



Broward Sierra News

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ENVIRONMENTAL TALKING POINTS – By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair

THE BURMESE PYTHON:

- During the recent, very short, cold spell that we had, which was going to be prime python hunting season, only a few hundred were caught.
- The biggest snake caught so far was a 16 ft. long male python. We need many cold spells.
- Collier County is doing a three month research project to find out where most of the pythons live, hoping to locate the more fertile breeding & mating areas.
- Wildlife officials are now offering training classes, as well as making videos available for those willing to hunt and wanting to have more expertise in doing so.



- The African country of Rwanda now has a ban in place whereby officials at the Airport can confiscate bags brought in by international passengers.
- California, having planned on being the first state in the Union to officially “ban the bag,” was forced to put this plan on hold, due to the strong opposition by the plastic industry.
- Which leads us to our own state of Florida... where the peculiar state-wide rule on the books that “No local city can put in place any ordinance banning plastic bags” hasn’t been overturned – as yet.

THE RECENT BLACK BEAR HUNT:

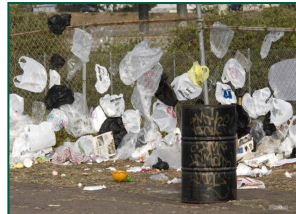


- The number of bears to be “culled” was reached VERY quickly – 300 in only a couple of days (10% of Florida’s bear population), which could soon put black bears BACK on the endangered list.
- Sure enough, several bear-cubs were left orphaned, as was accurately predicted. Let’s hope that this inhumane result brings an end to Florida’s black bear killing fields!

THE ETERNAL PLASTIC BAGS:

Quoted from *Time magazine*:

- England has started charging the equivalent of eight cents for every plastic bag, thereby hoping to strongly encourage shoppers bring their own (multiple use) bags.
- Denmark, already charging for plastic bags for over 2 decades, is now officially the world’s lowest bag using country with (believe it or not) an average use of four bags per year for each citizen.



THE PURITY OF OUR DRINKING WATER:

- The alarming issue of the Flint Municipal Water System containing excessive amounts of lead has been written about quite a bit lately. What’s not widely known is that, according to an in depth article in *USA Today*, high levels of lead are now found in at least 2,000 municipal water systems.
- Subsequently, I did some on-line research for Florida in this regard, and it’s worrisome to discover we’re not at all in the upper “clean” percentage pertaining to lead levels exceeding EPA standards, although most high lead level areas are located in Central/West Florida.

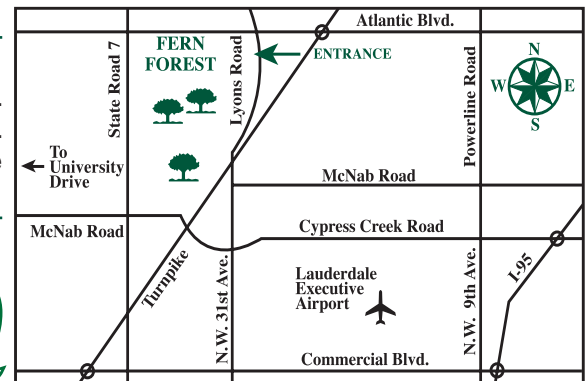
And finally... from a *Miami Herald* article published mid-March: **Dutch scientists have made great progress growing vegetables in (planet) Mars-like soil** which, hopefully, bides great news for future potential in trying to grow produce in dessert-like regions! (Now THAT could put a dent in world hunger due to poor harvest results and antiquated agricultural practices in Third World countries.)



Broward Sierra Club’s General Meetings - The first Thursday of each month we have committee reports and an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

DIRECTIONS: Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek is just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (From the south, NW 31 Ave. becomes NW 46 Ave., and then Lyons Rd. as you pass under the turnpike.) Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

Thursday, April 7: The featured speaker will be **Marine Turtle Specialist Cody Mott** of the nonprofit organization **Inwater Research Group**. They not only do research on sea turtles, but they also rescue turtles from intake ponds of electric power plants. Hear about their work, and what you can do to help.



Local Sierra Club Outings & Events

*To preserve a place, you must believe in it.
To believe in it, you must see it.*



APRIL 2, SAT. OKEECHOBEE RIM BIKE RIDE. A 15 to 25 mile ride on a paved trail on top of the Okeechobee Lake Dam. The outing will start at a designated area on the dam and end at the same location near Port Mayacca. You will need a cruiser or mountain bike, a spare inner tube, appropriate tool to remove tire, plenty of water and a snack lunch. It is suggested that you wear a large brimmed hat for sun protection. Wildlife will consist mostly of various kinds of birds and alligators. We will see the renovations being made to the dam which will cost an estimated 1.5 billion dollars. Afterwards the participants may want to share beverages at a local spot and even go to dinner at a nearby restaurant. This outing could take most of the day. *Suggested donation: \$5.* Leader: Darryl Rutz, 954-892-1740 dmrtz2@msn.com.



APRIL 10, SAT. KAYAK THE SOUTH FORK OF THE ST. LUCIE RIVER near Stuart. This is a beautiful, pristine stream near Stuart. It becomes increasingly scenic and narrow as you paddle. We'll stop at a remote picnic site and then paddle back to the starting point. This trip is very gentle water suitable for beginners. Bring your own kayak or canoe or rent in advance from Ed at South River Outfitters, 772-223-1500. \$26 for a single kayak, \$36 for a double kayak or canoe. \$5 launch fee if you have your own boat. Limit 20. Rated moderate. Suggested donation: \$3 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Chas Hunt, 561-739-3171 loxoutings@gmail.com.



MAY 20, FRI. WINE TASTING FUND RAISER 6:30 - 8:30pm at Total Wines in the Fountains of Plantation at 801 S. University Drive. The theme is "A Taste of Adventure." This exciting class focuses on delicious wines from the Southern Hemisphere. Featured wines include Argentine Malbec, Australian Shiraz and New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. Tasty appetizers will be served. Donation: \$20. For more information contact Sue Caruso at 954-684-6747 or susan.caruso@att.net.



MAY 21, SAT. SHARK VALLEY FULL MOON BICYCLE RIDE AND FUNDRAISER. If you haven't done this before, you'll marvel at the beauty of the Everglades' open space and mysterious wildlife. During this 15 mile ride you will see the sun set and the moon rise. We'll start at 6pm. *Cost \$10.* We'll have delicious snacks at the lookout tower. Rated moderate. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 judykuchta@yahoo.com.

Florida Seller of Travel Ref. No. ST37115

WATER MATTERS DAY, 2016 – By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair

Broward Sierra Group was happy to take part in this year's Water Matters Day on March 12 at Tree Tops Park. And what a delightful day it was.

Our entire Broward Excom committee was there, and we still had our hands full, informing the throngs of people stopping by our table, about our Sierra Club. And of course, we also warmly invited everyone to our monthly general meetings, besides handing out many flyers and other informational material.

One adorable activity which was created by the organizers for the younger visitors, was that at every table where they stopped to get enlightened, they got a stamp on a special form. With all the slots stamped, the youngsters were then invited to choose from a great quantity of Florida native plants, and take one home for free! Now THAT's an idea we could work on for future events!

This made of us think of inviting our Broward members to bring their kids along to one of our meetings – at least those who have already shown an interest in being involved with Mother Nature.



Which also brings us to this: we have a volunteer program to help clear Fern Forest of non-native/invasive plant species on a Saturday once every three months. It's our contribution to Fern Forest for allowing us to hold our meetings in such a beautiful natural park setting. And besides being a learning experience, all the children who join in this endeavor

(accompanied by a parent or other adult) can learn a great deal about what grows and what SHOULDN'T grow in Florida. It's a wonderful day outdoors AND they get community service credits from the National Sierra Club – a win-win situation.

And, by the way, anyone who comes up with a great, creative idea to involve Broward County's youth at our next Sierra tabling event, will get a Sierra environmentalist reward! (It's still a surprise what that will be...)

Excom phone numbers and email addresses can be found on our website at www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/contact-us. Or you can write to us at Broward Sierra Club, P.O. Box 550561, Davie, FL 33355.

DO let us know! We're looking forward to hear from you.

To see more photos of this event (and many other events and outings) see our photo gallery at www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/photo-gallery

