


Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

July - August 2022

Friends Go Archaeology!

By Cathie Foster

Did you know that Brooker Creek Preserve has a "sister" preserve? Our counterpart, Weedon Island Preserve, is located in St. Petersburg. Weedon's 3,000+ acres, situated along Tampa Bay, consist of coastal aquatic and upland habitats. Their Cultural and Natural History Center offers education about these habitats as well as wonderful insights into the rich cultural history of the area. Sunday, May 22 marked the first joint adventure (yes, I mean adventure) between the boards of both Friends groups. The board of the **Friends of Weedon Island** hosted our board members at a fun and informative event called "Friends Go Archaeology".

Upcoming Events

- July 17 Off the Beaten Path Hike: Interior Wildlands
- July 23 Closing Reception: Dustin Angell photography 11:00 am
- July 24 Entry deadline Member's Photo Exhibit & Invitational 4 pm
- July 30 Wildflower Garden Work Day
- July 31 Beekeeping Club
- Aug. 6 Readers Club
- Aug. 27 Wildflower Garden Work Day
- Aug. 28 Beekeeping Club
- July 30 - Sep. 18 FOBCP Member's Photo Exhibit & Invitational



Brooker Creek and Weedon Island Friends board members at the AWIARE Lab. Right, a tray of ancient pottery sherds.



We started with social time that included delicious and plentiful refreshments provided by Friends of Weedon Island. This was followed by a video presentation of *Gulf Islanders: The Weedon Island Story*. The highlight of the afternoon was a presentation by archeologist Dr. Bob Austin. Dr Austin is the co-founder of AWIARE (Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education) based at Weedon Island. Following Dr. Austin's presentation, we viewed the Center's pride and joy, a 1,000+ year-old dugout canoe that was found on Preserve property in 2001, very carefully excavated and preserved, and put on display in the Center in 2015. We were then treated to a visit to the nearby AWIARE research lab to view smaller artifacts that have been uncovered at the Preserve.

We are so grateful to the Friends of Weedon Island for hosting this initial get-together and to Dr. Austin for the opportunity to visit the AWIARE lab.

The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve board plans to return the favor and host members of our sister Friends group in the fall. We look forward to future "Friends Go" adventures and collaborations.



Top, a 1000 year old dugout canoe on display.



Above, AWIARE's Kendal Jackson, left, and Dr. Robert Austin answered many questions for the group.

Far left, AWIARE's Phyllis Kolianos explaining displays. Left, Dr. Austin discussed prehistoric sites in Pinellas County, including what is now Brooker Creek Preserve. Two photos by Bill Fehring, President of the Friends of Weedon Island Preserve.

AUDITORIUM GALLERY by Lynn Whitelaw

ON VIEW IN THE GALLERY Through July 17, 2022

FLORIDA STEWARDS: Portraits of Conservation Stewards from the Headwaters of the Florida Everglades Photography by Dustin Angell



Dustin Angell is an environmental educator and conservation photographer living and working in the Headwaters of the Florida Everglades. As Director of Education at **Archbold Biological Station** in Venus, FL, he builds community relationships and interprets ecological research for audiences of all ages. Angell's 12 digital photographs printed on aluminum, currently on view in Auditorium Gallery, document the science and conservation challenges of the region and the people trying to solve them.

FoBCP is pleased to support the staff of Brooker Creek Preserve, who wished to have this exhibition to compliment teacher training programs that will be held in the BCP Auditorium in July. Dustin Angell will be one of the guest presenters.

To learn more about the Archbold Biological Station: <https://www.archbold-station.org/>.

To learn more about Dustin Angell's photography: <https://www.dustinangellphoto.com/>



MEET THE ARTIST

The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is pleased to host a closing reception for Dustin Angell: Conservation Photography. Join us to hear Dustin talk about his work as an artist and as a biologist.

Saturday, July 23 from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Free - open to the public - light refreshments

UPCOMING EXHIBIT IN THE GALLERY

On view July 30 through Sept. 18

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve MEMBER'S PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION and INVITATIONAL

As FoBCP members and volunteers, we often have unique opportunities to document the wonder and beauty of Brooker Creek Preserve in ways many visitors never get to experience (even getting those special images sometimes on our cell phones!) To share

these "captured" moments of the unique flora, fauna, and ecosystems of the Preserve, consider submitting your best photographs to the **FoBCP Member's Photography Exhibition** this summer. This is the second of what was intended to be an annual exhibit, but COVID postponed our shows since the first one in 2019. Below is a flyer with information on how to participate.



To enhance the exhibit this year, we are also including an invitation to four photographers who over the years have found inspiration in Brooker Creek Preserve. Included are David Wright, photographer from Pasco County well known for documenting area events; Renato Rampolla, a portrait photographer from Tampa who often finds solace in the Preserve; Karl and Kathleen Nichter, FoBCP's "official" nature photographers extraordinary; and, through her family, beloved Tarpon Springs artist and FoBCP member, Sue Thomas, who passed away last year. We are pleased to highlight these photographers who use their artistic eye to showcase the beauty of Brooker Creek Preserve.

Attention FoBCP Photographers!
You are invited to display your best images in the...

FoBCP Member's Photography Exhibition
July 30 – September 18, 2022
Brooker Creek Preserve Auditorium Gallery

Closing Reception
Sunday, September 18, 1-3 pm
Please invite friends and family!

RULES:

- The photographer must be a member of the FoBCP.
- Photos must have been taken within Brooker Creek Preserve.
- Photos must be framed, ready to hang, with a horizontal wire on the back.
- Up to 3 photos per photographer may be submitted.
- All photo techniques are acceptable: color, black & white, manipulated.
- If the photo is for sale and is sold, Friends request a donation of 10% of the sale price.
- Unsold photography is to be removed Sept. 18 (or at the Nature Store upon request).

To enter, email Gallery Curator, Lynn Whitelaw: rlwhitelaw7@msn.com
by Sunday, July 24 with the following information:

- Your Name
- Contact Email and Cell Number
- Title of Work
- Medium (color, black-and-white, digital, etc.)
- Size of Image (height x width)
- Sale Price (or note as Not for Sale)
- Lastly, please attach this information to the back of your photo

Bring your framed photographs to the Friends Nature Store (open 9-4 Thurs.-Sat. and 11-4 on Sundays) beginning July 7 for safekeeping until the exhibit opens.

Deadline: All photos must be received by 4:00 pm, Sunday, July 24!

SHOW US WHAT YOU GOT!



2020 OFF THE BEATEN PATH

A nature-based fundraising hike series

Description: This series of four hikes will take place in beautiful areas tucked away within Brooker Creek Preserve in sites that are closed to the public. Our guide, Dr. Craig Huegel (SPC Biology Professor), can identify everything, from the tiniest moss to the tallest tree including animal prints, bird calls, lichens, and more. He is full of stories and very patient in answering questions. The hikes will be educational, and a lot of fun as well! The hikes will begin at 9:00 am, and be about 3-4 hours long. Bring water and lunch.

Cost: \$80 donation for the series of four hikes or \$25 donation per hike, with a 10% discount for members of Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve.

Sept. 26, 2021 – In Search of Catesby’s Lily – Located in the eastern part of the preserve, we will search for the threatened Catesby’s Lily. In so doing, we will see a profusion of beautiful fall wildflowers in full bloom.

Dec. 12, 2021 - Cypress Swamp Stomp – Located in the central part of the Preserve, this site features orchids, ferns, and epiphytes. Plan to get wet, or maybe not get wet, as we plunge into the depths of the swamp!

March 20, 2022 – Sandhill Scramble – The only true sandhills of Brooker Creek Preserve. This site is in the northern end of the preserve and will feature an abundance of spring wildflowers.

*** July 17, 2022 – Interior Wildlands** – We will be in parts of the Preserve so remote that cell phones won’t work, areas so pretty you won’t believe you are in Pinellas County!

Reservations Required:

Sign up early! Only 20 spots are open for these fabulous hikes *off the beaten path!* Questions? To register, call 727-934-2680 or email

info@friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org



Venture Off the Beaten Path

By: Craig Huegel

Too often, we fail to leave the paths forged by others to wander down a new one. It's safer, of course, to walk an established route. Obstacles that might have existed in the initial days have likely been cleared by others by the time you venture forth. All the road signs have been placed. All that's left is to put one foot forward and wait for the sign to tell you that you've reached the end. The only limitation to this is that remaining on the established trails hinders you from making anything resembling a discovery, and discoveries are what makes life interesting.

When possible, I walk off the beaten paths. It often is impossible to do so, but I try to remain aware of the possibilities for doing so when they arise. Nearly everything I've learned in life has occurred this way; exploring without the assistance of parents and adult leaders, making a wrong turn along the way and needing to find a way back, flipping a coin at an intersection and purposely picking the one that seems at odds with what I think I should do. The real discoveries are often found these ways - at least in my life they have.

When Barb Hoffman and I came up with the idea of creating a guided hiking program to help raise funds for Brooker Creek Preserve, we named it "Off the Beaten Path" for a reason. It was to be a series of hikes into places within the Preserve that were not part of the established public trail system. It was to be an opportunity to discover some of the treasures contained within the Preserve boundaries that one could not discover otherwise. This hiking series has been going strong now for close to a decade and even those who have participated in past years discover new things on return visits. I know that I do, and I've been walking some of these trails for more than two decades. It might be a population of a wildflower that has gone undocumented in the past. One year, it was a silk moth that I had to photograph and send out to experts to identify for me. Prior to that, I had no idea that such a thing as a sweet bay silk moth even existed. No matter how many times I've ventured out into the heart of the Preserve, I discover something exciting when off the beaten path.



Sweetbay silk moth - a little worse for wear.



Participants on a previous interior wildlands hike.

I welcome all of you that have an adventurous streak to join us on our next Off the Beaten Path hike. On Sunday morning, July 17, we will explore some of the deep interior forestlands within Brooker Creek Preserve. These acres include the best examples of "hydric pine flatwoods" - pine forests that become seasonally flooded; grass understories instead of saw palmetto. It also includes some true wet prairie. Such habitats are rare elsewhere in the Preserve. With the arrival of summer rains, we likely will get wet feet. The bugs should not be an issue and it will be mostly shaded. All the hikes in this series are limited to 20 participants and often fill up - so make your reservations through the Friends website as soon as possible. The fee goes to helping us assist Preserve staff in managing the Preserve. I'd love to have you join me.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Readers Club

By Jon Burr

On May 7 we discussed *The Wilder Heart of Florida*, 2021, Davis and Poole eds. This was a follow-up of an

earlier book of collected articles called *The Wild Heart of Florida*. On June 4 we discussed *Oranges*, 1967, John McPhee.

On July 2, we kicked off the inaugural Summer reader's experience free-for-all: We each shared a reading experience of a published book or magazine that was of particular importance to us. Doesn't necessarily have to be current.

August 6, any book about Florida nature. You pic'um.

August 6 will be the last Readers Club facilitated by the Nichters and me. The club started about 10 years ago and we have been facilitators for about 8 years. Stay tuned for the further adventures of the FoBCP Readers Club.

No reservation required. We meet on the first Saturday of the month (unless it's a holiday) in the Ed Center conference room, at 9:30 am.



Love reading about nature? Love sharing with like-minded readers?

Consider being a Readers Club facilitator!

Contact us at 727-934-2680 or info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org

Beekeepers Club News

FOBCP Spring Honey is here! Our Beekeepers Club members have been as busy as . . . well, bees. After a hive inspection a few weeks ago, we determined that it was time to extract, and that's just what we did on Sunday, July 3. While some of us set up the extraction equipment and got the jars ready, a few of us headed to the apiary to collect the honey filled "supers" (boxes of frames where the bees store their honey). And it is their honey, after all, so we were glad that they were very calm and accommodating. We are careful to never take too much, leaving plenty in the hives to sustain our bees.

**Our very own FOBCP honey, raw and unrefined
available for purchase in our Nature Store at Brooker Creek Preserve.**

\$10 for a 1-pound jar while supplies last!

Limit 1 jar per person



Beekeeping is for folks of all ages.



Everyone takes a turn at uncapping the honey.



Out of the extractor and into the strainer.



Filling jars with gooey goodness

Tada!



The finished product.

News from the Nature Store

Our current fiscal year (FY 2022), which runs from October 2021 through September 2022, will be the first full year the Nature Store has been open since Covid shut us down in April 2020. The closure certainly impacted the store's revenue for two years, but still the Nature Store held its own and made a respectable profit for FY 2020 and FY 2021. But we are back and doing better than ever! Our last full year of operation (FY 2019) showed annual revenue of over \$13,970. As of the end of May 2022, only 2/3 of the way through our fiscal year, we show revenue of \$13,354. Wow! Thanks to all who stop in to shop and to our dedicated Nature Store volunteers!

Speaking of stopping in to shop, this is a great time to do just that! In addition to our regular selection of great souvenirs and books, our Second Nature table (gently used items) and our Used Book shelves are FULL of very reasonably priced treasures. Most everything is under \$5, with most items priced at \$2 or \$3. Come in out of the heat and browse to your heart's content!



So many great books.

Second Nature Treasures

Volunteer News

Education Center Updates & More

By Julia Myers, Education Support Specialist, Brooker Creek Preserve



Chronolog: We have an exciting new citizen science project happening at the Preserve! Chronolog is a long-term photo time lapsing public engagement project where visitors take photos at our new photo station and then submit them. Chronolog compiles the photos into a timelapse that can be viewed by anyone, and visitors get to help document the scene over time. We can monitor and document the change in water levels and vegetation throughout the year. The chronolog station has been installed at the bridge over the creek that is behind the classroom. So, take a photo on your next hike and help power our new photo monitoring tool! You can explore our chronolog site and check out others here:

<https://www.chronolog.io/site/BCP101>



Night Hike Helpers: Our fearless Night Hike Leaders are looking for a few more dedicated helpers for this upcoming night hike season! Night hikes usually take place monthly from October through March. Night hike helper duties include helping manage the entrance gate, collecting donation money, and acting as a 'sweep' for the hike. Helpers also get to attend all of the night hikes! Please let me know if you are interested.

Sunday Volunteers: We are looking for a few more regular Sunday volunteers. Sunday shifts are from 11 am to 4 pm. Have a friend or family member interested in volunteering and getting involved at the Preserve? Send them our way!

Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve
ADOPT AN ANIMAL - \$35/adoption



*A program to enhance restoration and land management programs to help provide improved habitat for wildlife in **Brooker Creek Preserve***

The **ADOPT AN ANIMAL** program was established by the Friends in 2020 to give individuals the opportunity to help keep intact the ecological integrity of the Preserve. Funding will be used for:

- Removing exotic and invasive plants
- Restoring natural water flow
- Fire management
- Restoring natural plant communities

Animal adoptions make perfect gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, memorials, and more!

Upon receipt of your donation, the honoree will be sent by mail an adoption package with an adoption certificate, a fact sheet about the adopted animal, and a cuddly plush animal chosen for adoption. The donor will receive a thank you letter that can be used for tax purposes.

Donor Name: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Email: _____

___in honor of ___in memory of ___for myself

Honoree Name: _____

Send packet to this address. This is the donor or honoree address (circle one):

I wish to adopt (\$35 each):

- | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gopher Tortoise | <input type="checkbox"/> Deer Buck | <input type="checkbox"/> Raccoon | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle | <input type="checkbox"/> Otter | <input type="checkbox"/> Alligator | <input type="checkbox"/> Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gray Squirrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Deer Fawn | <input type="checkbox"/> Opossum | <input type="checkbox"/> Bat | <input type="checkbox"/> Coyote | <input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat | <input type="checkbox"/> Fox |

Total Due: \$ _____ Questions? info@friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org or 727-934-2680

Check endorsed to: **FOBCP**. Mail to: FOBCP, 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

FEID #59-3302182 tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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Friends  of
Brooker Creek Preserve

ADOPT AN ACRE



*A program to enhance restoration
and land management programs in
Brooker Creek Preserve*

The **ADOPT AN ACRE** program was established by the Friends in 2016 to give individuals the opportunity to help keep intact the ecological integrity of the Preserve.

100% of funding will be used for:

- Removing exotic and invasive plants
- Restoring the natural flow of water
- Fire management
- Restoring natural plant communities

Acres make great gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, memorials and more!

Upon receipt of the donation, the donor or honoree's name will be placed on the **ADOPT AN ACRE** display inside the Environmental Education Center for one year. A certificate will be sent to the honoree acknowledging the adoption.

Donor
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

__in honor of __in memory of __for myself

Honoree
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

I wish to adopt _____ acres @ \$100/acre

Total Due: _____

Make check payable to: FOBCP

Mail to: 3940 Keystone Road
Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org

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Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Mission Statement: The mission of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is to provide public support for the Preserve through fund raising, volunteer programs, and education to ensure that the Preserve remains a natural wilderness for future generations.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve - Land Use Position Statement: The Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve support land uses within the boundaries of Brooker Creek Preserve which have a main purpose that furthers the preservation, conservation, restoration or protection of the land and resources of the Brooker Creek Preserve.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve:
www.FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org
Email:
info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org
Voicemail: (727) 934-2680

Brooker Creek Preserve:
Phone: (727) 453-6900
Website: www.brookercreekpreserve.org
Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center is located at 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs, Florida, 34688. Phone: (727) 453-6800
Hours: Thurs. - Sat. 9am - 4pm, Sun., 11am - 4pm.

Friends Nature Store is located in the Education Center. Hours: Thurs. - Sat. 9am - 4pm, Sun., 11am - 4pm.

Preserve Hiking Trails open 7 days a week, 7:00am to 30 minutes before sunset. Closed the day after Thanksgiving and Dec. 25.

Horse Trails open 7 days a week, all year, sunrise to sunset.

This newsletter is published every other month. Please submit articles to Newsletter Editor Dr. Craig Huegel (727) 422-6583 or email Huegelc55@aol.com

Pinellas County PCR Mission statement: The mission of the Parks and Conservation Resources Department is to maintain and protect the inherent value of the County's natural, cultural and recreational resources through sustainable access, education, and stewardship that enhance quality of life for our community and future generations.

FOBCP Leadership 2022

Board of Directors Officers

Chair: Cathie Foster
Vice Chair: Robert Burkard
Secretary: Allyn Childress
Treasurer: Jane Myers
Business Director: Barb Hoffman

Directors:

Pam Brown: Wildflower Garden
Robert Burkard: Beekeeping
Allyn Childress: Grants
Evan Earle, Jr.: Return the Preserve Work Days
Cathie Foster: Nature Store Manager
Barbara Hoffman: Membership/
Owl-O-Ween
Walt Hoskins: Guiding Documents
Dr. Craig Huegel: Land Use/Newsletter
Editor/Off-the-Beaten-Path Hikes
Jane Myers: Music Events
Chuck Parsons: 4th Grade Coordination
Ray Poynor: Craftsman
Barbara Schultz: Publicity
Cathy Vogelsong: Newsletter Publisher
Julie Wade: Communications/Outreach
Mark Yeager: Night Hikes/Star Party

Further Leadership

Jon Burr & Kathleen Nicher: Readers Club
Mona Gardner & Dixie Mills: Nature Store
Bookkeepers
Sandra Miraglia: Nature Store Committee
Jeff Myers: Financial Manager
Cathy Ordiway: Website Master
Lynn Whitelaw: Art Gallery Curator

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