



Ancient Islands

DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Sumter and Polk Counties of Florida

Issue: 10-12, 11-01

DECEMBER 2010 - JANUARY 2011



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2010

Sierra's Annual Celebration of Friendships
forged in meetings beyond number and wonderful outings.

The celebration will be held at the home of Bob and Billye Taylor.

At 6:30 there will be an Executive Committee Meeting to announce the election results. **Reminder:** Mail your ballot from this newsletter by Dec. 6th or bring to the party. Open-ended socializing begins at 7:00. Bring a dish to share and your eating utensils. Dress is casual. The celebration won't be complete without you!



FROM THE CHAIR...Chuck Geanangel

We all need to thank outgoing Excom members Albert Honican and Dr. Robert (Bo) Jackson for their service. Their two-year terms expire this December and it was a pleasure working with them. The two new members on the ballot to replace them are Paul Anderson, PhD from Auburndale, a past chairman, and Gail Bagley from Lakeland, former outings chairperson. We are lucky to have the help of such talented individuals.

Looking at the results of the Nov. mid-term election, my first impression is to consider a move to New Mexico, Land of Enchantment - I hear it's a nice place; or perhaps Belize in Central America which is Florida like in climate. However, reality sets in and we have to figure out how to deal with a governor and a legislature only a tea party fanatic would like. Environmentally speaking, expect nothing good to happen legislatively; in fact, our biggest effort will be to stop a list of bad things from being voted into law. Ultimately, we may have to resort to the court system for relief. Some of the items sure to come up are: allowing off shore oil drilling, abolishing the State growth management agencies, selling off nature reserves, weakening environmental protection laws, and laying off state workers; the list could continue. Our only hope is that legislators will be

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PARTICIPATE IN THE BONE VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

After years of us asking, the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) will be conducting a new environmental impact study (EIS) on phosphate mining in southwest Florida's Bone Valley Region. The last such study was done in 1978 - a few things have changed since then!

The EIS will examine many issues including water quality and quantity impact, reclamation, wildlife habitat loss and fragmentation, public health, economics, waste products (phosphogypsum and clay settling areas) and mitigation. The objective is to produce a science based document that will guide future regulatory decisions relating to permitting.

Sierrans concerned about phosphate mining are urged to participate in the public input process on the EIS. The Corps' phosphate mining information web site is: usacejacksonvilleregulatory.com/mining. They have indicated that members of the public will be able to sign up for e-mail notices of meetings and public input opportunities via the web site. Please plan on attending the scoping meetings beginning January 12 (locations to be announced).

...Marian Ryan

(Continued from page 1) From the Chair

so involved in cutting the budget, lowering taxes, and working on their right-wing social agenda that they will ignore our areas of interest.

The county commission is a different animal entirely because they deal mostly with “nuts and bolts” issues. The election changed nothing. The backbone of the Polk economy for years has been the three-legged stool of agriculture, phosphate, and tourism. Phosphate mining is almost finished in the county and soon will be gone. Two highly contagious, deadly diseases, citrus canker and citrus greening, have devastated the citrus industry and in a few years only the largest corporations will be in the fruit business. Lego Land is the last hope for the tourism sector and many give it only a 50-50 chance of success. Half of the homeowners in the county are underwater financially. The BoCC has its back to the wall. I do not envy the County Commissioners their jobs. Did I mention that New Mexico was a nice place to live.....?

CORN SNAKE SHEDS ITS SKIN ON CUE AT OCTOBER MEETING!

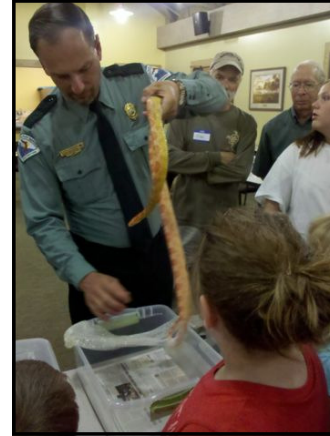


Photo by Andrea Adair

**Herpetologist First-Class Scott Spaulding,
Colt Creek State Park Manager**

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

For more activities/events, please visit our web site at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/> - links to Ancient Islands

Circle B Bar Reserve

Each month Circle B Bar Reserve offers a variety of guided hikes, nature oriented presentations, and tram rides. Because space is limited (especially on the tram rides) and additional events are added, call Karen Hagood, Naturalist Environmental Operations Specialist at 863 668-4673 to find out what is available and to reserve a space.

Trek Ten Trails

Hikes start at 9AM - contact Marian Ryan at 863 207-5206 or marianryan@gmail.com or <http://www.friendsoftheparks.net> for more information.

Dec. 11 Mary Holland Park - Bartow. At the intersection of US98 and SR60 go south on N. Broadway Ave. At the stop sign where Broadway and W. Clower intersect make a half right turn into the Park and continue south to parking. This is a 116 acre urban park whose three lakes are home to many wading birds.

Jan. 15 Chain of Lakes Trail - Winter Haven. From US17 turn east on Ave. B NW which will lead to the Library, 325 Ave. A NW, and parking. The Trail is 3.2 miles in length; in the southern section the ten winners of the FL Outdoor Sculpture Competition are on display; a self-guided plant tour map is available at the Library to facilitate the exploration of the Florida Friendly plants and rain gardens also in this section.

Service at Circle B Bar Reserve

Volunteers are always needed to help at the reception desk, create signs for special events, check the trails, etc. For more information and to volunteer call Karen Hagood at 863 668-4673 or e-mail karenhagood@polk-county.net

Service - These events are Ridge Ranger projects.

These stewardship projects start at 9AM at their respective locations. For more details and to register call the Volunteer Coordinator, Bill Parken, at 863 699-3742 or e-mail bill.parken@myFWC.com. Check the web site for changes to the schedule <http://myfwc.com/GETINVOLVED>

Dec. 4 FWC Royce Ranch - Lake Placid. Planting native plants to restore the damaged areas to native habitat.

Dec. 11 Bok Tower Gardens - Lake Wales. Habitat enhancement.

Dec. 17 MacKay Gardens - Lake Alfred. Planting 400 scrub lupines to create a scrub lupine plot similar to the FWC Lake Blue Scrub.

Dec. 18 FWC Lake Blue Scrub - Auburndale. Trimming and weeding the Scrub Lupine Plot.

Dec. 18 Highlands Hammock State Park - Sebring. Removal of invasive Dianella Lilly.

Jan. 8 Lake Kissimmee State Park - east of Lake Wales. Habitat enhancement.

Special activities such as native plant nursery, Lakewatch, GPS plant mapping, woodworking, etc., are available. Become a Citizen-Scientist! Call Bill for details.

In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver which will be furnished at the beginning of the outing. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call 415-977-5528. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. Please note that most of the above listed activities are events that we think you will find interesting and fun, but they are not official outings. Florida Seller of Travel Ref. No. ST37115



Sierra Club

Ancient Islands - FL Sierra
P.O. Box 7544
Winter Haven, FL 33883

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Members should send **changes of address** to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
or address.changes@sierraclub.org

DEC 10 and JAN 13 MEETINGS

PROGRAMS:

DECEMBER:

Party Time at the Taylors'

JANUARY:

**Forestry Issues: Prescribed Burning,
Hunting,
and Tree Farming v. Diversification
By Carrie Kotal, Polk County Forester**

*General Meeting and Executive Committee
Meeting Run Concurrently*

December 10th Celebration: hosted by Bob and Billye Taylor. Directions to their house are on the first page of this newsletter. For this special occasion we are celebrating on the second Friday.

January 13th meeting will be held at Circle B Bar Reserve at 6:30 pm. The Reserve is located on State Road 540 (Winter Lake Road) at a mid-point between Lakeland, Bartow and Winter Haven. From Bartow, take US 98 north to SR 540 and turn right; from Lakeland, take US 98 south to SR 540 and turn left; the property entrance is approximately two miles east of US 98 on the south (right) side of SR 540. From Winter Haven, take SR 540 and after the exits to the Polk Parkway (where there is a traffic light) look for and follow the Reserve signs; it will be a left turn. **Bring flashlight for parking lot.**

Web Site: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/>

Sierra Membership Application

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional): () _____ **F94Q W3311 1**

Check One **Individual** **Joint**

Introductory \$15

Regular \$39 \$49

Senior \$25 \$35

Student \$25 \$35



Annual dues include subscription to Sierra (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1). Dues are not tax-deductible.

Please mail your check and this form to:

Sierra Club, PO Box 421041, Palm Coast, Florida, 32142-6417

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