



# BROWARD SIERRA NEWS



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## EARTH DAY – By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Chair

One of the most successful ventures pertaining to environmental events has been Earth Day. In recent years we have seen a significant increase in participation and attendance in Earth Day events.

The first Earth Day was officially celebrated in 1970, surprisingly much earlier than most people thought. On that day some 20 million people worldwide spoke up to promote awareness of our global environment. It was Gaylord Nelson, a US Senator who officially founded Earth Day as a yearly U.S. event at that time.

Thanks to the United Nations getting involved in environmental protection, in 1990 Earth Day became a worldwide event. By this time it became alarmingly clear that huge deforestation was taking place everywhere, and little or nothing was being done to stop its devastating effects. Even precious rare tree and plant species were eradicated in a fastest way possible, to either clear land for quick agricultural purposes or boundless arbitrary urban construction everywhere. It was the major damage it caused to both mankind and future sustenance that forced the UN to get involved. One example in our own Caribbean backyard was the deforestation of Haiti, causing massive mudslides during a major storm or hurricane, almost more deadly than the hurricane itself.

Interestingly, China, one of the countries not showing too much environmental concern for the longest time, had its first major Earth Day event in 2012, when 100,000 bikers cycled around China with major fanfare, and added the country's yearly participation as well. This might have been due to the heavy toll that pollution started taking on China's population. Besides a drastic increase in the population's rate of lung cancer, China is now facing asthma increase among Beijing's children. The notorious, thick layer of Beijing's exhaust and smoke filled fog during the winter months is such that Embassy personnel nowadays leave their families state-side, instead of having them live there.

And, by the way, at present there are now some 180 countries celebrating Earth Day!

Some facts:

- It's estimated that yearly about 2 million people die world wide due to toxic environments. Besides China, now India is severely affected as well.
- In just these past few decades, over half of the world's tropical and colder climate forests have been depleted (think Brazil's rain forests, and recently alarm bells are ringing for Indonesia's centuries' old majestic tree canopies).
- About two-thirds of beverage containers like bottles, cans etc. are still being wasted by burning or thrown into sky-high landfills.
- 100 billion pieces of junkmail are discarded as waste, every year in our country.
- Some 166 million tons of very recyclable resources - paper, plastic, metals, glass and even organic material (wood, straw) - go into incinerators every year.



On a good note, nowadays over two-thirds of cardboard boxes and newspapers are being recycled, but far less of office paper, administrative print etc.

And in Panama, a Central American country we'd not expect it from perhaps, celebrates Earth Day every year by replanting young orchids of a 100 already endangered orchid species.

Kudos here also to Costa Rica, which has done a tremendous job preserving it's beautiful rain forests.

Come celebrate Earth Day with us this year at Sawgrass Sanctuary Park on Saturday, April! 7th. There will be a Tree-Planting Ceremony in commemoration of Arbor Day, a Kids' Corner with children's activities, bounce houses, face painting, arts and crafts, handcrafted goods, fantastic food and beverage vendors, and exhibitors and educational displays to help you green your routine.

We are pleased to announce that our new Excom Member MaryAnn Soltis has been appointed as our new Vice Chair.



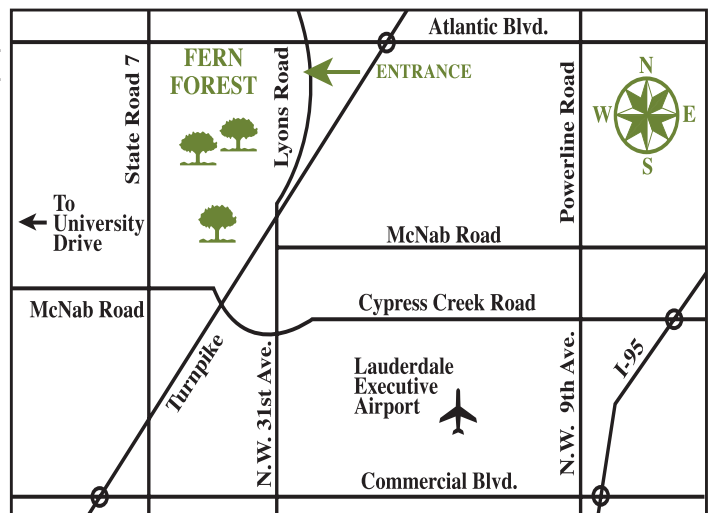
## Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - The first Thursday of each month we have committee reports and an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

**DIRECTIONS: Fern Forest Nature Center**, 201 Lyons Road South, in 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 follows. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

**Thursday, April 5th:** Our guest speaker will be Patrick Ferguson, Sierra Club staff team leader for the Stop Sugar Field Burning campaign. He'll be giving an update on the progress that the Sierra Club is making against Big Sugar in the Belle Glade area of South Florida.



**Thursday, May 3rd:** We will be showing the National Geographic documentary, *Before The Flood*, which premiered last year. The film is a rousing call to action as it follows actor Leonardo DiCaprio around the globe bearing witness to climate change and speaking to experts on what must be done to save our planet.



# LOCAL SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS AND EVENTS

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



**MARCH 31, SAT. FERN FOREST BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT** You know we meet at Fern Forest Nature Center on the first Thursday of the month? Well, it's time to do something for them. We will be helping them get rid of invasive plants and keeping the place looking good for visitors. We will meet in the Exhibit Hall on the first floor at 9:00 AM. Please bring water and help out your local Sierra Club and Fern Forest as well. They will have work gloves, but if you have a pair that you're used to, bring them. They will be supplying water (stay hydrated!). And make sure to wear long pants. Please let Max know if you will be coming. 954-296-3411 [maxgold@yahoo.com](mailto:maxgold@yahoo.com).



**APRIL 7, SAT. EARTH DAY FESTIVAL AT SAWGRASS SANCTUARY PARK.** The Earth Day celebration will feature a Tree-Planting Ceremony in commemoration of Arbor Day, a Kids' Corner with children's activities, bounce houses, face painting, arts and crafts, handcrafted goods, fantastic food and beverage vendors, and non-profit exhibitors and educational displays to help you green your routine. Stop by the Sierra Club booth and say hi.



**APRIL 10, TUES. FREE CONE DAY AT BEN & JERRY'S.** Broward Sierra Club is once again setting up a location at Ben & Jerry's on the boardwalk at Hollywood Beach (near Margaritaville). Come by for free ice cream and visit your Broward Sierra Board members.



**APRIL 11, WED. AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH 2** will be shown at the Savor Theater, 503 SE 6th St., Fort Lauderdale at 9am, 11:10am & 1pm. Speakers will include Broward County Mayor Beam Furr, Commissioner Steve Geller, and others.



**APRIL 14, SAT. SEA LEVEL RISE SYMPOSIUM.** Please join the Broward Sierra Club to discuss sea level rise in South Florida. Hallandale Beach Cultural Community Center, 410 SE 3rd Street Hallandale Beach, 10:00am - 5:00pm.

**APRIL 29, SUN. KAYAKING/CANOEING AT ST. LUCIE INLET PRESERVE STATE PARK** near Stuart. 9:30am. This classic Florida barrier island is accessible only by boat, but it is worth the ride. A 3300 foot boardwalk takes visitors across mangrove forests and hammocks of live oaks, cabbage palms, paradise trees, and wild limes to a neatly preserved Atlantic beach. During the summer months, the island is an important nesting area for loggerhead, leatherback, and green turtles. We will paddle across the Intracoastal and then explore the tidal creeks. After we've worked up an appetite, we'll have lunch and go for an ocean swim on a pristine secluded beach. *Suggested donation: \$3 members, \$5 non-members.* Bring your own kayak or canoe. Sorry, rentals are not available. Rated moderate. [www.floridastateparks.org/stlucieinlet](http://www.floridastateparks.org/stlucieinlet). A video from a prior outing can be found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr2Bh-EG2Is](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr2Bh-EG2Is). Leader: Chas Hunt 561-739-3171 [loxoutings@gmail.com](mailto:loxoutings@gmail.com).

## BROWARD NATURESCAPE'S EMERALD AWARD GOES TO BROWARD SIERRA MEMBERS JACKIE & KIP FISHER

– By Sue Caruso, Broward Sierra Secretary



Jackie and Kip Fisher accepting their Broward NatureScape Emerald Award at Water Matters Day

This award recognizes businesses, municipalities and residences that “have created and maintained model Florida-friendly landscapes or completed exceptional projects.”

Kip and Jackie Fisher's National Wildlife Federation Certified yard certainly speaks volumes. It says they put their environmental beliefs into practice, making a home for urban wildlife. There are over fifty species of native plants providing food, cover, water and places to raise young, for turtles, birds, bees and butterflies. Of course, Jackie and Kip enjoy the fruits of their labor, too, with cozy areas to relax in throughout their yard. Seeing the wildlife take advantage of the habitat they have provided is a big reward. Jackie has seen many species, including the rare atala butterfly, making its comeback from near extinction 50 years ago!

Jackie says they sometimes go weeks without putting time in to attend to their yard. An asset of having native plants is that they are adapted to our South Florida environment, most needing less care and water than non-native species. Of course, this beautiful landscape has not happened without planning and hard work. It is a labor of love, that with time and help, has paid big dividends. Obviously, the Broward NatureScape awards committee agreed!

Many nurseries in Broward can help you find the right plant for the right place in your yard or space. With massive urban development in South Florida, it is important that we all help give our beautiful native species a place to stop, rest and survive.

Go to [www.broward.org/NaturalResources/NatureScape/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.broward.org/NaturalResources/NatureScape/Pages/Default.aspx) if you are interested in having a certified wildlife habitat. There are resources and suggestions to help anyone have a wildlife habitat, even on a porch, patio or rooftop.



## BIG CYPRESS HIKE A HIT!

– By Sue Caruso, Broward Sierra Secretary

On Sun., March 11th, six intrepid hikers and two Broward Sierra outings leaders made the 6-mile hike on the Florida Native Trail portion of Big Cypress.



Photo by Dave Vance

As we explored the trail, hikers and leaders alike shared information about the native fauna and flora, as well as environmental issues pertinent to South Florida. The participants were treated to gators basking on the shoreline, wading birds taking flight, and wild flowers in bloom with bees and butterflies busily gathering their nectar. Though the habitat is basically a slash pine/saw palmetto community, a slight change in elevation brought us to a lush oak hammock. With a stop for lunch and some



lively conversation, we completed the hike in about 4 hours. All agreed that the time and distance was just about right. The best part? We arrived strangers and left as friends.

To see more photos from this hike, go to [www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/photo-gallery](http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/photo-gallery), and click on Big Cypress - Mar. 2018.