



SCCF MEMBER UPDATE

Sanibel Provides 'Safe Haven' for Rescued Freshwater Turtles

By Barbara Linstrom, Communications Director

State wildlife officials freed nearly 300 freshwater turtles on Sanibel Island recently as the result of a historic turtle trafficking bust announced in November. They are now part of a long-term monitoring project by SCCF.

"This is an important reminder that Sanibel is part of global systems -- our Sanctuary Island is not immune to international wildlife trafficking," said SCCF CEO Ryan Orgera. "I spent years working across the globe on the illicit trade in wild creatures, and am saddened to be thrust back into this global problem right here on Sanibel."

On Oct. 18, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) announced it was charging two suspects for poaching thousands of Florida's native turtles from the wild and selling them illegally in Florida, with final destinations in international markets. These charges represent the state's largest seizure of turtles in recent history.

With nearly 70 percent of Sanibel in preservation, the island is a self-proclaimed sanctuary for wildlife. Local laws protecting wildlife exceed state rules when it comes to turtles.

"All turtles on Sanibel are protected by a city ordinance and we will continue to enforce all applicable ordinances to protect wildlife on Sanibel," said Sanibel's Natural Resources Director James Evans.

The city's ordinance prohibits the removal of any turtles from the island. The state of Florida passed a law in 2009 that prohibits selling turtles taken from the wild. However, the state does allow the removal of one turtle a day per person for some freshwater species.

SCCF's Wildlife & Habitat Management Program Director Chris Lechowicz has led the monitoring of the island's freshwater, brackish and semi-aquatic turtles for nearly two decades.

"These turtles tend to fall through the cracks in regards to media attention and public awareness of their current plight," said Lechowicz. "As poached wild-caught turtles are funneled to Asian markets, the effects are felt throughout the region, including Sanibel. Thanks to FWC for uncovering this illicit activity that has directly affected wild turtle populations in numerous areas in the southeast U.S."

The main turtles included in the bust were box tur-



SCCF has a longstanding monitoring program for freshwater, brackish and semi-aquatic turtles, including the Florida box turtle, pictured here (black line to right is a transmitter) turtles, diamondback terrapins and mud turtles, he added. Lechowicz began monitoring these turtles in 2002, finding that Sanibel provides an excellent habitat.

"We are on a hit list now when it comes to places where poachers will be looking for these turtles," he said. "We need to be extra vigilant of protecting them now."

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has also expressed concern over the turtle trafficking.

"Illegal wildlife trade continues to escalate into an international crisis and Sanibel island isn't immune from these brazen acts that can destabilize our ecological communities. Wildlife trafficking is both a critical conservation concern here at home and a threat to global security with significant impacts on the national interests of the U.S.," said Kevin Godsea, Acting Project Leader at Sanibel's J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

If you suspect anyone of turtle poaching, please call the Sanibel Police to report it at the non-emergency number, 239-472-3111.

You can help support SCCF's work with turtles through our Gift Catalog, online at scf.org, Support Us, Gift Catalog.

This Year's Everglades Conference Will Be at South Seas, January 9-12

By Rae Ann Wessel, Natural Resource Policy Director

Be part of the Everglades wave! There is more momentum and progress being made in Everglades restoration than at any time in history. Join the wave, plan to attend the 35th annual Everglades Coalition Conference in our backyard at South Seas Resort, Captiva on January 9-12, 2020. This year's



theme *America's Everglades: All Hands on Deck*, underscores that all voices are needed to continue the progress.

This annual educational and networking opportunity gathers a broad diversity of decision-makers from federal, state, local

and tribal governments, agency representatives, stakeholders, public and private interests including scientists, educators, contractors, conservationists, students and the media. We hope you'll join us to discuss, debate and advance Everglades restoration.

More on Policy from Rae Ann on Page 4



For more information and reservations visit:

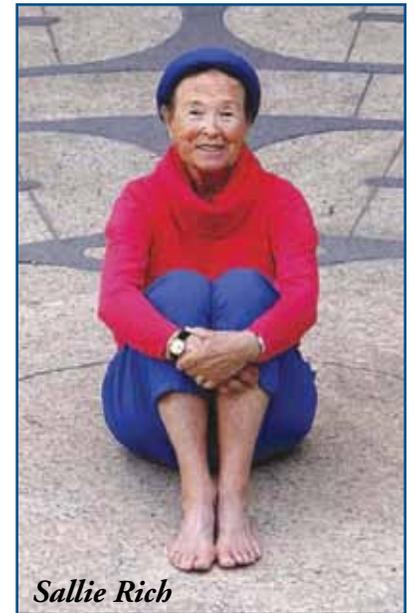
www.evergladescoalition.org

South Seas Resort has a special rate of \$199/night (plus tax) available for limited rooms on a first-come first-served basis through December 10th, 2019. Please call 1-800-282-3402, and reference "Everglades Coalition 2020" for the discounted rate, or visit www.southseas.com for online booking - discount code 0X67A5.

Annual Membership Meeting & 5th Annual Brush of Excellence Award

Please join us on Tuesday, December 10 at 4:30 p.m. at the Bailey Homestead Preserve for cocktails and small bites, the Annual Membership Meeting and the presentation of the 5th Annual SCCF "Ding" Darling Brush of Excellence Environmental Art Program Award. All of our supporters — members, donors and volunteers — are invited to hear a recap of the year, plans for the future, and to vote on nominees to the Board of Trustees.

Former but long-time island resident Sallie Rich has been named the 5th Annual SCCF J.N. "Ding" Darling Brush of Excellence Environmental Art Program Award Recipient. She will be honored for her longstanding contributions in capturing the natural beauty of our islands through photography. She will accept an honorarium presented by Andrea Koss in memory of her husband Kip, Darling's grandson and torchbearer. Prior honorees were Jaye Boswell, Clyde Butcher, Jim Sprankle and Ikki Matsumoto.



Sallie Rich

New Legacy Society Members to be Honored

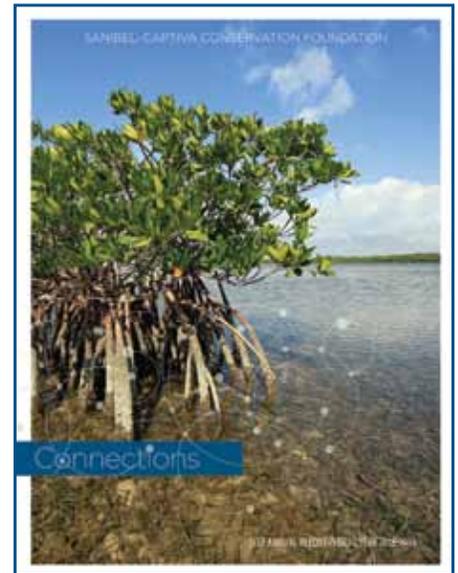
Inductions for new Legacy Society Members will also take place during the December 10 Annual Membership Meeting. If you have remembered SCCF as the beneficiary of a bequest or other planned gift, we would like to thank you by recognizing you as an SCCF Legacy Society member.

Please contact Cheryl Giattini if you have made such plans of which we might be unaware. She can be reached at 239-395-2768 and cgiattini@scf.org.

'Tis the Season

'Tis the Season we ask our members to include SCCF in their end-of-tax-year giving. You can provide much-needed operating support to all our program areas by making a tax-deductible gift to the Annual Fund Drive.

Please give at www.sccf.org or by using the reply envelope in the recently mailed FY2018-2019 Annual Report. If you haven't received your copy, or have questions, including how to give securities, please contact Cheryl Giattini at 395-2768 or cgiattini@sccf.org.



Royal Terns Face Loss of Nesting Areas and Other Challenges

By Audrey Albrecht, Shorebird Coordinator and Biologist

Fall is a great time to look for birds on our beaches here on Sanibel and Captiva, as there are migrants moving through, and others that will stay with us for the winter. Among the large flocks of terns and gulls, there are likely to be several Royal Terns with field readable white leg bands bearing black alphanumeric codes. These birds were banded by researchers from Virginia Tech on their breeding grounds in Virginia and Georgia.

The birds banded in Virginia come from South Island of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, which is the largest nesting colony in Virginia; home to Gull-billed terns, Royal Terns, Sandwich Terns, Common Terns, Black Skimmers, Laughing Gulls, and others. During the nesting season, there are up to 25,000 individual adult and juvenile seabirds on this island. Unfortunately, the expansion of that bridge tunnel will result in the loss of this crucial



Other colonial nesting sites in Virginia were previously lost to erosion, sea-level rise, and high predation rates.

The science-based solution proposed by Virginia Tech is to construct an island for the birds to nest on. Other states have successfully built islands to mitigate similar construction actions. These islands offer



See Terns on Page 4

Above left: Banded ROYT "4KL" was originally banded as a chick on the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel on July 7, 2018. When we sighted it on 9/11/19 it was the first time it had ever been seen since it left HRBT in 2018.

Above right: Banded ROYT "C2Y" was found dead near the lighthouse on 8/30/19 – unknown cause of death but could likely be a victim of water quality issues. It was originally banded as a chick on the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel on July 7, 2018. Top right: Google aerial showing the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and location of South Island.

Water Watch

By Rae Ann Wessel, Natural Resource Policy Director

Blue Green Algae Task Force

The Blue Green Algae Task Force was established as one of the priorities in Governor DeSantis' Executive Order: Achieve More Now For Florida's Environment. The mission of the Task Force is to identify, gather and evaluate information on sources of pollution and provide specific, science-based recommendations for expediting improvement and restoration of water bodies suffering from harmful blue-green algal blooms. Following five meetings in October, the Task Force issued their first Consensus Document.

Not surprisingly the panel's findings identify a familiar suite of major sources of nutrients that feed harmful algal blooms: agricultural operations, wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, stormwater and legacy nutrients in soils, ground water and sediments. These sources are exacerbated by changes in land use (filling of wetlands, increased pervious cover), changes in surface hydrology (ditching and draining to move water off the land) and climate change with increased temperatures and changes in the patterns, duration and volumes of rainfall and drought.

The panel's recommendations focus on the need to reduce nutrients at their sources and invest in research, monitoring, innovative technologies and policy reforms to improve water quality. The priority targets in this first report include: Agricultural runoff, wastewater system overflows, septic systems and stormwater. As they continue to meet additional sources will be evaluated and considered.

Focusing on priority impaired basins, they evaluated the effectiveness of the current Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) program and suggested that an integrated approach of monitoring and modeling be applied to evaluate the success or shortfalls of projects and actions needed to address and adjust approaches as necessary.

In basins dominated by agriculture they highlight that runoff is the dominant source of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution. They identify the need to increase agricultural enrollment in the Best Management Practices (BMP) program and updating of the BMP manuals with specific targets for nutrient reduction, increased monitoring, reporting and follow up.

In dealing with wastewater overflows the panel recommended all lift stations be required to have emergency back-up power to operate when storms knock out power. In 2017 -18, 320 million gallons of sewage was dumped to state waters. They also recommended Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) take a proactive approach up front to inspect plant infrastructure and require replacement of faulty wastewater treatment plants to eliminate discharges.

Florida has 2.6 million septic systems that treat one third of the state's wastewater and account for 10% of the entire nation's septics. Increased inspection and monitoring and expanding the minimum acreage on which septics are approved across the state are key recommendations of the panel.

Updating statewide stormwater standards with more effective design criteria, requiring inspection, monitoring and corrective actions are also recommended. Current stormwater standards are 25 years old and a major source of pollution.

Investing in cost effective, safe and scalable innovative technologies to detect, monitor and forecast are recommended together with policies to prevent and reduce nutrient pollution.

Finally they identify an urgent need for studies on the health effects from exposure to toxins in harmful algal blooms. They recommended an expanded proactive monitoring program and increased funding for research. Better

Terns cont'd from Page 3

a predator-free nesting location for the birds, and are also known to improve fish habitat. Due to the recent weakening of the U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act, however, the Commonwealth of Virginia is no longer legally able to require the developers to offer mitigation. At this time there are no plans to create an alternate nesting site for these birds.

In addition to the threats on their breeding grounds, Royal Terns are also highly susceptible to brevetoxicosis, and are frequently admitted to C.R.O.W. and other wildlife hospitals during red tide events. Like all migratory birds, they do not belong to any one locality, but instead tie us all together. A tern born and banded in Virginia may stop to rest here on our beaches in Florida and then continue on as far as South America. Others may spend the entire winter here.

Locating and reporting these banded individuals is more important than ever, so that we may track these individual's survival across their range. If you see a banded tern, or any other bird with bands, please report it to our shorebird biologist at shorebirds@sccf.org.

For more information on this topic visit <https://www.vtshorebirds.org/hrbt>

coordination between the Department of Health (DOH) and DEP are needed to communicate health concerns to the public. They recommend that DEP set criteria for exposure and DOH be more proactive in issuing advisories.

The panel has made a very good start in a short time frame to get the state pointed in the right direction. You can access the document at:

https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/Final%20Consensus%20%231_0.pdf

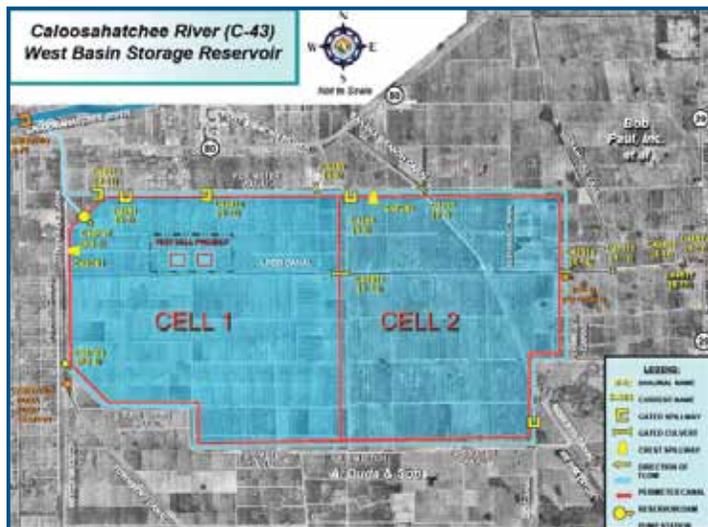
Governor Action on Task Force Recommendations

In response to the Task Force's first report, the Governor has announced DEP will be introducing legislation this session to address these sources. Key aspects include:

Directing DEP to work with Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACCS) to assure: BMPs are mandatory and use the best science, that thresholds for nutrient reductions are identified, monitored and enforced. And require that actions be taken for not meeting standards. We'd like to see the agricultural "presumption of compliance" with water quality standards be eliminated.

Inspection authority for septic tanks will be transferred from the DOH to DEP to address the environmental as well as the health impacts. Additionally, Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) can receive credits for elimination of septic systems.

Wastewater plants will be inspected up front to identify needed maintenance and assure faulty infrastructure is replaced. Stormwater rules will be updated and modernized and cyanobacteria standards will be established.



Above: Aerial showing the location of the two cells that will comprise the C-43 reservoir. Right: The groundbreaking was held in October and construction has begun (finally! after a multi-decade fight to get some relief for the Caloosahatchee and its estuary).

Stay tuned, we'll advise you when the bill is drafted and ask for your engagement to see that a comprehensive water quality bill makes it out of session this year. Follow progress of the Legislative session on SCCFs Tracker: scf.org, Resources, Legislative Tracker. Now it will be up to the legislature to support and pass these needed policies.

DEP Triennial Review

Under the Clean Water Act, states are required to review their water quality standards at least once every three years and if appropriate, revise or adopt new standards. This is the process known as the triennial review and we are in that process now.

Meeting with DEP over the past year in preparation for this review we have been asking them to establish standards for cyanobacteria in recognition of the health concerns from exposure to toxins. DEP has added cyanotoxin criteria to this review along with revisions to criteria for cadmium, turbidity, numeric nutrients and fish consumption advisories to name just a few. Public meetings were held in early November.

Details of the changes can be found on DEP's website: <https://floridadep.gov/dear/water-quality-standards/content/triennial-review-water-quality-standards>.

C43 Project

In 2001 the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) bought the old Berry Groves land in Hendry County along SR 80 for construction of a storage reservoir in the Caloosahatchee watershed. Construction began on the reservoir in 2015 and last month, on October 25, 2019 the Governor hosted a groundbreaking at the site to highlight the work on the \$523 million contract, the largest ever awarded for a project by the agency.

The Caloosahatchee estuary is plagued by too much

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Sea Turtle Incubation Environment Monitoring Project

By Courtney Thomson, Sea Turtle Research Assistant

The Sea Turtle Program's incubation environment monitoring project was launched in 2018 to investigate environmental variables that could be affecting sea turtle nests. Sea turtles have temperature-dependent sex determination, meaning that the incubation environment of the eggs will ultimately determine whether the hatchlings will develop into boys or girls. Warmer, drier conditions typically produce more females and cooler, wetter conditions produce more males; many use the fun saying, "hot chicks and cool dudes," to remember this. However, as global temperatures continue to rise, there is concern as to whether or not there will be enough males produced to sustain future populations.

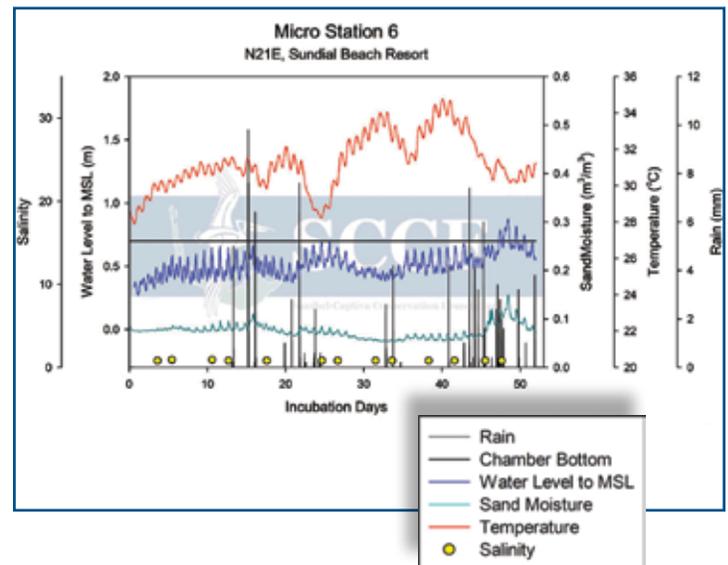
Previous research conducted on Sanibel Island by Florida Atlantic University found a higher proportion of male hatchlings than would be expected from incubation temperature alone. What conditions unique to Sanibel may be responsible for producing more male hatchlings? Drawing inspiration from the SCCF Marine Lab's groundwater mapping on Sanibel, we suspected that groundwater may influence moisture and temperature inside the nest and generate a cooling effect.

To test this hypothesis, loggers were placed in nests during night tagging patrols, with sensors collecting temperature and moisture readings throughout incubation. Temporary groundwater wells were also installed next to each nest to monitor groundwater levels and salinity. This year, we incorporated an exciting, new aspect to the project to learn how groundwater can impact the gender of the hatchlings: sex ratio sampling! We partnered

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Hatchling weights were collected using a small scale.



Photos below from left: Research Assistant Courtney Thomson checking on a research nest. Middle: A nest experiencing high levels of water influence. Right: Intern Ellie Phillips conducting a nest inventory. Above right: A graph showing the relationship between groundwater, temperature, sand moisture, and salinity for a research nest.



New Marine Lab Capabilities Highlighted During 2019 Red Tide

By Eric Milbrandt, Ph.D., Director, Marine Laboratory

On September 30, 2019, satellite imagery from NOAA indicated that a red tide bloom had started in Collier county. The dinoflagellate that causes red tide is *Karenia brevis* and it produces brevetoxin which can cause fish kills and respiratory irritation to people. The initiation of a bloom event is poorly understood. However, the intensification of the bloom often occurs near land and often near large river systems. As the bloom was transported north through ocean currents and wind, it reached the Sanibel causeway on 10/18/19. The routine monitoring on the beaches indicated some moderate and a few high abundances of *Karenia brevis*. The bloom continued its northward trajectory and when sampled on 10/28 was high or medium at most locations. A satellite image (Figure 1) and the results from sampling in the Gulf of Mexico (Figure 2) show the extent and intensity of the 2019 red tide bloom

The new equipment purchased when we moved into the new Marine Lab were selected to expand our capability to study algae blooms. The Flowcam is a flow cytometer with a microscope lens that captures images of each particle in a water sample. Upon some further analysis and expertise in phytoplankton identification, the number of cells of each species can be counted. A new segmented flow analyzer (acquired January 2019) was set up and is running dissolved inorganic nutrients routinely to determine the nutrient conditions in and around a phytoplankton bloom.

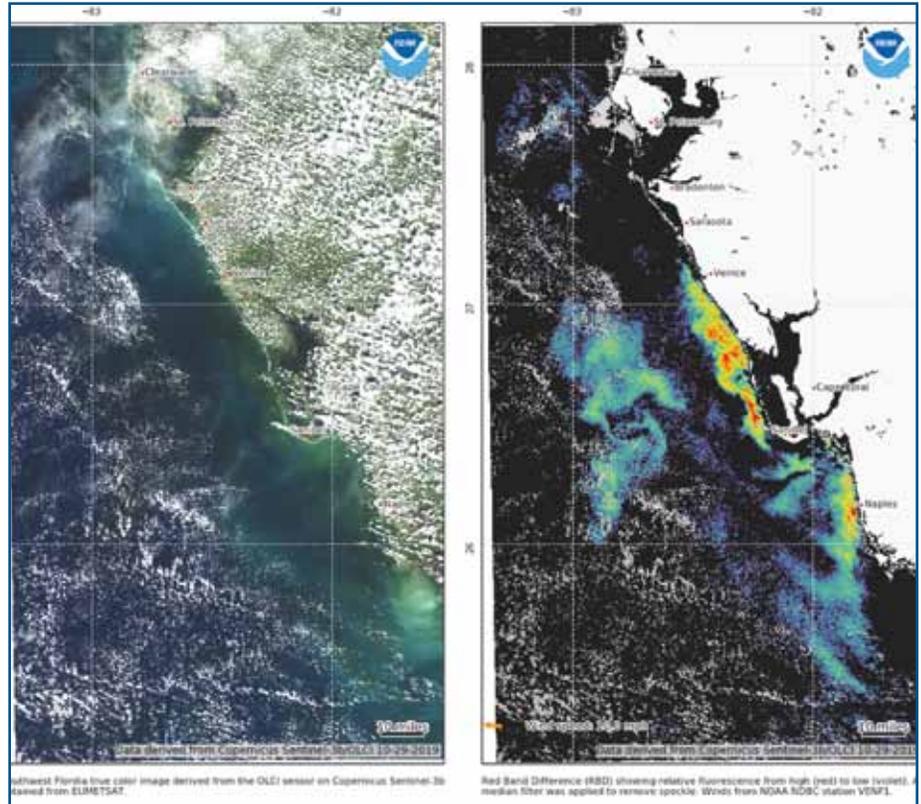
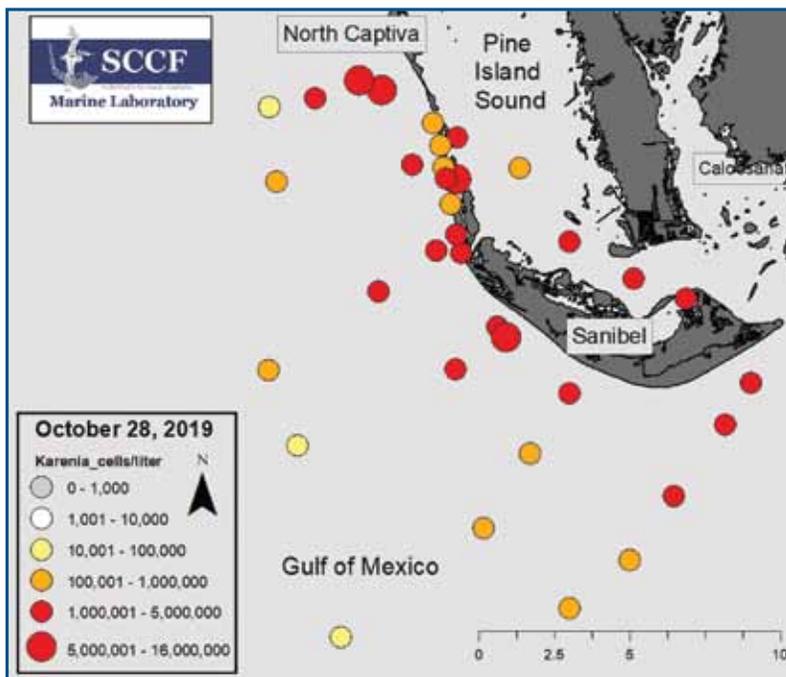


Figure 1 (above): NOAA satellite images. Above left is a true color image. Above right shows the local red tide: Red indicates the highest concentration. Figure 2 (below): Sites sampled by the Marine Laboratory and concentrations (red indicates 1 million cells/liter or higher; the red tide toxin begins killing fish at >10,000 cells.)



The new R/V Norma Campbell provides routine access to the Gulf regardless of wind or sea state.

Our research on red tide blooms has ramped up considerably with grant-supported projects to study the water column conditions and algae blooms in the Caloosahatchee and Gulf of Mexico. The National Science Foundation-sponsored project is wrapping up with its emphasis on the Caloosahatchee flows and influence on phytoplankton. We have increased the sampling around Captiva and out 10 miles in the Gulf of Mexico. The sampling is intended to fill existing gaps in nutrient, chlorophyll, and phytoplankton data, not currently sampled by the State of Florida or NOAA. This water and beach conditions monitoring program is made possible through the support of Goldman Sachs Gives and the Vince family.

Welcome Two New Garden Center Interns

Hi! My name is Jessie Dickson and I will be an intern with the Native Landscapes and Garden Center! I graduated in May from Wittenberg University with majors in Environmental Science and Russian and Central Eurasian Studies, and minors in Marine Science and Russian Language. Prior to arriving at SCCF, I will be completing a residency program at The Dawes Arboretum, in Central Ohio, which is also where I grew up. While in school, I was fortunate enough to have been able to study abroad in the Bahamas and attend field studies in both Mississippi and North Carolina. I am passionate about both marine and freshwater ecosystems and love being able to incorporate terrestrial ecology and botany into my work with these ecosystems. I applied to this internship in hopes that I will be able to learn about the native species in Southwestern Florida and have a better understanding of the ecosystems here. I am an advocate for education and believe the only way to inspire change is through education and so being able to work with an organization that shares this belief is so exciting! On a less serious note, my favorite animal is a manatee, I have a large collection of houseplants that some might call unhealthy, and I consider myself to be an ice cream connoisseur. I look forward to meeting everyone!



My name is Haley Gladitsch and I am an intern in the Native Landscapes and Garden Center! I grew into my love for plant ecology at a camp on the North Fork of Long Island where I eventually became the garden science coordinator. My interest in growing food sustainably led me to pursue a degree in Environmental Biology and a minor in Food Studies from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) in Syracuse, NY, where I graduated this past spring. While at SUNY ESF, I had the opportunity to take classes such as ethnobotany and plant systematics, which allowed me to build a connection between my passion for growing agricultural crops and an appreciation for the conservation and diversity of plants in the world. During my final semester of college, I studied abroad in Thailand where I became fascinated with subtropical and tropical plants and their importance to the villagers that I lived with. After returning from Thailand, I spent the summer working at Brookhaven National Lab (BNL) on Long Island. At BNL, I was a forest health monitoring intern where I studied the impact of ericaceous plants on the regeneration of pitch pines in the Central Pine Barrens.

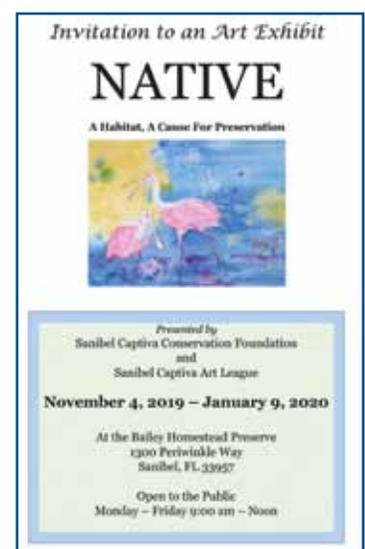
From environmental education to research, I have found the most rewarding aspect of learning is being able to communicate it to other people – which is why I am so excited to be spending the next six months on Sanibel Island learning and working with the SCCF!

“Native” Art Show at Garden Center

SCCF and the Sanibel Captiva Art League have joined forces once again to create a new art exhibit that opened in November and will run through January 9 at the Bailey Homestead. The exhibit is open Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to noon.

The original works are interpretations of the theme of “Native,” and is representative of SCCF's mission to conserve and protect our islands' natural beauty, wildlife and resources. Interpretations are both interpretative or literal, in 2-D as well as 3-D.

Works will be available for sale. Admission is free. For more information, please call the Garden Center at 472-1932.



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water when it's not needed and too little water when it is needed to keep a healthy salinity balance in the estuary. This project is the only major storage project so far in the Caloosahatchee watershed designed to capture and hold water to provide the estuary freshwater during dry months. When completed in 2023 the 10,500 acre reservoir will hold 170,000 acre feet or 55 billion gallons of water behind 35-ft.-high levees.

As if to illustrate the need for the project, this past September was the driest September since 1932, when record keeping began, and the SFWMD has declared this the shortest recorded wet season. It is recognized that more storage is needed in the watershed to provide all the water needs of the estuary but this project is a major step forward. One issue we have is that the project was designed without a water quality treatment component. The Governor addressed this in his executive order, prioritizing the need for this critical feature. A working group has been established and is currently evaluating options to clean water coming in and discharging from the reservoir.

Caloosahatchee Oxbow & Riverlore Cruises

Reservations are now open online. Plan to join us on the river. Our 24th year began the day after Thanksgiving. The 2.5 hour cruises depart from the WP Franklin Lock Recreation Area in Olga. Tours are guided by Rae Ann Wessel, a river researcher, long-time river advocate, historian and SCCFs Natural Resource Policy Director. The boat is a stable and spacious 41 passenger pontoon boat. All seats have a great view for photographs and wildlife viewing. Trips fill up fast so advance reservations and ticket purchase are required. Reserve your seat online at: www.sccf.org, then Resources, then Calendar. Cost is \$ 45.00 per person. Friday cruises depart at 1 pm return 3:30 pm, Saturday cruises depart at 9 return by 11:30.

Friday November 29, 2019

Saturday January 25, 2020

Saturday February 15, 2020

Friday March 6, 2020

Saturday March 21, 2020

Friday April 3, 2020

Saturday May 9, 2020

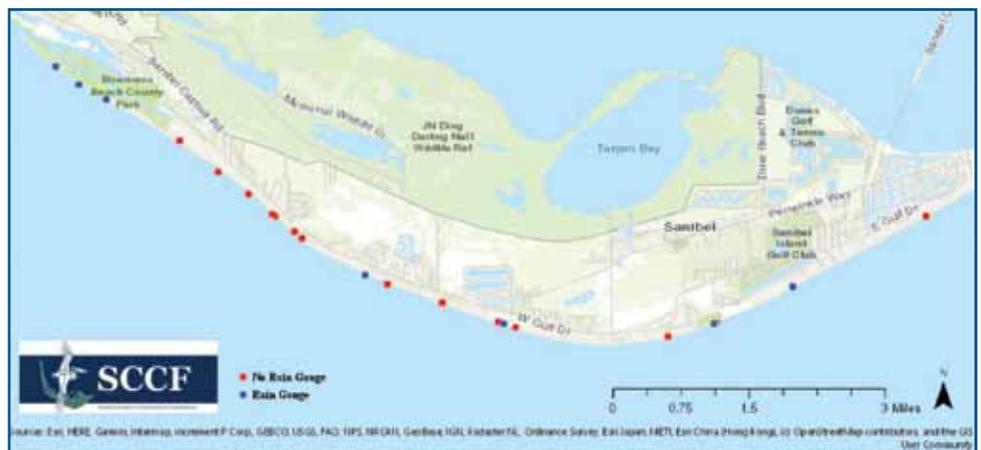
Sea Turtles -- Continued from Page 6

with Florida Atlantic University to collect small blood samples from hatchlings which can then be tested for a specific hormone that is present in males, and not in females. This methodology is a new and innovative way to non-lethally gather information on how groundwater may be impacting hatchling sex ratios.

Although we are still awaiting the results of the hatchling genders, preliminary analyses reveal that:

- Last year, there was a significant relationship between groundwater and temperature, suggesting that groundwater could create a cooling effect on nests. However, this year, there was not as clear of a relationship; while some nests showed very strong relationships, others showed none. This indicates that there may be seasonal variations that can impact groundwater influence.
- In both 2018 and 2019, the relationship between groundwater and moisture varied from nest-to-nest. This leads us to believe that there might be other site-specific environmental factors, such as sand composition or vegetation, that may have a greater influence on moisture at some sites.

As we continue to analyze the data, we hope to generate a better understanding of groundwater influence and the implications it could have on hatchling sex ratios.



A map showing the locations of 2019 research nests with rain gauges and without rain gauges.

NATIVE ART EXHIBIT

Monday, December 2 – Thursday, January 9; Monday – Friday, 9am to noon

This cooperative exhibit between SCCF and the Sanibel Captiva Art League features original works of art interpreting the theme of native. Come enjoy the fresh works of artists who were inspired by SCCF's mission to conserve and protect our islands' natural beauty, wildlife and resources. The exhibit will be held inside of the Bailey Homestead, 1300 Periwinkle Way; admission is free, and hours of the exhibit are Monday-Friday, 9am-noon. Call the Native Landscapes & Garden Center at 239-472-1932 with questions. Exhibit will not be open on Dec. 24 – Jan 1 due to the holidays.



Red Mangrove, watercolor by Anita Force Marshall

MAKING THE LAND WORK WALKING TOURS

Mondays at 2pm; Thursdays at 10am

Join us for a one-hour walking tour of the Bailey Homestead Preserve that blends SCCF's conservation work on the historic property, the history of the land itself and some stories about the Bailey family, which farmed the land for three generations. The walking program includes a look at the demonstration gardens at the Native Landscapes & Garden Center, the Windmill, the Pavilion, the Devitt Pond Overlook, and a look inside the Bailey family home. Walking shoes are recommended. No reservations are needed. Suggested donation of \$5 to SCCF greatly appreciated. Bailey Homestead Preserve, 1300 Periwinkle Way, meet at the Conservation Gateway Kiosk at the head of the Shipley Trail, near the entrance. Call the Garden Center at 239-472-1932 for more information. No tours Monday, December 23; Thursday, December, 26; Monday, December 30 or Thursday, January 2 due to the surrounding holidays.

YAUPON HOLLY TEA REVIVAL & TASTINGS

Tuesday, December 17, 1 to 3pm

Join us for a festive afternoon celebrating Yaupon Holly! Bryon White, one of the founders of Yaupon Brothers Tea in Volusia County, FL, will talk about the revival of Yaupon Holly, its use as a tea, and the burgeoning tea industry in Florida. The program will be followed by a Yaupon tea tasting featuring samples of food made with tea prepared by the vibrant and joyful Jackie Vitale, Chef-in-Residence at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation on Captiva. \$20 registration, includes a canister of Yaupon tea bags. Participants will be given a 10% discount on gifts in the Garden Center and on the purchase of a Yaupon Holly plant. Meet at the Pavilion at the Bailey Homestead Preserve, 1300 Periwinkle Way. Tickets available through Eventbrite at sccf.org, Resources, Calendar. Call the Native Landscapes & Garden Center at 239-472-1932 with questions.

CALOOSAHAATCHEE OXBOW AND RIVERLORE CRUISE

Explore the scenic and historic Caloosahatchee on an Oxbow and Riverlore Cruise hosted by SCCF and gain a personal perspective on the river, its history, folklore, issues and solutions. We follow the river back to a time when a waterfall served as the headwaters of the Caloosahatchee and settlers braved living in the wilderness. The 2.5 hour adventure begins by locking through the W.P. Franklin Lock in Olga. Stories of the settlements and their adventures are blended with an understanding of the river's oxbows, the wild creatures that call it home and the challenges the river faces. Tours are guided by Rae Ann Wessel, a river researcher, long-time river advocate, historian and SCCF Natural Resource Policy Director. The boat is a stable and spacious 41 passenger pontoon boat. All seats have a great view for photographs and wildlife viewing. Cruises depart from the south side of the river at the W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam off SR 80 in Olga. Friday cruises depart at 1 pm return 3:30 pm — November 29, 2019; February 7, 2020; March 6; April 3; Saturday cruises depart at 9 am return by 11:30 am — January 25, 2020; February 15; March 21; May 9. Tickets are \$45 per person with advance reservations required online at sccf.org, Resources, Calendar. Space is limited. Reservations are a must!

28TH ANNUAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT

The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF) will hold its 28th Annual Tennis Tournament on Dec. 7 and 8, 2019 at Beachview Tennis Club. The entry fee is \$75 and the deadline for entry is Wednesday, Dec. 4. For more information, please call Toni Halski at Beachview Tennis at 239/472-9099. Categories are 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0 men's and women's doubles. Court times to be determined and Winners and Runners-up will receive a Luc Century etched wine glass. Play will be at Beachview Tennis, 1101 Par View Drive on Sanibel. To register or for more information, please call Beachview Tennis at 472-9099. To pay by credit card, please call SCCF at 472-2329 or return entry form to Toni Halski at Beachview, 1101 Parview Drive. All entrants will receive a tournament T-shirt plus breakfast and lunch on Saturday and Sunday. SCCF gratefully acknowledges the support of Grampy's as Presenting Sponsor. For sponsorship opportunities, please call SCCF at 472-2329 (credit cards accepted). Sponsorship levels are Presenting Sponsor, \$7,500; Major Sponsor, \$5,000; Grand Slam Sponsor, \$2,500; Championship Sponsor, \$1,000; Match Sponsor, \$500; Set Sponsor, \$250; and Game Sponsor \$150.

**EVENINGS AT THE HOMESTEAD: SEA TURTLE RESEARCH COLLABORATION —
SCCF AND LOGGERHEAD MARINELIFE CENTER**

Thursday, December 12, 6 to 8:30pm

Join us to learn about research underway by SCCF's Sea Turtle Program Coordinator Kelly Sloan and Loggerhead Marinelife Center's Dr. Justin Perrault on the 2017-2019 catastrophic red tide event that resulted in the largest number of sea turtle deaths ever attributed to a single red tide event. Doors will open at 6pm for light refreshments, followed by the featured presentation from 6:30 to 8:30pm.

Titled "After the Tide - Characterizing the Sublethal Effects of a Catastrophic Red Tide on Nesting Sea Turtles," their study is investigating the effects of the bloom on the health and reproductive success of nesting sea turtles. They are also looking at how the toxin is transferred from the mother to her hatchlings. In addition to learning more about the insidious — or sublethal — effects of red tide blooms on sea turtles, the data will be used to raise awareness and inform policies that promote heightened water quality standards and healthier oceans.

Previous studies have found that seemingly healthy turtles test positive for brevetoxins from red tide without an active bloom and that toxins can remain in the food web for up to one year after the event has dissipated.

Director of Research at Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach, FL, Dr. Justin Perrault has 13 years of experience working with sea turtles in the laboratory and field. He has published over 25 papers on sea turtle biology, health, and toxicology. Currently, he is an Adjunct Scientist at Mote Marine Laboratory and an Affiliate Scientist/Scholar at Florida Atlantic University. He has a BS in Marine Biology from UNC-Wilmington and a PhD in Integrative Biology from Florida Atlantic University.



Justin with a Leatherback in South Africa.



*Justin measuring an albino hatchling.
Photo by Bethany Augliere.*

SCCF's Sea Turtle Program Coordinator Kelly Sloan also started working with sea turtles 13 years ago -- first in Costa Rica and then for six years in South Carolina, where she managed all aspects of the state's sea turtle conservation program. That program included coordinating more than 30 projects and more than 1,000 volunteers. Since December 2013, she has led SCCF's sea turtle program, growing its staff, volunteers and research commitments. With a B.S. in Biology from Virginia Tech, Sloan's team at SCCF collected 130 blood samples from nesting females and collected 112 dead hatchlings for pathology during the 2019 nesting season to help inform the red tide study.

Admission \$10. Tickets available through Evenbrite at scf.org, Resources, Calendar.

SCCF DECEMBER 2019

HAPPENINGS
PROGRAMS
OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Native Art Exhibit M-F thru Jan 9	2 Making Land Work	3	4	5 Making Land Work	6 Nature thru Movement	7 Tennis Tournament
8 Tennis Tournament	9 Making Land Work	10 Annual Meeting & Brush of Excellence	11	12 Making Land Work Evening @ Homestead: Sea Turtles	13 Nature thru Movement	14
15	16 Making Land Work	17 Yaupon Holly Tea Tasting	18	19 Making Land Work	20 Nature thru Movement	21
22	23 Making Land Work	24 HOLIDAY – SCCF closed through January 1	25	26	27	28



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

December 2019 Member Update



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SCCF



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SCCF's 2019 Christmas Card

Inside greeting:

*From Our Home to Yours...
Happy Holidays!*

Cards are \$15 for 10 cards and they will be available for purchase in the shop at the Native Landscapes & Garden Center.

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