



Institute for Regional Conservation

June 2023 Newsletter

In This Issue...

- Upcoming Events
 - "Importance of Dunes" Program at Schoolhouse Children's Museum
 - Ecological Restoration Event at Red Reef Park
 - Invasive Plant Removal at Red Reef Park
 - Natives For Your Neighborhood: Transforming Native Plant Gardening into Habitat Restoration - A Webinar
- Thank You to Our Donors
- "From the Field" Spotlight
- IRC Begins Work on National Geographic Project
- Recent Events
 - Bioblitz in Delray Municipal Beach
 - Ecological Restoration Event at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area
 - Coastal Conservation Education at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center

[View as Webpage](#)

Upcoming Events



"Importance of Dunes" Program at the Schoolhouse Children's Museum

IRC will be running an educational program called "The Importance of Dunes" for children ages 3-7 at the [Schoolhouse Children's Museum](#) in Boynton Beach. The event is Wednesday, July 5 at 10am and is part of their summer environmental programming series. The program is free with paid museum entrance, but calling to reserve a spot is highly recommended.

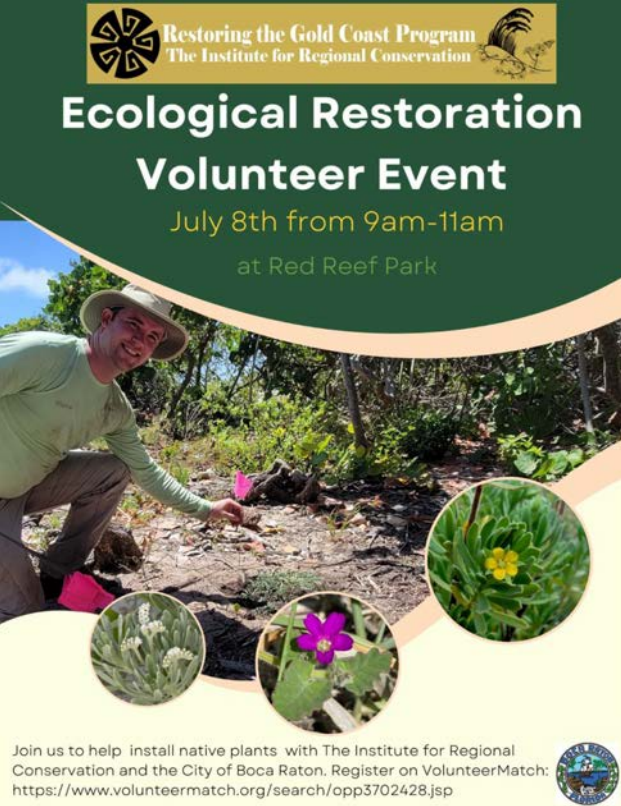
Kelly McLoughlin, IRC Coastal Biodiversity Restoration Technician at our last event at the Schoolhouse Children's Museum.

Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at Red Reef Park

Join IRC and the City of Boca Raton on

Saturday, July 8 from 9am to 11am at Red Reef Park. IRC and volunteers will be working together to install a variety of native plants to the beach dune and coastal strand just south of lifeguard stand 9. Volunteers will be instructed how to properly install our plants, learn about coastal ecosystems, and have the opportunity to participate in a litter pick-up.

Grab a friend and come out to help us plant a diverse array of native species so we can restore the essential biodiversity of Red Reef Park. We will provide further instructions on attire, water, and parking before the event, after you sign-up. Please be sure to [RSVP here](#) as there are a limited (but flexible) number of spots for this event.



Restoring the Gold Coast Program
The Institute for Regional Conservation

Ecological Restoration Volunteer Event

July 8th from 9am-11am
at Red Reef Park

Join us to help install native plants with The Institute for Regional Conservation and the City of Boca Raton. Register on VolunteerMatch: <https://www.volunteermatch.org/search/opp3702428.jsp>

The poster features a man in a hat kneeling in a field, surrounded by circular insets of various native plants like yellow and purple flowers. Logos for the Institute for Regional Conservation and the City of Boca Raton are present.



Restoring the Gold Coast Program
The Institute for Regional Conservation

Ecological Restoration Volunteer Event

When: Friday, July 21 from 9am-11am
Where: Red Reef Park
Why: Help remove nonnative, invasive plants
With: The Institute for Regional Conservation & City of Boca Raton
Register on VolunteerMatch:
<https://www.volunteermatch.org/search/opp3702431.jsp>

The poster features a large background image of purple and green plants. It includes circular insets showing a person working in a field and a close-up of a plant. Logos for the Institute for Regional Conservation and the City of Boca Raton are present.

Invasive Plant Removal at Red Reef Park

Join IRC and the City of Boca Raton on Friday, July 21 from 9am to 11am at Red Reef Park. IRC and volunteers will be working together to remove one of South Florida's most common and overlooked invasive species from Red Reef Park - the oysterplant. Groups of volunteers will be educated on the coastal hammock ecosystem they will be working in and then taught how to remove the plant from the ground. Together we will see how much oysterplant we can clear and see how much new space we can make for future native plant installations.

No experience is required and volunteers of all ages are welcome. Please be sure to [RSVP here](#) as there are a limited (but flexible) number of spots for this event.

Natives For Your Neighborhood: Transforming Native Plant Gardening into Habitat Restoration - A Webinar

IRC is honored to be the guest presenter

for the Florida Wildflower Foundation's monthly webinar on Wednesday, July 19 at 2pm. IRC Executive Director, George Gann, and IRC Assistant Director of Programs, Cara Abbott, will be presenting on Natives For Your Neighborhood (NFYN). They will explain the various ways you can use NFYN, and will discuss the significance of at-home restoration in the context of the **United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** and combating the biodiversity extinction and climate change emergencies.

To register, [click here](#).

WEBINAR

July 19, 2PM



Natives For Your Neighborhood:
Transforming Native Plant Gardening Into Habitat Restoration

presented by
GEORGE D. GANN
Executive Director, The Institute for Regional Conservation

CARA ABBOTT
Assistant Director of Programs, The Institute for Regional Conservation



Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Michael Gomez, Kimberlee Pompeo, & Kate Smithson.

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.

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

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



Needham's skimmer (*Libellula needhami*) dragonfly. Photo by Cara Abbott.

"From the Field" Spotlight



Photo of Small's milkwort by Celeste Boncompte.

Small's milkwort

Check out this exciting find Celeste Boncompte, IRC Field Technician, stumbled upon at one of our Pine Rockland Initiative project sites in Miami-Dade County! This is Small's milkwort (*Polygala smallii*), which is listed as federally endangered and critically imperiled by IRC, FNAI, and NatureServe. It's such a fun find because they're uncommon and usually hard to spot for the untrained eye.

IRC's Floristic Inventory of South Florida's website provides a wealth of information about Small's milkwort including the habitats, growth habits, and conservation status. You can find more about Small's milkwort on the IRC's website [here](#).

IRC Begins Work on National Geographic Project



Green antelopehorn (*Asclepias viridis*) photo by Alex Seasholtz.

In case you missed the announcement in our April newsletter, IRC founder and Executive Director, George Gann, has been designated a National Geographic Explorer and was awarded the inaugural National Geographic Photo Ark Species Impact Initiative grant. This funding is being used for ecological restoration in the Richmond Pine Rocklands of Miami-Dade County, which provides essential habitat for two federally endangered insects. For IRC's portion of this important collaborative work, our Ecological Restoration Team has begun pre-restoration monitoring, controlling native palms that have become overgrown in the absence of fire, and invasive plant removal.



The treatment of overgrown native palms, specifically [Saw palmetto](#) (*Serenoa repens*), due to the absence of fire, photo by Alex Seasholtz.



Recent Events



Michelle Smith, IRC Program Associate, showing [Coco-plum](#) (*Chrysobalanus icaco*) in the beach dunes, photo by Cara Abbott.



[Beachstar](#) (*Remirea maritima*) photo by Cara Abbott.

Bioblitz in Delray Municipal Beach

On Saturday, June 3, IRC had an amazing time at Delray Municipal Beach for a Bioblitz event as part of the Society for Ecological Restoration's Make A Difference Week. Participants had the opportunity to explore and discover the fascinating local beach dune ecosystem, searching for various plant and animal species.

This event was in honor of the City of Delray Beach achieving the prestigious Blue Flag Designation. This international recognition is awarded by the Blue Flag international jury and signifies that Delray Municipal Beach has fulfilled strict environmental, educational, safety, and accessibility criteria.

**Ecological Restoration Event at
Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse
Outstanding Natural Area**

On Saturday, June 10, IRC collaborated with the Bureau of Land Management at the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (JILONA) for a large ecological restoration day. We increased maritime hammock diversity by planting over 300 native plants of 30 species thanks to the help of 25 wonderful volunteers!

We would like to thank the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin County for funding this important work. We would also like to thank Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management for providing volunteers, Keith Buttry of Neglected Plants for helping with plant design and purchasing, and Chris Quadrell for assisting during the event.

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



Group photo before the hardwork commence, photo by PBC ERM.



Volunteer installing a native hammock tree, [Paradisetre](#) (*Simarouba glauca*), photo by Michelle Smith.



Campers raising their hand to answers questions being asked by Cara Abbott, IRC Assistant Director of Programs, photo by Michelle Smith.

Coastal Conservation Education Program at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center

This month, IRC launched a summer Coastal Conservation Education program at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center (LMC). Excursions were led by Cara Abbott, IRC Assistant Director of Programs, and Kelly McLoughlin, IRC Coastal Biodiversity Restoration Technician, with groups of enthusiastic campers aged 6-13. During the outings, 120 students were taken on a captivating tour of the beach dunes located just east of LMC's facility. They participated in an intriguing scavenger hunt within the coastal ecosystem, discovering the remarkable ways in which biodiversity contributes to dune resilience. They also learned about the crucial role of coastal plants in preventing erosion and providing food for birds and butterflies. To conclude the day, each student was



given a special gift—a copy of our educational coloring book titled 'Explore Our Coast'. Thanks to the generous support of the Hornik Family Foundation grant, this summer's educational program has become achievable.

Kelly McLoughlin, Coastal Biodiversity Restoration Technician, leading campers through the coastal ecosystem.

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](#)
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