



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

January - February 2022



The popular Wildlife Safari is back with a little twist. In the past, this popular event has been coordinated completely by the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve. This year, Brooker Creek Preserve staff will host and coordinate the Safari, with support from the Friends of BCP. As always, this fun family event relies on the help of a legion of volunteers! Interested? Stay tuned for further information!

This Sunday! Music in the Woods Meriggiare String Quartet

Jan. 23, 2:00 - 4:00 pm (see the flyer on page 10).

This year reservations are required and seating is limited. To reserve a seat(s) please contact us at 727-934-2680 or info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org

We will contact you to confirm your reservation.

Upcoming Friends Events

- Jan. 8 Readers Club
- Jan. 15 Return the Preserve Work Day
- Jan. 23 Music in the Woods:
Meriggiare String Quartet
- Jan. 29 Wildflower Garden Work Day
- Jan. 30 Beekeeping Club
- Feb. 5 Readers Club
- Feb. 12 Night Hike 6:30 pm
- Feb. 26 Wildflower Garden Work Day
- Feb. 27 Beekeeping Club
- Mar. 5 Beekeeping Class: Honey Bee Biology & Behavior
- Mar. 5 Star Party/Night Hike 6:30
- Mar. 10 Beekeeping Class: Getting Started with Beekeeping
- Mar. 20 Off the Beaten Path Hike:
Sandhill Scramble
- Apr. 2 Wildlife Safari
- Apr. 9 Beekeeping Class: Healthy Hives

Chairman's Message

By Cathie Foster

Hello Fellow Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve and Happy New Year!

Our Friends Annual Meeting

It was fantastic to see those of you who came to the Annual Meeting and Lunch on January 8. There have been too few opportunities these past two years to chat with you, our members. You are the backbone of all that our organization does! As we welcomed in 2022, we celebrated all we were able to accomplish during our past fiscal year (October 2020-September 2021).

- October 2020 - Set up the Nature Store's new Square system following a full inventory and store clean-up
- Nov. 18, 2020 - School Field Trip Sales resumed (Education Center and Store remain closed)
- Apiary maintenance and honey extraction - the bees were kept happy and productive!
- Dec. 5 and 12, Jan. 30 - Parking lot sales of Brooker Creek Honey from our own beehives
- March 13, 20, 27 and Apr. 3 - Limited store sales outside front entrance
- Wildflower Garden Workdays
- May 1, 2021 - Nature Store reopened in full
- July 17, 2021 - Return the Preserve Workday
- August 14, 2021 - Front Entrance Planting Day
- September 11, 2021 - Return the Preserve Workday (Sickles High School NHS)
- September 12, 2021 - Art Reception: Jeff Nabors
- September 26, 2021 - Off the Beaten Path: Catesby's Lily hike
- October 2, 2021 - Native Plant Sale (technically, this falls in FY2022, but it was so close I had to include it!)

Also worthy of celebration is our FY2021 income. The figures in the tables below reflect overall income before taking out expenses. FY2019 was the last full year of our usual activities and programs. FY2020 and 2021 were "Covid" years.

OVERALL INCOME	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
	Oct 2018 - Sept 2019	Oct 2019 - March 2020	Apr 2021 - Sept 2021
Operating Income			
Memberships	15,955	10,625	9,253
Nature Store	36,178	22,083	19,057
Iron Ranger	994	2,042	1,686
Donation Boxes	876	221	2,610
Other Donations	2,353	9,588	14,794
Subtotal Operating	56,356	44,558	47,400

OVERALL INCOME	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
	Oct 2018 - Sept 2019	Oct 2019 - March 2020	Apr 2021 - Sept 2021
Major Events			
Fall Wildflower Festival	4,230	3,788	0
Spring Wildlife Safari	3,812	0	0
Owl-O-Ween	1,228	1,477	0
Music in the Woods	2,490	3,128	50
Subtotal Major Events	11,760	8,393	50

As you can see, your membership donations and the Nature Store income remained strong. And take a look at the "Iron Ranger," "Donation Boxes" and "Other Donations" lines! Wow! This tells me that our members and the general public recognize and support the work the Friends do even when life throws us a curve. Or maybe because life threw us a curve. Either way, we are so very grateful for everyone's ongoing support!

We are moving forward with as many of our usual programs and activities as is safely possible. I look forward to seeing you at one or more of them, or when you are just there to enjoy the natural loveliness that is Brooker Creek Preserve. *Cathie*

On behalf of all the FOBCP Directors, I wish each of you & your families, a very happy, healthy and safe 2022!



FOBCP Annual Meeting and lunch.



Nature Store News: Happy Anniversary to us!

By Cathie Foster

2021 marked the Nature Store's 20th anniversary! When the Friends first envisioned opening a small store so visitors could take home a souvenir of their visit to "Our Wildest Place," we had no idea that it would become what it is today — a full retail operation, run completely by volunteers. And each year we make a nice profit. At the end of each fiscal year, all of the store profit is transferred over to our FOBCP operating account for use in support of Brooker Creek Preserve.

Profit over the years (fiscal year Oct 1 - Sept 31):

2011 Opening year	\$ 1,336
2019 Last <u>full</u> year	\$13,970
2020 (Open Oct. 2019 - mid Mar. 2020)	\$ 9,319 (includes Fall Wildflower Festival and school field trip sales)

This past fiscal year we were fully open for only 5 months, May-September. There were no festivals and just a few school field trip sales as most of this time span encompassed Summer Break. Given all that, we are so proud of this year's profit of:

\$8,364

Many thanks to our Nature Store volunteer team and, of course, to our customers!



Farewell and Happy Trails to Kathleen and Karl Nichter!

The ongoing success of our little store lies with the dedication of our wonderful volunteers, guided by our 5-person management team. But the little nugget of an idea, and the behind-the-scenes work to make it a reality, came largely from FOBCP Director and Nature Store Bookkeeper, Kathleen Nichter. Up until just a few years ago, Kathleen was the sole manager of the store with a very little bit of help from the other four members of the Nature Store Committee. As the store grew and Kathleen's responsibilities became more and more time-consuming, the committee met to divide those responsibilities up among the five of us. Kathleen was then able to focus on handling the store bookkeeping, which she has continued to do in an exemplary manner. For much of that time, Kathleen also served as a Director on our board. She has served on the Board's Executive Committee as Secretary and has been a co-leader of the Friends Readers Club.

As avid travelers and campers, Kathleen, and her husband Karl, who has also been a long-time Brooker Creek Preserve volunteer, recently decided to embrace their status as retirees and start acting the part. In that vein, Kathleen is setting aside her role as an FOBCP Director and as Nature Store Bookkeeper. She and Karl will still be around, offering their photography programs and being involved in the Brooker Readers Club, but we will absolutely miss Kathleen's outstanding contributions to our Board of Directors and the expertise and dedication to detail that she offered as Nature Store Bookkeeper.



Thank you, Kathleen, for all you have done.

We wish you interesting and safe travels!

Welcome to our new Nature Store Bookkeepers

FOBCP members, Dixie Mills and Mona Gardner, will take over as Nature Store Bookkeepers. You may not have run into them in the Nature Store, but they have been behind-the-scenes volunteers for years, filling school field trip orders on days when the store is closed to the public, and making the trek over the Skyway Bridge several times a year to bring back native plants for the store's Plant Porch, as well as volunteering at our major events.

They have already met several times with Kathleen to go over bookkeeping procedures, and it is a lot! Thank you both for taking on this very important job. Welcome to the Nature Store Team!



Friends Outreach By Julie Wade

One of the joys of being a part of the volunteers for Brooker Creek Preserve, and a member of the Friends, is sharing her beauty with the community. It is still incredulous to me how many residents have not yet discovered Brooker Creek's secrets, mysteries, and peacefulness, even though we are virtually in their back yards! Our Friends "Outreach" component is one way to keep the community aware of the respite that is available to them and their families only a short drive or bike ride away.

I am lucky enough to participate in the Tarpon Springs First Friday extravaganza. It occurs on the first Friday, obviously, of every month, February thru November, from 5 to 10 in the evening. Tarpon Avenue, the main street, is closed to vehicular traffic, and more than 100 vendors of food, merchandise, and information set up booths for guests to enjoy on their evening stroll. Local musicians add to the spirit. Another Brooker "friend" and I get to meet and greet hundreds of local residents and visitors to our area. We share with them that even in this most densely populated Florida county, we have preserved almost 9,000 acres of natural Florida and that a visit to Brooker is free. Additionally, we provide them with the current program and hiking information, and add names to our mailing list. Each month we "shake hands" with almost 400 folks and welcome them to visit, or visit again. It is especially gratifying to hear of visitors' own fascinating experiences at Brooker or their reminiscences about their 4th grade field trip. If you are out and about on a first Friday, stop by and say "hi."

Another recent "reach out" event was September 18th. We joined the City of Tarpon Springs and its Recreation Division at their annual Eco Fest.

Preservation-minded and eco-friendly groups set up tents and informational displays next to the City Splash Park on Live Oak Street. The City's own departments provided music, water slides, food, and free trees to attendees. We were able to share the wonders of Brooker Creek with many families and invite them to come for a visit.



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

ACRE ADOPTIONS FOR BROOKER CREEK PRESERVE

Many thanks for the following Acre Adoptions:

In memory of Tanner Byholm, given by The William Ruth Family

In memory of Sandy Tressler Buckley, given by Cathy Ordiway



Joseph Weinzettle
**SWAMPS OF NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY
PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS**

Eighteen plein-air works inspired by study of the natural environment that surrounds us.

exhibit on view

January 16th

through

April 10th, 2022

*the auditorium gallery at
Brooker Creek Preserve
Environmental Education
Center*

Swamp Interior: Evening, 2020 – Oil over silverpoint on panel
28"x16"

Opening Reception

Sunday, February 13, 1-3 pm

Short program with our

Guest Artist, Joseph Weinzettle

Talk and Nature Hike by Dr. Craig Huegel

***Free / Open to the Public / Light Refreshments / Live Music
Gallery open***

Saturday 9am-4pm / Sunday 11am-4pm

Some Fridays – please call

727-934-2680 • info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org

AUDITORIUM GALLERY

By Lynn Whitelaw

ON VIEW IN THE GALLERY, Jan. 16 - April 10, *Joseph Weinzettle: Swamps of North Pinellas County, Paintings and Drawings*

Artist Reception and Talk:

Sunday, Feb. 13, 1:00-3:00 pm

Free / Open to the Public / Light Refreshments / Program

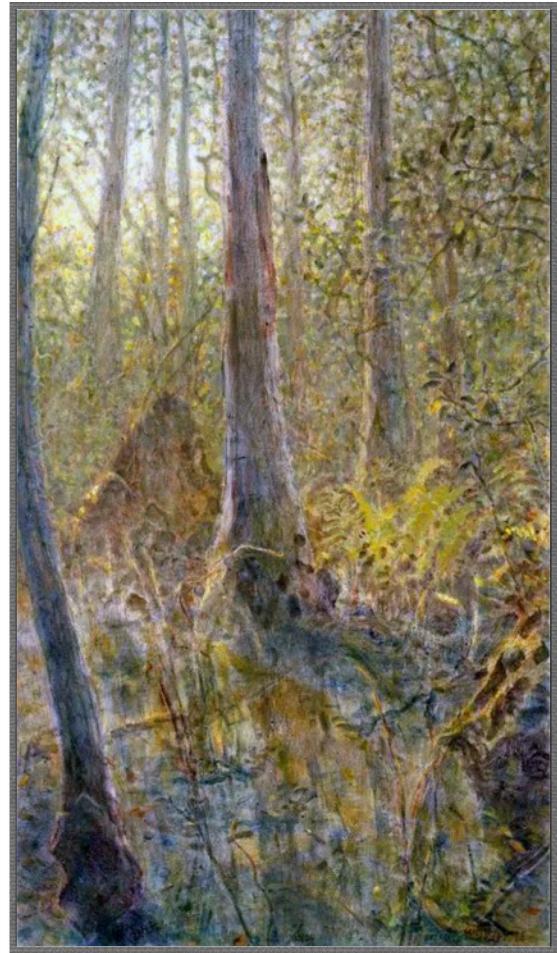
Following a short program with comments by artist Joseph Weinzettle, Dr. Craig Huegel will give an introductory talk on *The Importance of Our Swamp Lands* and lead a short boardwalk hike over the Brooker Creek swamp lands.

"My paintings may take weeks to months to complete depending on the scale and complexity. Occasionally I re-visit a painting the following year, when the surface is again workable. The underdrawing and painting are layered responses to the site conditions. Due to changes over time on site, the underdrawing and painted layers are often contradictory. This is part of the process, the organic nature of working en plein air. I want the viewer to share in the experience on site."

- Joseph Weinzettle

The swamp drawings and paintings of Tarpon Springs artist Joseph Weinzettle are explorations of natural environments in Pinellas County, including Brooker Creek Preserve, and are conceived *en plein air*, meaning they are created directly on site to capture the nuances of changing light and atmosphere. Weinzettle's work is painstakingly conceived through the build-up of drawn and painted layers. He incorporates a variety of materials and techniques on his gesso and primed wood panels, including the use of oil paints, bamboo brush and ink, silverpoint, natural red chalk, and stand oils.

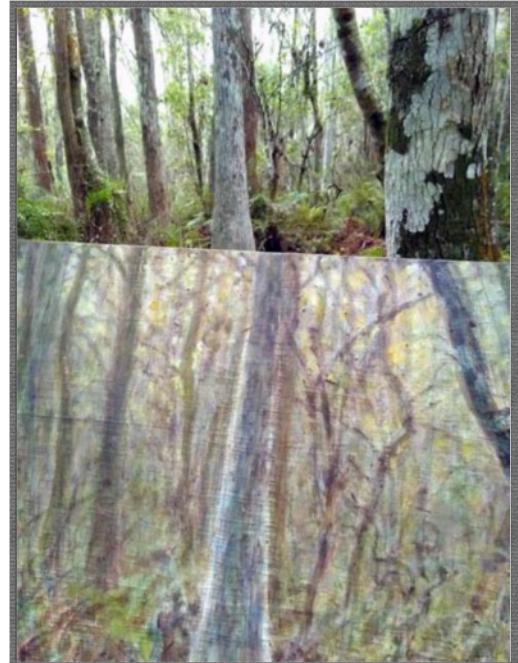
Joseph Weinzettle has lived on the west coast of Florida since 1992 and is well known and respected as both an artist and as an instructor, teaching drawing at several area art centers. Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, Weinzettle received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from The Cooper Union in New York City in 1989 and his Master of Fine Arts in 1997 from the University of Mississippi.



Joseph Weinzettle,
Swamp Interior: Evening, 2021
Oil over silverpoint on panel, 28 x 16

Over the past twelve years, Weinzettle has been creating *plein air* landscape paintings. He has received numerous awards and grants for his work, including the prestigious Pollock-Krasner Foundation and Gottlieb Foundation grants. In 2010, he was selected for an Artist-in-Residence program in the Everglades National Park. Weinzettle has had numerous solo exhibitions in Florida and his artwork is in both public and private collections, including the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve is honored to show the *plein air* drawings and paintings documenting the swamps of North Pinellas County and thank Joseph Weinzettle for the work he has created in Brooker Creek Preserve.



Photograph of a nature site, with the *plein air* painting by Joseph Weinzettle below.

UPCOMING ART EVENT AND EXHIBITION **2022 Brooker Creek Preserve Plein-Air Weekend**

Event: Friday, April 22 (Earth Day) - Saturday, April 23, 2022

Reception and Awards Program: Sunday, April 24, 1-3 pm

Exhibition: April 24 - May 8 (works for sale with a 10% donation back to FoBCP)

This event is open to artists and photographers who are encouraged to use Brooker Creek Preserve to create nature-inspired works during the two-day event. Consider becoming a *plein air* artist and participate in **Plein Air 2022**, or help us spread the word to artists in our area.



SPECIAL EVENT IN THE AUDITORIUM GALLERY:

Enjoy the *plein air* works of Joseph Weinzettle while listening to the **Meriggiare String Quartet** during their concert on Sunday, Jan. 23 at 2:00 pm (see page 10 for details)



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve
presents

MUSIC IN THE WOODS SERIES with

Meriggiare String Quartet

Italian for: "To escape the heat of the midday sun by resting in the shade"



Nina Kim-Mulla

Michelle Painter

Jonas Benson

Edevaldo Mulla

Sunday, January 23, 2022 2:00—4:00 pm
Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center
This concert will be held inside the auditorium

***REGISTRATION REQUIRED!**

WE WILL CONTACT YOU TO CONFIRM YOUR RESERVATION

Due to Covid we will allow only the first 100 people who register to attend.

***Please call 727-934-2680**

**to leave a voicemail registration or email us at
info@FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org**

\$15/person donation requested at the door.



2022 NIGHT HIKES!

Night Hike:

Saturday, Feb. 12, 6:30 pm

Night Hike & Star Party:

Saturday, Mar. 5, 6:30 pm

Join the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve for a hiking experience along the Education Center Trail...at night! These special hikes are open to the public and limited to 20 people per hike. **A \$3 per person donation is requested.** Hikes are led by Mark Yeager, a Preserve volunteer who is knowledgeable about nocturnal wildlife. The hike is about one-mile in length and will take about 1.5 hours.

Pre-registration is required! Once you register, more information will come to you via email. Pre-register online by logging onto: <https://nighthikes.eventbrite.com>

These hikes are for adults and families only. Children must be accompanied by parents. Please leave your pets at home. Pets are not permitted in County Preserves.

Star Party! Join the Friends AND the St. Petersburg Astronomy Club to view planets, stars, and the moon with telescopes. Night Hikes will be conducted as well. Saturday, March 5, 2022, 6:30 pm

Questions? Email info@friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org

Please note: our Night Hikes are popular, space is limited, and there is always a waiting list. Please sign up only if you know you can attend, and cancel if you find you will be unable to.



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



The Importance of Swamps

By: Craig Huegel

Recently, I was given another opportunity to lead a hike into the Preserve's most beautiful cypress swamp as part of our *Off the Beaten Path* walks. I look forward to this walk each year and I like to believe that my fellow hikers get as much from it as I do. Wading into a swamp like this, knee deep in water, is almost a religious experience for me and as we walk, I realize that too few of us ever take advantage of such experiences. They seem a bit scary to do without a guide and most big swamps are off limits to the public. We tame such experiences by creating boardwalks that put us just a bit outside of the real swamp. We look in, but we are not a part of it.

When I was directing the Preserve's educational programs many years ago, we took 5th graders into such places - an experience that these kids would never have taken without us to guide them. Some of the kids jumped at the chance while others were visibly fearful. One girl especially stands out in all of the years I did these walks. As we disembarked from the van and readied ourselves to begin the walk, she begged me to take her back to the safety of the center. She had images of venomous snakes and alligators and impending doom; a life up to that time of stories of danger that such places hold. I assured her that I would take her back if she entered the swamp and didn't like it. As I expected, she turned out to be perhaps the most enthusiastic camper we ever had. By the end of the morning, she was laughing and jumping off logs, inured to the "danger" she once envisioned. This may have been the only time in her life that she would trek through a swamp off a boardwalk trail, but I like to believe it left an impression that would last a lifetime. Swamps are like that. They seem "spooky" on the surface, but are magical beneath it.

Swamps are forested wetlands and marshes are herbaceous - dominated by grasses and other non-woody species. Marshes are fascinating habitats, but they are not nearly as magical as a swamp. Because they occur in full sunlight, you can see well into the distance. There is little to anticipate as you move forward. Not true in a forested wetland where the canopy of cypress, tupelo and other trees lends an atmosphere of primeval Florida. There is something new around each corner as you walk. The kids universally thought of Jurassic Park as we walked each session for all of those years and I could fully appreciate that sentiment. It was in a way. It's a place that seems ancient and provides a way to look back into the prehistory of this beautiful state we live in.



It is true that snakes and alligators make their home in a well-developed swamp, but it is not true that they are places to fear. They are places to respect most certainly, but in all of the years that I've walked these places I have not experienced fear. I am always enthralled by each experience. When we walk across a swamp on a boardwalk, we lose so much of the real experience. We are looking at them from the outside and, at best, we are only getting a look at what might be. Walking into and through a swamp makes us a part of it.

It is not possible to explore a swamp at Brooker Creek Preserve outside of a guided walk. It is possible elsewhere in places like Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, but we have made such possibilities impossible here unless you join me or another guide. I encourage you to take advantage of such opportunities the next time it is offered. My guess is that you will come away with an appreciation for such places that you couldn't possibly have otherwise and that it will completely alter for good your perception of what a swamp is and why they are so important.

Return The Preserve Work Days 2022 By Evan Earle, Jr.

As we enter a new year, I want to thank all of the hardworking volunteers who have participated in our Return The Preserve Work Days. It is amazing to look back and see what you have accomplished. Our first RTP Work Days were in 2014. That is eight years of hard work! Over those eight years we have removed everything from caesarweed to St. Augustine grass to pine saplings to invasive apple snails.

We look forward to another great year in 2022. There is plenty to do and we will do it!

Thank you for your hands-on support. With you, we will continue to Return The Preserve to its natural ecological health and beauty.



We hold our RTP Work Days the first month of each quarter. For 2022, our RTP Work Days are planned for: January 15, April 16 (we will be honoring Earth Day), July 16, and October 15. Please join us!



Beekeeping Club Update

By Bob Burkard

This is an exciting time of year for our beekeeping club. Our "Long" Florida winter is almost over and our honey bees have come through with flying colors. We currently have five hives, each consisting of the wooden structure, the honeycomb made of wax, a single queen bee and 20,000 to 50,000 female worker bees. Our five hives are healthy and ready for the upcoming spring. For those of you who were asking: this time of year there are no male bees or Drones in a healthy hive.



What a beautiful location for our honey bees!

From a beekeeper's perspective, there are two seasonal conditions that we need to account for when managing our bees, determined by the weather and the number of flowering nectar-producing plants. Adult bees eat nectar and honey, which is nectar that the bees turn into an easy to digest concentrated food. When flowers are blooming and nectar is available, the honey bees eat nectar, and when plants are not flowering and producing nectar, the honey bees eat the honey they have stored. As an FYI, the baby bees (developing larvae) eat mostly pollen.

During the times of the year when flowers are blooming and honey bees are collecting nectar and bringing it back to the hive to make honey, we need to make sure that they have enough room in their hives to expand. While there are many other things that we need to manage with our bees this is one of the most important considerations during the "Honey Flow" (which is the term that we beekeepers use when flowers are blooming, and nectar sources are available, and the weather is favorable for the bees to fly and collect it).



Some of our honey bees collecting nectar
Last fall we harvested over 80 pounds of honey from our bees.

Conversely, during the times of the year when there are no flowers blooming, we need to make sure that our bees have enough stored honey to eat and that they do not starve. Beekeepers call the time when there is a shortage of nectar-producing flowers a "Nectar Dearth." The length of time for the honey flows and nectar dearths, and the amount of nectar available for harvesting by our bees, vary each year depending on the variability of the weather conditions (rain and temperature) those times.

In our area of Florida by the Booker Creek Preserve we have two nectar dearth seasons: the middle of winter (mid-Dec through mid-Feb) and middle of summer (July - late August). So, in the area where we keep our bees, we have two honey flows where our honey bees bring nectar to their hives and make honey. At the end of each of our honey flows our beekeepers decide on how much of the stored honey to harvest. We need to ensure that each hive has stored enough honey to feed itself during the nectar dearth, and we only take what is extra for ourselves.

Our Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Beekeeping Club meets on the last Sunday of each month. At our January 30th meeting, we are going to check on the health of the bees, ensure that they still have enough stored honey, and we will prepare for our February honey flow. We have a great group of enthusiastic beekeepers who share the work, share their knowledge and experiences, and help us all become better at this wonderful hobby.

Our Friends of Brooker Beekeeping Club is also sponsoring our Introduction to Beekeeping series again this year. These are great sessions for both people who want to learn about honey bees and experienced beekeepers to learn more about these amazing insects. We have three sessions scheduled :

1. Saturday, March 5: Honey Bee Biology and Behavior
2. Saturday, March 10: Getting Started with Beekeeping
3. Saturday April 9: Healthy Hives

If you are interested in learning more about honey bees or participate in our club, please email:

info@friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org



Barbara Hoffman holding a perfect frame of honey ready for harvesting.

News from the Wildflower Garden

By Pam Brown

The garden has been resting and mostly going to seed during December. Since we were not able to work in the garden for the October work day, several of us met on an off Saturday in December to clean up and spread seeds from the plants around the garden

We will resume work in the garden on Saturday January 29 with our winter work hours of 9:00 to 11:00 am. If you would like to join us, please register by emailing me at pamperedgardeners@gmail.com. We limit the number to five workers, and children 10 or more years old, due to the fragility of the plants in the garden. Bring your gardening tools, gloves, hat, and bug repellent, and wear closed-toed shoes. We will provide a light snack along with coffee and tea.

Pam's Thoughts

Many of the landscape plants in Florida are evergreen, but even though they are still green, they are dormant during the winter. Pruning these evergreen plants or trees is not recommended during the winter season. Pruning can encourage these plants to break dormancy and sprout new growth. This new growth is very sensitive to frost or freezing temperatures. This might cause damage to the plant should we experience such cold temperatures. While we have not had a hard freeze in our area for about 10 years, there is still the possibility that this could happen. The best time to prune evergreens is early to mid March in our area. Plants that lose their leaves during the winter (deciduous plants) can be pruned during winter, and January and February are the recommended months.



Uncolored tiger beetle
at the Preserve



Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve Readers Club

By Jon Burr

It was nice to once again have in-person meetings. It was not crowded in the small conference room. To continue in an understating mood, perhaps it is any reader's guess as to when anything resembling those vague memories of normal will return.



At the December meeting we talked about *Olustee America's Unfinished Civil War Battle* by Greg Ahlgren. The discussion was good, the book got everyone's attention. Given that some of the events portrayed were unpleasant was simply a result of the times the book portrayed — the Civil war in Florida. There were, however, a few okay surprises at the end of the book.

Ah, a new year. We met on Saturday, January 8, 2022. We were not meeting on our usual first Saturday of the month as that was New Years Day. The book we discussed was *The Three Marjories*, by Sandra Wallus Sammons, a school librarian who wanted to provide more Florida history for students with the help of the Pineapple Press. Author Sammons' book is subtitled "Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Marjorie Harris Carr and Their Contributions to Florida."

In the past we've read about Marjorie Carr's husband, Archie, (a Preserve connection: our Barb Hoffman, early in her career, worked for Archie) and we've read about Rawlings and some of her Florida neighbors. The book is short but tells about three Florida women who made a difference for the better of the natural lands of Florida. The book was enjoyed by all with Marjorie Carr being the 'favorite'. As the times remain a bit uncertain vis-a-vis scheduling, please check meeting times with Preserve staff.

Proposed for the rest of first half of 2022:

February 5, *Cat Tale: The Wild Weird Battle to Save the Florida Panther*, 2020, by Craig Pittman.

March 5, *The Wild Heart of Florida*, 1999, Ripple and Cerulean, eds.

April 2, *Journal of Light, The Visual Diary of a Florida Nature Photographer*, 2004, John Moran.

May 7, *The Wilder Heart of Florida*, 2021, Davis and Poole eds.

June 4, *Oranges*, 1967, John McPhee

See you at 9:30 am, February 5th, 2022 in the conference room in the Ed Center.

Volunteer News

Education Center Updates & More

By Julia Myers, Education Support Specialist, Brooker Creek Preserve

Year-in-Review: Wow, what a year!

Despite the global pandemic and being closed until April of this year, Brooker Creek volunteers continued to SHINE! I couldn't be prouder of our volunteer team. Big thanks to our volunteers for sticking with us and staying flexible as we navigated this everchanging "new normal" together. In fiscal year 2021, Brooker Creek volunteers contributed a total of 2,436 hours, which is an equivalent of \$69,523 of service to our Preserve! Brooker Creek Volunteers reached 368 visitors through volunteer-led guided hikes, book times, and educational programs. Volunteers also welcomed 4,484 visitors into the Ed Center since we've re-opened. We are incredibly grateful for each of you and your efforts. Thank YOU for your passion and dedication to the Preserve!

Hello 2022: We are looking forward to the New Year. Right now, we are planning for in-person programs starting in January. We will still offer webinars but are looking forward to bringing back our in-person educational programs and events. We're excited to kick off January with some fantastic new programs, so be sure to check out the January calendar!



Book Time with Miss Alex



Hike with Ray and Rose



Youth Turkey Program with Meredith

New Audio Tour: We have created a new audio tour for the Friends Trail. The Friends Trail is located at the end of Lora Lane, and only a short drive from the Ed Center. Look for audio tour signs with a QR code at the 15 designated stops along the way. Happy Learning.

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

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (1-800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION NUMBER CH. 16077



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

Questions? fobcp@tampabay.rr.com

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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 News-letter 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: TBD
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

Registration Info: FEID #59-3302182 tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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