

Talks recorded at the Naples Preserve (2021/2022)

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Astronomy

[“Beauty on the Ground, Beauty in the Sky”](#) – Learn about the night skies over southern Florida and why dark skies are important! (2021)

Angelina Guerra – Everglades National Park.

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Angelina Guerra, Park Ranger, Everglades National Park

Biology

[“The Florida Panther”](#)

Ashlee O’Connor: Panther Outreach Specialist, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

[“A Gray Fox Family in the Naples Preserve”](#) – Video presentation showing 2 months in the life of a gray fox family that was living in the Naples Preserve.

Rebecca Speer, Naples Preserve

[“Herptiles of the Caribbean”](#) – Take a cruise through the Caribbean and learn about its interesting collection of herptiles (amphibians and reptiles) along the way.

Lou DiPerna – Naples Preserve Volunteer

[“Is Everything that You Read about Gopher Tortoises True?”](#) – The gopher tortoises that live in south Florida are different from those that are found in other parts of its range.

Rebecca Speer – Naples Preserve

[“Linked with Science: Connecting Communities Through Horseshoe Crab Research”](#) – Horseshoe crabs have existed for over 400 million years and have been mating along our coastlines since the formation of North America. It is only within recent years that researchers have begun to explore the science behind these nesting behaviors. The collaborative program between Florida Fish and Wildlife and University of Florida, *Linked with Limulus: Horseshoe Crab Watch*, uses community volunteers to collect data and tag horseshoe crabs on some of our most popular beaches. Community science initiatives such as these allow scientists to collect vital data while giving citizens the chance to get involved and explore the wonders of science.

Samantha Arner – Volunteer Coordinator for the Horseshoe Crab Watch program in Collier and Lee Counties

[“2022 Naples Preserve Gopher Tortoise Day Event”](#) featured the following talks:

Gopher Tortoises and Fire, Angel Kelly, Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land And Trust
Native Plants and Gopher Tortoises, Karyn Allman, Naples Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society
Battle of the Burrow, Brittany Piersma, Audubon Western Everglades

Gopher Tortoise Nests and Neonates in the Naples Preserve, Rebecca Speer, Naples Preserve

[“The Perfect Predator”](#) – In the animal kingdom, predators come in all shapes and sizes. Strength, speed, agility, and superior senses are important factors in becoming a successful hunter. But which resident of Big Cypress National Preserve uses all these attributes to be the perfect predator?

Jay Kissell – National Park Ranger

[*“The Real Snowbirds of South Florida: Using Community Science to Assess the Ranges of South Florida’s Overwintering Birds”*](#) – South Florida provides critical overwintering habitat for hundreds of migratory bird species. As the earth’s climate rapidly changes, it becomes increasingly critical to assess if and how overwintering ranges are shifting, particularly in areas like South Florida where urbanization, sea level rise, and interrupted freshwater flows are already impacting bird populations. Community science data can help us move away from a reliance on expert-drawn range maps toward a more fluid model of determining where birds can be found and how these ranges might be changing.

Alex Levine, Education Manager – The Conservancy of Southwest Florida

[*“The Secret Lives of Box Turtles on the Florida Gulf Coast”*](#) – This program will cover some descriptions of some new and exciting findings in life history and ecology of box turtles in southwest Florida.

Jordan Donini – Florida Southwestern State College.

[*“She Sells Seashells...”*](#) – Those pretty objects that you find along the beach were once the homes of an interesting variety of marine creatures. Learn about them and the ways in which seashells have been used by humans for thousands of years.

Lou DiPerna, Naples Preserve Volunteer

[*“Slithering Around Big Cypress”*](#) – Throughout Big Cypress National Preserve, under your very feet and high above your head, something slithers. We look at the preserve for its beauty, ecological importance, and recreational activities. However, too rarely do we consider the perspectives of the animals living here. Join Ranger Ella Simon to explore how our snakes perceive and rely on Big Cypress.

Ranger Ella Simon, Big Cypress National Preserve

[*“The Stone Crab Research and Monitoring Program: revealing long-term trends in Florida’s Stone Crab Population”*](#) – This program will focus on the Stone Crab Research Program conducted by the Fish Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). I will discuss the history of the program, how we collect data on stone crabs along Florida’s Gulf Coast and what these data tell us about the biology and behavior of stone crabs. Further, I will touch on how this research relates to fisheries management and preview some emerging efforts to surgically tag stone crabs in order to track their movements in the Gulf of Mexico.

Mike O’Boyle, Biological Scientist, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

[*“The Unseen Reptiles of Big Cypress”*](#) – Big Cypress is known for its charismatic reptiles like alligators, diamondback rattlesnakes, and the invasive Burmese python. However, this area is also home to a plethora of lesser known (but equally interesting) reptiles that make Big Cypress a unique place. Slither on in with **Ranger Alex** as he explores these “unseen” herps.

Alex Christopher – Big Cypress National Preserve Ranger

[*“The US Military’s Role in Biodiversity Conservation”*](#) – The United States Department of Defense (DoD) administers millions of acres of land largely protected from development. DoD lands therefore often have high biodiversity, but these properties also have a higher density of federally protected species than any other federal land management agency. This program will discuss various tools and techniques used to research imperiled species for forming their management and conservation on DoD installations.

Dr. Sasha Tetzlaff, Research Biologist – US Army Corps of Engineers.

[*“Winter Shorebird Migration and Stewardship”*](#) – Learn about the field surveys and outreach during winter migration in Southwest Florida and how you can aid in the success of these long-distance travelers.

Brittany Piersma, Field Biologist, Audubon Western Everglades

Botany

["10 Native 'Weeds' for 20 Butterflies"](#) – Some plants we call “weeds” are native host plants for butterflies! Expand your understanding of “weeds,” meet 10 native “weeds” and the butterflies that need them and learn some simple ways to make life easier for butterflies in our home landscapes.

Andee Naccarato, Naples Preserve & Naples Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

["Carnivorous Botany"](#) – Plants aren't always rainbows and sunshine – sometimes they feed on meat and other plants! Some are sticky, some have mouth-like structures, some even suck nutrients right out of their neighbors. Discover the plants that use alternative sources of food, all while living right under our nose in SWFL.

Julie Motkowicz, Education coordinator, CREW Land & Water Trust

["Epiphytes: Livin' Life on the Edge"](#) – Join Ranger Danielle Page as we explore tree trunks and canopies in search of Big Cypress National Preserve's most magical and edgy daredevils. Often viewed exclusively as a thing of beauty, epiphytes actually play an important role in the Big Cypress swamp ecosystem. Located throughout the preserve, these complex plant structures support the lives of numerous insects and more. Tune in to find out what makes a fern resurrect from the “dead” and visitors fall in love with “Casper the Friendly” Ghost Orchid.

Ranger Danielle Page, Big Cypress National Preserve

["Liminal Spaces: Florida's 'Faerie' Milkweed"](#) – Florida has 21 species of milkweed, the only host plant for the monarch and queen butterflies. Florida "faerie" milkweed (*Asclepias feayi*) is a very uncommon and understudied species with star-shaped flowers that virtually disappear when not in bloom. It is one of Florida's two endemic milkweeds! This presentation will review the relationship between milkweeds and monarchs. We will discuss what is known about the monarch's preferred habitat, its reproduction, and what we can do to protect and conserve it.

Kara Driscoll – FGCU graduate student

["More Than Just Pretty Flowers"](#) – Enjoy a brief introduction to Naples Botanical Garden's history and mission. Learn about ongoing conservation efforts for threatened and imperiled species across the global tropics and hear about upcoming events and educational opportunities.

Emily Kless, Interpretive Specialist, Naples Botanical Gardens

["Restoration in the Naples Preserve"](#) – What is “restoration”? Is it necessary? Is it boring? Attend this virtual program – you might be surprised about some of the answers.

Rebecca Speer – The Naples Preserve

Conservation

["fStop Foundation"](#) – Learn how you can help the foundation achieve their mission, learn about trail cameras and how those images contribute to conservation, and enjoy candid still images and video produced by this citizens science effort.

Jayne Johnston, Volunteer Coordinator, fStop Foundation

["Where the Green Grass Grows"](#)

Learn the where, what, why, and how of protecting water resources in southwest Florida. This presentation will highlight the water quality challenges facing us locally. It will offer simple changes that each of us can make to protect our water resources for the future.

Kamila Perez, Senior Environmental Specialist, Collier County Pollution Control

Geology

["The Library Hidden Below Big Cypress"](#) – Vast libraries of knowledge are hidden below the Big Cypress Swamp. Stories and legends of Earth's past are tucked away below its surface. From these ancient stories, we can gain further insight into our present, and how what lies beneath affects what's on top. Join Ranger Joseph Carlson as we page through these stories to uncover what is hidden below Big Cypress Swamp.

Ranger Joseph Carlson, Big Cypress National Preserve

History

["Collier County's Golden Age of Railroad"](#) – While the rest of the country's golden age of railroad had been well underway for over half a century, Collier County's introduction to the railroads was just beginning. Learn how the arrival of the rails changed our region's historic fabric, arriving with a bang and ending with only a fizzle.

Elaina Gyure, Collier County Museum Curator of Education

["Dredges, Dynamite, & Determination: The Building of the Tamiami Trail"](#)

Thomas Lockyear – Museum Manager, Museum of the Everglades

Parks and Recreation

["Discover Rookery Bay"](#) – Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve stretches across 110,000 acres of pristine mangrove forest, uplands, and protected waters, encompassing 40% of Collier County coastline. The Reserve is committed to preservation through research, education, and land protection.

Morgan Zeleny – Education Specialist at Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Personal Interest

["Finding Your Passion to Help: Lessons from Tarzan to Tarangire"](#)

Through personal examples and highlighting the history of Naples Zoo, Tim will share lessons on identifying and focusing your passion to help nature. From stories of his father's time as a stuntman for Tarzan to Tim's efforts in international conservation, you'll get your own ideas how to better enhance your own personal mission.

Tim Tetzlaff, Director of Conservation, Naples Zoo

Places of Interest

["Getting to Know Shy Wolf Sanctuary"](#) – Walk with us through a virtual visit to the sanctuary to meet our volunteers, learn about our resident animals and understand how Shy Wolf Sanctuary lives our mission each day through educational programs.

Debbie LoVerde – Community Education Coordinator, Shy Wolf Sanctuary.