



May 2024 Newsletter

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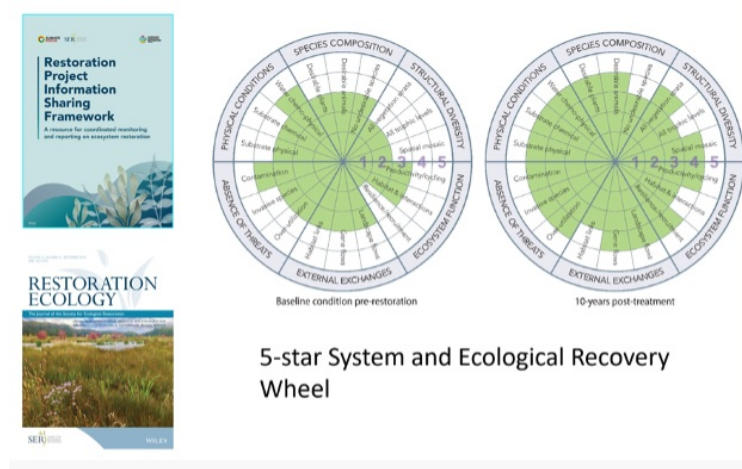
Conservation Note

Uniting Global Thinking with Local Expertise and Action

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of attending a United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. My job, on behalf of the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) and UN partners, was to deliver the keynote speech at a high-level side event on *Delivering Restoration Outcomes for Biodiversity and Human Well-Being*. My talk featured a draft Resource Guide for Target 2 of the Global Biodiversity Framework. Target 2 is the GBF goal for ecosystem restoration.



George presenting at the United Nations in Africa.



Global standards and guidance IRC uses in our ecological restoration practice.

Joining the people in the room were people online from around the world, including IRC Conservation Program Coordinator Liz Dutra. During the Q&A session, the moderator used a comment from the “IRC team in South Florida” (thanks Liz!) to ask how global standards and guidance deliver effective restoration on the ground. I responded that it is a two-way street. Through our practice at IRC in South Florida we test global standards and, if we they don’t work, we recommend improvements. But we also find that our restoration practice benefits enormously by incorporating global guidance, including tools from SER such as the Ecological Recovery Wheel.



A typical slide showing the breadth of IRC’s work linking the local to the global.

It is this uniting of cutting-edge global thinking with local, place-based knowledge that makes IRC so special. It is why the impact we create is so valuable. We not only impact local native species and ecosystems in a highly positive way but help to scale standards-based restoration to other communities around the world.

George Gann
Founder and Executive Director


Upcoming Events

Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at Red Reef Park, Boca Raton.


Friday, June 7th 9am to 11am

Help us remove invasive plants at Red Reef Park in Boca Raton. We will also install native dune plants. Come learn about coastal conservation.

It is a great way to gain community service hours. To sign up and for more information [click here.](#)



Restoring the Gold Coast Program
The Institute for Regional Conservation



ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION VOLUNTEER DAY

With the City of Boca Raton

Join us for an Ecological Restoration Day focused on removing nonnative plants and cleaning up the beach dune!

Where: Red Reef & 1400 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton, FL 33432



When: Friday, June 7th 9am-11am

Register at: regionalconservation.org/frcs/Events.asp

We Need Help With:

- Installing native plants on the beach dunes
- Mild debris clean up
- Invasive species removal

A confirmation email containing all the event details will be sent to all registered participants on the day prior to the event.




Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at Pirate Park in Miami Beach


Saturday, June 15th 9am to 11am.

Join IRC for our 1st ecological restoration day at Miami Beach's Pirate Park. We will install native dune plants and learn about the importance of coastal conservation. We are proud to partner with Miami Beach Rising Above where we are expanding our Restoring the Gold Coast Program South into Miami Beach.

It is a great way to gain community service hours. To sign up check out our [IRC events page](#) and scroll to the Miami Beach Flyer for more details.



Restoring the Gold Coast Program
The Institute for Regional Conservation





ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION VOLUNTEER DAY

Help us install native plants & learn about coastal ecosystem conservation!

**Where: Pirate Park
7601 Atlantic Way, Miami Beach, FL 33141
When: Saturday, June 15th from 9-11am**

Register at: bit.ly/MBRestoration



A confirmation email containing all the event details will be sent to all registered participants on the day prior to the event.

IRC Leads the charge for protection of the Rare Ghost Orchid

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will decide by June 1, 2025, whether to protect the imperiled ghost orchid. This agreement follows a lawsuit filed by IRC, Center for Biological Diversity and the National Parks Conservation Association.

The ghost orchid is one of the most famous flowers in Florida, but its population has



Copyright: Roger Hammer

"The ghost orchid is hanging on by a thread and needs the full weight of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Endangered Species Act to survive and eventually recover to health. " said George Gann.


The ghost orchid is at risk of extinction from multiple threats, including poaching, habitat loss and degradation and the climate crisis. We are hopeful e will have a positive outcome stay tuned for an update through IRC's website.

[More information here.](#)

declined by more than 90% globally and by up to 50% in Florida. It is estimated that only 1,500 individuals remain in Florida and less than half are known to be mature enough to reproduce.

"We are highly disappointed that we must resort to a lawsuit to get the ghost orchid the legal protection imperative for its survival," said George Gann, executive director at The Institute for Regional Conservation.

"However, we cannot let bureaucratic inertia and inadequate funding for the Endangered Species Act lead to the extinction of this amazing icon of the Greater Everglades — that would be a senseless and unnecessary tragedy."



CENTER for BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY *Saving life on Earth*

For Immediate Release, May 16, 2024

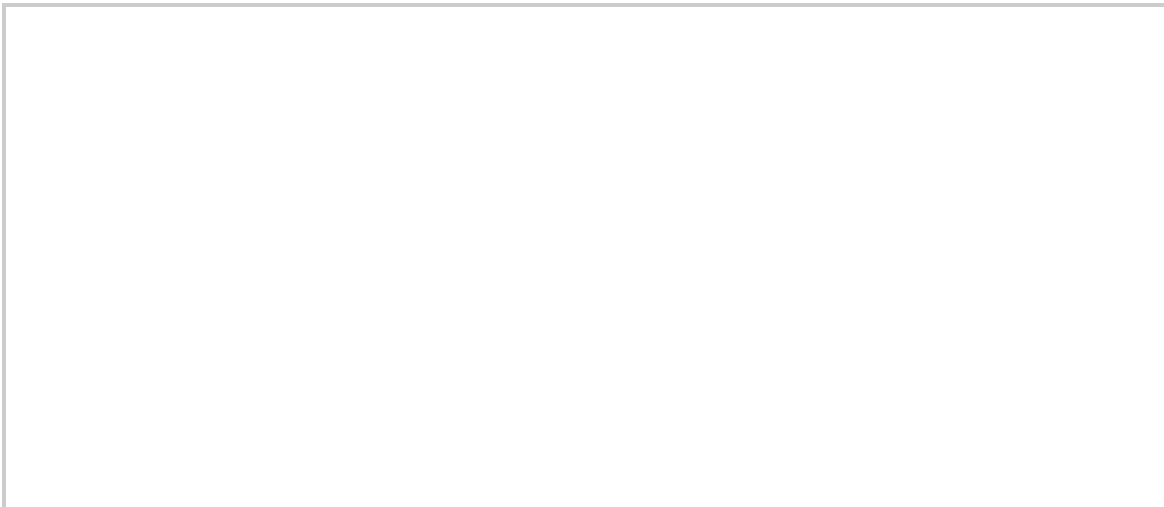
Contact: Tina L. Pugliese, The Institute for Regional Conservation, (561) 889-3575, Tina@PugliesePR.com
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Legal Victory Speeds Protection Decision for Rare Ghost Orchid
Flower Threatened by Poaching, Habitat Destruction, Climate Change

HOLLYWOOD, Fla.— The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service **agreed** today to decide by June 1, 2025, whether to protect the imperiled ghost orchid. The agreement follows a lawsuit filed by The Institute for Regional Conservation, Center for Biological Diversity and the National Parks Conservation Association.

"We welcome the agreement to finally deliver a regulatory decision," said George Gann, executive director at The Institute for Regional Conservation. "The ghost orchid is hanging on by a thread and needs the full weight of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Endangered Species Act to survive and eventually recover to health."

Exciting new collaboration with Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach





We are delighted to announce a momentous collaboration between IRC and the esteemed Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach (PFPB) aimed at revitalizing Phipps Ocean Park. This endeavor represents a significant stride towards coastal restoration, with plans underway to establish a state-of-the-art Coastal Restoration Center within the park's grounds. This new partnership, a combination of proven ecological responsibility in both the built and natural environments, will serve to further enhance and protect the coastal ecosystems of Palm Beach.

This is a highly collaborative effort where architects, designers and ecological restoration leaders are working together to create an international model for a coastal park. This is a tremendous step forward for our Restoring the Gold Coast program where the new Coastal Restoration Center will serve as our headquarters for our program and we can continue to educate, restore and protect our vital coastal ecosystems. The work we are doing directly supports IRC's mission to connect humans with the nature while preserving and reviving our coastal environments.

[Click here for here to read more about the collaboration.](#)

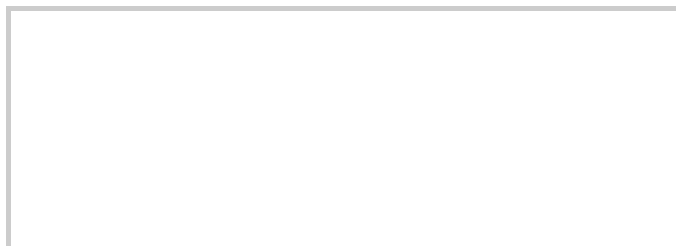
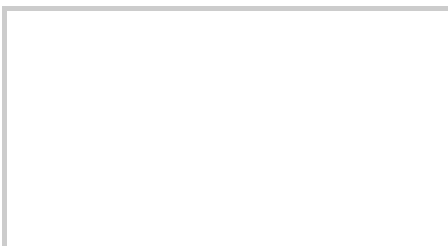


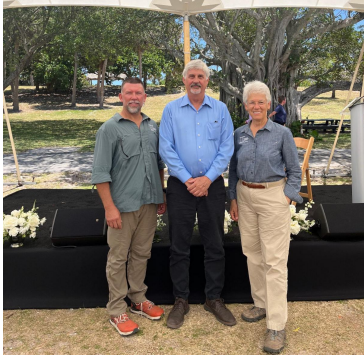
Amanda Skier, CEO PFPB and George Gann, sign agreement for a PFPB & IRC collaboration.



A new Coastal Restoration Center will be built as part of the revamp at Phipps Ocean Park.

During the groundbreaking event on April 19th, the IRC participated alongside local students in the installation of 200 native plants, marking the commencement of beach dune restoration efforts as a larger part of the restoration of this park. For more information [click here.](#)





Keith Buttry, IRC associate and PFPB Botanical Curator, George Gann, and Susan Learner, PFPB Director of Horticulture



Representing IRC at Phipps Ocean Park Groundbreaking Event. Liz Dutra, Conservation Program Manager, Allison Turner, IRC Board Member, George Gann, Executive Director



Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Kimberlee Pompeo, James Baldwin, Gladys Escalona, and Shanee Bruno..

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

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.

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.



Man-in-the-ground
(*Ipomoea microdactyla*)

DONATE

Recent Volunteer Day at Orchard View Park, Delray Beach

We hosted an Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at Orchard View Park on May 4th, where we filled 33 bags FULL of invasive plants! That's over 1,600 pounds!! With over 20 awesome volunteers, we removed frequent invasives such as air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) and American evergreen (*Syngonium podphyllum*). By restoring this maritime hammock, we're able to help foster the native ecosystem and benefit the diversity of the park for the future.



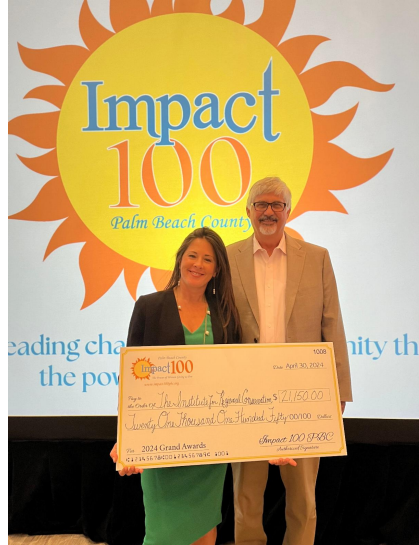
We are thankful for the support from the City of Delray Beach for this event.

Beach Jacquemontia Field Trip- Delray Beach

On May 22nd, we had over 20 participants join us for a field trip in Delray Beach, as part of the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Beach Jacquemontia Virtual Summit. For the last 5 years restoration efforts have been underway for this federally endangered flowering beauty. This event brought together many stakeholders from local government, state government, and members of the community to learn about management and restoration practices. Special thanks to the City of Delray Beach and Delray Beach Fire Department for their support with this event.

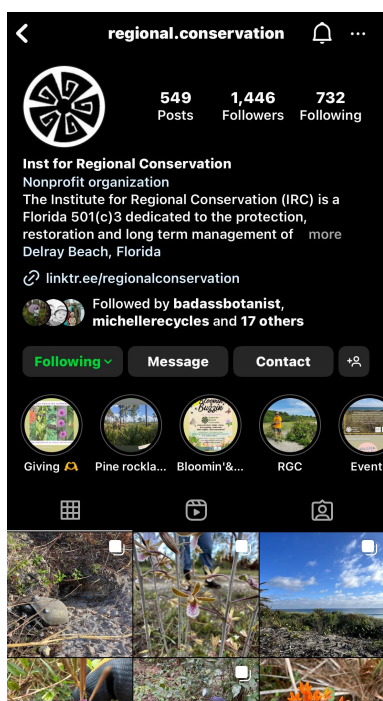


IRC & Impact 100 Palm Beach County



On April 30th, IRC was awarded a merit grant of \$21,500 at the 2024 Impact100 Palm Beach County Grant Awards. We are thrilled to receive this grant award and look forward to continuing our mission to restore and conserve vital ecosystems of throughout South Florida and beyond. Thank you to Impact100 PBC.

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.

The Institute for Regional Conservation | [Website](#)
Newsletter Editor: Liz Dutra





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