



September 2022 Newsletter

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Monthly Conservation Note

Building Community

As a survivor of Hurricane Andrew (1992), I can attest that there is little that can be said to ease the pain and trauma of a major hurricane. But actions truly matter. We often talk about sea level rise, climate change, and biodiversity loss in a regional or global context but, ultimately, they are deeply local and personal. Hurricanes smash both us and the people, plants, animals, and ecosystems we cherish.

September has been a month of personal loss for many in the IRC community. First, Hurricane Fiona whacked Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, still not fully recovered from Maria (2017), triggering massive landslides, flooding, and the collapse of the electrical grid. Then, the Atlantic provinces of Canada were

outpouring of volunteerism and the restoration of native ecosystems on the island. On a personal front, I vividly remember trucks rolling into my parent's nursery from fellow members of the Florida Association of Native Nurseries - I cannot overstate what that meant to us.

Today, I worry about the impacts of Fiona and Ian on my many friends and colleagues, as well as on the ghost orchids of western Cuba, and the Fakahatchee Strand in southwestern Florida – an irreplaceable repository of native biodiversity. My plea is to do something, no matter how small, to help. Show support for those in need, whether it is sending a text or a post checking on your friends, donating time or money, or showing up

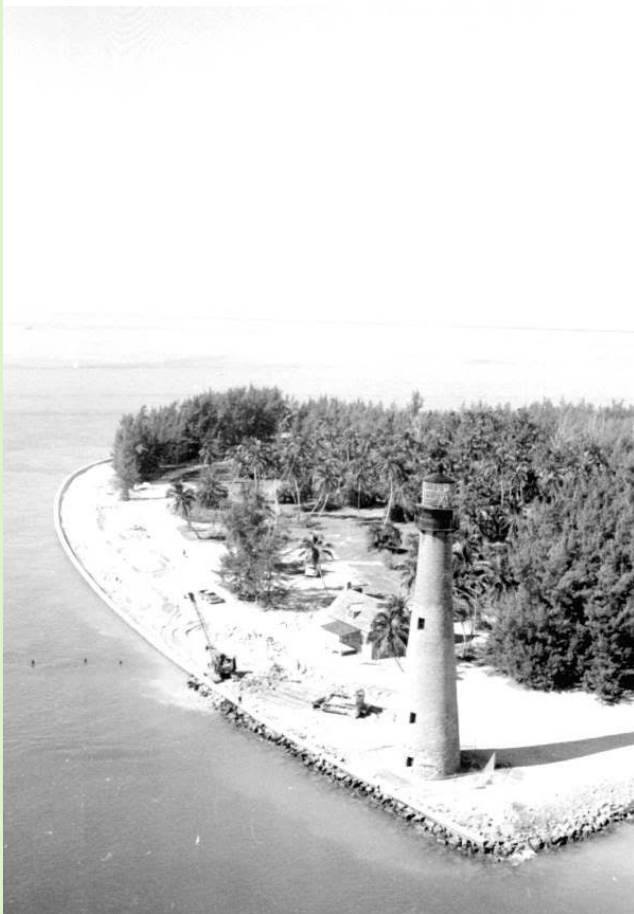
hammered by “historic, extreme” Fiona. This week on Tuesday, Ian rammed into western Cuba, leaving the entire island without power; Wednesday began Ian’s onslaught on Florida as “one of the strongest hurricanes to ever hit the United States”.

This is the new normal. How we react to it determines what the world will look like and how it will operate in the future. One thing I learned from Andrew is that adversity can build community, and there is opportunity even in devastation. For example, Andrew felled a forest of invasive Australian-pines at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, which led to an

several weeks from now when the collective mind has moved on to the next disaster. Let’s build a better community together. People and nature need your help.

p.s. For those of you in southeastern Florida who escaped the wrath of Ian, please consider attending our Clash for the Coast event on October 11 (see below) and help build resilience to future storms! Please check future newsletters and our Facebook page for other opportunities to help.

George Gann
Founder and Executive Director



Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park full of invasive Australian-pines prior to Hurricane Andrew.



Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Andrew.



Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park with a restored native ecosystem following Hurricane Andrew.





Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Brenda Carr, Marion DeGroff, Ellaine Pacella, and Orlando Medina.

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

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

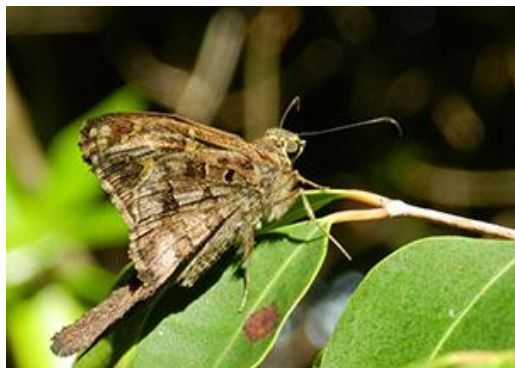
While we get funding for some great projects, those funds rarely cover all of our costs, so we really do need your support to continue our important work.

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.

Thank you to our recent **Natives For Your Neighborhood Sponsors**, Pro Native Consulting, Key West Botanical Garden, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation, and All Native Garden Center, for their continued support.

Pro Native Consulting is located in Miami and offers native plants for sale, as well as, consulting services.

Key West Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden is a frost-free native botanical garden located in Key West that also offers native plants from their nursery, a natural conservation habitat, and educational resources. **Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation** located in Sanibel offers a native garden center, environmental education, and various trails through their preserves. **All Native Garden Center** located in Fort Myers offers an array of native plants from their nursery as well as landscaping services.**



Dorantes Longtail. Photo by Beryn Harty.

**Executive Director's note. At present time, we have to assume that Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation on Sanibel Island and All Native Garden Center in Fort Myers have sustained catastrophic damage from Hurricane Ian. We urge you to offer any support possible to these organizations and others in southwestern Florida. We were happy to receive word that Key West Botanical Garden sustained only minor damage.

DONATE

Restoration Work at Simpson Park

IRC's Ecological Restoration crew has been conducting “strike team tactics” aimed at restoring the canopy of the historic Simpson Park in the City of Miami. This important remnant of the once great Brickell Hammock suffers from invasions of numerous exotic and native vines. One of the greatest threats is from the native Hoopvine (*Trichostigma octandrum*). Hoopvine's stems can become very thick and large, adding additional weight to tree limbs, smothering branches and preventing photosynthesis, therefore damaging the canopy trees. Our hope is to conserve the many rare species that call Simpson Park home and allow them to thrive in the heart a metropolis.



One of the many rare plants found at Simpson Park, **Husk tomato** (*Physalis pubescens*), is pictured above.

Recent Events



Habitat Restoration Talk and Walk at Orchard View Park

IRC's Education and Outreach Coordinator, Cara Abbott, led Orchard View Elementary students on a Habitat Restoration Talk and Walk at Orchard View Park on September 2nd. She talked with students about the restoration work IRC's Ecological Restoration crew has been conducting on site and then took the students around the park to point out various native and invasive plant species.

This event was part of the City of Delray Beach's Climate and Art weekend. To watch the presentation, [click here](#).

Delray Beach - Past and Present

On September 3rd, IRC's Executive Director, George Gann, gave a history of beach conservation in Delray Beach and also spoke on plans for the future, including restoration work IRC will conduct thanks to our Restoring the Gold Coast program.

This event was part of the City of Delray Beach's Climate and Art weekend. To view the presentation, [click here](#).



Planting Event with Roots and Shoots Students

On September 21st, IRC's Coastal Biodiversity Restoration Intern, Kelly McLoughlin, had the pleasure of joining the [Delray Beach Children's Garden](#) in their Roots n Shoots program! The group talked about beach dune ecosystems, biodiversity, and native plants before they were able to plant propagated natives on their own. We had a blast and look forward to seeing these plants and people again soon for a Restoring the Gold Coast planting event!

Restoration Volunteer Day at Red Reef Park

On September 24th, we held our Restoring the Gold Coast Program's Phase II Kick Off event at Red Reef Park in Boca Raton. Volunteers focused on removing non-native, invasive plant species from the coastal dune and also helped out-plant the federally and state endangered beach clustervine (*Jacquemontia reclinata*). Beach clustervine was grown by Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, thank you!

Thank you to New York Life and the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties for funding this important restoration work.

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



Upcoming Events

Clash for the Coast - a Do Good Delray Event



We are less than two weeks away from this exciting event! Please join us on Tuesday, October 11th, at 5:30pm, at the Delray Beach Market.

We are partnering with Door 2 Door Strategies to raise money for our Restoring the Gold Coast Program. Two amazing chefs from the Delray Beach Market will face off in a cooking challenge using a secret ingredient. That secret ingredient is going to be an edible plant native to our coastal ecosystem!

While the chefs battle it out, the rest of us will engage in a battle of the minds during some fun and educational conservation trivia.



We need YOUR help to get us to our goal of \$10,000.

- \$25 General ticket gets you light bites and 1 drink voucher
- \$35 VIP ticket gets you light bites, 2 drink vouchers, and a free trivia answer

To buy tickets, [Click here](#).

If you cannot make the event, but would like to contribute to our Restoring the Gold Coast Program [click here](#) to learn more about sponsorship opportunities!



Boynton Beach Fall Festival

One of the City of Boynton Beach's signature events, Fall Festival, will take place on Saturday October 15 from 3-6 PM. IRC will have a booth set up with free native plant seeds and more information on our programs.


There will be activities for families and kids of all ages, including games, bounce houses, rock wall, petting zoo, sack races, pumpkin decorating contest, face painting, and live DJ, plus free popcorn and candy for kids.

Explore our Dunes with IRC

IRC has partnered with [Schoolhouse](#)

Children's Museum in Boynton Beach for an exclusive event for children ages 3-7 on Friday, October 21 at 10 AM. IRC's Coastal Biodiversity Restoration Intern, Kelly McLoughlin, will lead children through a discussion about coastal conservation and the importance of the dune ecosystem as a whole, all while using their five senses. Kids will also have the opportunity to build their own 2D dune!

Class size is limited, special pre-registration is strongly suggested. Please call the museum to register, 561-742-6780.


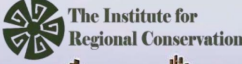


Explore our Dunes with IRC

Friday, October 21 at 10:00 a.m.
for kids ages 3 - 7

The INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL CONSERVATION will visit us to share a story about conservation. Children will learn the importance of the dunes through their five senses and make their own 2D dune!

FREE with paid admission



Funded in part by a grant from Impact 100 of Palm Beach County.

Class size is limited
Special Pre-Registration is Strongly Suggested
Please CALL to Register.

129 E. Ocean Avenue | Boynton Beach | 561.742.6780
www.SchoolhouseMuseum.org | [f/SchoolhouseMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SchoolhouseMuseum)



Give Miami Day

presented by: **amazon**

The Miami Foundation
For A Greater Miami

Give Miami Day

Please plan to participate in **Give Miami Day** on November 17 (or early giving starting November 14) to support IRC's essential work in South Florida's pine rocklands. This is one of the nation's biggest 24-hour annual giving events and our biggest yearly fundraiser for our **Pine Rockland Initiative**. One thing that makes this event special is additional funds from a Bonus Pool based on our donations. Stay tuned for more details next month. We thank you in advance for your continued support!

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: Cara Abbott

