



The Buzzard Bulletin

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

April Fool's Day, 2024

Volume 2, Issue 1

Notepad

Welcome

Welcome to new CREW Trust volunteers **Patty Chiapo, Tyler Fuller, David Grinnell, and Joe Kilbride.**

Volunteer learning opportunities planned

Spring and summer learning opportunities for volunteers are in the planning stages.

Some topics are already planned, but volunteers with suggestions for topics are encouraged to send them to Angel.

Past topics have included swamp yoga, mosquito farming, and training alligators.

Gardening

Weeding and trimming at the CDT trail head garden is ongoing and plantings are in the near future. Volunteers interested in helping construct a poison ivy trellis should email Angel.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **David Grinnell, Michael Picciano, Tyler Fuller,** and Trail Operations Coordinator **Robin Serne** for completing the Florida Master Naturalist Freshwater Systems course.

CREW Logging

Please log in to Track-it-Forward regularly to keep up to date on entering volunteer hours. There may be some non-descript awards for those who regularly log hours.

Soil rocks Collier second graders

Soil Rocks!, designed for 2nd grade students in the Collier County School District, had a fantastic year.

Students explored the soil that supports all life at CREW Cypress Dome Trails while learning about soil types.

They also looked signs of wildlife, learning to identify species using binoculars and field guides.

With the help of CREW Trust's seasonal naturalists, **Savannah Pultrone** and **Payton DeMay**, and vol-

unteer **Ralph Czekalinski**, Soil Rocks! welcomed 261 students. Most students even walked into the marsh and cypress dome and got their feet wet.

Only two students wandered into deeper water, disappeared, and were never found.

Education Coordinator Piper Jones said that the 99.2% survival rate was a marked improvement over previous years and was due to CREW Trust's enhanced teacher training program.

Accidentally introduced invasive being treated

Have you noticed blue spray on parts of Poorman's Pass in FPS?

SFWMD Senior Land Manager Joe Bozzo said recent grading on Poorman's Pass in FPS used fill containing an exotic type of sand imported from a desert in Tunisia.

"With heavy rains, that dry, Saharan sand begins to crystallize and fuse with our native sands that are adapted to humid conditions," he said. "That tends to create sharp, lumpy frag-

ments that pose a genuine danger to wildlife, hikers, and bicycle tires."

The District sprayed the patches of the alien sand with a chemical destabilizer that disrupts the sand's



crystalline structure. Blue dye was added to identify the areas that had already been sprayed.

"Rain will wash away the residue," Bozzo said, "and we can replace any resulting depressions with native sand and fill. The work will be finished by April 1."

Volunteer help needed for season's final programs

Volunteer leaders and sweeps are still needed for the few remaining CREW Trust public programs scheduled in April and May.

Weekly Guided walks

1st & 3rd Tuesdays: CMT

2nd & 4th Tuesdays: CDT

Wednesdays: BRS

Saturdays: FPS

Sundays: bench sitting at BRS

Special events

Apr. 12: Paranormal Plants, CMT

Apr. 27: Eating Toadstools, CMT

May 26: Tree Migration, CDT

Monthly Guided walks & rides

Apr. 1: Fool's Day Hike, BRS

Apr. 5: Birding Walk, BRS

Apr. 6: Bike the Loop, BRS

Apr. 13: Family hike, CMT

May 11: Family hike, FPS

May 19: Get Lost on the Loop, BRS

FGCU service learning

Apr. 13, BRS

Apr. 19: BRS

Marine scientists stunned by new fish discovery in FPS

River sharks were thought to be extinct until the end of the 20th century when small populations were discovered in Borneo and Northern Australia.

Their precise geographic range is uncertain, but they have since been found in rivers or coastal regions in and around southeast Asia, Africa, and parts of Australia.

That's why a discovery of a river shark in subtropical North America is so unexpected. Although the genus contains only three extant species, further species could easily remain undiscovered due to their secretive habits.

Of the three currently described species, only the Ganges Shark (*Glyphis gangeticus*) is restricted to freshwater. The other two, the Northern River Shark and the Speartooth Shark, are found in coastal marine areas as well as fresh water rivers.

With the sighting of a small fresh water shark in the boat yard pond along the yellow trail in Flint Pen Strand,



FWC contacted Mike Heithaus, a marine ecologist at Florida International University.

His lab's work in Shark Bay, Australia, as well as his research in sharks in both Australian and Florida waters made him an eminently qualified expert

to help identify Flint Pen Strand's shark.

Without actually capturing and drawing a DNA sample from the shark, Heithaus said identification was almost impossible, but that it was most likely in the genus *Carcharhinidae* and probably a subspecies of the Ganges Shark and

new to North America. Further research is needed and planned for this summer.

Volunteer sightings of the shark, and especially any further photos, would greatly help narrow the identification possibilities.

Please send confirmed observations and especially photographs to WynLyn or Lauren by April 1. They will relay the information to Heithaus.



The first known sighting and photograph of an unknown fresh water shark in Flint Pen Strand was made in February of this year.

Staying connected

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Web sites

www.crewtrust.org
www.trackitforward.com (hours & events)

The Buzzard Bulletin contains notes and information for CREW volunteers and is emailed six times a year (and sometimes one more time on APRIL FOOL'S DAY)

Quick ID: Southern Leopard Frog & Pig Frog

The Southern Leopard Frog and the Pig Frog are the two large frogs that are most commonly encountered on CREW trails. Both are found in or near water. Their calls are distinctive, but visual clues help to identify the two.

The **Southern Leopard Frog** is a sleek and spotted frog. Look for the light spot in the center of its tympanum and a stripe down the side starting at the eye. The common name comes from their leopard-like hunting technique of lurking in tall grasses and preying on antelope and deer.



The **Pig Frog** is Florida's second largest frog. Body colors range from light yellowish-green to grayish green to all green. They appear to have a mostly solid coloration. Their call sounds like a pig grunting, and they are farmed for their meat which tastes like bacon when fried and ham when baked.

