

# Volunteer News

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## Volunteers support J.W. Corbett WMA

The 60,348-acre J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in northwestern Palm Beach County is owned and managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The agency manages the WMA to protect a variety of wildlife, including endangered and threatened species, migratory birds, fish and both game and nongame species. The FWC also manages the area for a wide variety of recreational uses.



—Photo by Linda King, FWC

J.W. Corbett WMA volunteer Joe Brennan preparing wildlife food plots.

J.W. Corbett WMA has a long history of volunteer support, and volunteer efforts have been and remain invaluable; during 2009-2010, J.W. Corbett WMA volunteers logged more than 3,000 hours. Volunteer activities at J.W. Corbett WMA range from large, one-day events supported by volunteers from local organizations or clubs to ongoing individual projects. For the past 16 years, local clubs have sponsored an annual J.W. Corbett

WMA clean-up event, logging approximately 500 volunteer hours and filling four 20-cubic-yard dumpsters before noon. Local club involvement in this clean-up event includes Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Florida Trails Association, Palm Beach County Airboat & Halftrack Conservation Club, Wellington Radio Club, Pine Jog Environmental Center and Friends of Corbett WMA.

Additional volunteer contribution for 2009-2010 includes approximately 400 hours from Florida Trails Association volunteers to clear trails, 80 hours from Wellington Radio Club for communication support, 100 hours of combined club support for tree planting, and various other projects, including Red-cockaded Woodpecker monitoring, bird counts, invasive plant removal, clean-ups, landscaping, wildlife surveys, and wood duck and barn owl box installation and monitoring.

Furthermore, the Friends of Corbett, established in 2000, volunteer approximately 450 hours annually. Members meet monthly and raise funds for J.W. Corbett WMA and the Everglades Youth Conservation Camp, located within J.W. Corbett WMA and operated by Pine Jog Environmental Center

and Florida Atlantic University. Friends of Corbett also sponsors a biannual "Tales of Corbett" banquet



—Photo by Linda King, FWC

J.W. Corbett WMA volunteers take a break for a photo during a tree planting event.

and hosts an annual banquet each June for board elections, member recruitment and presenting volunteer awards.

Individual volunteers also make important contributions to J.W. Corbett WMA. Each year, Joe Brennan, a volunteer from the National Wild Turkey Federation, donates an average 290 hours to the wildlife forage program by mowing 300 acres and planting 200 acres with a variety of wildlife forage.

Volunteer support at J.W. Corbett WMA is invaluable. For information on volunteering at J.W. Corbett WMA, contact Linda King at 561-624-6989 or [Linda.King@MyFWC.com](mailto:Linda.King@MyFWC.com).

— By Linda King



MyFWC.com

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

# 2010 National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day, a nationwide, hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance America's public lands, was celebrated Sept. 25. The FWC Office of Recreation Services, in cooperation with staff from the Joe Budd Aquatic Education Center and Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and the Florida Division of Forestry, hosted a National Public Lands Day event at Joe Budd WMA just West of Tallahassee.

Thirty-one volunteers, including Girl Scouts and their families, contributed 124 hours to spruce up the Aquatic Education Center building and grounds. After the work was completed, volunteers

and staff enjoyed an afternoon of demonstrations by K-9 handlers and their dogs, of prescribed fire equipment and about wild turkey telemetry. Other activities included fishing and archery.

In Central Florida, the Ridge Rangers volunteer program also hosted a National Public Lands Day event at Lake Blue Scrub conservation site in Auburndale. Work focused on supporting the reintroduction of scrub lupine, an endangered plant species found only in Central Florida. Over a thousand scrub lupines have been planted at Lake Blue Scrub in two experimental plots. On this day, eight Ridge Rangers volunteers and 18 Girl Scouts



—Photo by Liz Sparks, FWC

*Volunteers spruce up the grounds at the Joe Budd Aquatic Education Center.*

and adult leaders spent the day maintaining these plots by removing encroaching vegetation. Juliet Rynear, biologist from Bok Tower Gardens, gave an onsite presentation to the Girl Scouts on the scrub lupine project and the results of the experimental plots.

— *By Jessica Ireland and Bill Parken*

## Volunteers host fish camps at the Stock Enhancement Research Facility

Every summer during June and July, the Fish and Wildlife Institute Stock Enhancement Research Facility in Port Manatee partners with angling clubs and nonprofit organizations to host several "fish camps" at the hatchery to educate children of all ages about marine stock enhancement in Florida and how to be ethical anglers. FWC volunteers assist by organizing the events,

rigging rods, teaching at skill stations and providing valuable expertise on catch-and-release fishing. This year, fish campers from the Florida Aquarium, St. Pete Pier Aquarium,

Florida Sherriff's Youth Ranch, Hillsborough County Children Services and the Blooming Place for Kids participated in these events.

Volunteers from the Anclote Key Anglers Club have been organizing special-opportunity fishing events at the Stock Enhancement Research Facility for the past four years for foster children from Blooming Place for Kids. This summer, 22 volunteers contributed a total of 184 hours.

The anglers club received a grant from Fish Florida to provide children with free rods, reels and tackle boxes to take home. They also gathered donations from local companies and food vendors to provide drinks and lunch, and even paid for the tour bus that transported children to and from SERF. These volunteers deserve special recognition for all of their hard work for and dedication to the children! For more information on the Stock Enhancement Research Facility fish camps, contact Gina Russo at 941-723-4505 or [Gina.Russo@MyFWC.com](mailto:Gina.Russo@MyFWC.com).

— *By Gina Russo*



—Photo by Gina Russo, FWC

*A young lady shows off her juvenile tarpon caught during a fishing event at the Stock Enhancement Research Facility.*

# Tarpon troopers take on the heat

The 2010 Professional Tarpon Tournament Series provided an opportunity for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) staff and volunteers to draw blood and take DNA samples. The samples help researchers evaluate how stressed the tarpon are at the time of release by measuring the response of various blood chemistry levels relative to non-tournament tarpon.

All current tarpon research is directed at evaluating the effects of catch-and-release fishing on tarpon to effectively educate an-

glers on the best practices to enhance the survival and ultimate conservation of the species.



—Photo by Kathy Guindon, FWC

Tarpon research staff and volunteers prepare to take tarpon DNA samples.

During three weekends in May and June 2010, teen volunteers Sam Roberts and Jeremy Forbes awoke in the dark to be at the beach before sunrise. Tarpon research can involve hours of

sweltering hot boredom followed by minutes of organized chaos. But when you have a fish to sample, you have to be ready to get the job done, so volunteer assistance to do just that is invaluable to the project. Through the help of dedicated volunteers, FWC-FWRI tarpon research studies have been able to gain much information on this important recreational fishery.

If you are an avid tarpon angler and are interested in volunteering to take DNA samples, visit <http://research.myfwc.com/tarpon> or call 800-367-4461 for a kit.

—By Kathy Guindon

## New FWC conservation volunteer program

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has established a new conservation volunteer program in the west central Florida area: the Brooksville Ridge

Volunteer Program. Volunteers work on FWC and other public and private lands in Pasco, Citrus, Hernando, Sumter and Levy counties. Volunteers who have a passion for conservation and the environment can help by working with scientists and land managers to remove invasive plants, prepare lands for prescribed burns, assist with habitat enhancement and land management activities and



—Photo by Annemarie Hammond, FWC

Volunteers operate land management equipment to maintain fire lines and critical habitat on conservation lands.

participate in wildlife research as a citizen scientist. Current projects include Red-cockaded Woodpecker research, rare invertebrate

studies and invasive plant management, and additional projects are soon to come.

If you are interested in volunteering or have a conservation project that could utilize the help of volunteers in the Brooksville Ridge region, please contact Annemarie Hammond, Brooksville Ridge volunteer coordinator, at 352-754-6722 or [Annemarie.Hammond@MyFWC.com](mailto:Annemarie.Hammond@MyFWC.com).

—By Annemarie Hammond

## In memory of volunteer Kathleen Tuck

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) volunteer Kathleen Tuck passed away at her home in Cedar Key on July 21. She was 57. Tuck received the 2009 FWRI “Volunteer of the Year” award for her contribution to horseshoe crab studies, which she researched and monitored with unflagging enthusiasm.

She was a driven environmentalist, and was especially devoted to teaching children about conservation. Tuck’s family has established an account at the Drummond Community Bank in Cedar Key for donations for a permanent horseshoe crab educational exhibit to be developed in her memory.