerpts from the SPCA, Los Angeles

Ilka and Bruce will be bringing a few native reptiles with them for show too. The meeting is Tuesday, September 23, 7:30 PM at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian, and everyone is welcome to attend.

A brief word about our November General Meeting. This will be a special event, jointly held with the Pelican Island Audubon Society, at their regularly scheduled meeting time on Monday November 10, at the Sebastian Library. The program will be a showing of the "Lost Bird Project," which features a segment about the Carolina Parakeet, of which the last known location in the wild, was the South Prong of the St. Sebastian River. There will be more information about the program in our November newsletter.

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA

There is no word yet, as we write this newsletter, on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) the Federal Railroad Administration is in the process of preparing, for the All Aboard Florida project. The report is behind schedule at this point, but expected in the near future. For more information about the project, visit the AAF website at www.allaboardflorida.com. The EIS will be posted on their website, as well as the FRA website at www.fra.dot.gov, once it is available.

In the meantime, feel free to send us your comments and concerns about possible impacts to our river.

EPA PROPOSES TO FIX CLEAN WATER ACT LOOPHOLE

Polluted streams and wetlands benefit no one. But, for too long, many of Florida's vital waterways have been at risk of pollution and destruction. This includes streams that feed drinking water sources for 1.8 million people in southwest Florida. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to restore safeguards for these vital waterways so they are protected once again. Polluters and their allies in Congress don't want this to happen. Your involvement is needed to protect clean water in Florida today.

Florida is home to hundreds of thousands of acres of uniquely valuable wetlands, including cypress domes, sinkhole wetlands other forested wetlands – all important for wildlife and Florida's clean water. More than 800,000 wetlands acres in the Panhandle region alone are so-called "isolated" waters, which no longer have clear Clean Water Act protections and desperately need them. Florida has already lost almost half of the wetlands it once had – and has lost more wetland acreage than any other state in the continental U.S.

But as the federal government seeks to clarify which water bodies it protects, a Florida Congressman is decrying what he calls "a gross overreach of power," and touts his legislation to block the process.

Rep. Steve Southerland stated: "When the EPA proposed an outrageous new rule that would expand its regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act to include almost any body of water, from puddles to ditches, to pipes, to farmland ponds, I wanted to return to Tallahassee – the heart of our district – to begin our fight anew."

Vicki Tschinkel, former secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, says, "I'm not even sure it's possible that he personally read the regulations."

She says she's mystified at Southerland's characterization of the proposed rules. For one, she says they actually exempt farm ditches and ponds, as they have since the 1970s. Second, she says they don't expand the federal government's jurisdiction. What they do, she says, is give extra detail about what qualify as protected headwaters that become tributaries that flow into lakes and rivers.

Tschinkel says people who farm or build structures or roads need to know the difference, and because two recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions have muddled Clean Water Act definitions, clarifying them is crucial.

The following links will allow you to send your, or preformatted comments, to the EPA and your legislators regarding the proposed Clean Water Rule:

www.cleanwater.org/protect-clean-water

www.americanrivers.org/blog/weather-heats-up-so-do-attacks-clean-water-congress/

<https://secure.nrdconline.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=3377>

source: Clean Water Action's "Florida Currents," Spring 2014, and "Environmentalists Urge Support For Water Rules Rep. Southerland Seeks To Block", August 22, 2014, WFSU Public Radio

FILMING FLORIDA

"Filming Florida" is a three-year journey undertaken by conservation photographer and filmmaker Drew Fulton to tell the story of the natural landscape and biodiversity of Florida. It is a narrative of Florida's inherent beauty interwoven with the photographer's experiences of discovery and filmmaking. Filming Florida showcases one of the country's most diverse states—its landscape, wildlife, and natural history—while inspiring individuals to learn about, explore, and conserve the incredible biodiversity of Florida.

The project will culminate with the release of an eight part natural history series; a large format,

photographic book; and a multimedia, educational exhibition. During the three-year project, Drew will continually bring the stories of Florida to life using cutting edge technology through *Nature Profiles*, a biweekly series of natural history short films, and the *Daily Species*, a daily introduction to a new Florida species in partnership with the international project *Meet Your Neighbours*.

Filming Florida began on January 1, 2014, and will continue filming through 2016 with a planned release of the film series, book, and exhibition in 2017. For more information, visit www.filmflorida.com.

FALL FUNDRAISER/YARD SALE

We hope you are looking forward to our upcoming yard sale fundraiser this fall, and have found some unique items to donate. We have tentatively set Friday, November 14 for the date of the sale. There will be more information in our November newsletter, and we will email our members with more details later. In the meantime, please look around for items to donate, and if you have something you need to get rid of now, please email or call us 772-202-0501.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AWARD

This award is given annually by the Friends to an individual or business, that has enhanced the environmental quality of the St. Sebastian River area, by one of the following criteria: 1) Landscaping, 2) Water quality projects, 3) Open land conservation, or 4) Erosion control. If you know of someone or a business in our area that you believe qualifies, please let us know. More details, as well as an application form, can be found on the "About Us" page of our website. You may also leave us a message at 772-202-0501. Nominations need to be received by October 31st.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

July 1, 2014 – August 31, 2014

Balance 7/1/14	\$2953.72
Receipts	
Total	
Disbursements	
Balance 8/31/14	\$ update unavailable

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$231.12
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, Sep. 17, 7 PM
**Indian River Lagoon Observatory:
 Phase 2 Expanding Real-time
 Observations for Everyone**
 Harbor Branch Ocean. Inst.
 5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce
 info: www.fau.edu/hboi



Saturday, Sep. 20, 8 AM
International Coastal Cleanup
 Ocean Conservancy
 Keep IR Beautiful, 772-226-7738
 Keep Brevard Beautiful,
 321-631-0501
 info:
www.oceanconservancy.org/cleanup



Tuesday, Sep. 23, 7:30 PM
Living with Urban Wildlife
 Ilka Daniel, Indian River County
 Humane Society
 Bruce Dangerfield, Animal Control
 FSSR
 North IR County Library
 1001 Sebastian Blvd.
 info: www.fssr.org



Saturday, Sep. 27, 9 AM – 1 PM
**National Estuaries Day
 Celebration**
 Environmental Learning Center
 255 Live Oak Dr, Vero Beach
 info: www.discoverelc.org



Saturday, Sep. 27, 10 AM – 3 PM
**Indian River Lagoon
 Science Festival**
 Museum Pointe Park, Ft. Pierce
 info: www.irlsciencefest.org

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

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association
Tropical Kayak Tours