



## Coastal & Marine Extension News – March 2010 Volume 1, Issue 5

### Success Stories

**John Stevely** -- The Florida Artificial Reef Summit (January 21-23, 2010, Cocoa Beach) promoted the exchange of technical information that will enable Florida artificial reef programs to plan, construct and manage artificial reefs in a cost effective and ecologically sound manner. A total of 186 representatives from Florida and Gulf and Atlantic states participated, including a broad mix of extension clientele from private fishers, charter captains and volunteers to local, state and federal agency professionals. The educational program consisted of panel discussions and over 40 invited and contributed talks and 22 poster presentations. The Summit was a collaborative effort between Florida Sea Grant (FSG) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC). The Florida Marine Extension Program was fully involved in all aspects of Summit planning, preparation and execution. Marine Extension agents John Stevely (Manatee Co.) and **Bryan Fluech** (Collier Co.) co-chaired the Summit steering committee, with Specialist guidance on program content from **Bill Lindberg**. **Joy Hazell** with help from **Dorothy Zimmerman** edited the Summit Abstracts and Program. Several Marine Extension agents from throughout the state facilitated all aspects of the Summit, including **Chris Verlinde**, **Andrew Diller**, **Betty Staugler**, **Scott Jackson**, **Brooke Saari** and **Stephen Theberge**. **Treva Damron** coordinated on-site reception and registration. The 2010 Summit was dedicated to the memory of Chris Koepfer, former Lee County Artificial Reef Coordinator, and more than \$2,500 was contributed to an educational fund for his daughters through a raffle of donated fine art and other items. In addition to the fiscal support for the Summit provided by FSG and FWC, a total of 22 other sponsors also provided funding. The Summit is only held once every 3-6 years. Initial evaluation indicated that the Summit met or exceeded participants' expectations. A post Summit evaluation will be conducted within 3-6 months.

The Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival (February 20-21, 2010) had two goals: (1) generate funding for the purchase and restoration of 95 acres of environmentally sensitive land (the FISH Preserve) along Sarasota Bay adjacent to the historic commercial fishing village of Cortez (Manatee Co., FL); and (2) help preserve the working waterfront nature of Cortez, one of the few remaining commercial fishing villages in



Cortez. The Marine Extension program played a co-founding role in starting the Festival 28 years ago and continues to play a key role in organizing the Festival. Approximately 25,000 people attended the festival which generated an estimated \$90,000 in net profit. To date the Festival has generated over \$600,000 and the mortgage for the initial land purchase has been successfully retired. Payments on two remaining mortgages are being successfully met. Approximately 2,500 Festival participants attending dockside talks by Marine Extension John Stevely (Manatee, Co., Fl) that explain the history of Cortez, commercial fishing practices and environmental issues affecting the productivity of coastal waters. The goals of the Festival are disseminated to many tens of thousands citizens in the region by pre and post publicity in all major weekly and daily newspapers and some TV stations.

**Maia McQuire** -- Elementary school teachers in Florida feel that they do not have time to teach science because of pressure to focus on math and language arts. Maia McQuire has been collaborating with **Ruth Francis-Floyd** (UF/IFAS Veterinary Medicine) to develop a third grade curriculum about manatees that addresses state science standards, as well as language arts, math and social studies. This curriculum is being pilot-tested in two schools in Flagler County. In December, 2009, all 400 third grade



students from the two schools visited Blue Spring State Park to learn more about manatees, and to see them in the wild. The park volunteers who taught the classroom component of the field trip were very impressed with the students' level of knowledge about manatees. Volunteers from the UF Veterinary School, the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications and Flagler County residents helped lead the classes around the park, and guided them in completing data sheets. Students observed manatee and fish behavior, and were able to see a manatee with a satellite tag in the spring run. Students also learned about the non-native fish that harass manatees in the spring area, and discovered that these fish may have been released from aquaria by Florida residents. For the majority of the students, this was the first time they had seen live manatees. Teachers are continuing to incorporate the manatee lessons into their curriculum, and plans are underway for each school to offer a science night in spring 2010, with the third grade students and teachers providing manatee-themed activities, posters and podcasts.

**Doug Gregory** -- The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Keys Seafood Festival, a partnership between UF/IFAS, Florida Sea Grant, Monroe County Extension and the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association was held in Key West on January 16. Over 6000 locals and tourists attended. UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant had an Extension educational booth this year. This annual effort is a major contribution toward helping to sustain the financial and political viability of the local fishing industry which is the most valuable in the southeastern US. Many businesses throughout the community contribute to the event.

Doug also testified at a Florida Department of Community Affairs Administrative Hearing regarding the Stan Mayfield Working Waterfront Grant program. The testimony provided, as an expert witness, highlighted various discrepancies in the criteria used to award grant funds.

**Lisa Krinsky** – Working in collaboration with other fishing conservation and environmental organizations in the county, Lisa worked with the Super Bowl Host Committee to organize the NFL's 2010 Kids Fishing Classic. The partners organized fishing clinics at the Broward and Miami-Dade County NFL Youth Education Town (YET) Centers. 150 kids learned about fish anatomy, ethical angling, rods, reels, and tackle, marine debris, marine habitats, and life skills. During the fishing classic, all 150 kids went offshore fishing and then attended a party where they partook in gyotaku, casting, and touch tank stations, and had their picture and autographs taken with NFL players.



Along with the Miami-Dade urban horticulture extension agent, Lisa hosted a Mangrove Maintenance Workshop. 56 people attended the 5-hour training devoted to teaching arborists and landscape architects mangrove identification, biology, pruning and management of mangroves in southeast Florida. Upon completion of the workshop, participants received a variety of continuing education units for pesticide users, arborists, and landscapers.

Lisa also was a member of the steering committee for the 1<sup>st</sup> International Rip Current Symposium at Florida International University, which was co-hosted by Florida Sea Grant. This three day symposium brought together 82 scientists, beach safety personnel and managers, and extension agents from 9 different countries to try to develop a unified message for rip current safety. As a result of the meeting, Lisa will coordinate meetings with the NOAA National Weather Service, Miami-Dade Marine Patrol, and local marine safety officers to come up with a localized plan for rip current safety and awareness.

**Chris Verlinde** – participated in a number of coastal and marine initiatives this quarter, including the following. She provided and taught all activities for the Boy Scout Nature Badge at the annual Boy Scout Merit Badge Clinic at the Gulf Islands National Seashore Naval Live Oaks Unit. Twenty scouts completed all requirements for their nature badge. She worked with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas and Ecosystem Restoration, FWC, FDEP



Park Patrol and volunteers from the Bream Fishermen Association to remove 128 crab traps from Catfish Basin and Blackwater Bay in Santa Rosa County. She led 29 teachers and informal educators participated in two Project Learning Tree workshops. Participants received the curriculum book and increased their knowledge about environmental education. She also received the Walt Reese Environment Conservation Award from the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce and was Project Learning Tree Facilitator of the year 2009.



**Lindsay Addison** -- The Team Ocean program kicked off its outreach efforts in late January. Fourteen volunteers received classroom training and are learning on-the-job as they visit Keewaydin Island in Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. On the island, they conduct stewardship activities such as trash pick-up and sign checks, the importance of protecting the estuary, and boating and fishing regulations. As one of the most visited spots in the Reserve, Keewaydin Island will benefit from increased stewardship and educational activities. The Team Ocean program is operated through a partnership between Florida Sea Grant and Rookery Bay Reserve.

**Leslie Sturmer** -- Leslie is participating in the Aquaculture 2010 conference hosted by the World Aquaculture Society in San Diego, California this month. She has been invited to give four presentations on the following topics: improving shellfish production through clam hybridization, culture potential of the sunray venus clam, shellfish best management practices, and decision-support tools for clam growers. In addition, Leslie is chairing a session entitled Down and Dirty with Small-scale Shellfish Growers, Hobbyists and Gardeners.

### **Upcoming Events**

**Maia McGuire** – March 22-26, 2010—“Exploring our Environment II—from the past to the future.” This adult day camp was created at the request of participants in the first “Exploring our Environment—from the ocean to the river” classes. This will be the second offering of this new class; like the first offering, the class is full, with 20 participants. The class was developed and is being taught by Maia McGuire in partnership with the GTMNERR.

**Doug Gregory** – Doug is participating in a National Sea Grant effort to provide education about the new NOAA Catch Shares Policy that involves agents and specialists from most Sea Grant programs in the US. Doug also will be busy locally dealing with climate change issues, serving as the Monroe County staff liaison to the Monroe County Green Initiative Task Force in the development of a Climate Action Plan for both Monroe County government operations and the county-wide community. This new effort is the result of a request from the County Administrator and requires monthly meetings and monthly presentations to the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners. Climate change educational efforts involves partnerships with the County, local municipalities, local utilities and NGOs.

**Bryan Fluech and Lisa Krinsky** – Bryan and Lisa are teaming up to offer a series of workshops in April that will focus on seafood safety and sustainability. Workshops will be held in Collier and Miami-Dade counties. The workshops are intended for the general public and will address balancing seafood health benefits and risks, supply and demand trends, and proper purchasing and handling practices. Bryan and Lisa are also working with **Dr. Steve Otwell** and **Dr. Wendy Dahl** from UF's Food Science and Human Nutrition Program to offer a series of seafood health and sustainability webinars intended for health care professionals and extension faculty.

**Chris Verlinde** -- The 10<sup>th</sup> annual Seagrass Awareness Celebration (March 27, 2010) is an annual family event held at Shoreline Park South in Gulf Breeze, Florida. This year activities will include live marine life in touch tanks, “eat a seagrass bed,” make a shark tooth necklace, seining, games, fishing, marine creature costumes, arts and crafts, food, music, displays, explore a seagrass bed, boating safety, fishing, kayaking, a marine critter caper, and more! Bring your family and friends, water, sunscreen, hat, water shoes, lawn chairs and join us for a fun filled day! Participating organizations include: The Environmental Education Coordination Team, University of Florida IFAS Extension: Florida Sea Grant Extension, Florida Master Naturalists, Florida Department of Environmental Protection: Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas, Ecosystem Restoration, Park Patrol; Resource Rangers, Roy Hyatt Environmental Center, Florida Diamondback Terrapin Working Group, US Environmental Protection Agency, the Wildlife Sanctuary of NW Florida, Mil Flores, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Marine Education, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, the Pensacola Recreational Fishing Association and more!

**The Next issue of this Newsletter will be sent out in June 2010**