

Everglades Reporter

Published by

Friends of the
Everglades

Founded in 1969 by Marjory Stoneman Douglas

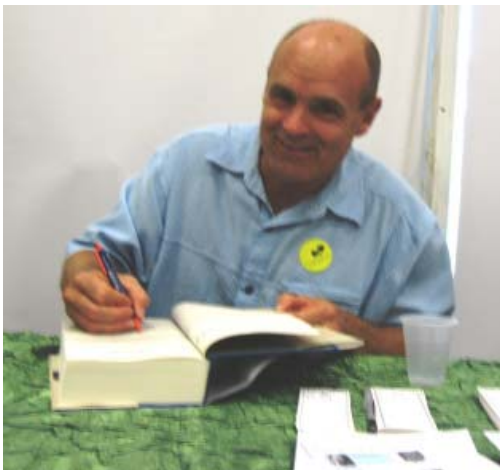
Summer 2009

Editor: Karen Mashburn

Our 40th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Event

On Sunday, April 5, 2009 at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, we held our 40th Anniversary Celebration. The Garden Room at Fairchild, where Friends has held the annual event for 40 years, was decorated beautifully for the occasion by Board members Milda Vaivada and Karen Mashburn. There was music, a lively silent auction, and plenty of food and wine. Fairchild held an Everglades Day in conjunction with our meeting. The Board of Directors for 2009 were elected. At right is a photograph of some of the Board members present.

This year we were pleased to honor Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez with the Defender of the Everglades Award for his stand against moving the Urban Development Boundary (UDB). Local and out-of-town developers continue to push to open land in the Everglades west of the UDB to additional development, in spite of the woes that result from urban sprawl. Mayor Alvarez fought the County Commission to try to prevent their vote to allow this westward march into the Everglades.



Prof. Jack Davis



From left: Board Members Connie Washburn, Shiela Gaby, Theo Long, Jim Kushlan, Juanita Greene, Milda Vaivada, Karen Mashburn, Dave Reiner and Cindy Lerner



Mayor of Pinecrest, Cindy Lerner and Mayor of Coral Gables,

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Did you ever wonder where to dispose of those batteries and other pollution producing items?

By Anna Gonzalez, Board member

Frequent and regular advancements in technology, as well as a sharp increase in the popularity and affordability of consumer electronics, mean that more gadgets and 'tech' items than ever are destined for the trash heap. As ecologically minded consumers, it is our duty to see that these items are disposed of properly, and that salvageable components are recycled.

The Solid Waste Management Department has a program to collect and recycle used electronic equipment from Miami-Dade residents. Items acceptable for drop-off include monitors and televisions, computers, printers, DVD players and VCRs, audio/visual, cell phones and hand held radios. Equipment can be dropped off at Home Chemical Collection Centers which are open every Wednesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Trash and Recycling Centers which are open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. year round.

West Dade - 8831 NW 58 Street (Permanent Collection Center)
South Dade - 23707 SW 97 Avenue, Gate-B (Permanent Collection Center)
North Dade - 21500 NW 47 Avenue
Palm Springs North - 7870 NW 178 Street
West Little River - 1830 NW 79 Street
Golden Glades - 140 NW 160 Street
Sunset Kendall - 8000 SW 107 Avenue
Eureka Drive - 9401 SW 184 Street
West Perrine - 16651 SW 107 Ave
Moody Drive - 12970 SW 268 Street
For Homestead residents only - 548 S.E. 6 Avenue



Laptops, cell phones, PDA's and most other portable devices have rechargeable batteries which can release damaging chemicals into the environment. Tantalum, the substance that allows cell phones, DVD players, laptops, and video game consoles to perform so efficiently is mined extensively in the eastern part of Congo where the Kahuzi Biega National Park, home to the Eastern Lowland Gorilla, is located. Therefore, it is doubly important to recycle these items, go to www.rbrc.org to find a rechargeable battery and cell phone recycling location near you. Convenient locations include retail stores such as Radio Shack, Best Buy, Home Depot and Office Depot. Best Buy also accepts other consumer electronics for recycling. The county website offers a battery disposal chart at: www.miamidade.gov/dswm/battery_chart.asp.

Compact fluorescent bulbs are great for energy conservation, but contain highly toxic mercury. All Home Depot Stores are CFL bulbs Safe Disposal Locations. Take expired unbroken CFL bulbs in a sealed plastic bag and deposit in a CFL collection box located near the entrance or exit inside the store. Permanent Home Chemical Collection Centers (above) also accept used CFL bulbs.

By ensuring that hazardous chemicals in electronics and batteries are safely disposed of and by recycling components from derelict items, we can lessen our impact on the environment.

The Friends of the Everglades Third Annual Walk/Bike-A-Thon

The Tradition Continues

By Andrea Arteaga

One of the main goals of Friends of the Everglades is to draw more people out to the beauty that the Everglades ecosystem has to offer. On a peaceful Saturday morning in early March Friends was successful in accomplishing just that. Everglades defenders of all ages gathered together in support of our third annual Gladeswalk fundraiser.

Held in Everglades National Park at Shark Valley, participants this year were enthusiastically welcomed with breakfast and a few opening remarks by board member Alan Farago. Following the opening statements, participants chose to either bike the fifteen-mile loop or stroll the trail while observing the unique wildlife Shark Valley harbors. "I don't get out here enough" was the most common phrase of the day. "It really is a shame that more people do not take the time to visit the Everglades and disconnect from hectic city life. I feel so grateful to be able to enjoy one of the most unique ecosystems in the world on such a serene morning as this," said volunteer David Wilensky.

The Gladeswalk this year however, was unlike any other. Taking on a different and more animated spin, members were encouraged to collect pledge donations from family and friends for a chance to win one of three fantastic prizes. Hannah Richter took first place in this



Board member Alan Farago speaking to the crowd

competition, engaging family and friends to contribute to Friends' cause as a part of her Bat Mitzvah project.

Through her hard work, a great number of young people were exposed to the beauty of Shark Valley for the first time. To see so many kids out enjoying the Everglades because of Hannah's hard work was truly heartwarming. This was her third year participating in the event.

In addition, participants were given the opportunity to experience the Everglades accompanied by two expert bird watchers from the Broward County Audubon Society. Never before have those present at the Gladeswalk been as motivated as this year's group. When asked if he would participate again in the years to come, Mr. Wilensky eagerly replied, "Of course! Great food, good company, the chance to observe alligator families in their natural habitat and all for an excellent cause...what more could a boy ask for?"



Board members Terri Sabag, Connie Washburn and Milda Vaivada

A Message from the President



David P. Reiner, II

Friends of the Everglades would like to thank you for your invaluable support. In spite of our accomplishments and best efforts, the Everglades continues to degrade. Developers continue to be given permission to develop sprawl west of the Urban Development Boundary.

Protections for the ecosystem which is the lifeblood of South Florida are hard won and expensive. The Everglades does not have a voice to defend itself, or powerful interests to protect it. That's why I ask you to consider making a planned gift to Friends of the Everglades. Specifically, by establishing a charitable bequest that benefits Friends of the Everglades, you will reaffirm your commitment to ensuring that the Everglades will continue to be protected.

Legacy gifts provide financial support for hundreds of thousands of acres of Everglades land and water that needs to be protected. These planned gifts also enable Friends of the Everglades to develop and implement environmental education programs that help protect the state's most vulnerable and valuable

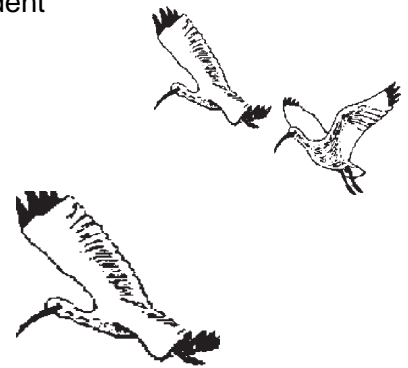
resource – water – from contamination.

I hope you will include Friends of the Everglades in your estate plans. Taking this small step now will have a big impact for years to come. Your bequest will also inspire others to join you in supporting our efforts to protect the only Everglades in the world.

Thank you for your support of our efforts to defend our most basic necessity – clean water – for all our citizens and wildlife in the Everglades.

Sincerely,

David Reiner, President



Juanita Greene

Juanita Greene moves to Tallahassee

Our long-time Friend, Board member, Conservation Chair and former President of Friends, Juanita Greene, has moved to Tallahassee to be near her daughter.

Juanita has been a clear and consistent voice for the preservation of the Everglades, and an outspoken advocate for restoration by natural instead of man-made solutions.

Juanita retired as a reporter for the Miami Herald. In recent years she has been an active environmentalist and has chaired panel discussions at the Everglades Coalition.

We will miss Juanita, and we wish her well in the newest chapter of her life. She will continue to serve on the Board, and will keep an eye on the Florida Legislature for us.

Critical Ecology Excursion Series in the Everglades

By Madelyn Mateo

Friends of the Everglades offered a new and exciting program in May 2009. A Critical Ecology Series was created and led by Madelyn Mateo, FIU Environmental Studies Alumni, and Ecology of South Florida Lab Instructor.

Critical Ecology is the scientific and social understanding of our environment during a critical period. This program was created, not just to entertain, but to increase awareness among the citizens of South Florida to respect and protect the natural environment, especially the Florida Everglades. The program also gave participants the opportunity to explore and have a hands-on learning experience with a focus on Everglades ecology and the social impacts that have historically affected the ecosystem.

The sites visited included Big Cypress for a cypress hike, Everglades National Park for a bicycle ride, Crandon Park for a sea grass exploration and Key Largo for a reef snorkel.

We are accepting donations to help support the Critical Ecology program. Our goal is \$20,000 which will fund the program throughout the year. We look forward to offering these programs in the future. If you are interested

in donating/sponsoring or wish to have a private tour for your company, birthday or other occasion please visit our website for more details or call Madelyn Mateo at **305-669-0858**.

Our special thanks to Jennifer Roberts and the McDanel Fund for their donation in support of our first Critical Ecology program, as well as Cindy Adams from The Reef Roamer for their attention and support.



Left to Right:
Emily Hamilton, Allen Dray, Becca Dray, Desiree Dray, Josh, Madelyn Mateo

Gourmet for the 'Glades

By Madelyn Mateo

Friends of the Everglades hosted our first *Gourmet for the 'Glades* on Thursday, June 4, 2009, a benefit for the protection and health of the only Everglades in the world. This benefit gave South Florida residents and restaurants the opportunity to creatively contribute to an exceptional cause.

This year the Gourmet for the Glades evening took place in Coral Gables at OranIQUE on the Mile, a lovely and elegant restaurant with outrageously delicious Caribbean cuisine.

Many thanks to the owner Delius Shirley for his participation. Delius offered a \$65 per person menu including



Joe and Grace Pujala at OranIQUE

a glass of house wine, a three course meal, tax and gratuity. Fifty percent of the proceeds were donated to Friends of the Everglades. Our thanks to everyone who contributed and participated in *Gourmet for the 'Glades*. This fundraiser was a unique and engaging experience.

The Second Annual *Gourmet for the 'Glades* will be held on **Earth Day, Thursday, April 22, 2010**. Our goal for next year is to have at least ten restaurants that are making an effort to be a "Green" restaurant. A "Green" restaurant is one who recycles, or supports local farmers, or uses earth friendly cleaning products, or serves organic foods, etc. These restaurants will participate by committing a portion or all of their dining receipts on the event date to Friends of the Everglades.

Patrons (our Friends, members, and supporters) benefit by enjoying a wonderful dining experience at a "Green" restaurant with a portion of the cost going to support the work of Friends of the Everglades. We look forward to your support for this event! The model is simple, and the results are substantial. *Gourmet for the 'Glades* will be a great success in South Florida! We hope that you will become part of this program next year to celebrate Earth Day. If you would like to volunteer or suggest "Green" restaurants, please contact Madelyn Mateo at 305-669-0858 or send an email to mmateo@everglades.org.

Or you can visit www.everglades.org/news.html.

Everglades Natural History

Third in a Series by James A. Kushlan, Ph.D., Board Member



James A. Kushlan

White Ibis

Among the wading birds you are most likely to see often in south Florida is the White Ibis. They seem to be everywhere - which is both a new thing and an old thing. It is an old thing, because White Ibis are and always have been the most abundant wading bird in the Everglades. If any bird were to be emblematic of the magnitude

of wildlife that once found homes in the Everglades and nearby southern Florida it would be this one. Its typicality has not gone unappreciated locally, it is the University of Miami's mascot (a hurricane not being sufficiently cuddly for a mascot).

The White Ibis is a modestly sized wading bird, weighing a couple pounds. It is white as an adult but brown on top as a juvenile, turning white before its first birthday. Its bill, exceptionally long and down-curved, is used to probe the mud, water or soil, as if it were giant tweezers. Anything caught between the tips is tossed back into the gullet with a quick head flip and probing resumes. They walk along in very shallow water or even on land, probing as they go. This is not a technique that's good for fishing, as most seem to be able to avoid the probe. Rather the technique catches slow moving animals such as crustaceans, larval insects, worms, and snails. So, unlike the Wood Stork which is also a non-visual prober but specializes in catching fish, the White Ibis eats invertebrates, most especially crayfish in fresh water and small crabs along the coast. And unlike the Wood Stork, it is not so dependent on falling water levels to concentrate its prey. Mostly it just likes the water shallow enough to wade about, but doesn't mind probing in lawns either. But it does like company, and moves about in flocks that can number in the hundreds. The success of the ibis in the Everglades may be attributed to such tendencies as flocking (a help in both finding feeding sites and stirring food up), nesting in tight colonies, moving around nomadically if needed to find areas appropriate for nesting and feeding, nesting at nearly any time between spring and late fall, and feeding in many situations - falling water levels, rising water levels, stable water levels, and even out of the water on soft dirt.

If one were to compare birds within a flock closely, it can be seen that they are quite dimorphic, the male's bill being half again as long as the female's. This is all the better to the defend the nest site with, which is a skill much needed as they nest tightly together in colonies, and males are not above pilfering nest materials or even trying

to mate with neighboring females. During nesting the otherwise pinkish bills become bright red, as does the face and throat that in males is inflated to the size of a ping pong ball during courtship. Although a bird of the Everglades, the White Ibis has a very extensive range throughout southern North America and into South America, where its place is taken by the very similar Scarlet Ibis that differs mostly only in being all red instead of all white.

As the White Ibis in the Everglades, lines of Scarlet Ibis can fill the skies of a Venezuelan Llanos or Brazilian Pantanal sunset.

One cannot read much about the Everglades without coming into contact with statements about the numbers of wading birds that used to be. There was a time when it was thought that these were in the millions, but there is no proof of that and thinking in these numbers gets expectations confused. In

fact the best that can be done for 'historical' numbers is from about the 1960's through 1980's. These numbers for all wading birds are in the high tens, and maybe low hundred, thousand. What is a fact, is that whatever the historic numbers of Everglades wading birds really were, they were for the most part White Ibises.

That is the old part. The new part is that in recent decades the White Ibis has become more and more of a suburban, even an urban bird. Where to go to see them? Almost anywhere - the Florida Keys, Homestead, Redlands, Naples, road margins, artificial ponds, downtown Miami, and, yes, at the University of Miami campus (where the mascot came long before the real birds). A good example of the current situation is at Key Biscayne where over a thousand nest annually on a small island at Crandon Park while feeding all over nearby the yards and parks and even flying to and past Miami to feeding sites. You can watch the evening flight lines of ibis from urban Miami along the Causeway out to the Key. The White Ibis is now an urban bird - a testimony to its adaptiveness.

We can appreciate the resilience of the species and ap-



White ibis

White Ibis

continued

precipitate its beauty as it now graces our yards, but is there not something amiss here as well? Why is it that these birds are not out nesting in the Everglades as they used to? Some are for sure, and it is still the most abundant nesting species in the interior marshes. But it is not likely that the urban situation is so wonderful that it just compelled them to take up residence there. Rather it is a sign that the situation in the Everglades is not to their liking, and that overall some can do better in backyards. White Ibis is inherently a nomad, moving about from year to year as it finds conditions that are suitable to its nesting. A sure sign of the Everglades' restoration will be when the White Ibis again is nesting in the tens of thousands each year at changing sites within the Everglades. In the meantime, we can enjoy the spectacle of the emblematic bird of Everglades wildlife in our yards, and wonder what comes next for the Everglades and its wildlife.

A Special Thanks to Our Volunteers

By: Andrea Arteaga

Friends of the Everglades has been working hard to ensure that the mission and legacy of our founder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, continues to be carried out in the generations to come. In order to make this a reality, Friends has extended its efforts to grow a solid volunteer base comprised of young adults who are passionate about protecting the environment. These young people are dedicated to spreading the word concerning all the good work Friends of the Everglades has accomplished throughout the years.

Recently, this volunteer group has grown in number thanks to some committed university students and recent graduates who are motivated and understand how important it is to make sure that the Everglades ecosystem is protected and restored.

We would like to thank the following volunteers for all of their hard work in the past months. Without you, we would not be as strong in this longstanding battle to protect, preserve and restore the only Everglades in the world.



Ernesto Garcia
Emily Hamilton
Jordan Hew
Karen Lezzi
Shanna McClain
Cathy Sobke
Adrian Soca
Janaina Vida Panconesi
David Wilenski

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acknowledge our 2009
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Power Pizza
The McDanel Land Foundation
Shurr Adventures
Sidewalk Salads
Sous Chef 2 Go
Whole Foods
WLRN
The Vitamin Shoppe
The Reef Roamer

Welcome to our New Members

Jon and Shirley Alexiou
Terri Bein
James Beitz
Roger Bunker
Vicki Bunker
Wanda Campbell
Howard Davis
F. Allen Dray Jr. and Family
Andy Drucker
Jane Everitt
Eli and Andi Feinberg
Gerald Gatti
Carl Gawenus
Mark and Anna Gilbert
Judy Keiser

Sharon Kelley
Barbara Lalevee
Anna McMullen
James & Karen Meier
Dorothea Paoletta
Enrique Paredes
Bob Skinner
Steven Sorkin
Sue Steinberg
Claudia Succar
Mary Ann Taylor
Edgar Zuniga



Left - Jim McMaster, Outreach Coordinator and some Friends at the 40th Anniversary Celebration



President Dave Reiner at our 40th Anniversary Celebration

Continued from page 1

We were privileged to hear a talk by Professor Jack Davis, author of *An Everglades Providence*. His talk was an inspiring look at the extraordinary life and accomplishments of our founder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Pro-

fessor Davis signed his book for those who purchased it.

Many current members and new members joined us for this special celebration. See page 7 for a listing of our new members.



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