



Institute for Regional Conservation

March 2025 Newsletter

In This Issue...

- Conservation Note
- Upcoming Events
- Recent Events
- Spotlight on our NFYN Sponsors
- Staff Update
- Thank you to our sponsors

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Conservation Note

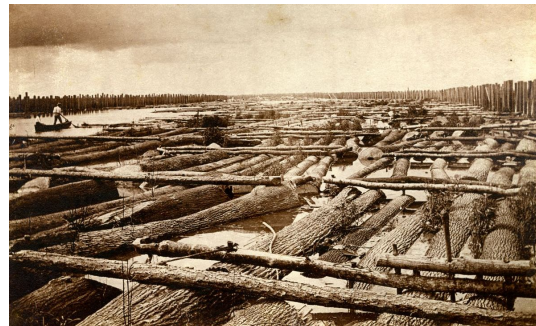
Flights to Mars

I grew up in rural America. I also loved science fiction, spending most of my days barefoot outside in nature and many nights reading about what the future might look like. Some books operated so far in the future that Earth was not even a distant memory or slice of historical data. But for many others there was a clear bifurcation: Earth had been cared for as the home world and nature and people co-existed, or, Earth was post-apocalyptic, whether from nuclear or chemical warfare, disease, general ecological collapse – or the occasional alien invasion. The general theme was that the more the planet was cared for, the more democratic the political institutions and the more economic prosperity flowed between rural and urban communities.

The reasons for leaving Earth follow a similar line of logic. Let's leave to explore, with boundaries to make sure we don't destroy everything in humanity's wake (e.g., the Prime Directive), or let's leave because we have created Hell-on-Earth. It does not take much imagination to figure out which would be more democratic and more economically equitable, and which would be based on the robber-baron-strip-mine-every-resource mentality of America of old.



[Courtesy of Oregon Secretary of State](#)



[Courtesy of Florida Memory](#)

It is no accident that those pitting rural America versus urban America want to colonize Mars. Meanwhile, they are planning on depriving rural America of essential dispersed services that are

supported by urban dwellers (like roads, postal services, the internet, national parks, agricultural research, modern medicine), to strip mine our national forests, open our parks to private development, and kill off endangered species at will (via the “[God Squad](#)”). But you must ask yourself, who will be on those flights to Mars? Who will benefit from this migration off Earth? It seems obvious, not any of us.

If we are not careful, we stand to lose everything. No matter what your political or religious persuasion is, please remember that taking care of the environment is a bipartisan issue. Without the support of both political parties for national parks, clean water and air, and recovering depleted wildlife, we would have had little left from the last time the Robber Barons had their way with America. If we allow this to happen again, then rural communities will suffer the most, and a few hyper-rich people will be on their very own flight to Mars. But I know that we can do better. I know that we can resolve the cultural issues that divide us and rise to the occasion. Conservation is inherently a conservative act and restoration is arguably a progressive one. Let’s all do our part to stop the insanity. What most Americans want, and our planet needs, is to operate from the center, not along the whipsaw of two extremes.

George Gann
Founder & Executive Director

Upcoming Events



ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION
Volunteer Day *Help Needed*

APRIL 11TH
9AM - 11AM

RED REEF PARK
1400 NORTH OCEAN BLVD
BOCA RATON, FL

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Friday, April 11th - Ecological Restoration Day

Join us for a volunteer day restoring Red Reef Park in Boca Raton. We need your help to remove nonnative plants from the natural area at the park.

We look forward to continuing our restoration efforts at Red Reef Park with continued support from the City of Boca Raton. Check our [events page](#) periodically for updates and upcoming events.

[Click here for more details.](#)

Friday, April 18th - Ecological Restoration Day

Join us for a volunteer day restoring Red Reef Park in Boca Raton. We need your help to remove nonnative plants and install native plants to the beach dune system.

We look forward to continuing our restoration efforts at Red Reef Park with continued support from the City of Boca Raton. Check our [events page](#) periodically for updates and upcoming events.

[Click here for more details.](#)



ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION
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Celebrate "Earth Day"



JOIN IRC AND THE CITY OF DELRAY BEACH TO CELEBRATE

EARTH DAY



19TH APRIL 2024 9AM-12PM

ATLANTIC DUNES PARK HABITAT RESTORATION VOLUNTEER DAY

 1605 S. Ocean Blvd, Delray Beach, FL

www.regionalconservation.org






with IRC on Saturday, April 19th

Join the IRC and The City of Delray Beach to celebrate "Earth Day" volunteer day restoring Atlantic Dunes Park in Delray Beach. We need your help to remove nonnative plants and install native plants to the beach dune system.

We look forward to continuing our restoration efforts at Atlantic Dunes Park with continued support from the City of Delray Beach. Check our [events page](#) periodically for updates and upcoming events.

[Click here for more details.](#)



Recent Events

Native Plant Installation Volunteer Day at South Beach Park, Boca Raton

On Saturday, March 8th, IRC facilitated a volunteer event at South Beach Park in Boca Raton. With support from the City of Boca Raton and over 20 volunteers, we successfully performed ecological restoration and invasive species removal.

We planted native grass species to help stabilize the dune such as Muhlygrass, Cordgrass, and Elliott's love grass. In addition to planting we also were able to remove invasive over 100lbs of Snake plants from the interior part of the park. Then a large patch of Beach naupaka along the dunes. We are so grateful for our volunteers and the City of Boca Raton for the support!



IRC Joins Native Plant Day with the Dade Chapter FNPS

On Saturday, March 22nd, IRC joined the Dade Chapter Florida Native Plant Society for their annual Native Plant Day located at Castellow Hammock Preserve & Nature Center, Miami, FL.

We had the opportunity to host a table and share our programs and restoration projects with the



general public. With roughly 500 attendees, it was a successful event engaging people through activities and various environmental displays. Visitors to our booth had an opportunity to learn about our Pine Rockland Initiative program and the importance of native plant biodiversity.

ECO Fair at Miami Beach Senior High School

On Friday, March 14th, our Restoration Biodiversity Intern, Kayla Mosteller, attended the Miami Beach Senior High School Ecology Fair. We had the opportunity to connect with high school students and highlight the importance of ecological restoration. We engaged students in discussions on our restoration programs, Restoring the Gold Coast, and the Pine Rockland Initiative.

We built a small display of a native biodiverse dune and a limited species dune to demonstrate the differences between a healthy dune and one that has low biodiversity. Students also learned about native plant species. Thank you to Miami Beach Senior High School for inviting us to the ECO Fair!



NFYN Sponsor Spotlight



The [Florida Wildflower Foundation](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, connecting, and expanding native wildflower habitats throughout Florida. Their work includes:

- **Education & Outreach:** Offering grants, workshops, and resources to inform the public about the importance of wildflowers in supporting pollinators and ecosystems.
- **Research & Conservation:** Funding studies to protect native wildflowers and increase biodiversity.
- **Roadside Wildflower Program:** Partnering with state and local agencies to preserve and

enhance wildflower corridors along Florida's highways.

- **Community Engagement:** Encouraging gardeners and landowners to plant native species through initiatives like the [Florida Wildflower License Plate](#), which helps fund their projects.



To learn more about the Florida Wildflower Foundation, check [out their website!](#)

Interested in becoming a [Natives For Your Neighborhood](#) sponsor?

Please email our administrator, Katherine Hardial at khardial@regionalconservation.org for more information.



Staff Update: Joel Otero becomes Ecological Restoration Team Leader

We're excited to announce that Joel Otero has been promoted to Ecological Restoration Team Leader! Since joining IRC, Joel has demonstrated unwavering dedication to our restoration efforts. In less than two years, he has earned both his Natural Areas Weed Management and Aquatic Pest Control licenses, showcasing his commitment to professional growth. Beyond his technical expertise, Joel has proven to be a natural leader, implementing new systems that are elevating our team's efficiency and impact.



His passion for conservation and hands-on approach to problem-solving have made him an invaluable part of our organization. Whether mentoring team members in the field or streamlining operations behind the scenes, Joel is always striving to improve our restoration work. We are incredibly proud of his achievements and can't wait to see how he continues to shape the future of our restoration initiatives. Congratulations, Joel!



Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Kristin Cadavieco, Michael Poland, and Maple Street Natives.

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

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.

Consider supporting our efforts which 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. Click the button below.

If you're interested in being a sponsor of Natives For Your Neighborhood, please reach out to **Katherine Hardial**.

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



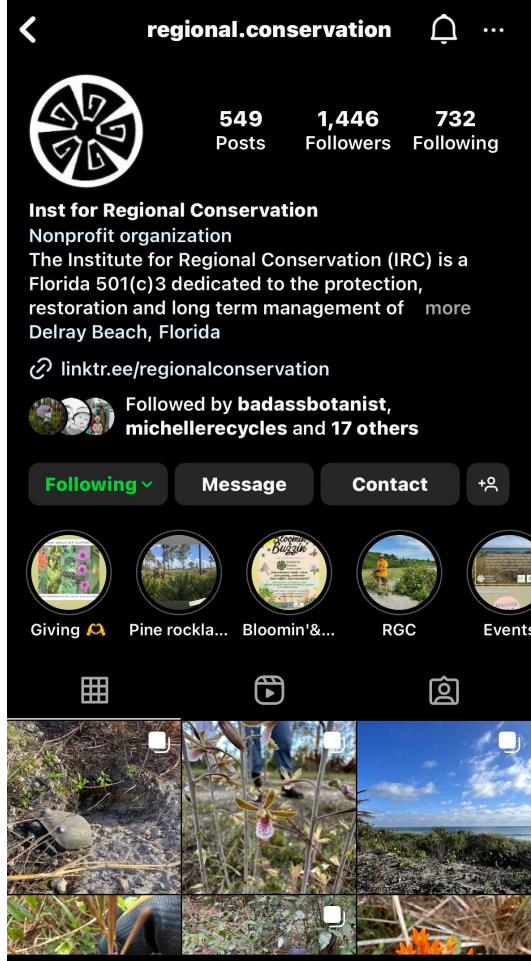
[Physalis walteri](#)
(Walter's groundcherry)

PLEASE DONATE

Your donations empower us to enhance our free online resources, safeguard rare plants and animals, restore native ecosystems, and champion more effective public policies for conservation.

Follow us on Social Media

The best way to stay up to date on all things IRC is to follow us on social media! Every week we spotlight native plants for "Wildflower Wednesday" and give a glimpse into one of our many unique projects from our "From the Field Friday" posts. You can also follow our socials where we share our



event photos and lots of relevant information about the environment and beyond.

So, if you haven't already, follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)!



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

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