

The Mangrove

The Quarterly Newsletter of The Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve

PLANT LIST PROJECT IN PROGRESS

For the past few months a project to revise the Preserve's plant list has been underway. The current list was compiled more than twenty years ago when the County took ownership. A revision was in order when it was discovered that several species growing in the Preserve were not on the original list.

To make this revision, a record was made of all species currently residing in the Preserve, including exotics.

The revised plant list was dropped into an Excel worksheet and organized by group, family, genus and species. The common name of each plant, as determined by the 2011 edition of Wunderlin and Hansen's Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida, was also included.

What is unique to this new listing is species are now linked to a photograph. This feat was accomplished by webmaster Pat McKeon who loaded the Excel worksheet into a Google document and then linked it to Google's Picasa photo album.

Presently there are 110 species recorded on the list with about half linked to a photo. Jim Rodwell has been adding pictures but, there is still a long way to go. More species will be added over time and perhaps some will be taken off.

To see the Preserve's revised list go the Friends website. There is link on the first page taking you to the listing and then on to Picasa.



PRESERVE CLOSED FOR BOARDWALK REPAIRS TWICE THIS FALL

*September 5th - September 23rd

*The month of November

The Mangrove is printed compliments
of Lee County Parks & Recreation



THE RATTLEBOX

By Vicki Little, Sr. Parks &
Recreation Supervisor
Beach Parks & Shorelines

Boardwalk Repairs & Improvements

Lee County Maintenance and Repair Department has found it's time for repairs to our 1/2 mile of boardwalk. Lee County MARS & Viking Construction Corp. of SW FL will repair some 35 to 40 areas on the boardwalk to provide a safe and level surface.

Cost for this project is estimated at \$12,500 with funding coming from Lee County Tourist Development Council (TDC) under the Boardwalk Deck Improvements Funds. This project is to be completed in September followed by a boardwalk addition scheduled to be installed in November. This section is being funded by Lee County Parks & Recreation Small Project Funds. The County Planning and Design Department is handling this \$35,000 project and in an effort to save money the work will all be done in house. With the additional boardwalk section we'll now be able to provide wheelchair accessibility and our facility will be ADA accessible from the new handicap parking space and sidewalk in the parking lot, to the overlook pavilion on Estero Bay. What a wonderful amenity for those who never had access to our beautiful Preserve!

Note: The Trex decking used is made from reclaimed plastic and wood material that would otherwise end up in landfills.



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Articles, pictures, and questions for inclusion in *The Mangrove* should be sent to our P.O. Box 6561 Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

or emailed to either:
drodwell@embarqmail.com or
editor@glily.com

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends are dedicated to the preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural and fragile beauty of the Preserve, to create a legacy for future generations.



FIND US AT FACEBOOK
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
friendsofmatanzaspreserve.org

NEED TO CONTACT US?
Call Dorothy Rodwell
at 851-7166

PROFESSOR MANGROVE'S CORNER

Dear Professor Mangrove,
What is a Black Mangrove Forest?

The Black Mangrove Forest, a low lying area located behind the Tidal Swamps, is one of the major plant communities in the Preserve. Because the elevation is slightly higher, it is not inundated with salt water twice a day like the Tidal Swamps. However, it gets its share during the rainy season and during winter storms when strong winds push the tidal flow into the Forest.

This periodic flooding makes the Forest a wetland. A wetland dominated by grasses, such as the Everglades, is a marsh. A wetland dominated by trees is a swamp. The Forest is dominated by the Black Mangroves which gives this community its name.

The Forest further differs from the Tidal Swamp in that there is vegetation growing on the Forest floor whereas plant growth, aside from mangroves, is not possible in the tidal swamps. The Forest is still a highly saline environment and the brackish water table is just a few inches below the ground's surface.

The principal trees are the Black and White Mangroves and the Buttonwood. All have strategies enabling them to thrive in the salt environment. Plant life on the grounds surface also have survival strategies. Succulents such as the Christmas Berry, Sea Ox-Eye Daisy, Saltwort, Sea Purslane, and Carolina Lavender store fresh water in fleshy leaves and stems.

The Forest can be viewed by taking the boardwalk out to the Pavilion.

PEACE POLE TO BE PLANTED IN PRESERVE



You may have seen an 8-foot pole at Rutenberg Park or Manatee Park saying *May Peace Prevail on Earth* in various languages. Perhaps you've seen one at a school or church in Lee County.

When I saw these poles and visited the Peace Pole Project online, I was hooked. What better place to have people take time to quietly think about peace, including inner peace, than Matanzas Pass Preserve? How wonderful that (with your help) this will soon be a reality. In fact, our peace pole will be at our wine dinner so that donations may be collected to cover its cost and shipping, a total of \$140.

Please call Dorothy Rodwell at 851-7166 to make a donation and be sure to attend our planting ceremony next year. Also, you may wish to visit www.waymark.com which tracks the locations of peace poles around the country.

Dorothy Rodwell

OUR SMART TRAIL IS BORN

Barely a year ago Terry Cain led a group of Friends to Ding Darling. Ding Darling had just drawn national attention with their QR Code based inature trail. Director of the Ding Darling Society, Birgit Vertesch, described how the inature trail was put together. We chatted with park rangers who had participated in making the more than 20 videos. We traversed the Preserve with a stop at each of the ten panels making up the inature trail. Using our smart phones, we enjoyed the short videos explaining each habitat. It was enough. We had to have our own smart trail.

Our original plan called for four panels displaying QR Codes, one for an introduction to the Preserve and one for each of the Preserve's three major plant communities. Julie Schwab got a micro-grant from Charlotte Harbor. Mark List offered to produce the videos. Everything was smooth sailing.

But, we just couldn't get it right. Mark brought in Amanda Parke, an accomplished actress, and her young son, Van, to help. But I flubbed my lines and walked into trees. We finally we got it done but Mark didn't like the results and scrapped them all.

Back to square one. Instead of remembering a script in a structured setting, I did my guided tour as if I had a group from Ohio following me. Mark dumped the tripod and carried the camera. I carried a six foot black mangrove stick as a pointer. Mark simply followed the stick and it worked. We wound up with six good videos.

The next step was getting the panels made... even more problems. The panels would cost more than \$600. They would have to be kept clean. Changing videos would require replacing the whole panel. In the end, the panel idea was abandoned for a 4" x 9" card with codes on one side and a map on the other. Visitors can pick up the cards at the Preserve's bulletin board.

By the time this issue goes to print, our **smart trail** should be in business. Many thanks to all who helped.

by Jim Rodwell

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA "IMPACT" STUDENTS RETURN

University of Georgia students have spent their Spring Break volunteering in Lee County for the last two years. Matanzas Pass Preserve has been one of their favorite workday locations. So when they decided to return to Lee County over the Holiday Break this year, we decided to give them two workdays in the Preserve! Twenty students arrive on December 13th and will voluntarily work in our Parks & Preserves until December 19th.

They are scheduled to work in Matanzas Pass Preserve on Friday and Saturday, December 14th & 15th. Please pencil those days on your calendar and stop by to meet these energetic and supportive young people IMPACT our Preserve!

*Vicki Little
Sr. Parks & Recreation Supervisor Beach Parks
&
Shorelines Lee County Parks & Recreation*

LOOKING AHEAD TO WINTER

PLANT SALE - January

GENERAL MEETING - February

VISIONS OF THE PAST - February

SHRIMP PARADE - March

CHECK OUT OUR FALL ACTIVITIES ON THE BACK PAGE

ARE YOU ENJOYING THE MANGROVE?

We certainly hope so! In order to serve our readers better and to be more green, we'll be offering an email version of **The Mangrove** to those with email addresses beginning in January.

If we don't have your email please send it to Nick Melancon at nmelancon@leegov.com.

If you wish a mailed copy, contact Dorothy at 239-851-7166.

MATANZAS PASS PRESERVE ANNUAL WINE DINNER & BENEFIT FOR THE PRESERVE

Hosted by Dan and Tree Andre of the Mango Street Inn
Date: Saturday, November 3, 2012 Time: 6 pm— 8 pm
Cost: \$100 per person
Contact James Rodwell at 463-4292 to purchase tickets

WHAT WILL BE THE SAME?

- Like-minded people coming together to promote our pristine Preserve with food, wine, and friends.
- Pairings of food and wine demonstrating why Dan and Tree are our favorite foodies!
- Outdoor beauty at the Mango Street Inn

WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

- Sustainable food and wine
- Tickets must be purchased in advance due to the time and effort put into the planning of this event. We truly count on every donation.
- Our Peace Pole will be present and donations accepted.

A PERFECT FOCUS

This year our wine dinner features food and wine from sustainable growers and producers. Hmm...what does this actually mean? While many of us are concerned about the chemicals used to produce our food and beverages, most don't think about the long term impact this food and beverage production has on the land and sea.

Farming naturally isn't a new concept. It's the way it was done for hundreds of years. In the last two centuries, as companies have moved into mass marketing and production, these natural methods have fallen by the wayside in order to meet the needs and demands of our growing population. The trend toward the return of natural farming comes from the farmers' concern about the long-term viability of their land, the quality of their product and, most importantly, the protection of the environment.

Sustainable farming is much more than avoiding pesticides. It's about the whole farm. As my old friend and winemaker, Werner Michlits, from the biodynamic farm Meinklang in Austria says, this type of farming means nothing touches the grapes that doesn't come from the farm itself. It means using techniques such as plant covers to provide nutrients to the soil, bird- bat and owl boxes for rodent and insect control and livestock to provide fertilizer.

Interestingly, it is possible to be an organic farmer and still destroy the environment. Sustainable growing attempts are needed to leave the land in better condition for the next generation. It takes into account issues of global warming, soil erosion, water consumption, soil fertility and greenhouse gases.

Matanzas Pass Preserve is 60 acres of unspoiled land. This island treasure needs to be protected and maintained. On Saturday, November 3 we have the opportunity to enjoy food and wine grown and produced from farmers who feel as passionate about their product as we islanders do about our preserve. Will you join us for dinner?

By Tree Andre

WHY DO GUESTS KEEP RETURNING TO OUR WINE DINNER?

Paula Kiker: *"Incredible food, delectable wine and great friendships come together for a very special evening and a wonderful cause."*

Sharon Schmidt: *"Good food, good company, good cause."*

Chuck Schmidt: *"I go because it is THE fund raising event on the island and the proceeds go to a wonderful cause." PS: I think the raffle is rigged as the Rodwells won two prizes last year.*

WHY KEEP EXOTIC PLANTS OUT OF THE PRESERVE?

Why do a bunch of fun loving people run around Matanzas Pass Preserve every other weekend getting dirty, sweaty and sometimes poked by plants? Believe me, there are days when I just do not understand this behavior. There is a passion among this group to not only keep the preserve clean, safe, and open to the public but to also educate folks about this wonderful natural area. The opportune words here are “natural area.” What is a natural area for Fort Myers Beach?

It is an area that has had little alteration by man. Man’s biggest alteration in the preserve was the digging of mosquito ditches in 1958. This created elevated areas where the ditched material was left in place and where exotic pest plants could take hold and create a seed source for the rest of the preserve carried by wind, high tide events and birds visiting the preserve.

The Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve and their friends (such as groups from FGCU and Edison College) work every other week-end to rid the Preserve of exotic plants. This group of exotic plant busters pull, cut, and dig all kinds of plants that do not belong in a maritime hammock. Some you would recognize as house plants your mothers and grandmothers had around the house. Others were planted as ornamentals in yards because they could survive our hot dry climate but, having no natural predator, they took over yards and escaped into the Preserve. If left unchecked, they would create a mono culture, meaning we would only have the exotic plants, many of which do not provide a food source for our wildlife.

This is only one of the many fun things the Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve do to keep the Preserve looking beautiful, safe and healthy. While working on the exotic plant buster’s crew you learn about exotic plants, native plants and planting the right plant in the right place.

Come out and join the Friends some Saturday. Learn about your native vegetation while having fun with passionate, fun loving people.

*Terry Cain
Lee County Parks & Recreation
Land Stewardship Coordinator*

PLANTS OF THE PRESERVE AS LISTED & SEEN IN THE REVISED PLANT LIST



Spanish Bayonet



Buttonwood Tree



Spanish Moss

MEET OUR NEW MAYOR, LINDA MEEDER



Please welcome our new Mayor of Matanzas Pass Preserve, Linda Meeder. Her first mayoral duty was to present to the Environmental Education Faculty Representatives for the Lee County Schools and she was a big hit.

Long familiar with the beach (her mother moved here in 1978), Linda was raised in Ohio but found herself in Miami earning a BS in Geology from the University of Miami. Following this she worked in soil and water conservation and farm development. In 2008 she moved here permanently.

A Florida Master Naturalist and an interpretive guide, Linda brings her quiet enthusiasm and guidance to Home Sweet Home and Magic Spots.

ENJOY OUR NEW
EMAILED MANGROVE
AND PRESERVE
UPDATES TOO!



EARTH ED SAYS: EVEN ADULTS NEED MAGIC SPOTS

Imagine a place where it's ok to wait, watch and receive information from what is around you. In this place is a sharpened sense of harmony with the world. It is in this place that it's ok to just "be." For many our Preserve is just such a place and now we have both children and adults turned on to our magic spot.

From Steve Van Matre and the Institute for Earth Education, our basis for children's programs at Matanzas Pass Preserve.

Stay tuned for 4th grade adventure!



Magic Spots... This addition to our program is a creative way to encourage children to notice what is right around them as something both interesting and calming. This is a 45 minute interactive (child and nature) activity in the Preserve. What a great way to have a personal and private experience in the natural world.

We are so fortunate to be able to offer a 4th grade program, in the Spring, that continues the tradition of high quality educational offerings for children in the Preserve. The **Connection Inspection** (a web of life) and **Ed's Diary** (exploration emphasizing a sense of wonder and place) come from the Lee County Parks and Recreation, the Institute of Earth Education, and the Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve. Once again we'll be customizing these programs in order to highlight the special qualities of our Preserve. Look for more details in our next Mangrove.



ADOPT A TREE

**A gift for all occasions: Births & Birthdays,
Graduations, Anniversaries, Holidays,
Weddings, In Memory**



For a \$50 contribution, you can adopt a tree, for a year, in our 60-acre Preserve on behalf of yourself or any other designated recipient.

The contribution includes a certificate of adoption (including the name of the tree adopted), a one-year membership in the Friends of Matanzas Pass

Preserve and a one-year subscription to The Mangrove, the Friend's quarterly newsletter. The balance of the contribution will specifically be used by the Friends for enhancement and restoration projects in the Preserve.

Trees available for adoption include Live Oak, Gumbo Limbo, Slash Pine, and Buttonwood.

**Fill out the application to the right
and send your \$50 check to:**

***Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve
P. O. Box 6561
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931***

ADOPT A TREE APPLICATION

Your Information — Date _____

Name

Address

City, state, zip

Phone

E-mail

Recipient's Information

In memory of In honor of

Name

Occasion

Person to notify

Address

City, state, zip

Phone

E-mail

Check tree selected:

Live Oak Gumbo Limbo

Slash Pine Buttonwood

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN US?

To join, complete this membership application and return along with your annual dues to:

Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 6561

Ft. Myers Beach, FL 33932

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please call me as I'd like to learn more about volunteer opportunities! I would possibly be interested in:

Education Preserve Workdays Special Events The Mangrove

Fundraising Friends Ambassador Adopt a Tree Program

Types of membership: Individual \$10/year _____ Life Membership \$100 _____

I'd like to donate an additional amount of: _____ Total amount enclosed: _____

HERE'S A PEEK AT OUR FALL SCHEDULE

Tuesdays: Friends Board Meeting at Bay Oaks, 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.: Oct 9, Nov 13, Dec 11

Thursdays: Matanzas Mangrove Walk 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. : Dec 6, 13, 20

4th Wednesdays: Ethnobotany Walk - 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.: Begins in Jan

Saturday: Workdays in the Preserve – 8-10 a.m.: Oct 13, Nov 10, 24, Dec 8, 22, 29
See Important Note Below

New offering in January for our “Meditation Destination.”

Important Note: As Preserve work-days can change, please call Pat Gano at 745-5970 or check www.friendsofmatanzaspreserve.org to be sure a particular date has not been rescheduled.

SPECIAL DATES & EVENTS OF INTEREST

October 27th—Monofilament Madness

Nov 3rd— Wine Dinner

Dec 7th—Volunteer Training for the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve (presented by DEP)

Dec 14th and 15th—University of Georgia Students

FRIENDS OF MATANZAS PASS PRESERVE

PO Box 6561

Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931