



## Upcoming Legislative Issues

By Rae Ann Wessel and Holly Schwartz, Natural Resource Policy Staff

### *Florida's 2019 Legislative Session*

Preparing for the 2019 Legislative Session that starts March 5th, elected state officials began committee meetings in December. The impact of Hurricane Michael, that hit the Panhandle last fall, has dominated budget discussions. A forecasted state budget surplus of \$223 million for 2019 appears to have vaporized as Hurricane Michael recovery costs of \$250 million are anticipated.

Legislators have started to file and sponsor bills. Last year, of 3,250 bills filed only 186 passed. With just 60 days to debate, vote on and fund bills, changes happen fast so we encourage you to follow developments on SCCF's 2019 Legislative Tracker on our web site. The Legislative Tracker will provide weekly notices of committee dates and times when bills will be presented and debated, a table of bills SCCF is tracking with links to the bills, and Action Alerts with talking points you can use to contact legislators. To be sure you don't miss timely information we encourage you to sign up to receive Action Alerts directly to your email. (Find the Tracker and Action Alert sign-up at [sccf.org](http://sccf.org), go to Resources and click on the Take Action drop-down.)

As of this writing a few bills we will be following have been filed on fracking, fertilizer and septic regulation. Senator Linda Stewart (Orlando) has filed SB 146 to ban fracking in Florida. Introducing the bill, Senator Stewart stated, "Fracking poses a dangerous threat to our environment, especially here in Florida. The fracking process involves a host of toxic chemicals injected in the extraction process which could contaminate the fresh water supply for millions of people and our wildlife. It's just not worth the risks."

SCCF supports a ban on fracking for Florida as 1) the process uses precious freshwater, 2) contaminates groundwater, where a majority of Floridians get our drinking water and 3) because the state's limestone geology is incompatible with the mechanical impacts from fracking. No House bill has yet been filed.

Septic tank regulations have been proposed in SB

214 by Senator Joe Gruters (Sarasota) and HB 85 by Representative Will Robinson (Bradenton) to require periodic inspections and maintenance of septic systems and require the Department of Health to update their database and maps of existing systems, develop minimum standards and create rules and enforcement procedures for failing systems.

A bill requiring statewide use of slow-release nitrogen seeks to update fertilizer regulation. HB 157 has been filed by Representative Geri Thompson (Orlando). The bill is couched in the 2008 Model Ordinance for Florida Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes with some modified conditions on local governments. There is no current Senate companion bill.

The past year's water quality crisis makes these issues low-hanging fruit for legislative action. We will work with the sponsors to see if we can tighten and target the bill language to assure that they contribute to significantly improving water quality. SCCF will be closely following these bills along with the hundreds of others that impact natural resources.

### *Federal Legislation 2019 Farm Bill*

In December, Congress passed the \$867 billion farm bill. The bill retains billions of dollars in subsidies to farmers for sugar cane and sugar beets and expands subsidies to nieces, nephews and first cousins of farmers even if those relatives do not directly work on the farm. Sugar subsidies are estimated to cost consumers \$2.4 to \$4 billion more than under free trade.

In early 2018 it was hoped that a business coalition for sugar reform could make the case to eliminate sugar subsidies.

The farm bill also legalizes the production of hemp, that has been estimated to grow into a \$20 billion industry by 2022.

*See Policy on Page 2*

## Policy -- Continued from Page 1

### *Legislation Filed — Combating Rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels*

New bipartisan legislation has been filed in the U.S. House that would add a fee to major sources of carbon dioxide emissions such as oil refineries and coal producers. The fees collected would be returned to taxpayers to offset higher energy costs. The *Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act* proposes an initial fee of \$15 per metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub> with an escalator of \$10 per year if reduction targets are not met. Emission reductions of 40% in the next 10 years and 90% in 30 years are estimated if the bill is successfully enacted.

The fourth National Climate Assessment Report <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/> issued in late 2018 highlights the interconnected and cascading impacts of climate change to natural resources, the built environment, our social systems and economy.

Three of the five bill sponsors of the legislation are from Florida: Congressman Ted Deutch (Palm Beach and Broward) Francis Rooney (Lee and Collier) and former Governor Charlie Crist (Pinellas). Representative John K. Delaney (Maryland) and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (Pennsylvania) are also sponsoring the bill.

## 50-Year-Old Gopher Tortoise Spotted on SCCF Preserve

*By Audrey Albrecht, Shorebird Biologist*

Recently, SCCF's Wildlife & Habitat Management staff came across a gopher tortoise crossing a road on one of SCCF's nature preserves. Upon closer inspection, they saw that the tortoise was marked. Tortoises and other turtles are sometimes marked by drilling small holes in the outer scutes of their carapace in a unique pattern. So as not to cause any disturbance to the protected animal, staff snapped a few quick pictures and the tortoise scurried back to its burrow. Back at the office, they were able to look up its unique markings by referencing historical data.

They were quite surprised to find out that this particular tortoise was actually marked over 40 years ago, in 1978. In fact, she was already an adult at the time of her original capture, meaning she could be much older. Staff estimates she is at least 50 years old.

1978 was the last year of the tortoise races in Fort Myers. For 20 years, gopher tortoises were collected from the wild from all over the state and as far north as Georgia and brought to Fort Myers for the race. After the 1978 race, all 108 racing tortoises were brought to Sanibel, where they were cared for and treated for their injuries. 35 sustained injuries from the hooks used to yank them from their burrows, others had injuries from crowded holding cages prior to the race, and most had paint and decorations on their shells and claws. When the weather was appropriate, the tortoises were marked and released on properties with suitable habitat.

After this event, Sanibel's City Council passed an ordinance making it illegal to disturb tortoises or their burrows. SCCF worked with the biologists responsible for stopping the races, and continued to mark gopher tortoises on the island for research, and relocated tortoises from construction sites to suitable habitats when needed.



The individual mentioned in this article was marked as part of the continued research after the racing tortoises were released.

Gopher tortoises are listed as threatened in the state of Florida, and it is illegal to disturb the tortoise or its burrow. Always observe them from a respectful distance.

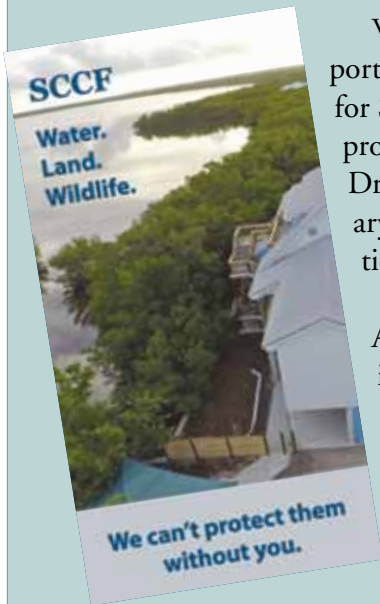
### New Tumblers Available at the Garden Center

Show your support of SCCF while you're drinking coffee! Twenty-ounce vacuum-insulated tumblers are now available for purchase in the SCCF Native Landscapes & Garden Center. Made of stainless steel, the Klean Kanteen brand mugs have the SCCF logo and mission printed on each side, and are perfect for keeping your coffee warm or your water cold.

Each mug comes with a tumbler lid, and costs \$26.95. SCCF members receive a 10% discount.



## Please Help SCCF Reach its Fiscal Funding Goals



We're more than halfway through the fiscal year and need the support of all our members to make FY2018-2019 a financially stable year for SCCF. You can provide much-needed operating support to all our program areas by making a tax-deductible gift to the Annual Fund Drive. Please read the Annual Fund Drive brochure mailed in January. It is chock full of examples of the extensive work your contributions support.

Please donate by using the reply envelope in that recently mailed Annual Fund Drive request or give at [www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org). For questions, including how to give securities, please contact Cheryl Giattini at 395-2768 or [cgiattini@sccf.org](mailto:cgiattini@sccf.org).

**\$850K**

**\$495K**

**FY 2018-19  
ANNUAL  
FUND DRIVE  
As of 1/8/19**

# Water

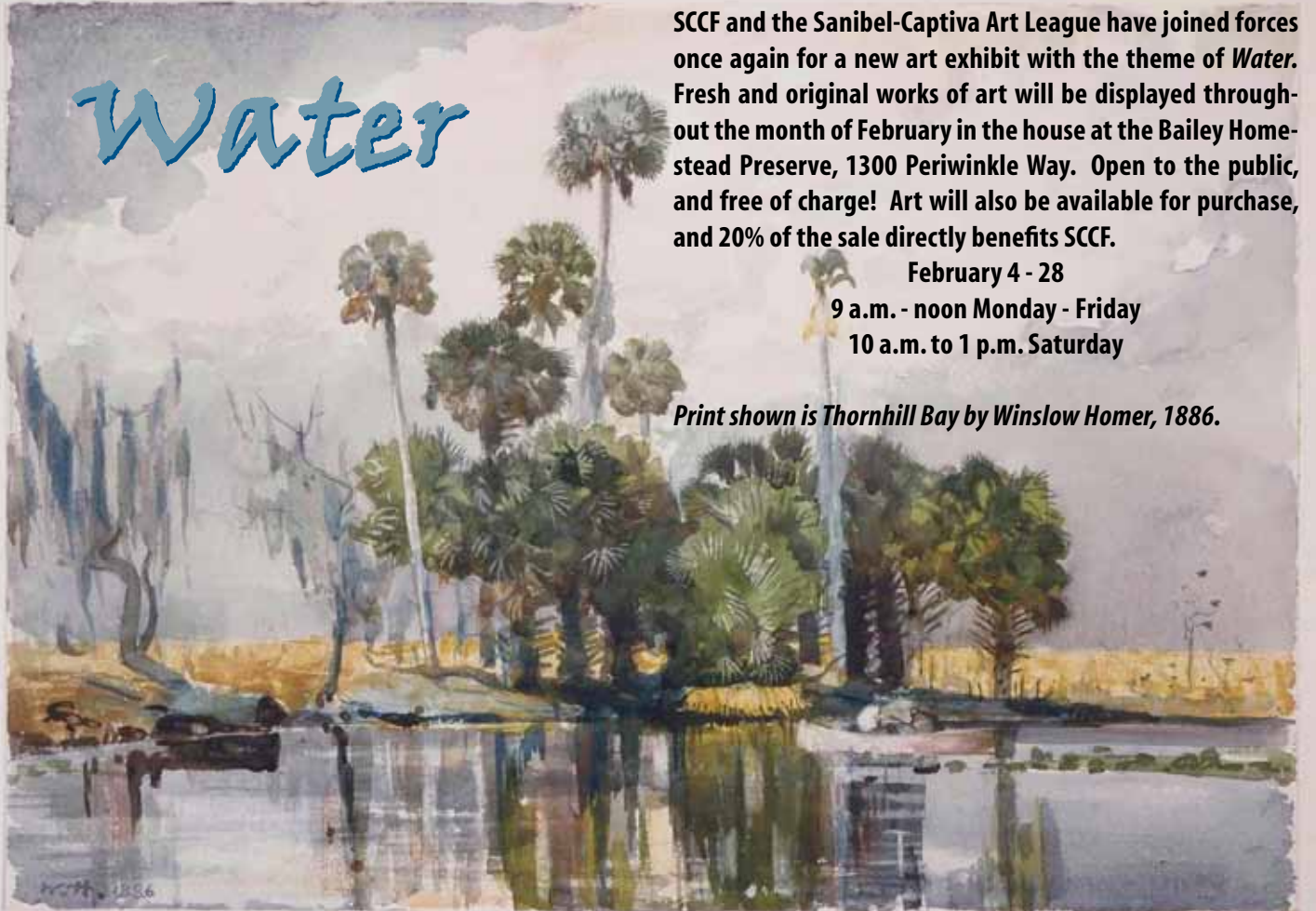
SCCF and the Sanibel-Captiva Art League have joined forces once again for a new art exhibit with the theme of *Water*. Fresh and original works of art will be displayed throughout the month of February in the house at the Bailey Homestead Preserve, 1300 Periwinkle Way. Open to the public, and free of charge! Art will also be available for purchase, and 20% of the sale directly benefits SCCF.

February 4 - 28

9 a.m. - noon Monday - Friday

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday

*Print shown is Thornhill Bay by Winslow Homer, 1886.*



## Meet Kevin Jones, the Marine Lab's new Research Assistant

I'm thrilled to be working here at the SCCF Marine Lab. Growing up in Cleveland on the shores of Lake Erie, I became interested in aquatic science from a young age. Spending my summers swimming and fishing, and later surfing and SCUBA diving, gave me an appreciation for the importance of conserving and protecting aquatic ecosystems.

At the University of Alabama, I decided to follow my childhood dream by pursuing a B.S. in chemistry and marine science. During my time there, I was fortunate enough to spend two summers as a student and intern at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Alabama's primary marine research and education center. This was my first time experiencing the unique beauty of the Gulf coast, and it left a lasting impression on me.

After graduation, I sought out any opportunities that would allow me to build up my skills and experience as a field scientist. I traveled west to serve in AmeriCorps, where I worked on conservation and land management projects in such diverse locations as Lake Tahoe and the Grand Canyon. I went on to work as a research assistant at the Stone Laboratory on Lake Erie and as a scientific observer on commercial fishing vessels in Alaska. When the opportunity arose to come and work for SCCF, I was thrilled to continue pursuing my passion while also doing my part to protect the

Gulf coast that I have come to love.

So far, I have been blown away by the energy and dedication of my coworkers here at SCCF. The body of work that this small organization has produced over the years is extraordinary, and I am excited to become a part of that. My primary responsibility at the Marine Lab will be the maintenance

of the RECON water quality sensors that stretch from the Caloosahatchee out into the Gulf. These sensors provide invaluable data to the Marine Lab about the conditions of our local waters. It's a pleasure and an honor to be working at the Marine Lab, and I can't wait to contribute to the important research that happens here.

## New Journal Publication by Marine Lab

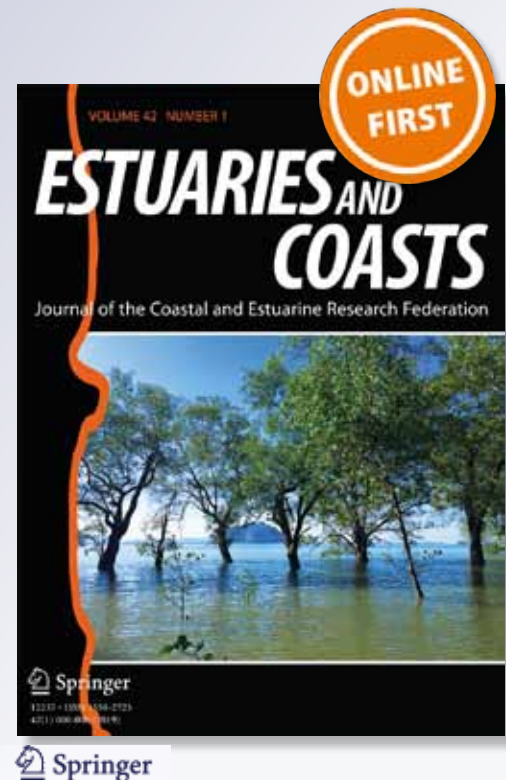
*Determining the Sources of Macroalgae During Beach Stranding Events from Species Composition, Stable Isotope Analysis, and Laboratory Experiments*

**E. C. Milbrandt, L. Reidenbach & Michael Parsons**

**Estuaries and Coasts**  
Journal of the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation

ISSN 1559-2723

Estuaries and Coasts  
DOI 10.1007/s12237-018-00489-8



*Kevin Jones, Research Assistant, filters water from the Caloosahatchee as part of the NSF project to study algae blooms.*

*The Marine Lab's research on macroalgal beach stranding events is being published in the peer-reviewed journal, Estuaries and Coasts. Look for more information on the research in next month's newsletter.*

## 1st Annual Paul McCarthy Lecture: Change the Story, Change the World

The First Annual Paul McCarthy Speaker event, *Change the Story, Change the World* by Andy Goodman, will be held on February 6, at the Sanibel Community Association, 2173 Periwinkle Way at 7:00 p.m. Doors will open at 6:30 and light refreshments will be available. The event is free but pre-registration on EventBrite is required by January 30, 2019 ([sccf.org](http://sccf.org), go to Programs and look for event link).

The lecture series was conceived by the Boler family, which provided a grant to cover program costs, as a way to honor a dear family friend, Paul McCarthy, founder of

Captiva Cruises and an active presence on the islands for years. February 6 would have been Paul's 67th birthday.

*Change the Story, Change the World* by Andy Goodman is a chance to learn how the approach to information or call to action can be framed to motivate or engage more people. The art of non-fictional story telling can help engage more people in what may be a particularly challenging situation.

As an example: In Brazil, organ donation was almost considered taboo. There were lots of misconceptions and stigma attached to donation of viable organs for thousands of people whose lives depended upon a transplant. So donation organizations began looking to something Brazilians were passionate about — soccer.

They began working with local soccer clubs to promote donation. This eventually led to people associating intent for organ donation to be a mark of a super fan. To be a donor began to be imbued with the same passion as support for the local soccer hero or community club. The transformation was remarkable and the wait list for patients hoping for a new heart, liver, kidney was reduced to zero.

It was all about the story: discovering what blocked people from advanced consent, what they cared about deeply and changing the culture to celebrate. Moving people from information to knowledge to action is a skill.

Andy believes stories are the single most powerful communication tool we have, with the power to change the world.

## WHY BAD PRESENTATIONS

### Happen to GOOD CAUSES



## SCCF February 2019 Program Schedule

### BIRDS OF A FEATHER PAINT TOGETHER WORKSHOP

Join SCCF and SCAL (Sanibel-Captiva Art League) for an art meets science workshop about birds! Audrey Albrecht, SCCF's shorebird biologist, will talk about the anatomy of birds and observation skills that will help while studying birds for artistic purposes. Using Audrey's tips, Marion Hall, SCAL member and award winning watercolor artist, will lead participants in creating a watercolor painting of their favorite bird. Participants should bring their favorite watercolor paints, brushes and paper, as well as any reference photographs that they would like to use. Watercolor notecards will be available as part of the class materials. *Registration required, please call 239-472-1932 to sign up. Wednesday, February 13th, 1 - 4 p.m. at the SCCF Bailey Homestead Pavilion, 1300 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel. Cost \$30 SCCF/SCAL members; \$40 non-members, limited to 15 participants.*

### BOWMAN'S BEACH WALK

Meet your SCCF guide at Bowman's Beach at the foot of the bridge that crosses the bayou on the way to the beach. Your guide will lead you along the beach towards Blind

Pass and back along the back dune/bayou trail. Keep your eyes open for shorebirds and gopher tortoises. Learn about SCCF's 50-year role in island preservation. *Free to all but you must pay to park. Wednesdays, February 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 9 a.m.*

### CALOOSAHATCHEE OXBOW & RIVERLORE CRUISE

Come with us to experience the historic meanders of the upper Caloosahatchee on this 2.5-hour cruise guided by Rae Ann Wessel. Friday cruises depart at 1 p.m. and return by 3:30 p.m.; Saturday cruises depart at 9 and return by 11:30. Both depart from the W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam Park off SR 80 in Olga. *Friday cruises: February 1 (sold out), March 1, March 29. Saturday cruises: February 16 (almost sold out at press time), March 16 (almost sold out at press time), April 13 and May 11. Space is limited. Advance reservations and payment required. Register online: from [sccf.org](http://sccf.org), click on Resources upper right and follow Oxbow Cruise dropdown. \$45 per person.*

Programs continued on Page 7

# SCCF PROGRAMS FEBRUARY 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Weeds Seeds-8:45 New Moon Meditation on Caplina-call Yali at 239/314-9642 for more info. "Water" Art Exhibit w/ San-Cap Art League Feb 4 - 28 at Bailey Homestead Preserve	<b>5</b> Panther Corridors-10  Trail Walk-11	<b>6</b> Bowman's Beach Walk-9 Paul McCarthy Lecture: <i>Messaging for Nonprofits</i> -7 pm @ SCA. Registration by Jan. 30 required.	<b>7</b> Turtle Tracks-10	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Weeds Seeds-8:45	<b>12</b>  Trail Walk-11	<b>13</b> Bowman's Beach Walk-9 Birds of a Feather-1 @ Bailey Homestead Preserve	<b>14</b> Turtle Tracks-10  Shorebird Nesting-2	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  Caloosahatchee Oxbow & Riverlore Cruise-Franklin Lodge-9am-Advance Reservation required (almost sold out at press time)
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Weeds Seeds-8:45	<b>19</b>  Conservation Photography-10  Trail Walk-11	<b>20</b> Bowman's Beach Walk-9	<b>21</b> Turtle Tracks-10	<b>22</b>  Benefactors Brunch: 10:30. Call 239/395-2768 for more info.	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Weeds Seeds-8:45	<b>26</b>  Trail Walk-11	<b>27</b> Bowman's Beach Walk-9	<b>28</b> Turtle Tracks-10  Shorebird Nesting-2		
		Trail Walk-11				

# SCCF February 2019 Program Schedule

*Continued from Page 5*

## **CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHY & ETHICS**

With the rise of digital cameras and smartphones, the world of photography has been made accessible to just about everyone. Wildlife and landscape photography are especially popular in Southwest Florida but these ecosystems are fragile. Learn about conservation photography and what considerations to keep in mind. SCCF Public Outreach Coordinator Alexis Horn is a published professional photographer. *Tuesday, February 19 at 10 a.m. in the SCCF auditorium. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

## **FLORIDA PANTHERS AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**

Florida panthers are the rarest mammals in North America – and their future depends on wildlife corridors. While not found on Sanibel, they play an important role in maintaining the ecosystems of Southwest Florida. The last few years have seen record-breaking panther deaths, but there is hope. Prior to joining us, SCCF Public Outreach Coordinator Alexis Horn ran the Sierra Club's Florida Panther program. *Tuesday, February 5 at 10 a.m. in the SCCF auditorium. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

## **SHOREBIRDS OF SANIBEL & CAPTIVA**

Join SCCF biologists to learn about the shorebird species that nest on our beaches, including snowy plovers, least terns and wilson's plovers. SCCF has been monitoring beach nesting birds on Sanibel since 2002. Learn how you can safely share the beach and help us protect our feathered friends. *Thursday, February 14 and 28 at 2 p.m. Free to members and children, \$5 for non-members.*

## **TRAIL WALKS: EXPLORE SANIBEL'S INTERIOR WETLANDS**

Sanibel Island is a unique barrier island in Florida because it still has an interior freshwater wetland ecosystem that has not been lost to development. Join us for a guided walk through the interior wetlands and mid-island ridges of the Center Tract with discussion of native habitats, natural and cultural history and preservation efforts. *Trail walks will be offered through March on Tuesday through Thursday at 11 a.m. Meet at the Nature Center and proceed to the trails. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

## **TURTLE TRACKS**

Sanibel Island had one of the first sea turtle monitoring programs in the country. Learn about the life cycles and habits of the sea turtles and shorebirds that nest on our beaches, SCCF's monitoring activities, and what we are doing to protect them. You can also learn more about the devastating impacts on sea turtles of this past summer's Red Tide, when 192 dead sea turtles washed up on island beaches between July and September. *Thursdays at 10 a.m. in the Nature Center auditorium. Free to members and children, \$5 for non-members.*

## **WATER ART EXHIBIT**

SCCF and the Sanibel-Captiva Art League have joined forces once again for a new art exhibit with the theme of *Water*. Fresh and original works of art will be displayed throughout the month of February in the house at the Bailey Homestead Preserve. Art will also be available for purchase, and 20% of the sale directly benefits SCCF. *Monday, February 4 - Thursday, February 28; Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-noon; Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Open to the public, and free of charge!*

## **WEEDS & SEEDS**

We are a group of amateur botanists who enjoy finding and identifying native. Our walks visit different locations in Lee County, lasting for two hours, and are guided by a leader with a plant list. Depending on the location visited, you may need parking money. Please bring a hat, water, sun-block, and comfortable enclosed shoes with socks. *Meet at the Nature Center at 8:45 a.m., at the base of the porch and carpool to the site. Walks are free but donations to SCCF are welcome.*

- Feb 4 Bailey Tract
- Feb 11 Cypress Cove
- Feb 18 Presidents Day
- Feb 20 (Wednesday) - Caloosahatchee Creeks (Organized walk also Sat Feb 16)
- Feb 25 Bowman's Beach



Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation  
P.O. Box 839  
Sanibel, FL 33957

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### February 2019 Member Update



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SCCF



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@SCCF\_SWFL

## SCCF Nature Center

3333 Sanibel-Captiva Road  
(1 mile west of Tarpon Bay Road) / P.O. Box 839, Sanibel 33957

### SCCF Nature Center and Main Telephone:

(239) 472-2329      Fax: (239) 472-6421      [www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org)      [blog.sccf.org](http://blog.sccf.org)

Native Landscapes & Garden Center: (239) 472-1932 (at the Bailey Homestead Preserve)

Marine Laboratory: (239) 395-4617

Wildlife & Habitat Management: (239) 472-3984

*SCCF is dedicated to the conservation of coastal habitats and aquatic resources on Sanibel and Captiva and in the surrounding watershed through:*

- Marine Laboratory
- Natural Resource Policy
- Native Landscapes & Garden Center
- Sea Turtles & Shorebirds
- Wildlife & Habitat Management
- Land Acquisition & Stewardship
- Environmental Education



### Nature Center Hours:

Monday - Friday      8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. from October - May  
8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. from June - September

### Native Landscapes & Garden Center Hours:

at 1300 Periwinkle Way, Bailey Homestead Preserve  
Monday - Friday — 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Saturday from 10 a.m. — 3 p.m. (January through April)

### Visit our Nature Center

- Trails & Observation Tower
  - Education Center
- \$5/adult, children under 17 free, members free.

Find the latest real-time water quality readings from our RECON sensors at [www.recon.sccf.org](http://www.recon.sccf.org)

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Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, 3333 Sanibel-Captiva Road, P.O. Box 839, Sanibel, FL 33957 Tel. (239) 472-2329 [www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org)