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Strolling Science Seminars off to a Great Start

On October 28th, we were excited to learn the CREW Trust had been awarded a CHNEP Public Outreach Grant to help fund this year's new adult education series, the Strolling Science Seminars. Kathleen Smith, CREW's new biologist, led the first seminar at the CREW Marsh Trails on December 2nd. She shared her extensive knowledge of Florida black bears with the enthusiastic group of participants, showing them the equipment used for bear capture and teaching how to look for bear sign in the woods.

As part of each seminar we discuss citizen science and how participants can become more involved with wildlife monitoring and research. We've established a web page just for participants to get more info about citizen science projects and with links about the seminar topics. Check it out at <http://crewtrust.org/citizen-science/>

The next seminar –**Fire Ecology for Land & Species Management**– will be held on January 6th and led by Ayounga Riddick and Roger Clark. Check out our website for more info on all the Strolling Science Seminars and sign up today!



CREW Staff

Brenda Brooks Executive Director
Deb Hanson Env. Ed. Specialist

23998 Corkscrew Rd. Estero, FL 33928
crewtrust@earthlink.net

Phone: 239-657-2253
<http://crewtrust.org> Winter 2012

Thank You, Our Valuable Volunteers

The CREW Trust has been fortunate over the years to have many talented and generous volunteers who help us further our mission to preserve and protect the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed. From our generous Board of Trustees who guide the Trust with their wisdom of many combined years of experience to the many FGCU students who pass through the CREW gates to pull weeds, trim trails, assist with field trips, pick up trash, create videos and more, our volunteers help us accomplish so much more than we could ever do alone. With limited staff, the CREW Trust, SFWMD, and FWC all depend on our volunteers to help make CREW a great conservation and recreation place.

Our volunteers contribute time, talent, muscle, equipment, creativity, and many, many hours to CREW. During FY 2011, they logged 1609 hours, worth about \$34,000 in value. In November 2011 alone, our volunteers contributed 485.8 hours of time, the equivalent of 16+ hours/day for each of the 30 days – that's more than two additional full-time staff members! **Thank you, thank you, thank you!** Our regular volunteers continue to support us in a variety of ways, and we are delighted to have many new faces on our volunteer staff this year. We will be thanking each of them at our **January 10th CREW Members Wine & Cheese Social**, so we hope to see all of you there.

New Faces and Established Talent on the Trails

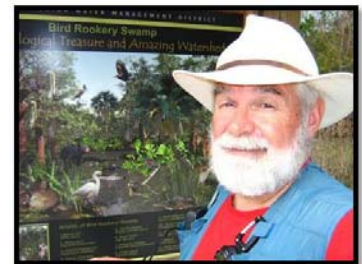
We know we could not accomplish all that we do without our valuable volunteers. **Dr. David Cooper**, our longest-standing volunteer continues to lead our monthly guided hikes at the Marsh Trails and assist with a variety of tasks, including giving sage advice on many topics! He is joined this year by several new faces who have stepped up to offer their talents and services.



CREW volunteers Dr. David Cooper & Roger Grossenbacher

Linda Jacobson is assisting with programs, field trips, and event planning as well as starting a regular blog column about the skies over CREW. She will be presenting Stargazing and Storytelling, along with long-time CREW member and former planetarium director, **Roger Grossenbacher**, on January 20th, 2012 at the CREW office and field.

George and Susan Luther are our new "eyes and ears" at Bird Rookery Swamp, keeping tabs on trail needs, kiosk brochures, and visitors. George also will be leading weekly hikes at Bird Rookery from January – March 2012. You will surely want to catch some of his grand stories on one of those hikes!



George Luther, CREW volunteer, will be leading hikes at Bird Rookery Swamp

Sign up for our environmentally friendly electronic version of the CREW newsletter by emailing your request to crewtrust@earthlink.net. Thanks!!

Golf Tournament Raises Almost \$8000 for CREW

The 2011 CREW Stanley Hole Golf Tournament was held Friday, October, 14th at the beautiful Old Corkscrew Golf Course. Forty-four golfers from southwest Florida supported CREW at this annual fundraiser. Golfers and sponsors raised \$7915 to help us fund our environmental education programs which serve over 5000 students a year.

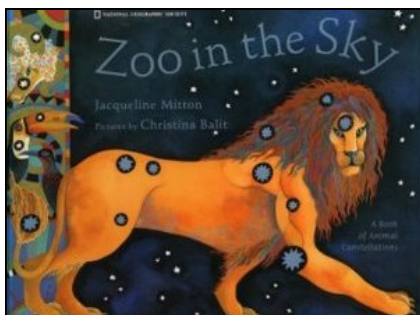
Thank you to Lewis, Longman, & Walker, P.A, Matt Taylor and the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents' Association, and to Hole Montes for their major sponsorships at this event. Thanks also to our many hole sponsors and to all the golfers who came out to support CREW once again!



Nature-Based Literacy

Nature-based literacy means combining reading with being outdoors, helping kids (and adults) develop a love for both, and nurturing a lifelong connection to nature and learning. If you are a parent, grandparent, teacher, or anyone who interacts with even one child regularly, you have the perfect opportunity to make this connection. Simply *grab a really cool book about nature and take your special child outdoors to read*. Take a hike or just sit under a tree outside your house and read together.

The CREW Trust is doing this with two events this year. Stargazing and Storytelling on January 20th will bring families together under the new moon to learn about stars and constellations and listen to stories about the night sky. The Birds, Bugs, and Bears Hike on March 10th will teach kids and their parents how to use field guides to help identify and learn about plants and animals while on a hike. In both cases, we'll be outdoors, learning about and enjoying nature, and we'll also take time to share the joy of reading.



FGCU Students Create Videos for Trail QR Codes

A couple issues ago, we told you we were piloting QR codes on our trails to provide more in-depth information to visitors who have smart phones with code scanner apps. Now, with the help of FGCU students, under the guidance of Instructor David Green, we have installed six new QR codes on the Marsh and Cypress Dome Trails. The students produced original videos using footage shot at the trails and their own voices and creativity to link to the QR codes. So, next time you are out at the trails, scan these codes attached to the trail marker posts and see what great work they did! The code to one of their videos is shown here. Scan it to see the video.



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Memorial Fund for Hugh Richard (Dick) Ennis

Long-time CREW member and supporter, Hugh Richard (Dick) Ennis passed away on November 30, 2011. As was his desire, Dick requested that contributions be made to the CREW Trust in his memory. At his family's request, we have set up a memorial fund in his name. Donations can be made on the CREW donation page of our website <http://crewtrust.org/donate/>.

THANK YOU FRIENDS of CREW!

New and renewed memberships since 9-19-11

Agnoli, Barber, & Brundage,
Rick Barber, III

Leslie Angel*

Jan Bachrach & Grant Hicks

Bonita Bay Group, Jerry McPherson

Bonita Springs Utilities, Fred Partin

Mary Kay Cassani

Lance D Donovan*

Bill & Elaine Dorsett*

Sarah Funck*

Richard Gordon

Grow, Inc.

Holly Hamilton*

Bill & Rosemarie Hammond

Mary Ellen Hawkins

Hole Montes, Inc.

Connie Langmann*

Tom & Judy Maish*

Gary and Barbara Mullins*

Thomas Payne*

Laurel & Dusty Rhodes

Henry & Marjorie Robinson

Michael Seef & Bonnie Michaels*

Leonard Shivok

Rick Solveson*

Hugh & Judy Starnes

Collier Enterprises Mgmt., Mike Taylor

Donna Walker*

Lewis, Longmann, Walker, P.A.,
Stephen A. Walker

Mary Ann Webster

Erin White*

* denotes new members

CREW Science:

Through Animals' Eyes: Dr. Dolittle and the Southern Ringneck Snake

by Dr. Charles (billy) Gunnels

Dr. Dolittle is one of the most famous and popular characters ever created in children's literature. Whether you know Dr. Dolittle from Hugh Lofting's books or Eddie Murphy's film adaptations, I am sure that we all remember Dr. Dolittle's special skill. Dr. Dolittle talked with the animals. By striking up conversations with his two-winged and four-legged friends, he learned about the needs and concerns of different animals. The stories of Dr. Dolittle are wonderful pieces of science fiction, which is not to say that they are complete fiction. Similar to the best science fiction, the story of Dr. Dolittle plays around the edge of scientific fact.

I am a scientist who feels a surprisingly strong connection with Dr. Dolittle. You might say that Dr. Dolittle is a kindred spirit. True, I cannot talk with animals in the way that Dr. Dolittle spoke with his parrot Polynesia. However, I can listen, and my success as a scientist depends on my ability to listen to how animals answer my questions.

I am a behavioral ecologist, which means that I study the evolution and ecology of animal behavior. As a behavioral ecologist, I listen to the animals. I ask animals questions in carefully designed experiments and observations. I then listen to their answers in data that I collect and analyze. Saying that a scientist "listens" to animals may strike you as whimsy, but this is exactly how a behavioral ecologist learns about animals. A behavioral ecologist learns about the perspective and decision rule of animals by listening to how they respond to different situations.



Clay models of snakes

Photo by Dr. Charles (billy) Gunnels, FGCU

molded into different behavioral positions. Predators tell us their answer by biting into particular models. At this point, we do not know whether southern ringneck snakes expose their red underbelly in a coil to flash a warning coloration or deflect the attention of the predator. However, our ability to ask these animals a clear question will allow us to hear their answer in the near future.

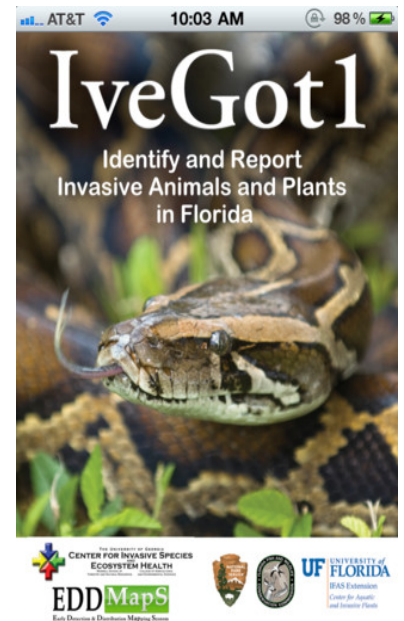
If you want to learn how to listen to the animals, then please join me at the **February 4th Strolling Science Seminar** as we look at the CREW through animals' eyes.



A bitten snake model

Photo by Dr. Charles (billy) Gunnels, FGCU

Consider a study that I am working on at the CREW with undergraduate students from Florida Gulf Coast University. We are looking at an intriguing behavior in the southern ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus punctatus*). The southern ringneck snake is a small, thin ground snake with a black back and red underbelly, and this red underbelly is normally hidden against the ground. When disturbed or attacked by a predator, the southern ringneck snake will suddenly coil its tail to expose its red color of its underbelly. In this study, we are asking the southern ringneck snake why it shows this behavior when harassed. To hear the answer, we ask predators how they respond to model clay snakes that are



A new iPhone app, *IveGot1*, developed by UGa in partnership with UF, NPS, and FWC, encourages people to identify and report invasive species found in Florida. An android version is coming soon.

Join the "Friends of CREW"

When you become a "Friend of CREW", you are helping to ensure the quality of life for your community, your children, and future generations by protecting our vital water resources and wildlife habitat. Please consider returning this Membership Form to CREW along with your contribution. More information at <http://crewtrust.org>.

Membership Levels (please select one)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preserver (\$5,000 and up) | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Bald Eagle (\$1,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat (\$50) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panther (\$3,500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Swallow-tailed Kite (\$500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Families (\$35) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodstork (\$2,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Ghost Orchid (\$100) | <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals (\$25) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Students (\$10) |

Name (please print) _____

Company/Organization (business memberships) _____

Mailing Address _____

City, ST, ZIP _____

Phone () _____

Email address: _____

(Providing your email address helps us get CREW information to you quickly – we do not share your information with other organizations.)



Connect with CREW on our Facebook fan page where we post daily updates, news, and events. www.facebook.com/CREWTrust



You can also follow us on Twitter @CREWTrust



A Musical Night with Nature – 2012 CREW Concert Will Feature New Sounds

On March 24th, 2012, the band shell at Bonita Springs' beautiful Riverside Park will be filled with magical music from some of southwest Florida's most talented musicians. This year, Kat Epple and the **Katalyst Project** will return along with singer/keyboardist **Wendy Webb**. And they've invited a newcomer to the CREW lineup, an exciting quartet called **The Wholetones**. Tickets are \$20 (children 12 and under free) and can be purchased at the gate or in advance by contacting 239-657-2253 or crewtrust@earthlink.net.

Wildflower Festival – March 30 – 31, 2012

Roger Hammer, David Cooper, Glen Stacell, Gary Schmelz, Nick Bodven, Robin Gardner, and Sally Stein have all committed to leading hikes at our annual Wildflower Festival. The summer and fall prescribed burns this year should make for an amazing array of flowers blooming next spring. So, mark your calendars now and get ready for a great event.

Online Registration for many CREW Hikes & Events

This year, online registration is available for many of our hikes and events through Eventbrite. Just go to <http://crewtrust.eventbrite.com> to see the list of events and to register. For events not listed there, check our website <http://crewtrust.org> for calendar and registration information.

Eventbrite®

Events Made Easy



Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed
23998 Corkscrew Rd. Estero, FL 33928
239-657-2253 www.crewtrust.org