



May 2020 Newsletter

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Biodiversity Explosion in Delray Beach

Since 2016 we have been working with dozens of volunteers and collaborators to reduce invasive species and restore native biodiversity at Atlantic Dunes Park (ADP) in Delray Beach. Starting as part of our Green Delray program, Atlantic Dunes Park is now one of the biodiversity hot spots in our Restoring the Gold Coast program. See a list of plant species at the park [here](#).

Work has been slow but steady, but over the last two years native plants have been showing up that have not been recorded there before, or which have not been seen at the park in decades, or which are recruiting and spreading into new areas. It is a remarkable example of the power of natural recovery in response to sound ecological restoration practice - in this case the restoration of coastal strand, the most impacted upland ecosystem in coastal Palm Beach County.

On Friday, I was able to go back to ADP with four ecological restoration practitioner colleagues to follow up on some work that was delayed due to the shutdown. We are not yet ready to hold volunteer events, but we are moving the restoration forward with a professional crew in cooperation with the City of Delray Beach. Once again we



Commelina erecta, or whitemouth dayflower, has recruited en masse in the back dune just east of the seagrape line.



Solanum bahamense, or Bahama nightshade, had been buried under seagrasses, vines, and invasive species. It emerged in 2020.

found native plants that had not been recorded before, emerging from under what had been a smothering canopy of Brazilian-pepper and seagrape. In celebration of getting back outside and enjoying springtime, I am posting pictures of some of the cool native plants celebrating the restoration at Atlantic Dunes Park. Enjoy!

George Gann
Founder and Executive Director



Neptunia pubescens, or tropical puff, is a very rare element of coastal dunes in southern Palm Beach County. We first recorded this at Atlantic Dunes Park on Friday.



We recorded *Piriqueta cistoides* subsp. *caroliniana*, or pitted stripeseed, for the first time on coastal dunes in Palm Beach County in 2019. This species is normally found growing in pine forests.



This is one of the very few authentic historical populations of *Salvia coccinea*, or tropical sage, in South Florida. Every spring the red flowers barely poke out from the protecting shrubs of the coastal strand.

DONATE



Thank you to all those who have supported IRC's programs in the last

Thank you to our most recent NFYN sponsors: All Native Garden Center,

month.

Tracey Webb, William Bathurst, Steven Gong, Barbara McAdam, John Miller, Amanda Treher, Barbara Levy, Jutta Laukien, and Pamela Wogan.

Donations allow us to provide important free resources to the public, land managers, scientists, landscape designers, and enthusiasts of native plants and native plant gardening.

[Nursery, and Landscapes](#), [Green Isle Gardens](#), and [Wilcox Nursery](#). Please check out their web pages to learn more about their nurseries.

To check out our Natives For Your Neighborhood website, [click here](#).

IRC has an E-Trade account, so please contact us about giving gifts of stock.

"I added an icon to my smart phone so I can access the Institute For Regional Conservation's website with just a touch. I find it a very useful tool for plant identification because I can check the plant list for specific sites, greatly narrowing the list of candidate plants to consider. The handy link to the Plant Atlas is great! I recommend the site every chance I get." - Sabrina Olson Carle



Weekly Conservation Conversations

Here is our final weekly webinar for now. Thank you to all who has either participated in one (or more) of these free webinars or has shared about us.

- **Pine Rockland Initiative** on June 2nd at 1 pm hosted by George Gann. For more information, visit the [Facebook event](#) and/or our [website calendar event](#). Don't worry if you miss out, it will be posted to our [YouTube page](#) and links will be posted on our [Facebook page](#) and the [Presentations](#) list on our website.

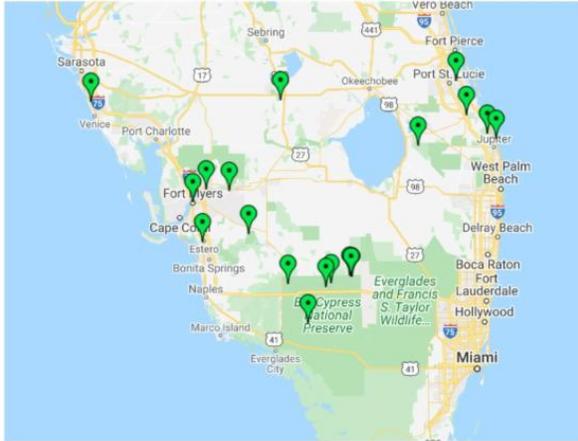
If you have any questions about attending any of these sessions, feel free to reach out to Cara Abbott at abbott@regionalconservation.org.



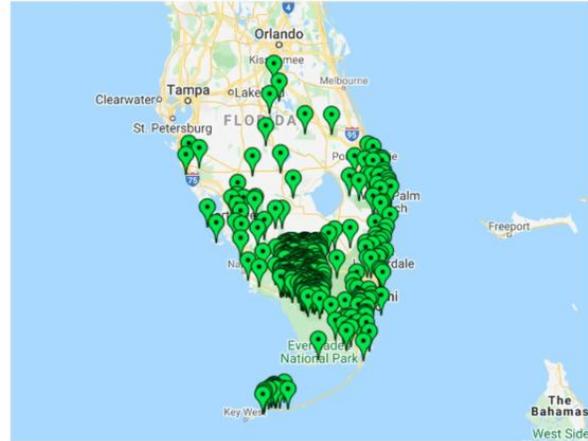
Making the Most of the Lockdown

While some of our field work ground to a halt in April and May, we have remained productive working on many of IRC's popular tools. In May, we completed uploading map data for 300 vegetation plots in Big Cypress National Preserve that we sampled in the early 2000s. You can view those maps for species included in the Floristic Inventory of South Florida and Natives For Your Neighborhood. Some species recorded for Big Cypress were found in only a handful of plots, or not in any plots at all, while other species were found in nearly every plot (see maps below). We are now in process of adding data from nearly 50 road transects, which will add data for many additional weeds.

Amorpha fruticosa
False indigobush



Cladium jamaicense
Sawgrass



Recent Weekly Conservation Conversations

We want to thank all of you (again) who have been able to join us via Zoom for our Weekly Conservation Conversations this past month. Another thank you to those who have shared these webinars and our resources with others.

If you missed out or want to share these informative webinars, here are the video links:

- [Restoring the Gold Coast \(RGC\)](#)
- [Biodiversity Starter Plant Kits](#)
- [Floristic Inventory of South Florida \(FISF\)](#)
- [Natives For Your Neighborhood \(NFYN\)](#)

Restoring the Gold Coast (RGC)

In this webinar, we discussed our accomplishments to date through the first year of our program, gave an update on what the program looks like in the midst of COVID-19, and gave an update on how the plants are doing at our current sites. Check out our RGC web page [here](#).



Biodiversity Starter Plant Kits

These Biodiversity Starter Plant Kits that we are currently selling expand on the biodiversity hot spots we are creating on public beaches in Southern Palm Beach County through our Restoring the Gold Coast program.

If you or someone you know lives on the



barrier island of South Florida, we encourage you purchase a kit to increase native biodiversity on your property! There is more info in the webinar recording and on our biodiversity starter plant kit [landing page](#).

Floristic Inventory of South Florida

In this webinar all about the Floristic Inventory of South Florida (FISF), we discussed how FISF was designed and how to navigate through it. Check out this free web resource [here](#).



Natives For Your Neighborhood

Thank you to the 70+ people who joined us via Zoom for our first Weekly Conservation Conversation all about Native For Your Neighborhood (NFYN)!

We shared how to utilize this resource for native plants. Check out this free web resource [here](#).



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

