



Institute for
Regional
Conservation

February 2019 Newsletter



Monthly Conservation Notes

Join us for our new monthly Conservation Notes, where we discuss topics important to our work. If you have ideas about topics you would like to see covered, please [send us a note!](#)

Diversity is Healthy

A diverse beach is a healthy beach! We have done well in southeastern Florida to re-nourish our beaches and restore sea turtle populations. Yet we have a long way to go to restore all of the native plant and animal diversity lost from our barrier islands in Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. The fact is that diverse dunes are more resilient to sea level rise and climate change. That's why it's critical they are restored based on native ecosystems able to support hundreds of species of native plants and animals, including rare and endemic species! Bringing together all of the stakeholders - landowners, community members, politicians, students - to support a *regional conservation* vision for the dunes of southeastern Florida is the goal of our new Restoring the Gold Coast program. Stay tuned to this newsletter for more updates!

This year marks The Institute for Regional Conservation's
35th anniversary!

Don & Joyce Gann Day

In recognition of Don and Joyce Gann's continuous dedication to the protection and preservation of native plants and natural areas in Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade County Commissioner, Levine Cava, presented a proclamation designating February 11th, 2019 as Joyce and Don Gann Day! Check out the [Miami-Dade County News Release](#) for the full

article.

A little known fact is that Don Gann was one of the original five Directors of IRC and our first President! Everyone at IRC would like to congratulate Don and Joyce Gann on their recognition for their legacy of hard work and dedication towards the protection, maintenance, and restoration of native plants and natural areas in Miami-Dade County.



We would like to thank our recent Natives For Your Neighborhood sponsors. Donations allow us to provide these important resources for free to the public, landscape designers, and other enthusiasts of native plants and native plant gardening. To check out our NFYN website, [click here](#).

[Sustainscape](#), [Plant Creations](#), [the Serenoa Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society](#), and [the Naples Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society](#)!

Thanks to the Board of Trustees of the [Beach Property Owners' Association, Inc.](#) (BPOA) in Delray Beach for donating \$500 towards our Restoring the Gold Coast program.

BPOA is a non-profit organization of property owners and residents who are dedicated to the concerns and quality of life in the area situated east of the Intracoastal Waterway in the city of Delray Beach. The BPOA serves as a strong, respected voice in preserving the natural environment of Delray's beach area, with due consideration to property rights.

DONATE

Native Plant Day w/ Dade Chapter of FNPS!

Michelle Smith will staff our booth at the 24th Annual Native Plant Day in Miami, hosted by the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. This event is on Saturday, March 23rd from 9:00am to 4:00pm at Bill Sadowski Park at Old Cutler Hammock.

Native Plant Day is an annual public outreach and education day with activities for all ages including walks, displays, programs, raffles, plants and merchandise for sale, and more! It is a free day of fun and learning for anyone who would like to join.



IRC's main web resources surpassed
1 million page views in 2018!

Check them out: Natives for Your Neighborhood,
Floristic Inventory of South Florida, and
Plantas de Puerto Rico / Plants of Puerto Rico.

Recent IRC Events

IRC at Lake Worth Festival of Trees

IRC's Samantha Gabriel attended the 14th Annual Lake Worth Festival of Trees and discussed our Green Delray and Restoring the Gold Coast programs, as well as our Natives for Your Neighborhood website.



IRC at Everglades Day

IRC's field biologist, Michelle Smith, and crew member, Louis Castillo, attended the 20th Annual Everglades Day at Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and discussed our work on pine rockland habitats and the



importance of restoration of upland habitats in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem.

"Doing Good Together" Program

IRC Research Associate and entomologist, Sandy Koi, attended the "Doing Good Together" program at Miami Lakes Elementary School. "Doing Good Together" is a Minnesota-based program that brings children together to do fun projects that help the local community. This is the second year IRC has participated; this year Sandy (who also does art work) provided two paper projects about conservation for the children to take home. One project depicted a tree and the animals who use the tree for food and shelter, and the other entailed the children drawing "Blessing Flags" for the things that the Earth provides for us. Similar to Tibetan "prayer flags", these biodegradable paper flags are meant to be hung in one's back yard to let the wind carry the blessings around the world.



Looking for a FUN opportunity to volunteer with IRC?



We are running a *Croton linearis* propagation project which involves cleaning and sorting thousands of croton seeds. We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to come to our office in Delray Beach and help us process these seeds. Plants grown from these seeds will be planted on Big Pine Key at the National Key Deer Refuge, where they will serve as a host plant for the Bartram's Scrub Hairstreak and the Florida Leafwing Butterflies. We will also be conducting direct seeding trials.

If you or someone you know is interested in this volunteer opportunity, let us know! Even coming in for one afternoon would be a huge help! You can email abbott@regionalconservation.org for more information.

Upcoming IRC Events

- **February 28th:** Our Chief Conservation Strategist, George Gann, will give two talks at Dr. Hong Liu's Restoration Ecology class at Florida International University: *International Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration* and *Restoring Globally Imperiled Pine Rocklands*.
- **March 2nd:** Our Field Biologist, Michelle Smith, and our Crew Leader, Hans van der Heiden, will lead a field trip for one of Dr. Liu's Restoration Ecology Labs at one of our pine rockland restoration sites.
- **March 20th:** George Gann will give a presentation on our Restoring the Gold Coast program to the Beach Property Owners' Association in Delray Beach.
- **March 23rd:** Michelle Smith will staff our booth at Native Plant Day in Miami, hosted by the Dade Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.
- **March 26th:** George Gann will present *The Future of Native Plant Conservation in South Florida - History and Adaptation in the Age of Change* at the Naples Botanical Garden for the Naples Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

We are a nonprofit conservation organization exempt from taxes under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)3.

The Institute for Regional Conservation | [Website](#)

