



The Buzzard Bulletin

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

June-July, 2021

Volume 5, Issue 5

Notepad

Welcome

Welcome to new CREW Trust volunteers Ralph Czekalinski, Michael Hushek, James Latham, and Jim Markey.

Looking back

During the 2020-2021 season, volunteers directed and completed several projects including the

- complete overhaul of CREW Marsh Trail marking system,
- completion of the purple trail linking BRS and FPS,
- installation and updating kiosks at each CREW trail,
- redesign and overhaul of trail maps for each trail,
- boardwalk repair,
- talking box and sign upkeep at BRS and CMT, and
- partnering with FWC on wildlife research.

Reminder

With the start of the thunderstorm season, being on the trails when there's a lightning strike nearby is not a good situation.

To be prepared for lightning and for the safety of volunteers on

the trails, lightning detectors can be checked out at the CREW Trust office.



Volunteers add value

CREW Trust staff likes to celebrate volunteer accomplishments at the end of every season. A few of those are listed in the column at the left.

To do that, the staff needs an accurate count of hours donated by volunteers.

Please take a moment now to add your hours in Track-it-Forward. If unsure, make a best guess.

That data is used to state the case for continued funding and support from the SFWMD, from grant funds, and from many other opportunities.

According to the I.R.S., each volunteer hour is valued at \$28.54.

During the 2020-2021 season, hours logged by volunteers had the equivalent value of over \$144,000, a significant investment in the success of the CREW project.

Summer trail help

The need for trail maintenance continues into the summer as trails begin to accumulate water.

Discuss any trail maintenance work with Allison before setting out, but here are some ideas to pique your interest.

Team up with fellow volunteers to weed whack the Yellow Trail North at FPS, or any trail that needs it. Trim around any and all signs and trail markers, pack out trash you come across while stewarding your favorite trails.

Contact Allison with any additional inspired ideas for trail projects.

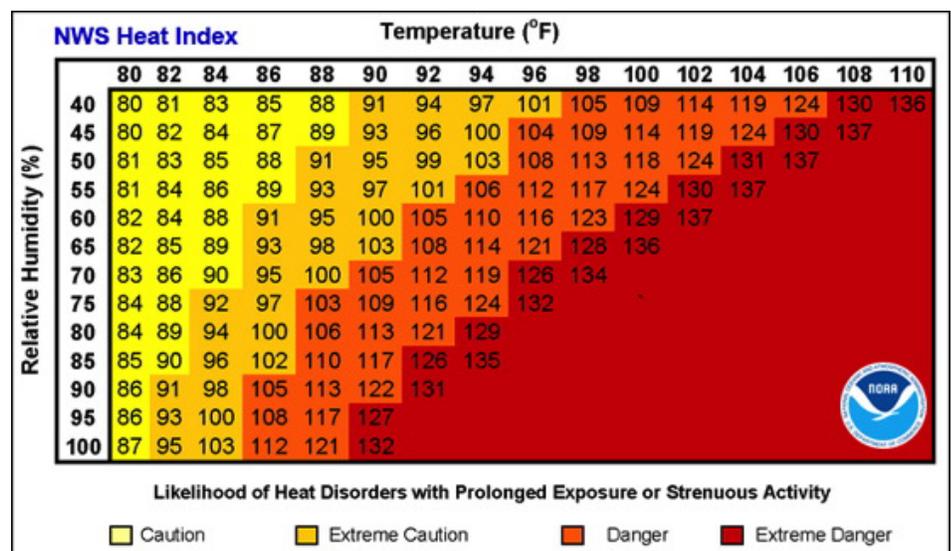
Swallow-tailed Kites

So far this spring, FWC staff and volunteers have found and are monitoring 33 kite nests on CREW property. Chicks were first detected April 15, the earliest reported in the United States.

Heat index: Know when it's not healthy to be outside

Summer temperatures and humidity can quickly cause heat-related problems. Be aware of the heat index below and avoid being outside whenever possible during "Danger" and "Extreme Danger" conditions.

When on the trails, always carry water and a charged cell phone, and seek shade and rest when feeling tired or light-headed.



Identification tip

Common pond turtles

Two large turtles on CREW lands are about the same size and shape. Look at the heads to identify them.



Red-bellied Turtle: look for a single wide stripe on the top of the head.



Peninsula Cooter: look for multiple thin pin stripes all over the head.

Staying connected

People

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www.crewtrust.org/crew-trust-volunteers (volunteer library—the password is **crew17**)

The Buzzard Bulletin contains notes and information for CREW volunteers and is emailed six times a year (September, November, January, March, May, July). Dick Brewer, editor.

It isn't the beetle's fault...

Pine bark beetles hasten inevitable demise of slash pines, but not the cause of death

Since Hurricane Irma on September 10, 2017, there has been a steady increase in the number of dying slash pines in Southwest Florida including all CREW trails except BRS.

Many stands of pines have sharply declined since then. Externally they may look okay, but there are likely internal injuries from the hurricane's winds that result in a separation of vital plant tissues that eventually cause the tree to die.

Pine bark beetles are often blamed. They do colonize, but do not attack, dying and dead pines.

The Six-spined Ips Pine Bark Beetle (*Ips calligraphus*) is the predominant beetle infesting stressed pines in our area.

They are most active during hot weather and are related to the Southern Pine Bark Beetles (*Dendroctonus frontalis*), which fortunately do not attack the native south Florida slash pine.

Signs of beetle activity are small, reddish-orange colored masses of resin and small holes with sawdust along the lower ten feet of the trunk. The beetles leave 1/16 to 1/8 inch round holes in the outer bark.

Adult beetles are small, about 3/16 inch long and are dark brown to black in color and have minute spine-like projections at the end of their wing covers.

Male beetles initiate the gallery and release pheromones to attract females which deposit eggs; several days later the eggs hatch.

The larvae (white, no legs, orange-brown head) eat the inner bark of the host tree and damage the food conducting cells of the plant. These galleries cut the flow and essentially girdle the tree internally.

In addition, the adults carry a blue stain fungus into the tree. This fungus eventually plugs the water conducting cells of the plant.

The beetles have many generations each year, so the dying trees can be attacked almost all year.

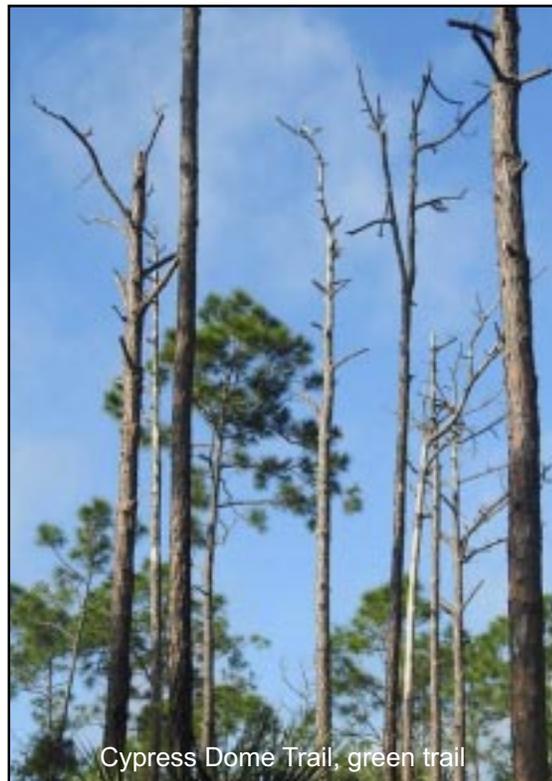
The Six-spined Ips beetles don't bother healthy trees. Instead,

they cull the sickly pines.

It is almost impossible to know when beetles may attack a particular tree because it is difficult to tell when a pine is stressed.

So what appears to be a healthy pine may be harboring bark beetles, but it is a tree that is already on its way out; the beetles just hastened its demise. The tree death is not related to the bark beetle activity.

For this reason, pesticide applications are not recommended. Even with a perfect remedy to eliminate the beetles, the trees will still die.



Cypress Dome Trail, green trail

condensed from an IFAS/UFL blog by Dr. Doug Caldwell, University of Florida
<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/collierco/2018/02/10/pines-beetles/>