



## January 2022 Newsletter

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## Monthly Conservation Note

### Building on the Past for a Stronger Future

In 2021, IRC moved forward in some key areas thanks to contributions of staff, volunteers, and supporters like you.

- Our [Pine Rockland Initiative](#), led by Alex Seasholtz, continued restoration work on more than 250 acres at multiple public and private sites in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Key grant agreements with the US Fish and Wildlife Service were approved, we signed a \$5,000 collaboration agreement with the National Parks Conservation Association, and raised over \$3,000 for the program through Give Miami Day.
- Our [Restoring the Gold Coast Program](#) in Palm Beach County is thriving thanks to collaborations with the City of Boca Raton, Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, and others. We celebrated the launch of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration at Atlantic Dunes Park in Delray Beach.
- The 2019 [International principles and standards for the practice of](#)
- Our Facebook pages on plants of [Puerto Rico](#) and [the Yucatan](#), curated by IRC Associate Carlos Trejo and teams of volunteers, now boast more than 11,000 and 16,000 members each.
- Cara Abbott and I have been busy upgrading [Natives For Your Neighborhood](#) with the support of the Florida Wildflower Foundation and our many NFYN sponsors.
- IRC Associate Christina Stocking and I have been updating data on Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands sites in the [Floristic Inventory of South Florida](#).
- We completed our third year of work on [Corridors of Invasion](#), mapping infestations of invasive species along canals and roadways for the South Florida Water Management District.

We have already started out the new year with a bang with the filing of a **petition to list the Ghost Orchid** (see below). We are all looking forward to an amazing 2022!

ecological restoration have now been downloaded more than 40,000 times, translated into five languages, and cited more than 270 times.

- We signed new agreements with the Center for Plant Conservation and Botanic Gardens Conservation International, to collaborate on **rare plant conservation** in Florida, and the **Global Tree Assessment** respectively.
- Our **free online resources** again had over 1 million page views, with significant growth in the use of the bilingual [Plants of the Island of Puerto Rico](#).

**George Gann**  
*Founder and Executive Director*



IRC staff and volunteers celebrating the launch of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration at Atlantic Dunes Park in Delray Beach.



**Thank you** to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Vinnie Ardillo, Robert Heinzman, Gwen Burzycki, Kingsley Dixon, Christopher Lansea, Roberto Bello, Habitat Specialists, Inc., Allison Turner, Laura Fidalgo, Gina Sousa, and Steve Sewell.

Thank you to our **Monthly Sustainers** who donate \$25 or more each month: Barbara McAdam and Valerie Seasholtz

Thank you to our recent Natives For Your Neighborhood (NFYN) sponsor: [Miami Blue Chapter](#) of the North America Butterfly Association.

**Memorial Gift to IRC.** A donation was made in memory of **Chuck McCartney** to support the work by IRC to list the Florida Ghost Orchid (see below). Chuck passed away in

IRC has an E-Trade account. Please contact us about giving gifts of stock.

While we get funding for some great projects, those funds rarely cover all of our costs, so we really do need your support to continue our important work.

Donations allow us to provide important conservation services such as improving our free online resources, increasing protection of rare plants and animals, restoring native ecosystems, and advocating for better public policy.

October 2020, leaving a legacy of knowledge and photos of native orchids and other wildflowers, both as a fantastic amateur botanist and a professional journalist.

<https://www.fnps.org/news/society-news/chuck-mccartney-obituary>



Photo by Chuck McCartney, 2015

## Petition Filed to List Ghost Orchid as Threatened or Endangered

On January 24, 2022, The Institute for Regional Conservation, Center for Biological Diversity, and National Parks Conservation Association filed a [petition](#) with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to list the imperiled Florida-native ghost orchid, *Dendrophylax lindenii*, as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and to designate critical habitat concurrent with listing.

"The ghost orchid is an icon of beauty and nature's abundance," said George Gann, executive director at The Institute for Regional Conservation. "Its long demise in southern Florida and Cuba, in part due to its immense popularity, is a bellwether of things to come. We can do nothing and watch another species go extinct in the wild, or we can act now to protect and restore this flagship orchid and its wild habitats. The Florida we envision includes a restored Greater Everglades ecosystem with all of its biological diversity, including the ghost orchid.



Photo Credit: Tony Pernas

[Read the full media release here.](#)

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# George Gann Acknowledged as "Earth Steward"



IRC's Chief Conservation Strategist and Executive Director, George Gann, was a speaker at "Gardening for Life," the 65th Annual Tropical Short Course, National Garden Club Tri-Refresher where he gave a talk on Natives For Your Neighborhood and "Why Planting Local Matters". While there, George was honored with a certificate of recognition as an Earth Steward from the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. Thank you to Barbara Hadsell for inviting George to the talk and to Marjorie Hendon, FFGC President, and Kathy Siena FFGC Chairman, for the award.

IRC is an affiliate member of the FFGC. George has published articles in the National Gardener and Florida Gardener and has given presentations at other FFGC events.

## Red Reef Volunteer Day

On Saturday, January 29, IRC held a restoration volunteer day at Red Reef Park in Boca Raton. Gumbo Limbo Nature Center staff and other volunteers worked with IRC to remove invasive species throughout this coastal park and pickup trash from the beach.

This event was part of our Restoring the Gold Coast program and we would like to thank the City of Boca Raton for partnering with us on this restoration work.

For more photos from the event, [click here](#).



Volunteers pose in front of the pile of *Scaevola taccada* they removed.

## "Meet Our Team" Spotlight

### Welcome, Alex Crow!

Alex Crow joined our Ecological Restoration team this month. Born and raised in Miami, he has always had a love for the natural world. He received his B.S. in Environmental Studies from FIU in 2019 and has worked



for various organizations and across disciplines including botany, plant and insect ecology, pine timber and restoration, GIS, and environmental education. He is especially passionate about botany and loves learning more about plants.

Alex is going to be a wonderful addition to our Pine Rockland Initiative. Welcome to the team!



## Everglades Coalition Annual Conference

IRC's Education & Outreach Coordinator, Cara Abbott, attended the 37th Annual Everglades Coalition Conference earlier this month. The theme of the conference was Everglades Restoration: Investing in a Climate Resilient Future. The conference brought together experts from around the state to cover everything from restoration success stories and failures to the history of the Saltwater Underground Railroad Network to the value of collaborations in Everglades Restoration.

IRC is proud to be a member of the [Everglades Coalition](#) and the important work they do. We encourage you to attend the next annual conference in 2023!



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

