



Sensing Nature, LLC

November 2013



Happy Thanksgiving

In This Issue

[Florida Black Bear Program](#)

[Everglades Eco-Tour](#)

[School Field Trips](#)



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Quick Links

[Sensing Nature Website](#)

[Like Us on FaceBook](#)

[Everglades Eco-Tour](#)

[RV the Withlacoochee River](#)



**Largo Holidays in the
Park
Arts & Crafts Show**

**Saturday, Nov. 30
10 AM - 9 PM
&**

Come Explore Natural Florida with Us!

Dear Brian,

Can you believe the holiday season is upon us? Are you ready? Luckily we are able to turn off our a/c so that we may enjoy the open-your-house-windows-season (i.e., Florida winter) instead of snow flurries like most of the U.S.

We have just returned from leading our annual November Everglades Eco-Tour. This year it was through the St. Petersburg Audubon Society. Everyone had a great time with wading birds stacked up in the marshes and alligators enjoying the warm sunshine. We were also entertainment for some of the dolphins that were just as eager to watch us as we were them during our venture into the Everglades backcountry.



© Sensing Nature, LLC

The Everglades still had quite a bit of water.

**Sunday, Dec. 1
10 AM - 5 PM**

at Largo Central Park
101 Central Park Drive
Largo, 33779

**Visit our Sensing Nature
holiday gift booth!**

- Sea Bean Jewelry
- Nature Photography
- Wildlife T-shirts
- Kids Toys & Books
- Canvas Tote Bags
- Nature ID Guides

Join us for a fun weekend with talented artists and crafters offering original and unique items, relish on festival foods and desserts like hot apple cider, freshly made fudge and roasted nuts.

Enjoy live Holiday music and costumed carolers by the Largo High School Madrigal Singers including live Santa Claus and his elves arriving at 12:00 Noon Saturday and Sunday so bring the kids and don't forget your camera!

Largo Central Park will have more than one million spectacular lights that will surely brighten your holiday season. The park illumination is on Saturday from 6:00 PM until 9:00 PM.



**More Holiday
Shopping!**

We are just starting Florida's dry season.

A giant flock of white pelicans resting on a mangrove island spit was also one of our trip highlights; they seemed to be enjoying their south Florida vacation. Approximately 500 white pelicans nestled along the shoreline qualifies as a giant flock, right?



*Side trip to the Skunk Ape
Research Facility
Headquarters.*

Okay, for those who don't know already by following our Sensing Nature FaceBook posts, we have something special to share. Everyone on the trip got an added wildlife bonus... we saw a Florida panther! It was brief, but so exciting that we are still in awe.



Florida panther tracks. Notice Jeanne's shoe (bottom right) for scale. No, you're not seeing double. The panther tracks are going in both directions. Must be a well liked path.

And to commemorate the lifetime experience, we went back to the area and made plaster casts of the tracks for everyone.

Florida Botanical
Gardens Foundation
Holiday Gift and Plant
Sale

**Sunday
December 8, 2013
10 AM - 4 PM**

Come support Sensing Nature
and other local vendors at this
fun, holiday shopping event.

Look for us on the FBG Plaza
just over the bridge, near the
Wedding Garden entrance.

- Beautiful Note Cards
- Nature Photography
- Organic T-shirts
- Sea Bean Jewelry
- Wildlife Replicas
- Florida Books & ID
Guides



Panther track with ruler. This track was approx. 3.5 inches long. Notice no claw marks, the heal pad appears large for the toe pad sizes, the top of the heal pad is bi-lobed and the bottom of the heal pad is tri-lobed. Florida's sandy soils make good tracks like this one hard to come by.

To see the panther was amazing enough, to have castings of its tracks elevated the experience to a lifetime wildlife milestone.

**"The Natural History
and Conservation of
the Florida Black Bear"**



**Photo by FWC Allan
Hallman**

**Boyd Hill Nature Preserve
Natural History
Speaker Series
December 10
Tuesday, 7:30 PM**

Lake Maggiore Environmental
Education Center
1101 Country Club Way S.



Maureen Swanson with her panther track cast she helped make.

Smiles spread through us even thinking about it. Who is ready to go with us next year?

Stay tuned for our upcoming adventures and do not be shy. Let us know if there is somewhere you or your group would like to experience.

St. Petersburg

Free; All ages welcome

Speaker: Jeanne Murphy,
Wildlife Biologist &
UF FMNP Instructor,
Sensing Nature

Join us for an interesting presentation on the natural history of the Florida Black Bear. Learn where they typically live, why they are often called an "umbrella" species, what is their population size and their current conservation status.

Also find out how we can help this magnificent species through our support of habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors.

Program Sponsored by:
Friends of Boyd Hill
Nature Preserve &
City of St. Petersburg Parks and
Recreation Dept.

Looking forward to seeing you
there!



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that we have 2 different turkeys in Florida?

The Eastern Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*) is found in far north Florida and the Florida Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo osceola*),

Thank you for your support and friendship.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Jeanne & Brian

Everglades Eco-Tour November 2014 Conducted by Sensing Nature

Mark Your Calendar Now!



Tranquil Everglades Sunset in the Backcountry

Stay tuned for details about next year's trip!

We can't guarantee another panther sighting, but we can guarantee an enjoyable opportunity to learn about the Everglades culture, ecology, history and conservation.

Enjoy fantastic Everglades experiences with people of similar interest lead by fun and knowledgeable guides. Watch colorful birds and other outstanding wildlife gathered throughout our destinations. Kayak the beautiful backcountry areas. Relax on a private boat charter while the Everglades' sun dips below the water horizon. Experience the calming magic and flora eye candy found within the wetland heart of the Fakahatchee Strand.

Group size is limited

- Cost: per person, double occupancy
- Experience: Novice to expert, all are welcome
- Difficulty Rating: 2 (1 easy to 5 hard)
- Activity Level: Easy to moderate
- Stay in a "Green" hotel with hot running water and comfortable bed for end of the day relaxation

Registration inquiries to info@sensingnature.com

which is also called the Osceola Turkey, is found in peninsular Florida.

Source: Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission



School, Scouts & Environmental Club Field Trips at Brooker Creek & Weedon Island Preserves



**Conducted by Sensing Nature in Partnership with
FWC Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network**

- Canoeing
- Coastal Fish Seining
- Freshwater Dip Netting
- Boardwalk and Nature Hikes
- Interactive Scavenger Hunts
- Ecology and Wildlife Activities
- Wildlife Adaptations & Migrations
- Environmental Education Center Tours
- Tracks, Scats & Signs Flatwoods Hike
- Social Responsibility and Coastal Conservation

[Click Here to View FYCCN Brooker Creek Field Trip Flyer](#)

[Click Here to View FYCCN Weedon Island Field Trip Flyer](#)

- Easy to Register & to Reserve Your Date
- Professional Biologist and Naturalist Guides
- 2.5 to 6 Hour Hands-on Nature Experiences
- Activities Correlate with Next Generation Sunshine State Standards
- Great for Kindergarten through High School
- Activities and Curricula adjusted for Group's Age
- Fun, Educational, Headache Free Field Trips!



Fees are \$5 to \$20 per Participant
Depending upon Activity, Group Size & Visit Length

For More Information or
to Reserve Your Field Trip Date:
Contact Sensing Nature
at (727) 397-2306 or jmurphy@sensingnature.com

**Coming February 2014 - Family Fishing
Class & Deep Sea Excursion**



Classes Taught by Sensing Nature:

February 5, 12, 19 & 26

Wednesday Evenings 6:30 - 8:00 PM
at Highland Recreation Complex
400 Highland Ave., Largo

Offshore Fishing Trip

by Double Eagle:

Saturday Date TBA, 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Off Clearwater Beach

Join Sensing Nature in the classroom to learn fish identification, angler etiquette, knot-tying, casting, rules, regulations, lures and bait, and types of equipment.

After this four week class, you will jump aboard the Double Eagle for a deep sea fishing trip. Use of bait, poles and tackle are provided during this trip.

Ages 8 to Senior - Legal guardian must register and accompany minors during class and excursion.

Approximate Fee per Person

(Fee may change slightly)

- \$56 Largo Resident with Rec Card
- \$70 Non-Largo Resident with Rec Card
- \$2 Clearwater Marina parking not included

Participants must have a Largo Recreation Card

How to Get a Largo Recreation Card

All registration is through City of Largo

For More Details or to Register:

Call Christina with City of Largo at (727) 587-6740 x 5008

Next UF Florida Master Naturalist Programs

*Take All 7 UF FMNP Courses with Sensing Nature
and Become an "Advanced Florida Master Naturalist"*



Conservation Science

Special Topic
24-Hours; \$150

1 of 4 Part
"Florida Master Naturalist
Land Steward"
Certification

December 4
Wednesday Evening
&
December 7, 14, 21
Saturdays Daytime

**[Click Here
to See Schedule or
to Register Now](#)**

During this course learn about species diversity, measuring biodiversity, the processes that generate and maintain biodiversity, types of ecosystem services, habitat fragmentation, ecological processes, effects of human activities on ecosystems, the history of conservation in North America and strategies for conservation planning.

Great for field biologists, citizen science participants, nature-related staff or volunteers, and anyone interested in Florida's natural environments.



Freshwater Wetlands

Core Module
40-Hours; \$225

1 of 3 Part
"Florida Master Naturalist"
Certification

February 7 - 28, 2014
Mondays & Fridays Daytime
No Class on Monday, 2/17

**Register Now or See
Schedule at
[UF FMNP Course
Registration Website](#)**

Learn about Florida's freshwater ecosystems including marshes, swamps, lakes, rivers and springs, their related plants and wildlife inhabitants. Human ethics, conservation issues, and interpretative speaking are woven into course material.

Program is for any adult, novice to knowledgeable, who enjoys learning and experiencing nature.

All registration is through the UF / IFAS FMNP website.

Questions? [Email Jeanne](#)



Environmental Interpretation

Special Topic
24-Hours; \$150

1 of 4 Part "Florida Master
Naturalist Land Steward"
Certification

June 4
Wednesday Evening
&
June 7, 14, 21
Saturdays Daytime

**Save the Dates!
Registration Available
in March 2014**

Help natural Florida by becoming a more effective environmental interpreter and educator.

Learn concepts including fundamentals of interpretation, key elements of an effective interpretive program, how to create themes, sub-messages and transitions, managing your audience, addressing diverse audience needs, developing effective displays/brochures, and practicing techniques.

Great for environmental educators, nature center staff and volunteers, park rangers, eco-tour operators, nature-related nonprofits, and anyone interested in teaching others about natural Florida.

All Registration is Through the UF FMNP Website
[Click Here to Learn More about the Florida Master Naturalist Program](#)

We look forward to seeing you outdoors enjoying natural Florida or in one of our classes!

Sincerely,

Jeanne Murphy & Brian Lane
Sensing Nature, LLC