



Manatee-Sarasota Group Boca Sierra



Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress

October 2013

National wildlife refuges of Southwest Florida

What: Manatee-Sarasota Group General Meeting
When: Thursday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m
Where: Sarasota Garden Club, 1131 Blvd. of the Arts

Paul Tritaik, Wildlife Refuge Manager of the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Complex in Sanibel, will present “National Wildlife Refuges of Southwest Florida” at our October meeting.

Tritaik will focus on the history and current status of NWR refuges on Sanibel Island, Pine Island, Matlacha Pass, Island Bay, and Caloosahatchee. He will also briefly discuss Florida Panther NWR and Ten Thousand Islands NWR, and mention the other refuges in Florida.

Tritaik has been the Wildlife Refuge Manager at J. N. “Ding” Darling NWR for 5 years. Previously, he was

Wildlife Refuge Manager at Pelican Island and Archie Carr NWRs on the central east coast of Florida for 15 years. His career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has spanned 30 years, starting at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland and including Okefenokee, Bond Swamp, and Piedmont NWRs in Georgia.

Join us and bring a snack or dessert to share during the social time.



—Linda Jones, group chair

Plight of the Bees...and the Long Bar Pointe Connection

Some members may remember that Lynn Olson, with the Suncoast Beekeepers Association, made a presentation about bees at one of our local group meetings. Unfortunately, bee die-offs have become such a serious concern that Time Magazine’s cover feature for August 19 was “A World Without Bees...The Price We’ll Pay if We Don’t Figure Out What’s Killing the Honeybee.” On September 3, the Herald Tribune reported that a Florida grower was fined for illegally spraying pesticide that killed millions of bees.

Lynn Olson thinks that a parasitic mite is a major culprit in bee decline, but most experts blame a combination of factors. USDA and EPA recently issued a joint report on honeybee health, citing a complex set of stressors - including habitat loss, parasites and disease, genetics, poor nutrition, and pesticides - as contributing to colony collapse disorder. A leading suspect is the class of pesticides known as “neonicotinoids,” which were recently banned in Europe for posing “high acute risks” to bees.

In 2011, Sierra Club questioned why EPA did not act on research implicating neonicotinoids in massive honeybee die-offs. Environmental and beekeeping organizations have pushed for a “stop use” order on the pesticide, but EPA refused. In August 2013, EPA launched new labeling

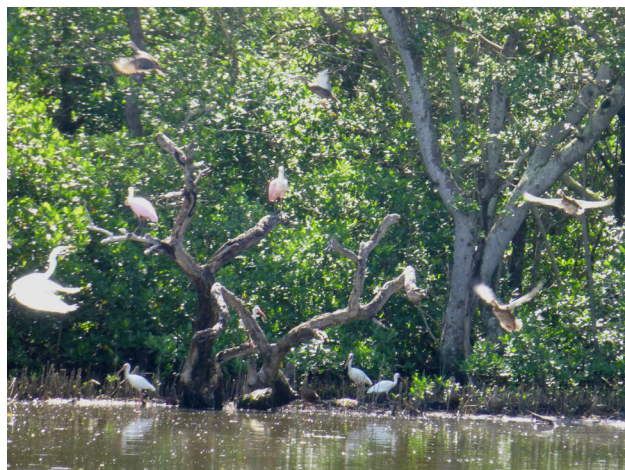
with a bee advisory box that warns against applying neonicotinoid products where bees are present. While labels may help, why didn’t EPA just ban neonicotinoid pesticides?

A recent study found that some bee-friendly plants sold at Home Depot, Lowe’s and other garden centers are pre-treated with pesticides that harm and kill bees, although they carry no label to indicate that. (Details can be found at <http://www.foe.org/beeaction>.) Friends of the Earth,

Sum of Us, and their allies have sent letters and petitions requesting that these retailers stop selling neonicotinoids and plants pre-treated with the pesticides.

Europe has banned bee-killing pesticides, and retailers in the UK are refusing to sell them. Major U.S. retailers

Plight of the bees continued on page 3



Mangroves at Long Bar Pointe photo by Barbara Hines



Manatee Conservation Committee

Monday, Oct. 21, 1 p.m. We'll discuss Manatee County conservation issues. Upstairs conference room, Bradenton Central Library, 1301 Barcarrota Blvd. Join us and/or contact Sandra Ripberger, 941-794-3878 or sandrari@yaho.com. Everyone is welcome! No previous experience required.

Sarasota Conservation Committee

Tuesday, Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m. We will meet at the Sierra Club office at 2815 Proctor Road (Riverview Plaza) to discuss Sarasota environmental issues. For details, contact Gerry Swormstedt at 941-366-9596.

Newsletter mailout — need help

Thursday, Oct. 17, 6 p.m. Help prepare the Boca for mailing. Meet at the Sierra Club office, 2815 Proctor Road, corner of Proctor and Swift roads. For details or directions, contact Lynn Nilssen (lynnsierra@nilssen.us) or 941-284-2158.

Nominations needed for Executive Committee

Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Club invites people to nominate themselves or others to serve on the group's Executive Committee. The committee meets monthly to plan events and discuss responses to regional environmental issues. Please send nominations to Peggy Dessaint (Dessaintap@verizon.net), Chair of Nominating Committee.

Help Sierra save money!

Want to help save local Sierra dollars, ease the burden on volunteers, and receive the newsletter faster and in color? Just follow the steps below to be switched from the paper copy mailing list to the electronic mailing list.

1. Type this address into your browser: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/FLORIDA-M-S-GROUP-NEWS.html>.
2. Click on "Subscribe/Unsubscribe."
3. Add your name and email address where indicated.
4. A confirmation email will include a link you must click to activate your e-newsletter subscription.

Environmental summit and potluck

Tuesday Oct. 29, 6:30 pm. Palma Sola Botanical Park, 9800 17th Ave. N.W., Bradenton. The Manatee County Fish and Game Association will host a potluck supper and expert panel on "How Will We Grow: What is the Future of Coastal Development in Manatee County?" Under discussion will be the county's environmental planning document, available at www.mymanatee.org or by calling 941-748-4501 x6825. Meat, tableware, and drinks will be provided; bring a side dish to share. To volunteer to help, call 941-752-3200. To RSVP that you will attend, call 941-792-8314.

Remembering Peggy Coley

Loyal member, ardent environmentalist and good friend Peggy Coley died August 19, 2013. We will remember her for 4 years on the Excom as Secretary and Membership Chr., lighting votive candles at Phillippi, wonderfully potent eggnog, being a loyal newsletter volunteer, arriving late to general meetings, but always there to help! Peggy's house and yard reflected her light footprint on the earth. The family requests that donations be made to our group in her honor.

—Gerry Swormstedt

2013 Executive Committee

Group Chair: Linda T. Jones, 941-358-3249, lindyleetheis@comcast.net

Vice Chair./Treasurer: Bob Fellman, 973-689-5556, rtf082446@hotmail.com

Secretary: Cathy Page, 941-795-8973, cnpage@tampabay.rr.com

Conservation Chairs

Sarasota County: Open.

Manatee County: Sandra Ripberger, 941-794-3878, sandrari@yaho.com

Fundraising: Open

Inner City Outings: Sarah Mitchell, 941-721-7132, mitchell8manatee@yaho.com

Membership: Mary Sheppard, 941-752-3200, mecomary@aol.com

Newsletter Editor: (This issue only), Wendy Sunshine

Outings: Jim Spencer, 941-586-7463, Saturnsky48@verizon.net

Political: Gerry Swormstedt, 941-366-9596, gswormstedt204@comcast.net

Publications/Tabling: John Myers, 941-961-7095; sagejohnm49@gmail.com

Publicity: Gerlinde Kohl, 941-474-4712, fgkohl@verizon.net

Group Communications

Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Group Website
www.florida.sierraclub.org/sarasota

Sierra Club Office:

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Boca Design and Production: Barry Zack, barryzed@gmail.com

Mailout: Lynn Nilssen, 941-284-2158., lynnsierra@nilssen.us

Executive Committee meetings are held once a month. For details about date and time, contact Linda T. Jones, Chair.

Boca Sierra Vol. XLI Issue 10

This newsletter is published monthly by the Manatee-Sarasota Group of the Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club. The intent is to inform members and interested individuals of local activities and national environmental issues. Members of the Sierra Club subscribe to Boca Sierra through their annual dues. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$6 annually.



Suggested outings contribution \$5

Annual Pine Lilly Hike

Saturday, Oct. 5, morning. Brisk 7-10 mile hike to look for Pine Lillies (*lilium catesbaei*), Limited to 10 participants. Depending on weather conditions, trails might be wet. Reserve with Bill Lewis, 941-355-2156.

Paddle Shell Creek

Wednesday, Oct. 9, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Enjoy the Climbing Aster Blooms and the butterflies of the Milk Vines. Participants must provide watercraft and know how to swim. Reserve with Rick, 941-637-8805.

Braden River Kayak

Saturday, Oct. 12, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Join us to explore the Braden River. From Jiggs Landing proceed until it narrows; approx. 8 miles round trip. Lunch at Linger Lodge. Reserve with Bob Fellman, 973-689-5556 or rtf082446@hotmail.com.

Coker Prairie Fall Wildflower Hike

Sunday, Oct. 13, 8 a.m.-noon. Bring water, snacks, flower books, cameras and insect repellent to the carpool. Reserve by Oct. 10 with Cathy Page, 941-795-8973, or Mary Sheppard, 941-752-3200.

Myrtle Creek Kayak

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Paddle upstream into a fresh water jungle and then downstream to the lower Shell Creek. We will also cruise to the only waterfall in this area. Reserve with guide Jim Story (Master Naturalist), 941-505-8904.

Oscar Scherer Walk

Saturday, Oct. 19, 8 a.m. Walk 5 miles and see Blazing Star blooming, lop-sided Indian Grass, Scrub Jays, and more. Bring water, repellent, and lunch if your time affords. Reserve with Sally-941-484-4113.

Alafia River Kayak

Sunday Oct. 20, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. This beautiful river flows through mostly rural eastern Hillsborough County. Due to the possibility of high, fast water, fallen trees, and other obstacles, kayakers should have at least a year of recent experience on various types of water. Bring water, sunscreen, lunch, and a fee for transporting kayaks. Reserve with Mike Lehner, 941-365-1073 or mklehn@hotmail.com.

Join Sierra Today

Act now and become a member of Sierra Club! By joining you'll support vital environmental advocacy, receive three publications, and gain access to local outings, members-only adventures, and other rewards.

Learn more and join at:

<https://tioga.sierraclub.org/joinorgive/member3.htm>

Lower Peace River Paddle

Thursday Oct. 24, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Florida Master Naturalist Rick Fried will lead you through phosphate dock ruins and alligator habitat. Lunch at the Nav-a-gator Restaurant. Reserve with Rick, 941-637-8805.

Outings leaders needed

Be an active club member and have fun at the same time – become an outings leader. Contact Outings Chair Jim Spencer at 586-7463 for details.

Chapter outings and e-mail updates

See all Florida Chapter outings online at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/outings/browse.asp>. To get weekly updates by e-mail on upcoming outings planned by the Manatee- Sarasota Group, Suncoast, Tampa Bay and other West Central Sierra Groups, subscribe at www.florida.sierraclub.org/sarasota.

Plight of the bees (from page 1)

have been asked to stop selling these pesticides and to indicate when plants have been pre-treated with neonicotinoids shown to kill and harm bees.

Steps to protect bees now

Gardeners should ask questions of your local retailers and try to buy untreated seeds and organic plants. Also, steer clear of all neonicotinoid pesticides. Better yet, EPA needs to ban neonicotinoids or Congress needs to prohibit use of these pesticides on bee-attractive plants as some legislators have already proposed. While a ban doesn't address all risk factors contributing to the bee die-off, it is a first step.

Bees need forage, flowers and wild spaces to survive. However, industrialized agriculture and ongoing development do not provide food for honeybees starved for pollen and nectar.

According to Lynn Olson, commercial beekeepers move hundreds of hives into the undeveloped Long Bar Pointe area so their bee colonies can rebuild on black mangrove honey. This undeveloped coastline has thick mangroves 30-40 feet tall, which benefit hundreds of marine organisms, birds and bees. Without the Long Bar Pointe mangrove forage, beekeepers couldn't provide bees for pollinating local farms that provide food for our markets. Will there be a place for the bee hives if the land is developed?

We have called for protection of our natural coastal resources and to move development away from the coastline. Much of the Long Bar Pointe area is in the Coastal High Hazard Area and should not be developed according to Manatee County's own comprehensive plan.

—Linda Jones, group chair

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Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet

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ICO explores Leffis Key for first trip of this year

Our local Inner City Outings (ICO) took nine 4th and 5th graders from Samoset Elementary in Bradenton on the first outing of this school year on Saturday, Aug. 24.

We hiked the trails and boardwalks of Leffis Key, learned about mangroves and salt flats, and saw plenty of crabs, spiders, butterflies, birds, and fish. Each student marked a checklist of creatures they saw on the hike. After a picnic lunch on Coquina Beach, we had a lesson about protecting sea turtles at one of the marked nests on the beach. Later, students got a chance to canoe, kayak, fish, and snorkel at the bayside. The most popular activity was undoubtedly the snorkeling.

We used a seine net to examine aquatic creatures in the bay, including quarter-sized starfish, a jellyfish, crabs, and a half dozen kinds of juvenile fish. The students were so interested and enthusiastic about discovering these environments and the volunteers were so satisfied to watch the students have fun.

Everyone enjoyed the great wildlife viewing. After this, I bet a few of them will go on to study biological sciences if they have the opportunity.

Inner City Outings provides meaningful outdoor environmental learning experiences for children who

might not have this opportunity otherwise. (Note: National ICO is planning a name change in the near future to reflect changes in participants in some areas.)

Our ICO has set a goal of having an outing each month for the coming school year. We are always looking for additional volunteers. Volunteers can participate directly in outings (both day outings and weekend campouts) or in grant writing, other fundraising activities, and other support activities. If you

are interested in volunteering, contact Sarah Mitchell at mitchell8manatee@yahoo.com or 941-725-1568.

-John Myers



Sarah Mitchell, ICO chair, leads 4th and 5th grade students from Samoset Elementary school, Bradenton, on the summit of Leffis Key, overlooking Sarasota Bay