


Newsletter of the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

May - June 2014

Chairman's Message

By Barb Hoffman

EVERYDAY is Earth Day at Brooker Creek Preserve! Earth Day started in 1970 and is celebrated annually on April 22. Events are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It is celebrated in more than 192 countries.

I was asked several times this year, what is the Friends group doing for Earth Day? The board and I had tossed around a few ideas but we came to the conclusion that everything we do is an Earth Day event.

Our constant vigilance and crucial support of Brooker Creek Preserve is so valuable. Just having the Preserve, the fact that it exists, is so important. The top two effects of



Passion flower
by Barb Hoffman

Chairman's Message

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overpopulation and contributing causes of climate change are (1) destruction of ecosystems and (2) loss of biodiversity. Even though our Preserve is only 8,500 acres, it represents a huge area for the Tampa Bay region. It is a living history museum of what our area once was. It is important locally to the plants and animals that
(continued, page 2)



Many thanks to Bob Host and Carrie Root for their many years of service on the Friends Board of Directors! Bob and Carrie resigned their positions to focus more attention on new endeavors with Rotary. Bob is now President of the East Lake Sunrise Rotary Club and Carrie is the Foundation Chairman of the Tarpon Springs Rotary Club. Good luck, Bob and Carrie! We will miss you!



Chairman's Message, continued:

live there, and globally to the planet Earth as well.

The three-building Ed Center complex are sustainable. The many feet of boardwalks are made from recycled materials. The Preserve itself is home to diverse populations of wildlife. Soon we will have a bike trail linking Brooker to Pinellas, Pasco, and Hillsborough Counties. And the many things we personally are supposed to do to help stop climate change are taught by staff at Brooker including:

- Eating Less Meat
- Supporting Environmental Education
- Reducing Energy Consumption
- Composting
- Adjusting Our Water Heaters
- Supporting Renewable Energy
- Stopping the Use of Disposable Plastic
- Buying Local
- Reducing Our Footprint
- Planting an Organic Garden
- Unplugging Appliances

Every day is Earth Day at Brooker Creek Preserve.

Barb

**Save the Dates
Friends Events for 2014**

First Saturday of each month:	Book Club
Last Sat. of each month:	Wildflower Garden Club
May 17	Return the Preserve Work Day
June 7	Off the Beaten Path Hike
June 14	Return the Preserve Work Day
June 22	Summer Solstice Boat Trip to North Bar Island
July 26	Four Lakes Hammock Hike
Sept. 14	Off the Beaten Path Hike
Oct. 8-12	Paint & Photograph Brooker Creek Preserve - a Plein Aire Event!
Oct. 18	Fall Wildflower Festival
Nov. 8	Friends Birthday Bash!
Dec. 6	Natural Wreath & Ornament Making Class
Dec. 7	Off the Beaten Path Hike

Don't forget to "like" the BCP Environmental Education Center on Facebook - [Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center](#)

Have a question, but can't find the answer? www.AskExtension.org or stop by the Education Center and drop your question into the "Ask an Agent" box.

In Memory of Alice Changstrom

By: Craig Huegel

In the end, the best we can hope for is to have led a meaningful life; that our presence here left a positive mark on those around us and that our passing creates a hole that others feel can never truly be filled. The passing of my friend, Alice Changstrom, on April 9 marked one such meaningful life and her 99 years touched a great many people – too numerous to count. I feel blessed to have been one of those folks.

Many of you may have known Alice. She was everywhere an environmental issue needed an advocate, but she rarely stood front and center drawing attention to herself. She worked tirelessly to make the world a better place, but she avoided the limelight whenever possible. She was an unassuming warrior, but warrior she was. She squeezed more minutes out of a 24-hour day than anyone I know.

I met Alice shortly after my arrival to Pinellas County in 1987. I was a young Wildlife Extension Specialist for the University of Florida and I was eager to initiate programs that might encourage people to improve landscapes for wildlife. Alice had already been doing that and we forged a quick bond. She had already been teaching nature studies at the Florida Federation of Garden Club's Camp Wekiva and teaching Junior Gardening after school at Dunedin Elementary School. She was reaching out to youth and connecting them to nature, and she was doing a superlative job at it.

When we founded the Pinellas Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society more than 2 decades ago, Alice was one of our first members. She understood the connection between Florida's flora and its wildlife and she was a regular member at monthly meetings until her ability to get around independently made this difficult. Even then, she would find a way to get to the major events. Alice wanted to be there even if she wasn't the leader. Her thirst for knowledge never waned nor her desire to increase the knowledge of others.

Alice established the first Environmental College classes offered by the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Never one to wait on others, she took it upon herself to set the curricula for 3 accredited lines of study, Garden Study, Landscape Design, and Environmental Studies. I taught classes for Alice. These were serious courses, not for the faint-of-heart. Alice made sure her students learned all the salient points and passed each as any college student might. These classes were extremely popular, but at age 94, she realized that she had been too busy to take them herself, so she opted to be a student again.

Alice was a lifelong gardener and an active member of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. She served a great many roles during her long life and was always willing to step in if she thought she was needed. The last time I actually worked with Alice was a couple of years ago when she asked me to speak to her Dunedin Chapter. She had just been made President one more time. Even though she was past her mid-90's, Alice was displeased with the direction her beloved Chapter had recently taken and she wanted them to change course. The way to do that was to lead, not complain.

Alice was active to nearly her last day and in every one of them, she was scheming to make a difference somehow. She loved Brooker Creek Preserve, the environment as a whole, and the thrill of watching young and old make a connection to nature. I will miss her dearly.

Return the Preserve Work Days

If you enjoy getting dirty or you are looking for a good workout, join us! If you want to be part of a visible "before and after" project, join us!

Saturday, May 17, 8:00 - 12:00

We will continue our removal of the grapevine overgrowth and any exotics from the area next to the parking lot near the entrance to the boardwalk.

Saturday, June 14, 8:00-12:00

This month we will remove exotics from the creek. Plan to get wet this time!

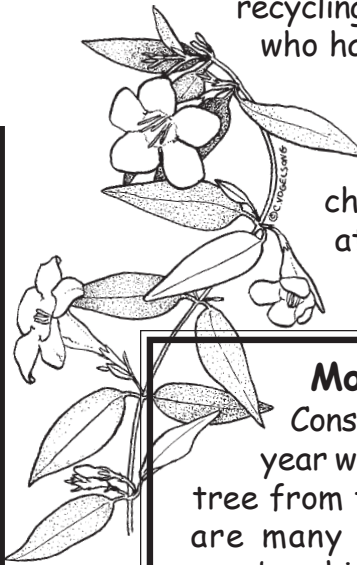
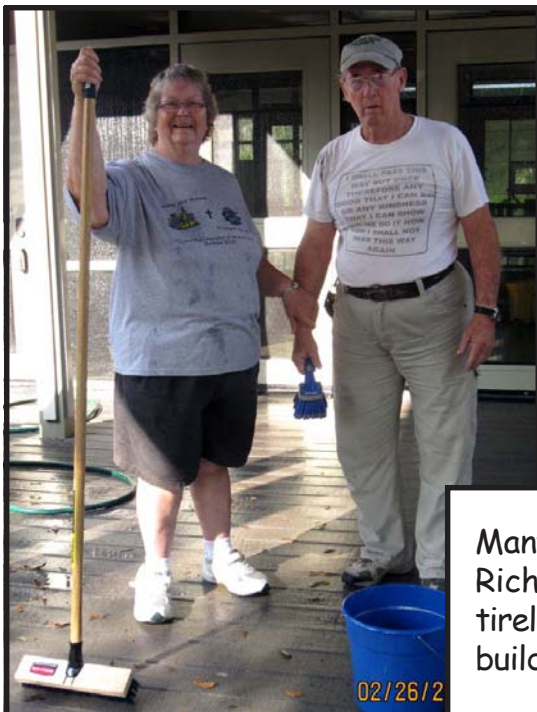
Please bring clippers, loppers, and rakes. The following are recommended: gloves, hat, eye protection, long sleeves, long pants, closed shoes, bug repellent, and sunscreen. Snacks and water will be provided. Lunch will be provided at noon. Please RSVP to Evan Earle at: earlejr@gmail.com or 727-515-9545.

Thank you! Your participation and support are sincerely appreciated as continue to do our part with our work days to return Brooker Creek Preserve to its natural beauty.



Golf Cart from Rotary!

Thank you to the Tarpon Springs Rotary Club and the East Lake Sunrise Rotary Club for their \$2,000 donation to make our golf cart dream come true. (Can we think of it as a birthday present? Remember, we are 20 years old this year!) The Friends kicked in the final \$1,500 needed to purchase this gently used, completely refurbished cart that can carry four people. The back seat folds down to create a flatbed to carry equipment. We have had it only one month and so far we have used it for Wildlife Safari, the tree density study, toting recycling materials, and giving elder volunteers who have trouble walking a beautiful, quiet ride on the hiking trail. The county has allowed us to store it in an enclosed spot with an electric outlet for charging the batteries. We so appreciate Rotary for this great gift and have many plans for its use in the future.



Mother's Day & Father's Day

Consider honoring your mom and dad this year with a beautiful wildflower or native tree from the Friends Nature Store. There are many species to choose from! Gift memberships are always good, too!

Many thanks to volunteers and Friends members, Richard & Linda Hicks, who quietly, frequently, and tirelessly wash the numerous screens of the Ed Center buildings. We appreciate you and all you do!



Summer Solstice Celebration and Fundraiser!
~ Barbeque, Beach, Boating, and Birding ~

Sunday, June 22, 2014
3:00 pm—9:30 pm

Sunset Cruise to North Bar
(the island to the north of Anclote Key)
With Captain Bob and his 40' Catamaran
One hour en route to the island,
four and a half hours on the island,
and one hour back to port.

The cruise embarks from New Port Richey.
There is room for 35 people so bring friends!
\$50 per person includes everything.
RSVP to hold your place: fobcp@tampabay.rr.com
All proceeds benefit Brooker Creek Preserve!



North Bar is an undeveloped island located about four miles offshore, accessible only by boat. It is home to a huge array of shorebirds and is the prime nesting spot for many species. North Bar has beautiful beaches for swimming and shelling.

Once on the island, you are free to do as you please. The beach barbeque will be cooked on the island. Beer and wine are included. A guided nature walk/bird hike will be available if you wish to attend. The summer solstice is the longest day of the year! What a wonderful way and great place to enjoy it!

Friends Campout Weekend (March 22-23)

Such a fun, relaxing, educational experience among family and friends! Photos by: Mike & Patti Young (Camping Hosts)

Six campers set up their tents among the beautiful oak hammock, primitive campsite area at Four Lakes Hammock in Brooker Creek Preserve. Four Lakes Hammock is closed to the public and available only to groups who volunteer at the Brooker Creek Preserve.



Four volunteers accepted the Friends invitation to hike the Four Lakes Hammock site on March 22. From left, Richard & Linda Hicks and Paul & Nancy Mellican (the four volunteers), Mike Young (camp host), and Mark & Nancy Yeager (hike guides).



Brad Wilkins and son Nathan at the firepit



Fourteen participants gathered around the campfire at nightfall for s'mores, story telling, and identifying night sounds. In addition, they enjoyed tin foil cooking, an energetic game of Bat Moth, and tips on how to assemble the perfect campfire.

Early Sunday morning, campers woke up to Barbara Hoffman's yummy strawberry topped pancakes and sausage with all the fixings



After Sunday morning breakfast, campers took a long nature hike which provided many photographic opportunities.



Left to right, Palm Warbler, Gulf Fritillary on Lantana, Lupine



Music in the Woods (March 15) - Another Big Success!

About 80 folks, toting chairs and coolers, arrived at the Preserve on one of those perfect-weather Florida evenings to listen to the folksy, yet modern, rhythms of *Between Bluffs*, a local band with huge talent. The surrounding oaks and pines provided the perfect setting for this March 15th concert. Not only did the participants enjoy the band, the sunset, and the rising full moon, but also the visit from a local barred owl who

perched above the wildflower garden and observed the crowd...or perhaps enjoyed the music, too. Board member, Allyn Childress and her family not only helped folks carry their stuff, but they tended the campfire, too, where everyone was welcome to roast marshmallows and make free s'mores. It was still light enough during intermission to go for a quick hike on the boardwalk or do a little shopping in the nature store. Plans for the next **Music in the Woods** call for the likelihood of a string quartet and a prize for "Showiest Picnic Presentation." Stay tuned!

Wildlife Safari (April 5) - A Great Success!

Graced with gorgeous weather, Wildlife Safari was a complete success with nearly 500 people attending! Held April 5, the safari included gopher tortoises, baby raccoons, baby opossums, red rat snakes, a screech owl, a red-shouldered hawk, a barred owl, crawdads, and some nasty exotic critters for public education! About 30 volunteers helped out as safari guides, registration takers, skin tent educators, lunch providers, wildlife station educators, photographers, and more. Many thanks to the chairman of the event, Brad Wilkins, for all his hard work, and to Allyn Childress, for organizing the invited wildlife.



Registration volunteers Laurie Angyn, Chris Warwick, and Barbara Moritz were busy!



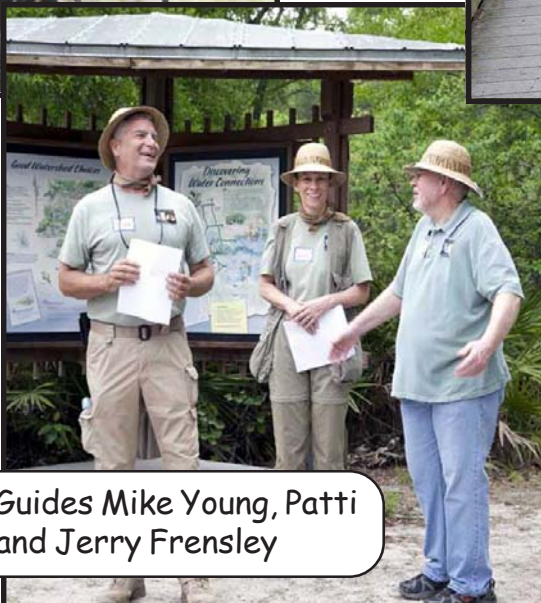
Safari Chairman, Brad Wilkins, on the go!



Red-shouldered Hawk



Safari Guide, Mark Yeager, leading the pack!



Safari Guides Mike Young, Patti Young, and Jerry Frensley



Volunteer Educator, Danny Childress, describes the problems with exotic critters.

Name Contest Results from Wildlife Safari

Thanks to everyone who submitted names for Mrs. Rossie's turtles during the Wildlife Safari. The judges reviewed all entries and decided on: Ed the Educational Tortoise for the gopher tortoise (left), and Boxey for the box turtle (right)



Volunteer Educator, Betty Rossie, talks about gopher tortoises.



Seeking New Board Members!

We are a "working board" whose members take on and follow through with projects. The only requirement is that you be a self-motivator and have the Preserve in your heart. These are voluntary positions - you are paid with the pride of a job well done!

Board Positions Available:

Community Liason - this person will actively solicit memberships and donations from local businesses.

Grant Locator - this person would scour the internet looking for grants for which we could apply.

Membership Chair -- this person keeps records of membership and sends notices and letters, mostly by email. The job takes about six hours per month. Must be well acquainted with Excel software and able to handle detailed record keeping.

Music in the Woods Chairman - this person would organize our new outdoor concert series.

If you are interested, please submit a short bio to fobcp@tampabay.rr.com - thank you!

Something New . . .

NIGHT HIKES!

The four scheduled night hikes, the first ever for the Friends, went great! Led by Friends board member and volunteer, Mark Yeager, the hikes started at sunset and travelled the Ed Center Trail. Each one took about one and a half hours. No flashlights were used (although they were carried for emergency) which allowed our human eyes to adjust to dim light. Our sense of hearing greatly increased as did the feel of the ground by our feet. Night hikers enjoyed seeing the many fireflies, hearing the nocturnal calls of owls, frogs, and Chuck Wills Widows, and observing the many stars and planets. Twice we were graced by the howls and yips of a pack of coyotes! Brooker is so beautiful by day, but amazing by night. Come see for yourself! Night hikes will resume in October.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve

Back by popular demand... **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 with answering questions. The hikes will be not only educational, but a lot of fun as well! The hikes will begin at 9:00 a.m. and be about 3-4 hours long. Bring water and lunch.

Hikes Off the Beaten Path:

Saturday, June 7 (change of date) - Cypress Swamp Stomp - Located in the central part of the Preserve, this site features orchids, ferns, and epiphytes. We might get wet, really wet, as we plunge into the depths of the swamp!

Sept. 14 - In Search of the 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. 7 - 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!

March 8, 2015 - 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.

Cost: \$80 donation for the series or \$25 donation per hike

Reservations Required: Reserve your spot by emailing fobcp@tampabay.rr.com. Sign up early! Only 20 spots are open for these fabulous hikes *off the beaten path!* Questions? Email fobcp@tampabay.rr.com or call 727-934-2680.

Hello from the Brooker Bookers! by Laurie Angyn

2014 Book List:

May 3: To Conquer the Air: The Wright Brothers and the Great Race for Flight by James Tobin

June 7: The A-Z of Global Warming: Climate by Simon J. Rosser

July 5: 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne

August 2: Jacques Cousteau: The Sea King by Brad Matsen

September 6: Silent Spring by Rachel Carson

October 4: Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne

November 1: Surviving the Volcano by Stanley Williams and Fen Montaigne

December 6: Florida's Geological Treasures by Iris Tracey Comfort



News from the Wildflower Garden

by Pam Brown

The Wildflower Garden looks especially lovely this spring due to the ample rain this past winter. We have more flowers than usual in bloom. At our March meeting of the Wildflower Garden Club nearly all of the blue saw palmettos that are not native to the west coast of Florida were removed. Phil and his son did the majority of the work. This was a major job and we are very appreciative for handling this major job. We also planted some wildflower seedlings to the area behind the windows in the Ed. Center. A lot of weeds were pulled and some seedling native trees were potted up to sell in the Nature Store. We will be planting some native shrubs and flowers to replace the blue saw palmettos that were removed.

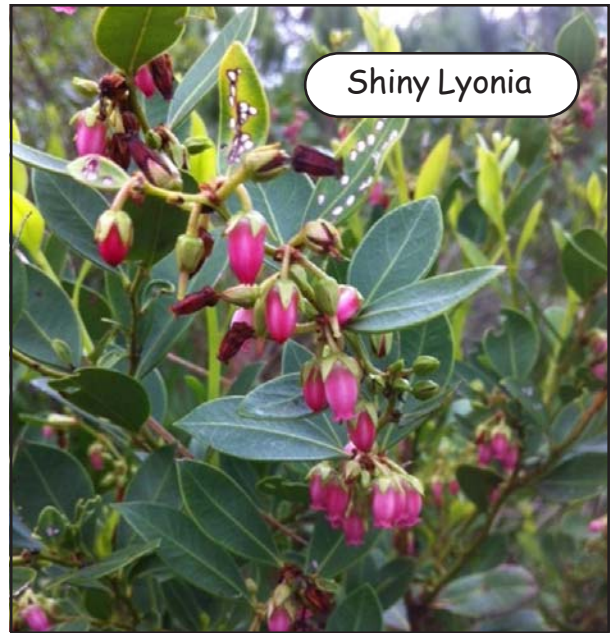
We meet on the last Saturday of each month and everyone is welcome to join us. The work hours for April through October are 8:00 am to 10:00 am. Please bring your own gloves and gardening tools. We will provide breakfast snacks. I hope to see you there.

Nature Store News

By: Kathleen Nichter

Mosquito season definitely arrived based on our hike around the Education Center earlier in the week. The Nature Store now carries a natural repellent called "Swamp Juice" in either towel form or a spray bottle.

The used book section continues to be popular with occasional visitors and regular visitors to the Preserve. Please keep us in mind when sorting through your bookshelves. Nature books and books about or set in Florida are appreciated. Our plant nursery has been recently restocked with native flowers, and we have some beautiful trees available too. Thank you for your continued support of The Nature Store!



Shiny Lyonia

Pam's Gardening Tip

Spring naturally brings the desire to plant. Consider adding a native shrub this spring. A good choice for a full sun to light shade spot that has moist, well drained, acidic soil is Shiny Lyonia, also called Fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*). This bush has lovely small bell-shaped flowers that are lightly fragrant. The white or pink flowers appear in late winter into spring. This evergreen shrub is naturally found along margins of damp swamp lands and ponds and can reach heights of 3 to 5 feet. Young leaves are a coppery color and as they mature become a darker green. Fruits are approximately 1/3-inch-long capsules that dry to brown and split open to release the seeds at maturity.



Garden Workers

Volunteer News and More!

By Lara Miller
Natural Resource Agent
Pinellas County Extension
University of Florida/IFAS



Help Spread the Word about Brooker Creek Preserve May 21:

The City of Safety Harbor's Recreation Department has invited us to be an exhibitor at their "Discover Florida" event May 21st from 4:00 - 6:00PM. Discover Florida is an after-school event targeting children and families to educate them on Florida's environment, outdoor opportunities and attractions. It is an excellent opportunity for families to discover what is available to them in their own back yards! The event will have various exhibitors and activities for kids in a setting characteristic of the true beauty of Florida—Safety Harbor's very own Marshall Street Park. If you are interested, let James or Lara know. Thanks!

This is a great local event that Jerry and I went to last year. I will be out of town this year, but would love to have one or two of you out there to represent Brooker Creek Preserve. We have a display and spin-wheel available that the kids absolutely love! Don't forget the skins and skulls too!



A National Opportunity: You Can Make a Difference

I sit on the Executive Board of the national Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals (ANREP) as the Southern Regional Representative on behalf of 13 states and Puerto Rico. The association hosts biennial conferences and this year we will be in Sacramento, California on May 18-22. We are currently on track to become an official non-profit and as you all know, fundraising is very important. During this year's conference, we are hosting a silent auction and I have seen some of the incredible talent you all have that highlight our natural resources. If you would be willing to donate a photograph, painting, jewelry, etc. to me, I will bring it with me to be a part of the silent auction. I would very much appreciate any thing you would be willing to offer as a way for us to continue to support our association. Thank you for your consideration either way!

If you have an item you would be willing to donate to ANREP's silent auction, please let me know (lara317@ufl.edu).

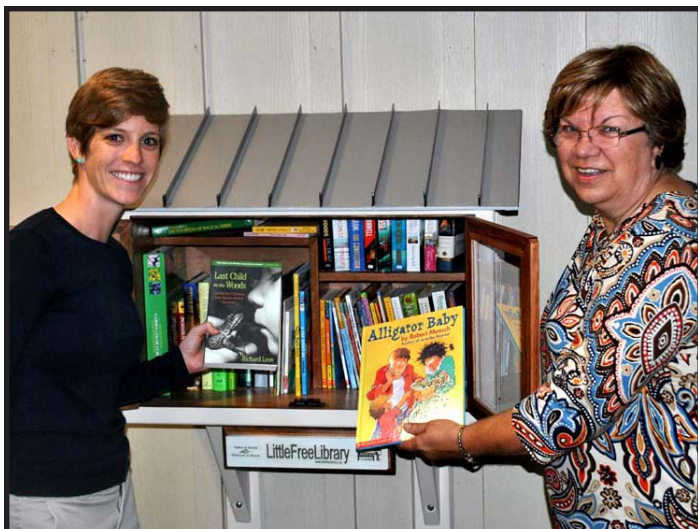
If you would like to join our active volunteer group at Brooker Creek Preserve, please call us at (727) 453-6800.



Happy Birthday to Brooker Creek Preserve's Environmental Education Center. On June 19th, we will celebrate the 10-year anniversary of Brooker Creek Preserve's Environmental Education Center. What a blessing to have such beautiful building supported by amazing volunteers like you! Here is to another 10 and then some...cheers!

Little Free Library

Thanks to the efforts of East Lake Library, Brooker Creek Preserve's classroom building now supports a Little Free Library! Make sure to check it out next time you visit. You can find out more about the Little Free Library, which is a world-wide program: <http://littlefreelibrary.org/>



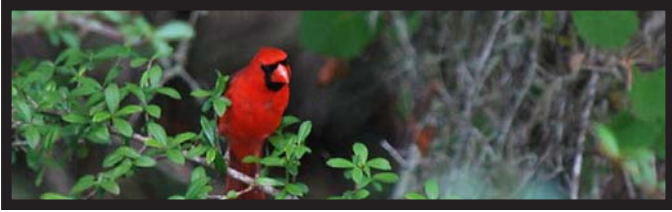
Mother's Day and Father's Day Gift Ideas

Mother's Day is on Sunday, May 11th and Father's Day is on Sunday, June 15th. If you're looking for a gift, but don't know where to find it, consider shopping at the Nature Store inside Brooker Creek Preserve's Environmental Education Center. 100% of the proceeds go back into supporting the preserve and its educational programs! I just did it for a birthday gift...



Did you know?

The donations we receive in the donation boxes in the Education Center are earmarked for programs at the Preserve. Nearly all natural history programs at the Preserve are sponsored by the Friends using this funding.



**Brooker Creek Preserve
Environmental Education Center
3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs.
All programs require advance registration
(727) 453-6800
www.brookercreekpreserve.org**

All classes at Brooker Creek unless otherwise noted. Upcoming Programs now includes relevant UF/IFAS Extension program offered throughout Pinellas County...

May 2014 Programs

Thurs., May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 10:30 - 11:15 am

Book Time at Brooker: Children ages 3 to 5 connect to the wonders of the natural world through a story and a craft, game or other hands-on activity. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 3, 9:30 - 10:30 am

Brooker Book Club: Hosted by the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve, the Brooker Book Club meets the first Saturday of each month. Geared toward adults, the book list includes works by Florida authors, past and present, with archeology, biography, politics and history storylines. The book selected for discussion in May is *Rose Cottage Chronicles - Civil War Letters of the Bryant-Stephens Families of Northern Florida*. Advance registration is required as seating is limited. Free.

Sat., May 3, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Explore the Ecosystems Guided Hike: Brooker Creek Preserve certified guides will lead the hike along the 0.75-mile walk along the Education Center Trail. Observe through the forested wetland, oak hammock and pine flatwood ecosystems. Closed-toe shoes, water and hat recommended. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult; those

younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. Free; registration required.

Wed., May 7, 14, 21, 28, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Master Gardener Clinic: Aspiring and master gardeners alike can come and get solutions for all types of questions concerning garden, lawn, and landscape care. Free. Palm Harbor Library. 2330 Nebraska Ave. Palm Harbor, FL 34683.

Thurs., May 8, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Ten Easy Steps to a Florida Friendly Landscape: Doris Heitzmann, the Florida Friendly Landscaping™ community outreach coordinator will discuss insights to innovative plant selection, use of versatile landscaping materials, ways to invite wildlife into the garden and how to make the best use of rainwater. Free; registration required. Palm Harbor Library. 2330 Nebraska Ave. Palm Harbor.

Fri., May 9, 10:00 - 11:30 am

Botany Hike: Join a Brooker Creek naturalist to explore the fascinating plants found on the preserve while identifying wildflowers, ferns, epiphytes, trees and more. The ecology of various plant communities will also be examined. Best suited for adults. Come prepared with a camera and questions. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 10, 10:30 am - noon

Entomology 101: What is that bug? Insects are all around us; some beautiful, some annoying and some downright dangerous! Join us to learn about this fascinating and diverse group of organisms. Basic identification and ecology will be explored in this introduction to the study of insects. Recommended for adults. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 10, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Birds of Brooker Hike: What birds are known to sing around Florida? A Beginning Bird Hike will cover how to identify common birds along a one-mile trail hike. Water and binoculars are recommended. Free; registration required.

Sun., May 11, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Rain Harvesting: Participants can learn how to save rainwater in a recycled plastic barrel. In this free class participants will learn how to make and set up a rain barrel. A rain barrel will be given away at the class as a door prize. Oldsmar Public Library, 400 St. Petersburg Drive E, Oldsmar. (727) 582-2108; <http://oldsmarclass.eventbrite.com>.

Fri., May 16, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Wildlife Hike: Join an experienced naturalist and hike along boardwalks and natural trails at Brooker Creek Preserve. This is a learning experience for everyone so come prepared with binoculars, cameras, and questions. Questions that cannot be answered by the hike guide will be researched in the Resource Room upon return to the Education Center. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 17, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Footprints on the Land Guided Hike: Certified hike guides will lead a hike along the Education Center Trail. Learn of the many "footprints" that be found during this 0.75-mile walk. Sturdy closed-toe shoes are a must; water and hat recommended. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult; those younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 17, 10 am - 12:30 pm

Dragonfly Discover Walk: Join local dragonfly expert Paul Trunk as we explore some of the habitats at BCP looking for dragonflies. Brooker Creek Preserve is an excellent area that is home to approximately 20+ species of odonates. We will learn about the natural history of dragonflies and their importance to a healthy ecosystem. Binoculars and a camera are recommended.

Sat., May 17, 10:00 - 11:30 am

Rainwater Harvesting: Participants attending this workshop hosted by the University of Florida/IFAS Extension, participants will learn how to save rainwater in a recycled plastic drum

for use in landscaping. The collected water may be used for plant beds, potted plants, and special plant collections. Each attendee will receive instructions on how to build and install a rain barrel. Participants also have the option of purchasing a completed rain barrel in advance of the workshop.

Wed., May 21, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Fertilizer/Pesticide BMPs: Training to obtain limited certification for urban landscape commercial fertilizer (LCULCF). BMP certification awarded upon passing the exam. Four FDACS pesticide CEUs provided. Cost is \$30; \$15 to employees of Pinellas County Government and the Pinellas County School Board and Pinellas County Master Gardener Volunteers (must present ID on day of class). Lunch and snacks provided. Registration required.

Thurs., May 22, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Roundup License Training - LCLM Training & LLO Review: This class provides training and testing necessary to obtain a limited commercial landscape maintenance (LCLM) license or as a review and testing for the limited lawn and ornamental (LLO) license. This class is NOT for renewal CEUs. \$75 Lunch and snacks provided. Brooker Creek Preserve, 3940 Keystone Road, Tarpon Springs. (727) 582-2562; <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/commercial-horticulture-pinellas-county-extension-4923914809>

Thurs., May 22, 10:00 - 11:30 am

Introduction to Plant Identification: Join a local UF/IFAS Extension specialist and examine the basics of plant identification, from using simple keys to identifying critical characteristics that will help any would-be botanist in the field. An emphasis will be placed on flowering plants, but ferns will be included as well. All materials will be provided. Recommended for adults. Free. Gulfport Public Library, 5501 28th Ave S, Gulfport, Florida 33707.

Sat., May 24, 10:30 am - noon

Backyard Habitat Series Part III: An Extension Specialist will be going over the best ways attract birds and keep homes for them in backyards. This program is best suited for adults. Participants that attend all three programs will receive a certificate of completion. Free; registration required.

Sat., May 24, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Our Wildest Place: Brooker Creek Preserve certified hike guides lead along the Education Center Trail. Learn why the preserve has been called "Our Wildest Place" during this 0.75-mile walk. Sturdy closed-toe shoes are a must, and water and a hat are recommended. All ages are welcome although children younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. Children younger than 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Free.

Sat., May 31, 8:00 - 11:00 am

Wildflower Garden Club: Join the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve to get gardening hands dirty in the preserve's wildflower garden. Bring garden gloves and hat. Morning snacks are usually provided. Free; registration required. 8 to 11 a.m.

Sat., May 31, 10:30 am - noon

Photographing Nature: Join nature photographers, Karl and Kathleen Nichter, as they teach participants the secrets of capturing some of nature's most amazing events. This program is best suited for adults. Free; registration required.

June 2014 Programs

Wed., June 4, 11, 18, 25, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Master Gardener Clinic: Aspiring and master gardeners alike can come and get solutions for all types of questions concerning garden, lawn, and landscape care. Free. Palm Harbor Library. 2330 Nebraska Ave. Palm Harbor, FL 34683.

Thurs., June 5, 12, 19, 26, 10:30 - 11:15 am

Book Time at Brooker: Children ages 3 to 5 connect to the wonders of the natural world through a story and a craft, game or other hands-on activity. Free; registration required.

Sat., June 7

Explore the Ecosystems: Brooker Creek Preserve certified guides will lead the hike along the 0.75-mile walk along the Education Center Trail. Observe through the forested wetland, oak hammock and pine flatwood ecosystems. Closed-toe shoes, water and hat recommended. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult; those younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. 9 to 10:30 a.m. Following the hike, members of the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society will guide a tour of some of Pinellas County's most fascinating archaeological sites. Beginning at the Weedon Island Center at 12:30 p.m. maps with directions to the sites distributed. A guide will be available at each site to detail the unique and amazing archaeology that occurred there. Free, but donations appreciated. Registration required.

Sat., June 7, 9:30 - 10:30 am

Brooker Book Club: Hosted by the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve, the Brooker Book Club meets the first Saturday of each month. Geared toward adults, the book list includes works by Florida authors, past and present, with archeology, biography, politics and history storylines. The book selected for discussion in May is *Rose Cottage Chronicles - Civil War Letters of the Bryant-Stephens Families of Northern Florida*. Advance registration is required as seating is limited. Free.

Sun., June 7, 9:00 am - noon

Off the Beaten Path: Cypress Swamp Stomp: The first in a series of four hikes will take place in beautiful areas tucked away within Brooker Creek Preserve in sites that are closed to the public. Located in the central part of the preserve, this site features orchids, ferns, and epiphytes. Getting wet is highly likely on this hike. \$25 donation for a single hike or \$80 for all four hikes.

Wed., June 11, 10:30 - noon.

What's that Wading Bird?: Is it an egret or a heron? Florida is home to many beautiful wading

birds. This family-friendly class goes over the different species and what sets them apart. Hosted by Pinellas County Extension. Free. Oldsmar Public Library, 400 St. Petersburg Drive E., Oldsmar, FL 34677.

Thurs., June 12, 3:30 pm

Key Plants/Key Pests: Join Extension Agent Theresa Badurek to learn about common plants in the landscape, key pests that bug them, and what can be done about them. Class starts at 3:30 p.m. Free; registration required. Palm Harbor Library, 2330 Nebraska Ave. Palm Harbor, FL 34683.

Sat., June 14, 8:00 - 10:30 am

Birds of Brooker Hike: Join this beginning bird hike and learn how to identify the county's common birds while meandering along a one-mile trail. Bring water and binoculars. Free; registration required.

Sat., June 14, 10:30 am - noon

Explore the Ferns of Brooker Creek: Explore the fascinating world of these ancient plants during a classroom/outdoor activity. We will study the natural history of ferns, then take a stroll to meet these plants around the Environmental Education Center. Identification tips, interesting facts and more await participants. Free; registration required

Sat., June 21, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Footprints on the Land Hike: Certified hike guides will lead a hike along the Education Center Trail. Learn of the many "footprints" that be found during this 0.75-mile walk. Sturdy closed-toe shoes are a must; water and hat recommended. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult; those younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. Free; registration required.

Sat., June 28, 9:00 -11:00 am

Wildflower Garden Club: Join the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve and get gardening hands dirty in the preserve's wildflower garden. Bring garden gloves and hat. Morning snacks are usually provided. Free; registration required.

Sat., June 28, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Our Wildest Place Guided Hike: Brooker Creek Preserve certified hike guides lead along the Education Center Trail. Learn why the preserve has been called "Our Wildest Place" during this 0.75-mile walk. Sturdy closed-toe shoes are a must, and water and a hat are recommended. All ages are welcome although children younger than 6 may find the hike challenging. Children younger than 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Free.


HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!



Brooker Creek Preserve
Environmental Education Center

10 years!



Friends  of Brooker Creek Preserve - **20 years!**

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, conserva-

tion, restoration or protection of the land and resources of the Brooker Creek Preserve.

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.

Friends of Brooker Creek Preserve:
www.FriendsOfBrookerCreekPreserve.org
Email: fobcp@tampabay.rr.com
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
Center Hours: Thurs. - Sat., 9am - 4pm
Friends Nature Store is located in the Education Center. Store Hours: Thurs. - Sat., 9am - 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

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