



# Friends of the Loxahatchee River December 2015



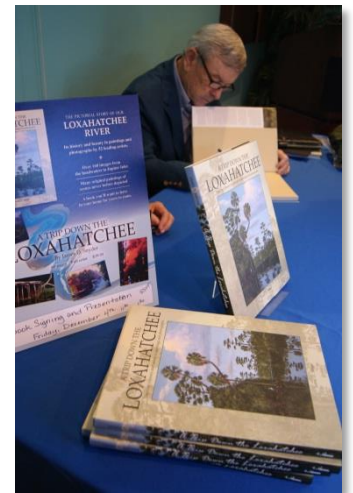
## River Center Summary Statistics

Year Month	General Visitors	Program Visitors	Outreach	Gift Shop	Donations	Memberships	Sponsors	Education Programs	River Center Programs	Special Events	Volunteer Hours
2014-11	1229	417		\$844	\$1,019	\$50	\$8,000	\$441	\$10	\$377	182
2014-12	1056	372		\$1,352	\$797	\$400	\$5,544	\$249	\$301	\$500	132
2015-01	1433	645	942	\$905	\$1,583	\$185	\$550	\$564	\$1,348	\$1,379	267
2015-02	1259	308	1313	\$1,360	\$987	\$200	\$532	\$130	\$3,025	\$2,872	215
2015-03	1695	219	274	\$1,451	\$1,003	\$365	\$3,500	\$100	\$5,390	\$9,647	358
2015-04	1326	518	150	\$1,600	\$1,023	\$250	\$1,400	\$1,818	\$6,770	\$1,561	130
2015-05	1138	358	183	\$944	\$643	\$210	\$2,950	\$49	\$5,179	\$1,599	81
2015-06	2078	1031	160	\$1,355	\$837	\$200	\$520	\$3,087	\$4,365	\$420	487
2015-07	1936	1294	46	\$1,985	\$524	\$50	\$650	\$5,073	\$1,490	\$377	645
2015-08	1544	305		\$1,432	\$691	\$75	\$1,460	\$732	\$215	\$892	404
2015-09	1047	278	34	\$771	\$491		\$520	\$60		\$160	116
2015-10	1055	549		\$872	\$636	\$25		\$128	\$128	\$626	139
2015-11	881	255		\$1,192	\$560	\$150	\$460		\$667	\$815	128

### River Center –

#### Friends of the Loxahatchee River

On Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, the River Center welcomed local historian and Loxahatchee River District Governing Board member, Jim Snyder. Mr. Snyder gave us a sneak peek at his new book, *A Trip Down the Loxahatchee*. The book describes an imaginary boat ride from the river's 140,000 acres of headwaters down through Jupiter Inlet, and celebrates the beauty and history of the Loxahatchee through the eyes of 52 leading artists and photographers. Mr. Snyder was also on hand to sign his books for all those that attended. We sold over 30 books in the gift shop that day! There were 64 participants that attended this program.



#### Special Programs

**Loxahatchee by Night Campfire** – The River Center hosted another “Loxahatchee by Night” Camp Fire season on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. Over 75 participants of all ages joined River Center educators for a night of fun. Megan Harris presented a wonderful talk entitled “A



Florida Thanksgiving” that included our top ten reasons why we are thankful for Florida. Inside the center, guests had a chance to create paper roll turkeys, pine cone turkeys and a chance to write down what they were thankful for on a leaf and place it on our Thanksgiving Mangrove tree. Guests were invited to explore the exhibits inside the center, touch animals in the touch tank, and discover various plants and animals in the migratory bird and butterfly garden. The camp fire was roaring all night, as families roasted marshmallows and enjoyed delicious s’mores throughout the evening.

## River Center's Adult Environmental Education Program: Sea Urchins and Echinoderms of the Loxahatchee River



Thirteen participants received an introduction into the scientific methods and observation-driven experiments used by scientists to study animals in the echinoderm family on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Echinoderms are widely recognized for their spiny appearances and include such well-known animals as sea stars, sea urchins, sand dollars and sea cucumbers. Topics included learning about how these fascinating sea creatures survive in their environment, how they compare to other aquatic species, and how they have developed unique adaptations for survival. Each participant also shared in several experiments during the lab to better understand sea urchin behaviors.

## Palm Beach Maritime Academy

On Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> the River Center welcomed 19 high school students from Palm Beach Maritime Academy for a special educational field experience that included an estuary biodiversity study. Students participated in a tour of the River Center learning about the connections between the different habitats throughout the watershed and then found the primary producers and consumers of the estuary during an Oyster Reef Ecology Lab. Students also completed a species biodiversity index comparing two different sites: Burt Reynolds Park and Coral Cove Park. We

were out in the water with seine and dip nets recording the different species and the quantity found of each species. They made observations on the slope and elevation of the land, if seagrasses were present, mudflats versus sandflats, mangrove adaptations, bird populations, fish abundance, as well as diversity. This was an extended pilot program that we will now offer to other private and charter schools that allow more time for field experiences.



## Story Time with a Purple Crocodile!

During the monthly Special Story Time (November 19), local author Jim Deakins came and read his wonderful story about a unusual Purple Crocodile to over 55 visitors. The children who attended also got the chance to create their own purple crocodiles. Thank you to Jim for sharing your story with us and for making us smile - because nothing makes you smile like a Purple Crocodile!



## Outreach Activities

### Learn Green Conference

On Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> the River Center participated in the 2015 Florida's Learn Green Conference as an exhibitor. Learn Green provided a variety of presenters and exhibitors that highlight best green practices for schools and share innovative and effective ideas, including the River Center. Over 1,000 people participated in

the event this year; a record attendance for the conference.

This annual conference is a creation of Florida Atlantic University's Pine Jog Environmental Education Center and the Palm Beach County School District's Division of Support Operations with the aim that Learn Green will encourage schools to create cultures of sustainability and that our efforts will lead to empowering students to become the leaders of a greener future. Learn Green is a key component of a larger initiative, the Green Schools Recognition Program. Together we are growing Florida's green and healthy generation.



**Volunteer of the Month:** The River Center would like to acknowledge Alexandra Matys as our November Volunteer of the Month. Alex has been volunteering since October of 2013 and has contributed over 50 hours of volunteer service. Alex has helped with several different special events such as National Estuaries Day, the Spooky Swamp Halloween Party and the Loxahatchee by Night Campfires. More recently she has dedicated her Saturday mornings to volunteering at the River Center. Alex will help wherever needed whether cleaning aquariums, setting up and preparing for next week's field trips, entering information into the database, or helping with touch tank demonstrations. No task is too big or too small and we thank her for the time, energy, and enthusiasm she has given to the River Center.

**Friends Membership** – 63 active members; 4 new/renewals; 39 current sponsors

**Annual Sponsors Recognition** – **Jupiter Inlet District, Laura Kerr**

**Upcoming River Center Events** – RSVP at [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.

Thurs, December 17 – Adult Environmental Education Series (2-3:30p)

Tues, December 22 – Family Seine & Snorkel (10a-12p): Coral Cove Park

Wed, December 23 – Craft-a-Palooza (1-3p) at the River Center. Winter crafts and games for the kids.

Thurs-Fri, December 24-25 – River Center is CLOSED

Tues, December 29 – Fishing Clinic (1-3p): Ages 5-15. Family friendly event.