



TURTLE TRACKS

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES COUNCIL

WINTER 2016

Environmental Lecture Series

We are excited to announce the speakers for ESC's 29th Annual Environmental Lecture Series along with our presenting sponsor, the Tobacco Free Partnership of Martin County. The Tobacco Free Partnership of Martin County is dedicated to the creation of tobacco-free social norms through a combination of community education, youth advocacy, and changes in local tobacco policies. We are excited to have their support and believe the partnership will be beneficial to both organizations.

The popular lecture series will be held on six Monday evenings, in February and March at 7 pm. The lectures will take place in the Environmental Studies Center's auditorium and are set to begin February 1 and conclude March 21. No lecture is scheduled February 15 or March 14. The Environmental Lecture Series is FREE and open to the public. Seating is on a first-come first-served basis. Doors open about 6:30 pm.

The Environmental Lecture Series began February 1 and featured Gabby Barbarite, PhD candidate at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and Florida Atlantic University, speaking on "Pathogenic Vibrio Bacteria in the Indian River Lagoon and their Threat to Human Health." Sharp hooks, spines and teeth are some of the dangers that sport fishermen are aware of; however, their biggest threat may be from something they are unable to see! Bacteria are natural inhabitants of coastal waters and are responsible for 80,000 illnesses, 500 hospitalizations, and 100 deaths in the United States annually. Find out how you can avoid being infected.

The February 8 lecture featured Valerie Spaling, FWC biologist for the DuPuis Wildlife and Environmental Area, speaking about the Red-cockaded woodpecker. Red-cockaded woodpeckers were once common throughout the southeastern United States but are now endangered through habitat loss and other factors.

On February 22 biologist, Dr. Larry Wood will present "Jewels on the Reef: The Biology and Conservation of Florida's Hawksbill Turtles." Florida is a global hub of sea turtle activity, and considerable attention has been brought to the plight of these endangered species by their annual arrival for nesting. However, hawksbills do not nest in Florida with any regularity, and therefore had escaped the attention of most sea turtle scientists. This program will introduce the unique biology of hawksbill turtles, and will explore the importance of Florida's coral reef environments to this highly endangered species.

The February 29 lecture will feature Jodie Gless, Wildlife Biologist for Florida Power & Light Company, with "Manatees: Response to change in warm water

habitat." For the past 30 years, Florida Power & Light Company has earned a reputation as a leader in the protection of threatened and endangered species and has worked to ensure that business practices are geared to protect wildlife and their habitats. They have embraced the protection and monitoring of manatees at 5 of their facilities around the state. During this presentation, you will learn more about what FPL is doing for manatees around the State of Florida.

On March 7 Nancy Pham Ho, Research Associate and Site Manager at Florida Tech's Vero Beach Marine Laboratory will present "Studying Seahorses Through Citizen Sightings." Seahorses are consistently listed as one of the most popular exhibit animals at public aquariums. However, they're not just another pretty face. Their popularity makes them an excellent topic for conservation, research, and outreach. Come learn about the life cycle of a seahorse and why Vero Beach Marine Laboratory scientists need your help to better understand these animals in our lagoon.

The series will conclude on March 21 with Dr. Vincent Encomio, Director of Scientific Research at the Florida Oceanographic Society with "The Northern Estuaries Resource Recovery Program: Efforts to restore estuarine habitat in the wake of the 2013 discharges." In 2013, freshwater discharges, into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers devastated oyster and seagrass habitats. Florida Oceanographic Society helped launch a bi-estuary program to redress the damages caused by these discharges. Establishment of the program and efforts to restore oyster and seagrass habitat are described, particularly FOS's work to directly involve the community in these efforts.

AT A GLANCE

2/1: Pathogenic Vibrio Bacteria in the IRL

2/8: Red-cockaded woodpeckers

2/22: The Biology & Conservation of Florida's Hawksbill Turtles

2/29: Manatees: Response to change in warm water

3/7: Studying Seahorses Through Citizen Sightings

3/21: The Northern Estuaries Resource Recovery Program

Call the council at 772.334.4643 for further information.

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Please consider leaving a legacy by naming the Environmental Studies Council in your estate plans.



The Environmental Studies Council, Inc.

2900 NE Indian River Drive
Jensen Beach, FL 34957
Council Office: (772) 219-1887 x 121
Center Office: (772) 219-1887

Mission Statement

To protect and enhance the education programs of the Environmental Studies Center and to promote and extend environmental awareness through community education.

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From the desk of the President

As the weather cools, the Environmental Studies Council is busy with events. On January 16th the Council had its annual fundraiser, a luncheon held at Monarch Country Club. Over 100 supporters joined the Council for an afternoon of great food, a wonderful speaker, and an incredible silent auction. The luncheon raised over \$14,000 to support the Environmental Studies Center. The Council is thankful for all the attendees and the sponsors who made this event a success. I'm already excited for next year's fundraiser!

If you missed the luncheon, there are still more events that you can attend to support the Center. February 1st starts the beginning of the annual Environmental Lectures Series sponsored by Tobacco Free Martin County. With six different speakers over the two month lecture series there are certainly topics that will interest everybody.

Make sure you stop by the Environmental Studies Center's table at the Martin County Fair as it runs from February 12th through the 20th. The table will have information about summer camp and display photos of the Center and students who've attended programs throughout the past 44 years.

If you haven't yet, please show your support for the Center and make your tax deductible donation to the Environmental Studies Council. The Council has updated its membership levels and added wonderful benefits. Membership now includes a discount to the gift shop and free or reduced admission to nearby nature centers like the Loxahatchee River Center and Manatee Observation & Education Center. The Council also provides a special membership for businesses that would like to show their support for the Center. Business members also receive sponsorship opportunities at Council functions.

I hope that you'll join me at one of the Council events or by making a donation to show your support of the Environmental Studies Center.

Sincerely,
Cody Mott

Did Your Membership Expire?

Have you renewed your membership to the Environmental Studies Council? These year-long memberships cost just \$25 for an individual, \$50 for a family and \$100 for a business. Funding everything from critter food to the salary of a certified teacher, memberships directly support the educational experience presented for free for ALL Martin County students.

We need your support!

To sign up, log on to www.escmc.org/membership or call 772-219-1887 x 121.

Thank You to Our Luncheon Sponsors!



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER ADMINISTRATOR, MARILYN GAVITT

Please stop by the Center and see our new indoor mangrove display in the Wet Lab, courtesy of the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties grant. It simulates low and high tides and natural sunlight from dawn to dusk. It is truly stunning! We've also added educational digital displays in the lab that help identify the animals living here. The three tank platforms on the north side, formerly made of wood, have been replaced with rebar and concrete, which will surely last a long time. A big thank you to our Maintenance Department for all the work they did on this with short notice.



The Center teachers and I visited Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton to gain some ideas for interactive displays and to share animal husbandry techniques. It is always interesting to see how other centers are run. They rehabilitate sea turtles there and have several marine tanks and displays. It is worth the trip down there!

Our next project, which we hope to complete by Earth Day, is a sprucing up of the Butterfly Garden area. The pond located there (which was originally an Eagle Scout project) needs some attention. The liner has ripped and the beautiful slate stone surrounding it has fallen into the bottom. We are seeking donations to purchase a new liner, fountain, and pebble stone. Please help if you can!

Thank you for your generosity:

- Pinch-a-Penny Pools in Port Salerno-turtle tank vacuum and circulating pump
- Barbie Hendry-monetary donation
- Louise Faivre-monetary donation
- The Technology Education Resource & Redesign Alliance (TERRA)-grant awarded to ESC for sixth grade program
- Integrated Telecom, Inc.-donation of a replacement projector for Green Door Room

Did you know?

Since 1972, the Environmental Studies Center has incorporated innovative teaching methods that are field oriented, with hands on investigation. The curriculum at the center meets Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, Common Core State Standards, and reflects real-world application of scientific processes.

What would you learn in 5th Grade?

Students are transported on the River Scout to a spoil island in the IRL. They examine a mangrove community, seine for grassflat organisms, map the island topography and study the effects of tides, erosion and deposition of sand on the island.

Wish List

The Environmental Studies Center needs your support! The Center has a current need for:

- *Exhibit sponsors - help support new aquariums and exhibits in the wet lab!*
- *Send a child to camp for one week*
- *Critter food for our residents*
- *Native plants for our north fence*

If you are interested in supporting any of the above opportunities, please contact us at info@escmc.org or by calling 772-219-1887 x121. Or stop by the Center - we'd love to see you!



Environmental Studies Council, Inc.
2900 NE Indian River Drive
Jensen Beach, FL 34957

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WINTER 2016

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Night Hike Happening February 20 - Reserve your spot today!

Join us for a nighttime sensory journey at Jonathan Dickinson State Park for our annual Night Hike. Guests will take a walk into the past as they explore the rich history of the Loxahatchee River at dark and learn about the creatures of the night.

The Hike includes a live animal talk with the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge, an owl pellet dissection, exploration of the forest, and music around the campfire. Guests will also chew on mints that show bioluminescence in nature.

The hike is family friendly for children ages 4 and up.

When: Saturday, February 20 from 5:00pm - 9:00pm

Where: Wilson Creek Pavilion at Jonathan Dickinson State Park

Reservations: Call (772) 219-1887 x121 to reserve your spot today - seats are limited! Reservations are required. \$10 per person.

Hot dogs and chips will be available for \$1.

Wear closed toed shoes and bring bug spray/mosquito repellent.

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