



# Friends of the Loxahatchee River

## March 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
2014-02	1129	263	530	\$1,139	\$1,147	\$525		\$84	\$3,670	\$150	177
2014-03	1529	158	670	\$1,436	\$1,079	\$720	\$100	\$410	\$2,405	\$10,418	376
2014-04	1295	905	62	\$1,198	\$975	\$200	\$200	\$318	\$3,825	\$633	167
2014-05	1099	520	791	\$965	\$932	\$150	\$2,500	\$358	\$4,873	\$451	217
2014-06	1802	760	695	\$1,315	\$1,089	\$175	\$1,544	\$2,572	\$5,029	\$328	475
2014-07	2135	1014	125	\$1,632	\$1,038		\$1,750	\$3,122	\$1,561	\$200	798
2014-08	1636	169	42	\$915	\$960	\$100	\$288	\$486	\$260	\$1,168	388
2014-09	1260	132	15	\$573	\$604	\$175	\$2,538	\$18	\$16	\$346	280
2014-10	1311	511	108	\$1,054	\$674	\$125	\$1,765	\$909		\$1,099	226
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	1406	595	942	\$905	\$1,583	\$185	\$550	\$559	\$1,348	\$1,129	267
2015-02	1259	308	1313	\$1,360	\$987	\$200	\$532	\$130	\$3,025	\$2,872	197

**Friends of the Loxahatchee River:** On March 6th the River Center welcomed Mr. Robert Wanvestraut of the South Florida Water Management District. Mr. Wanvestraut gave an interesting presentation on Florida's water resources and water use. Through some fascinating statistics he discussed water supply planning and how future water demands will depend on alternative supplies and conservation. Guests were encouraged to reduce their water demands so that we can reduce, defer, or eliminate our need to increase our water supply. Thirty seven participants attended this program.

### Special Programs

**Loxahatchee by Night Campfire: Backyard Astronomy** – Over 150 guests attended the final camp fire event of the season on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Holly Hennessy, the Planetarium technician from the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, gave an informative presentation on the night sky before guests gathered on the south lawn to spot planets and star formations with telescopes and green lasers. Participants made s'mores and crafts throughout the evening. This season's camp fire event was a great success with more than 680 guests over 5 events.



**Valentine's Day Storytime** – On February 12th the River Center celebrated love with a special Valentine's Day Story Time. 35 parents and children attended the program where we read stories about loving parents, hugs and kisses, and all the animals in the world that we love. Children danced to Valentine's Day songs and made Valentine's Day cards for everyone in the family, including their pets.



**Adult Education Fishing Clinic** – In preparation for a summer full of fishing fun, the River Center participated in Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation's fishing clinic instructor training on February 4th. Educators from Palm Beach and Martin County were invited to participate in the 2-hour certification to learn how to effectively communicate fishing regulations, tackle, methods, and much more to our youth anglers. Staff is excited to implement the new training and concepts during upcoming events.

**Naturalist Series: Limestone Creek** - The River Center kick started the Friends of the Loxahatchee Naturalist Series with a nature walk through the Limestone Creek Natural Area on February 25th. The natural area contains three native Florida habitats: pine flatwoods, hydric hammock, and mangrove swamp. Most of Limestone Creek was lost when the C-18 Canal was dug along the creek channel in 1956 where it connects with the southwest fork of the Loxahatchee River. Palm Beach County purchased 22 acres of the site in 2002. The County also manages 30 acres owned by the South Florida Water Management District located on both sides of the C-18 Canal. The County and SFWMD has completed a variety of restoration projects along the north and south banks, including the creation of several oxbows and planting of native vegetation. The natural area is part of the Northeast Everglades Natural Area. Two River Center educators and eleven participants visited this natural area for the first time and learned about fire ecology, native plant species, the Loxahatchee River, and all enjoyed a bird's eye view of several manatee cows and calves resting in the shallow waters beneath the docks.



**FAU Graduate Studies:** On February 28th students from Florida Atlantic University Graduate School received a firsthand look at the River Center's environmental education methods and practices. Eleven students earning their Master's in Education with a focus on environmental education took a kayak tour from Riverbend Park along the Wild and Scenic segment of the Loxahatchee River. Participants gained experience about how to take students safely off site in a natural environment and basic outdoor program development. They also toured the River Center and learned about our aquariums, exhibits, and educational programs.

**South Broward High School:** During the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit at the Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium, the River Center staff worked with a group of high school students from South Broward High School's Marine Magnet program with a passion for the environment. The River Center invited the "Plastic Free Mermaids" to travel up to Jupiter for a day of estuary exploration at Coral Cove Park. After leading students on a guided tour of the River Center exhibits, the group headed to the water to clean-up garbage and find some critters. Students cleaned up over 30lbs. of trash and got an up close and personal look at conchs, sea urchins, and tulip snails.

**Adult Citizen Science Program: Turtles** - Did you know that Florida is home to more species of turtles than any other state? Most people recall the five species of sea turtles that nest on our shores or swim in our coastal waters, but there are more than 18 species of freshwater turtles here in the state. On February 12th the River Center held another installment in the Adult Environmental Education Series with 15 participants. The program featured the diversity of these ancient, shelled reptiles that have existed for over 220 million years, including the "turtle" origins for the name "Loxahatchee River". Attendees learned about life history and habitats as well as the importance of preserving their populations in the ecosystem. Participants compared and identified the differences between sea and fresh water turtles and had a unique hands-on turtle interaction.

### **Outreach Activities**

**Jupiter Jubilee:** On February 7th the River Center and the Loxahatchee River District participated in the Jupiter Jubilee. This annual event, hosted



by the Town of Jupiter for residents, is a family fun event with business and civic fairs, an eco-tourism expo, kid's activities, demonstrations, food, music, and much more. More than 300 families visited the River Center and Loxahatchee River District's booth in the Eco-Tourism Expo, and staff received a lot of positive feedback.

**Artigras:** This year the River Center participated in ArtiGras 2015, the award-winning fine arts festival celebrating its 30th Anniversary February 14th – 16th. Visitors viewed art by 300 artists from around the



United States, experienced a fine arts area, artist demonstrations, visited ArtiKids area and the entertainment stage. Children experienced “the Everglades” (this year's theme) in the ArtiKids area. Local organizations, including the River Center, provided art stations and kids crafts. Over 780 families visited the River Center's booth creating plant rubbings, tie-died leaves, animal stamping, and turtle decorating. This event was our most successful outreach this season and we hope to see these families become part of our River Center family.

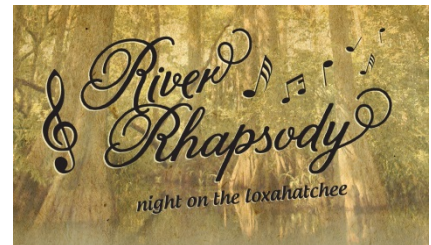
**Friends Membership** – 65 active members; 7 new/renewals; 46 current sponsors

**Annual Sponsors Recognition** – FPL (renewal for Night on the Loxahatchee), **State Farm** and **Smiley Wiley** (Lindsay Mesches).

#### **Upcoming River Center Events**

Mar 16-20 – Spring Break Aquatic Adventure Camp – ages 6-12, 9a-4p daily. \$215 per child (discount for current Friends members). Children will have a captivating experience discovering Florida's ecosystems, collecting marine critters, and caring for their own aquarium. With 4 counselors and just 16 campers per week, kids will explore the Loxahatchee River from the ocean's beautiful reefs to the freshwater cypress swamps at Riverbend Park in a safe, personal environment. Adventurers will get “hands-on” with the Loxahatchee, hiking & kayaking diverse habitats, participating in exciting eco-games, and seining and dip netting.

Sat. Mar 28 (7-9:30 p) – **Night on the Loxahatchee: River Rhapsody**, a benefit for the environmental education programs at the River Center. Guests of this “River Rhapsody” themed event will be transported back in time, passing through the River Center's doors to find themselves inside a turn-of-the-century riverboat. While on board, guests will enjoy storytellers, live jazz, calypso, and a capella music to set the mood, while River Center “ship's crew” will serve a savory selection of Florida-Caribbean inspired hors d'oeuvres prepared by the chefs of legendary local eatery Little Moir's Food Shack. RSVP and tickets online at: [www.tiny.cc/NOL2015](http://www.tiny.cc/NOL2015).



Fri. April 3 (12 p) – Friends of the Loxahatchee River Meeting: Florida Falconry - Join us for an exciting live raptor presentation by Busch Wildlife Sanctuary Board Member Timothy O'Neill. Light lunch provided. RSVP to [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.

Sat. April 4 (10-11:30 a) – Citizen Science – Adult Learning Program: Experience the fascinating science, ecology, and environmental study that you didn't appreciate when you were 12 years old. *Fish Morphology: Sea for Yourself* is the topic for April. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the different adaptations fish have to help them survive. \$5 lab fee. RSVP required to 561-743-7123 or [education@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:education@loxahatcheeriver.org)

- Sat. April 4 (2-4 p) – New Volunteer Orientation. Contact [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123 for more information.
- Thurs. April 9 (9:30 a) – Spring into Earth Day, Special Extended Storytime (ages 0-5). No RSVP required. Enjoy fresh Oceana Coffee.
- Wed. April 15 (10-11:30 a) – Nature Walk at Jupiter Ridge Natural Area. Learn about the scrub habitat and critters with River Center naturalists. \$10 for non-members, \$5 for members. RSVP to [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.
- Thurs. April 23 (5:30-7:30 p) – Sponsor Appreciation Event. The River Center will honor our annual sponsors and event sponsors aboard the Manatee Queen for an evening Loxahatchee River Cruise. Inquire how to become a River Center Sponsor at [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.
- Fri. April 24 (6-8p) – Lionfish Clinic. Attend our informative clinic to learn everything you need to know about lionfish, including how to capture them and prepare them for cooking. RSVP to [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.
- Sat. April 25 (8a-1p) – Lionfish Hunt. Get out there and put your lionfish training to work – go lionfish hunting and maybe even come home with a catch for a fantastic meal. RSVP to [rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org](mailto:rivercenter@loxahatcheeriver.org) or 561-743-7123.