



Institute for Regional Conservation

May 2023 Newsletter

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Monthly Conservation Note

Welcome to IRC!

I want to welcome our 388 new newsletter subscribers who signed up to receive **The Institute for Regional Conservation's** (IRC's) new Explore Our Coast coloring book. We hope you and your kids are enjoying it, and hope you stick around! (If you are a long-term IRC supporter you might want to **check it out** and read more about it below in this newsletter.)

Our **vision** is to unite people and nature to restore our world. We do that by engaging neighbors, citizen scientists, and fellow conservation and restoration professionals to protect and restore healthy populations of native plants, animals, and ecosystems. We hold restoration workdays, run bioblitzes, and give talks and workshops to the public. Many of our events are family friendly and suitable for participants of all ages.

We provide numerous free online resources that are widely used by the public, scientists, and conservation lands managers. A well-known example is **Natives For Your Neighborhood**, where you can find information on native plants and wildlife for your garden. In addition to our work in Florida, we support bilingual botanical resources in **Puerto Rico** and **the Yucatan**, and work on global ecological restoration policy. We collaborate with many organizations from the local (e.g., City of Boca Raton, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden), to state (Florida Natural Areas Inventory), to national (NatureServe) to global (Society for Ecological Restoration).

We hope you join us on our journey to make the world a better place for people AND nature.

George Gann
Founder and Executive Director



Upcoming Events

Bioblitz AT DELRAY MUNICIPAL BEACH

Bioblitz at Delray Municipal Beach with IRC

- June 3rd, 9am-11am
- Meet at Anchor Park restrooms
- Parking at Anchor Park and street parking
- We will check out the beach dunes across the street and see what we can find!

Participation

- Download the iNaturalist app and make an account
- Take photos of wild plants and animals
- Upload your observations to share with the iNaturalist community
- Learn more as your finds get identified/verified.

To Register

- Register by June 2nd.
- Email Cara Abbott at abbott@regionalconservation.org

Bioblitz on Delray Municipal Beach

Calling all citizen scientists! IRC is excited to partner with The City of Delray Beach on a Bioblitz of the Delray Municipal Beach on Saturday, June 3. Participants of all ages are welcome to join and help us document the plants and animals living in the coastal ecosystems of Delray Beach.

We will start with an educational guided tour by IRC staff where we will teach participants how to identify some of the rare and unique plants we encounter and upload their observations into iNaturalist.

This event is part of the Society for Ecological Restoration's **"Make a Difference" Week**.

To register, email IRC Assistant Director of Programs, **Cara Abbott**.

Ecological Restoration Event at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area

On Saturday, June 10, IRC will be collaborating with the Bureau of Land Management at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (JILONA) on a large ecological restoration day. We will be restoring maritime hammock diversity by planting over 200 native plants. This is a great opportunity to restore an important coastal ecosystem on a unique property. JILONA is the only unit of the National Conservation Lands east of the Mississippi River, and the only unit managed by the Bureau of Land Management's Eastern States.

This event is part of the Society for Ecological Restoration's "[Make a Difference](#)" Week.

To register, [email Karen Moore](mailto:karen.moore@blm.gov).



ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION VOLUNTEER DAY!

- Join The Institute for Regional Conservation and the Bureau of Land Management at the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area for an Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day, June 10th, from 8am-11am, where we will be installing 200-300 native plants in the maritime hammock and coastal strand habitats.
- Come ready to work with closed toed shoes, sun protection, and refillable water bottles, as drinking water will be available. We will provide gloves and tools.

INTERESTED PARTICIPANTS
TO REGISTER, EMAIL KAREN
MOORE AT [KMOORE@BLM.GOV](mailto:kmoore@blm.gov)



Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Amy Kimball, David Reese, Jose Garcia, & Sharon Stockman.

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

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

Thank you to Kirsten Hines for renewing her **Natives For Your Neighborhood sponsorship!** Check out her book "Attracting Birds to South Florida Gardens" [here](#).

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.



Julia Heliconian (*Dryas iulia*) caterpillar. Photo by Cara Abbott.

DONATE

"Meet Our Team" Spotlight

Welcome, Liz Dutra!

Liz Dutra recently joined IRC as a new Program Associate. In this role, she will support IRC's core conservation and restoration programs, with an emphasis on collecting and curating floristic, faunal, and ecological data, and supporting the design, implementation, and monitoring of standards-based ecological restoration projects.

Liz is a South Florida native and a graduate of Florida Atlantic University where she obtained her B.S & M.S. in Biological Sciences. Her thesis research focused primarily on ocean acidification effects on marine algal species populations throughout the Florida Reef Tract. Prior to IRC, Liz served as a research associate for NOAA and the University of Miami as she was the data manager for the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program. Liz also has a deep passion in conserving South Florida ecosystems, sustainability, and urban farming. Liz also volunteers with the Urban Farming Institute as their education and outreach manager where she teaches kids and adults about gardening and healthy living.





Research Associate Highlight - Jimmy Lange

Jimmy Lange and colleagues published a paper on the Everglades bully (*[Sideroxylon reclinatum subsp. austrofloridense](#)*) in March of this year. The paper, *Population Assessments of Federally Threatened Everglades Bully in Big Cypress National Preserve, Florida, USA, Using Habitat Suitability Modeling and Micromorphology*, explains population assessment of the federally threatened Everglades bully. The results of this study have implications for informing the designation of critical habitat for the Everglades bully and highlight the need for multiple approaches in managing and conserving at-risk, cryptic taxa like this species, including considering hybridization zones. To access and read the full article, [click here](#).

In 2014, Jimmy worked for IRC as a Field Botanist, then transitioned to Research Associate as he joined the South Florida Conservation Team at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. He currently is an environmental consultant with Smart Sciences. He serves on the Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC) Plant List Committee as well as the Everglades Cisma EDRR Plant List Committee. He is an ISA Certified Arborist and an FAA Certified Drone Pilot.

To read more of Jimmy's bio, [click here](#).

IRC Creates "Explore Our Coast" Coloring Book

IRC is excited to announce that we've created a brand new coloring book titled "Explore Our Coast"! This free, educational resource teaches kids (and adults!) about South Florida's coastal ecosystems and the amazing plants and animals that call these ecosystems home.

To download your free copy, [click here](#).

We will also be handing out hard copies of this coloring book at upcoming outreach events.

Here's a look inside:



Beach morning glory (*Ipomoea imperati*)

The eastern most coastal ecosystem is the beach dune, which is an herbaceous community of grasses like sea-oats, succulent species like beach-elder and pricklypear, annual species like coastal searocket, and trailing species like beach morning glory.

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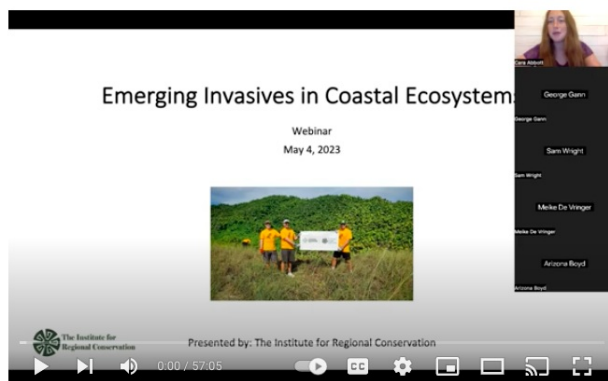


Black racer (*Coluber constrictor*)

In the beach dune, you can see snakes like the black racer slithering through the sandy grasses and hear birds like a rock pigeon cooing. At night, you might observe mammals like a raccoon or fox silently lurking in the dunes. You might even spot adult sea turtles nesting or sea turtle hatchlings climbing out and crawling towards the shore!

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Recent Events



Emerging Invasives in Coastal Ecosystems Webinar



Emerging Invasive Species Webinar

On Thursday, May 4, IRC held a webinar titled "Emerging Invasives in Coastal Ecosystems" where we highlighted 17 species of nonnative plants that we believe have the potential to become problematic invasive species. Our hope is that early intervention by homeowners and landmanagers can prevent these species from taking hold.

To view the recording, [click here](#).

Presentation on Coral Reef Park

On May 22, IRC Executive Director, George Gann, and IRC Ecological Restoration Team Leader, Alex Seasholtz, presented an Ecological Restoration plan for the pine rockland at Coral Reef Park, Village of Palmetto Bay, Florida.

Coral Reef Park is approximately 5 acres of pine rockland habitat found within an urban matrix that offers refuge to many important Pine Rockland species and serves as critical habitat for two federally listed plants. IRC shared their recommendations for the restoration and ongoing management at Coral Reef Park to focus on treatment of invasive species, the reduction of native hardwoods and palms, and the periodic application of prescribed fire.



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