



Institute for Regional Conservation

September 2023 Newsletter

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Monthly Conservation Note

10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration

IRC was well-represented this week at the 10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration in Darwin, Australia. Kingsley Dixon, IRC's Board member in Australia and Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) Board Chair, was a principal conference organizer, with key roles throughout the event.

IRC Board Chair Robert Heinzman and I both attended this momentous event with about 1,000 delegates from more than 80 countries. My responsibilities included



United Nations Decade on Ecosystem

representing both IRC and SER at the global launch of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration Standards of Practice, as well as moderating a high-level panel on the business case for ecological restoration. The theme of the meeting focused on the role of indigenous people and local communities in restoration and the need to reconnect people and nature, a core mission of IRC.

Although we have learned much about the power of connecting over Zoom, Teams, and other online platforms, it doesn't replace the deep connections we achieve when we share, listen, and work together in person. With that said, I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming "Bloomin' and Buzzin' - An Autumn Social" fundraising event in Delray Beach!

George Gann
Founder and Executive Director

Restoration's Advisory Board at Darwin National Park.



A great panel discussion with Henri Douche (SCOR), Julia Oliva (UEBT), George Gann (IRC), Frank Mars (Mars Inc.), and Hanieh Moghani (Indigenous people's representative) on the business case for ecological restoration at SER2023 in Darwin, Australia. Photo by SER.

Upcoming Events

Bloomin' & Buzzin' - An Autumn Social A Do Good Delray Event



OUR EVENT IS ALMOST HERE!

BUY TICKETS TODAY! We're thrilled to announce an upcoming fundraising occasion in collaboration with Do Good Delray, hosted by the [Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce](#).

This year, we're joining forces with [Central Park Taekwondo - Delray Beach](#), and our focus is set on generating funds for our [Natives For Your Neighborhood](#) website and program, as well as our [Pine Rockland Initiative](#) and [Restoring the Gold Coast](#) programs.

Save the specifics:

Date: Wednesday, October 18th

Time: 5:00pm - 8:00pm

Location: [Delray Beach Historical Society](#)

This event is designed for **all ages** to enjoy. Anticipate a delightful array of food, beverages, face painting, trivia, raffles, and much more!

Secure your tickets without delay - just [click here](#). For those interested in becoming sponsors, additional details can be found on the flyer above and by [clicking here](#).

Let's work together to achieve our objective of reaching **\$10,000** in support! Your participation is invaluable.



Give Miami Day

Each year we raise money for our Pine Rockland Initiative Program. The goal of the program is to restore and manage pine rockland fragments on public and private lands throughout the range of pine rocklands, including providing the thought leadership needed to move beyond "business as usual" and save this unique part of our natural heritage.

Please save these dates for Give Miami Day:
November 13-15: Early Giving
November 16: Give Miami Day

Here's the direct link to our [Give Miami Day page](#).

Consider creating a Fundraiser Page to share with your family and friends to help raise money to support our work in this imperiled ecosystem. We created a template you may use: <https://mtyc.co/narctf>. If you have any problems navigating the website, let us know and we'll try to help!





Thank you to all who have supported IRC's programs with a \$20 or larger donation in the last month: Heidi Feder, Richard Bell, & Susan Ireland.

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.

Thank you to our recent Natives For Your Neighborhood (NFYN) sponsors: [Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation](#) located in Lee County, [Indian Trails Native Nursery](#) and [@BotanizingBirdingButterflies](#) located in Palm Beach County. If you're interested in our NFYN sponsorships, reach out to [Michelle Smith](#).

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



Euphyes arpa (Palmetto skipper)
Photo by Michelle Smith.

DONATE

From the Field

Interesting Finds with Melany Flint, Field Supervisor



Five-lined ground skink.



A jumping spider munching on a caterpillar for lunch

Interesting finds with Melany Flint, Field Supervisor.

Melany shares with us some photos of wildlife and a plant she has come across recently being in the field among different sites in Miami-Dade County. The five-lined ground skink staying still long enough for its photo to be taken. The jumping spider catching prey larger than itself! Does anyone know what caterpillar species that is? And the eye-catching *Ipomoea*.

All photos by Melany Flint.



Man-in-the-ground (*Ipomoea microdactyla*) is always an exciting find, with their beautiful color inflorescence and their rarity.

City of Boca Raton, Snake plant removal

In early September, a restoration crew has been making great strides to remove the nonnative, invasive **Snake plant** (*Sansevieria hyacinthoides*) from the maritime hammock habitat throughout South Beach Park in Boca Raton. After the Snake plant has been removed, there will be plenty of room to install native plants back into the habitat to aid in the restoration progress of the local coastal ecosystem. Restoring the Gold Coast supporter, John Costello says "It's so important to protect our limited natural resources, which is why it's important to support organizations like the Institute for Regional Conservation." We are grateful for their support! "The City is excited to see more positive changes on our beachfront



Photos of Snake plant piles from being removed from the maritime hammock, by Liz Dutra.

parks," says Boca Raton's Sustainability Manager Lindsey Roland Nieratka. "Through our partnership with IRC we have been able to work with experts in removing invasive and exotic plants, replacing them with native species, and improving the ecological quality and resiliency of our barrier island." This is why it's important to always include stakeholders throughout the entirety of ecosystem restoration projects.



Ghost orchid. Photo credit: Tony Pernas.

Ghost Orchid - Protection Update

On September 13th, The Institute for Regional Conservation, [Center for Biological Diversity](#) and the [National Parks Conservation Association](#) sued the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for unlawfully delaying critically needed Endangered Species Act protection for the ghost orchid.

See the official [press release here](#).

On September 17th, [NPR](#) aired a *3-minute Listen* story about "Environmentalists want to protect a rare 'ghost' orchid as an endangered species". IRC Executive Director, George Gann and others were interviewed. [Listen here](#).



Pine Rockland Initiative Updates

[**Elliott's bluestem \(*Andropogon tracyi*\)**](#) was found after the initiation of restoration in an area that was dominated by Brazilian-pepper for a very long time. This was a very impressive find because it is considered critically imperiled in South Florida and is currently only found in 12 conservation areas.

Alex Seasholtz expresses his admiration for the restoration progress achieved at Florida City Pineland Preserve. We deeply appreciate the collaborative efforts (with Miami-Dade County's Department of Regulatory and Resources and MDC's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Connect to Protect Network



Photo of Elliott's bluestem by Alex Seasholtz

program, and others) underway to steer the preserve towards a more promising future.

Recent Events



September 1st - Imperiled Butterflies of Florida Work Group Meeting

Michelle Smith, IRC Program Associate, attended the annual Imperiled Butterflies of Florida Work Group meeting in West Palm Beach, FL.

Summaries were provided from multiple agencies and organizations on their continuous work on a handful of rare and endangered butterflies and other invertebrates throughout the state of Florida.

IRC Associate Mary Truglio is the Chair for the South Florida branch of the Imperiled Butterflies of Florida Work Group. Check out their [Facebook page](#) for more information.

September 2nd - City of Delray Beach - Climate & Art Event

George Gann, IRC Executive Director, presented on Habitat Restoration. He spoke about the importance of nurturing native ecosystems in urban environments and how ecosystems play a vital role in preserving our native plant and animal species, especially in the face of climate challenges. He also discussed the efforts of Delray Beach in restoring these habitats for a sustainable coastlines.

For more information about the City of Delray Beach's Climate and Art Event visit here:

www.delraybeachfl.gov/ClimateAndArt.

To view his presentation, visit the [City of Delray Beach's Youtube Channel](#).

CLIMATE & ART 2023

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2ND

SPECIAL LECTURES

Cornell Museum
51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach, FL 33444

10AM | Mark Cassini
Community Greening - 10,000 tree campaign

10:30AM | Solid Waste Authority
Recycling

11AM | Leneita Fix
The Reef Institute - Coral Bleaching, Rescue, and Restoration

11:30AM | Evan Orellana
Surfrider - Clean Water

12PM | George Gann
Institute for Regional Conservation - Habitat Restoration

12:30PM | Kent Edwards
City of Delray Beach - Green Building Ordinance

1PM | Elsa Gonzales-Soto
City of Delray Beach - Community Rating System for Stormwater Flood Insurance

1:30PM | Kent Edwards
City of Delray Beach - Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Climate Action Plan

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST
6 - 8:30PM
Trivia Night Friday
Hoppertunities
6PM - 9PM
Delray First Friday Art Walk
Downtown Locations

More Info

September 9th - Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at

Atlantic Dunes Park



Before Snake plant was removed.



After Snake plant was removed.

At Atlantic Dunes Park on Saturday, September 9th, we had an amazing morning, cutting and hauling nonnative Brazilian-pepper and hand pulling and hauling Snake plant that have been overtaking areas of the maritime hammock within the park.

Big shoutout to our fantastic volunteer crew leaders: Keith, Zamia, John, and Vinnie, and to our incredible volunteers! Your efforts are making a real difference in restoring this beautiful habitat and coastal ecosystems.

Thank you to the City of Delray Beach for sponsoring and funding this event.

For more content, check out our Facebook album [here](#).



Group photo with staff, volunteer crew leaders, and volunteers.

September 23rd - National Public Lands Day at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area

The Bureau of Land Management celebrated their 30th annual National Public Lands Day event on Saturday, September 23rd, at the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area.

Katherine Hardial, IRC Administrator, and Michelle Smith, IRC Program Associate, provided outreach and education information on our programs, Pine Rockland Initiative and Restoring the Gold Coast, along with online resources like Floristic Inventory of South Florida and Natives For Your Neighborhood. Plus, we gave away cool IRC stickers and Explore Our Coast coloring



books! Thank you to the Hornik Family Foundation's support to allows us to attend these outreach and educational events.

It was a beautiful morning spent with fellow public land enthusiasts who appreciate the great outdoors. Other organizations held nonnative, invasive plant removal and native plant installations. Be sure to check out the natural area and see all the featured hard work volunteers put in that Saturday.



September 28th - Field Trip with EcoScouts at Red Reef Park

IRC Program Associate, Liz Dutra led a group of 15 students who created an club called “EcoScouts”. These students followed Liz on a nature walk through Red Reef Park in Boca Raton, where they learned about the local coastal ecosystems (beach dune, coastal strand, and maritime hammock), the importance of ecological restoration, and had the opportunity to help install native plants at one of IRC’s coastal strand restoration sites. Thank you to the Hornik Family Foundation for the support to be able to lead this group of young environmentalists. If you’re interested in getting involved in restoration, check out our events tab on our website for how you can join us to learn all about Ecological Restoration!

September 30th - Black Forest - Tree Planting at Florida City Pineland Preserve

At Florida City Pineland Preserve, IRC joined Miami-Dade County's Department of Regulatory and Resources and MDC's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, MIT's Poetic Justice Project, the NAACP South Dade Branch, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Connect to Protect Network program, North American Butterfly Association, and others for a tree planting event.

IRC's restoration team was present to guide and assist in the installation of the trees. This conservation area has been undergoing meticulous restoration efforts for quite a few years. For this event at Florida City, the Black Forest has been created and installed for a living monument and archive for over 100,000 Black lives lost to Covid-19 in the United States.

Volunteers installed over 150 native plants including [South Florida slash pine](#), [Locustberry](#), [Pineland croton](#), [Dahoon holly](#), and so many more. Plants were installed in the southeast section of the preserve where nonnative Brazilian-pepper thicket once stood. Additionally, some volunteers assisted in cleaning



up litter within the pine rockland. We extend our gratitude to all those who joined and contributed to bringing about a positive change. For photos from the event, check out our [Facebook album](#).

Learn more about [Poetic Justice Project here](#).

For other volunteer opportunities with Miami Dade County's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, [visit here](#).



September 30th - Ecological Restoration Volunteer Day at South Beach Park, Boca Raton

IRC and [City of Boca Raton](#) held an ecological restoration event at Red Reef Park. We had over 30 volunteers that helped install over 150 different native plants. A few plant species included: [Jacquemontia reclinata \(Beach clustervine\)](#), a federally endangered herb, [Tropical sage](#), [Elliott's love grass](#), and [Saw palmetto](#).

We also removed *Scaevola taccada* (Beach naupaka), the nonnative *Scaveola* from our region, which is Category I Invasive by [Florida Invasive Species Council](#). We also removed Coconut palm coconuts, which is a Category II Invasive, from the restoration area. Additionally, trash was picked up.

Thank you to our volunteers, who helped install and remove plants this morning. In addition to the plants installed today, our staff and contractors have installed over 200 plants earlier this week! Thank you to City of Boca Raton for sponsoring and funding this restoration event!

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

Become a Sponsor of Natives For Your Neighborhood

Help IRC continue to update and expand [Natives For Your Neighborhood \(NFYN\)](#) while advertising your business or organization to a targeted audience of over 600,000 yearly users. Ideal sponsors are native plant nurseries, native landscape consultants and environmental groups looking to reach new members.

For more information on the available sponsorship levels and benefits of sponsoring NFYN, contact [Michelle Smith](#).

NATIVES FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

HERBACEOUS	EMERGENT	CANOPY
Your name and a link to your website under "Additional Sponsors"	Your icon and/or name with a link to your website on the right bar visible on all pages guaranteed to be among the top spots.	Your icon and/or name and a link to your site on the right bar on the home page and visible on all subsequent pages including plant lists and plant details.
\$100	\$1,000+	\$250+

<https://www.regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/>

The Institute for Regional Conservation
Conservation of rare plants, animals, and ecosystems

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Nonprofit organization
The Institute for Regional Conservation (IRC) is a Florida 501(c)3 dedicated to the protection, restoration and long term management of biodiversity.
regionalconservation.org/
Delray Beach, Florida 33483

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RGC Events Pine rocklands Dunes Marit

Grid of images showing various conservation projects and events.

The best way to stay up to date on all things IRC is to follow us on social media! Every week we spotlight a native plant in a "Wildflower Wednesday" post and give a glimpse into one of our many unique projects in a "From the Field Friday" post. On top of that, we share event photos and relevant news pieces.

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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