



Friends of the Loxahatchee River July 2016



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
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	144	\$1,192	\$560	\$150	\$460		\$667	\$815	135
2015-12	1078	277	51	\$2,749	\$663	\$250	\$8,460	\$82	\$210	\$186	149
2016-01	1083	606	348	\$1,083	\$496	\$150	\$2,410	\$93	\$4,065	\$679	158
2016-02	1178	295	2088	\$1,237	\$501	\$250	\$5,060	\$41	\$4,655	\$963	126
2016-03	1928	478	528	\$1,428	\$1,167	\$360	\$6,200	\$677	\$7,271	\$3,375	205
2016-04	1256	472	138	\$679	\$548	\$150	\$5,705		\$1,010	\$13,433	235
2016-05	1108	552	7	\$978	\$304	\$225	\$4,349	\$111	\$3,974	\$701	120
2016-06	2274	1000	468	\$1,939	\$781	\$125	\$348	\$2,828	\$2,410	\$1,125	581

River Center General

River Center and Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Night Climb- On Wednesday, June 1 the River Center staff was invited to participate in a meet and greet with the staff at the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and Museum. The event included a private sunset tour around the property and of the lighthouse itself. This was a great opportunity for staff from both organizations to get to know one another and brainstorm new partnership ideas.



Friends of the Loxahatchee River

There was no Friends meeting on Friday, July 1st.

Special Programs

Fishing Clinic

On Saturday, June 4th, fifteen children and their parents attended the first fishing clinic of the summer to kick off our 3rd annual Jr. Angler Fishing Tournament. Ages ranged between 5-15. Conducted at Burt Reynolds Park, the program began with a classroom session lasting about 45 minutes, and covered fishing regulations, knot tying, various forms of tackle, and fish identification. Before heading down to the water, we discussed the importance of safety while fishing, and considered potential hazards if these rules were neglected (i.e. holding the fishing pole vertical by your side, being aware of your surroundings when casting, and hooks). In addition to the standard rod and reel, kids also had the opportunity to learn and practice different methods of fishing, such as cast netting and yoyo reels.



Family Seine and Snorkel Program at Coral Cove Park

Families joined River Center environmental educators on June 11th and 22nd for a morning of exploration during June's Family Snorkel and Seine Expedition at Coral Cove Park on Jupiter Island. Participants got some relief from the heat in the cool water while River Center educators guided guests on a snorkel trip through the seagrass and mangroves, while discovering some critters along the way. Pufferfish, conchs, and seahorses are just a few of the animals that participants were able to experience up close and personal during our morning adventure! Educators welcomed over thirty-three adults and children to these events. Free to attend!



FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center H2O to Go High School Program

FAU Pine Jog Center has joined forces with FAU John D. MacArthur Campus, FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and CES Riverwood's Field Laboratory to offer a unique, week-long, residential research institute for high school and undergraduate students. This program, called H2O to Go, introduces students to scientists who are working in the field of environmental research. Students work with research scientists and develop an understanding for the interconnectedness and complexity of South Florida water systems and the environmental issues facing them. This program is designed to give students a professional experience not easily obtained by the general population and will provide a

competitive edge, particularly to students interested in life science, engineering, oceanography, and research.



The Loxahatchee River District has partnered with Pine Jog to bring over 160 students to our wastewater treatment facility to learn more about the water reclamation process, the nitrogen cycle, water quality testing, and how it relates to water resource solutions. Students participate in a two-hour tour of the different parts of the plant with hands-on activities. Material covered by River Center staff is later covered on a test students are required to pass to receive credit for the class.

USCGA About Boating Safely Course

The River Center once again hosted the "Boating Safely" course presented by the US Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 52 and sponsored by the AustinBlu Foundation on Saturday, June 18th with 35 participants (full enrollment). Teens and young adults are the target group for these classes to help them be more familiar, comfortable, and knowledgeable of boating and water safety. The River Center is proud to be able to provide the opportunity for people in our community to become better and safer boaters. 110 participants have attended the classes since March. Our next class on Saturday, August 20 is filling up fast and we hope that it fills as our last class of the summer. **The AustinBlu Foundation was so pleased with how the classes benefitted our local community, that they are now sponsoring another series of classes beginning in September and extending until March of 2017.**

Little Otters Family Fun

On Saturday, June 18th the River Center hosted its first ever Little Otters Family Fun program with eighteen participants ranging in age from 3 to 6 years of age. Children enjoyed a scavenger hunt of the River Center aquariums, read stories, and held critters from the touch tank. Families then went exploring in our migratory bird and butterfly garden looking for bugs, birds, butterflies, and lizards.

Afterwards families went on mangrove hike and then had a seine and dip netting experience. The Little Otter program for July and August are currently full and we are very happy with the success of this new program.

Summer Camp Starts Off with a Bang! - The River Center's summer camp season is off to a great start. Already 48 campers, 8 counselors and staff have enjoyed the many activities during the summer (June 6th-10th, June 13th-17th, June 20th-24th).



River Trekkers - The first week, River Trekkers (designed for children ranging from ages 9 to 11 entering 4th, 5th, and 6th grades) went kayaking, seine and dip netting, snorkeling, swimming, standup paddle boarding, fishing, and all around had a blast! The River Trekkers trekked to the Indian River Lagoon at Coral Cove Park, Dubois Park, explored the Lake Worth Lagoon at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, Fullerton Island, and went fishing at the Jupiter Lighthouse.

Nature Navigators - The second week was devoted to our Nature Navigators, designed for children ranging from ages 6 to 8 entering 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade. The weather was great and we were able to travel throughout Jupiter to visit all parts of the Loxahatchee River. Campers kayaked in Fullerton Island and Sawfish Bay, hiked with a Ranger at Jonathan Dickinson State Park, seine and dip netted in the Indian River Lagoon at Coral Cove Park, explored the Lake Worth Lagoon at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, and snorkeled at Dubois Park.



Fishing Camp - The third week, Loxahatchee Fishing Camp, was designed for children ranging from ages 11 to 13 entering 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. This is the third year that the River Center has held a fishing camp designed for middle school campers sponsored by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Department of Marine Fisheries. Campers visited fishing locations such as Coral Cove Park, DuBois Park, Jupiter Beach, John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, Burt Reynolds Park, and Juno Ridge Natural Area.



They experienced the Indian River Lagoon, the Lake Worth Lagoon, Loxahatchee River's Central Embayment, and the Jupiter Inlet. Campers learned different fishing techniques, equipment, fish identification, anatomy, regulations, and conservation efforts. They also went kayaking, snorkeling, paddle boarding, and swimming as well as a special boat trip provided by Capitan Tom and the Harbour Runner. With the popularity of this camp River Center staff are now considering holding two weeks of middle school camp for next summer.

During each week, campers collected marine species and were responsible for the camp aquarium, participated in numerous games, hands-on activities, and craft projects. Each Friday, parents are invited for a camper presentation and pot luck. We are looking forward to July summer camps!

Sponsor Appreciation Event

On a beautiful, summer evening (June 17) just after the afternoon rain storms had passed, several of our sponsors enjoyed a beautiful sunset cruise on the Loxahatchee River and a picnic dinner. We had annual sponsors, exhibit sponsors and event sponsors present. It was a great way for them to spend time together and for the River Center to say thank you for their support throughout the year. We travelled by Fullerton Island all the way down to Jupiter Ridge and then back up to Bird Island and the sand bar. River cruise provided by Harbor Runner.



Outreach Activities

Adventure Awaits Kayak Tour to Fullerton Island

On Wednesday, June 15th the River Center partnered with Palm Beach County Environmental Resource Management to lead a kayak tour to Fullerton Island from Sawfish Bay Park. The “Adventure Awaits” event series was designed to get visitors and citizens of Palm Beach County into the natural areas. They have conducted trail runs, kayak tours, nature hikes, evening stargazing programs and photography workshops. This kayak tour led 22 guests through a restored spoil island located just north of Burt Reynolds Park West. In August, we will partner with PBC ERM on a sunrise kayak tour of Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area.



Fullerton Project Overview

- Removed 6 acres of invasive nonnative vegetation and approximately 59,000 cubic yards of sand from the 12-acre island to create seagrass and mangrove habitat.
- Provided kayak access to a quiet refuge featuring unique wetland and upland habitats for fish, birds, and wildlife.
- Preserved 5.12 acres of mangrove habitat.
- Created 0.54 acres of mangrove and 4.23 acres of seagrass habitat.
- Restored 1.07 acres of upland hardwood hammock infested with invasive nonnative vegetation and created an additional 0.30 acres of hammock habitat.
- Public-use amenities include a 6 slip day-use floating dock, picnic area, and informational kiosk. Greens School Recognition Awards Luncheon

Sea-Fari Night at the South Florida Science Museum- On Friday, June 24th the River Center participated in the South Florida Science Museum’s “Nights at the Museum” event entitled “Sea-Fari.” The event included many underwater themed activities like touch tank demonstrations, shark tooth identification, and fish dissections. Once the sun set and the stars came out, star gazing was a popular activity as well. It was a great, family-friendly event and I hope the River Center can participate again in the future. The River Center interacted with over 176 guests that night.





Volunteer of the Month: The River Center would like to announce that July's Volunteer of the Month is awarded to Alice Ma. Alice is a student at Florida State University earning a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology. She has volunteered since May of 2016 but has made a big impression on the center. No matter the task, Alice always comes through for us. We look forward to her spending the summer here at the center. We thank her for her service and look forward to her continued support.

Friends Membership – 51 active members; 1 new/renewals; 37 current sponsors

Annual Sponsors Recognition – Mark and Arline Slifkin, Geoff & Lynne Lieberman

Upcoming River Center Events – RSVP at rivercenter@lrecd.org or 561-743-7123.

July 16 – Jr. Angler Fishing Tournament Ends!

July 22 – 6-8p: Jr. Angler Fish Fry! Competitors and their families gather together for a meal and award ceremony. Every child receives a t-shirt and goodie bag. Prizes will be awarded in four age categories with a grand prize winner.

July 23 – 8:30a-4:30p: About Boating Safely: While boating can be a fun and relaxing experience, operating a boat, especially for young people, can be dangerous. This issue was brought to light last summer when Austin Stephanos and his good friend were lost at sea. In hopes of preventing similar tragedies the River Center is collaborating with the US Coast Guard Auxiliary “Flotilla 52” to provide Boating Safely Classes targeted specifically to young boaters in our community. These classes are provided through a generous sponsorship by the AustinBlu Foundation, a not-for-profit founded in Austin’s name and dedicated to raising awareness and promoting educational programs to improve boater safety. Participating in effective boater safety training is the most significant thing boaters can do to decrease their risk of mishap while on the water. Potential boaters need to understand the dangers of boating in hazardous waters like the Jupiter Inlet. Although there is no cost for the class, a \$10.00 deposit per student is required to reserve a seat. This deposit will be refunded in full to all students who complete the class. Please bring a lunch. Pre-registration is required because space is limited. Registration will take place promptly at 8:00, the morning of class. Please register online now! www.tiny.cc/boatsafe.

July 30 - 9:30a-11:30a: Little Otters Family Fun! This is a NEW summer program designed for families with children ages 3-6 held on selected Saturdays this summer. The program will include a themed story, touch tank demonstration, garden exploration, dip netting and crab hunting. There are both inside and outside portions along with opportunities to get your feet wet. Cost is free, but please RSVP to the event.

August 6 – 9-11:00a: Family Seine & Snorkel: Join River Center staff and volunteers at Coral Cove Park for a morning of snorkeling, dip netting and seining. Have an interactive “touch tank” right there in the water and discover new critters. Free, but please RSVP.

August 6 – 10:00a-12:00p: Volunteer Orientation. To learn more about how to become a River Center volunteer please contact the River Center.

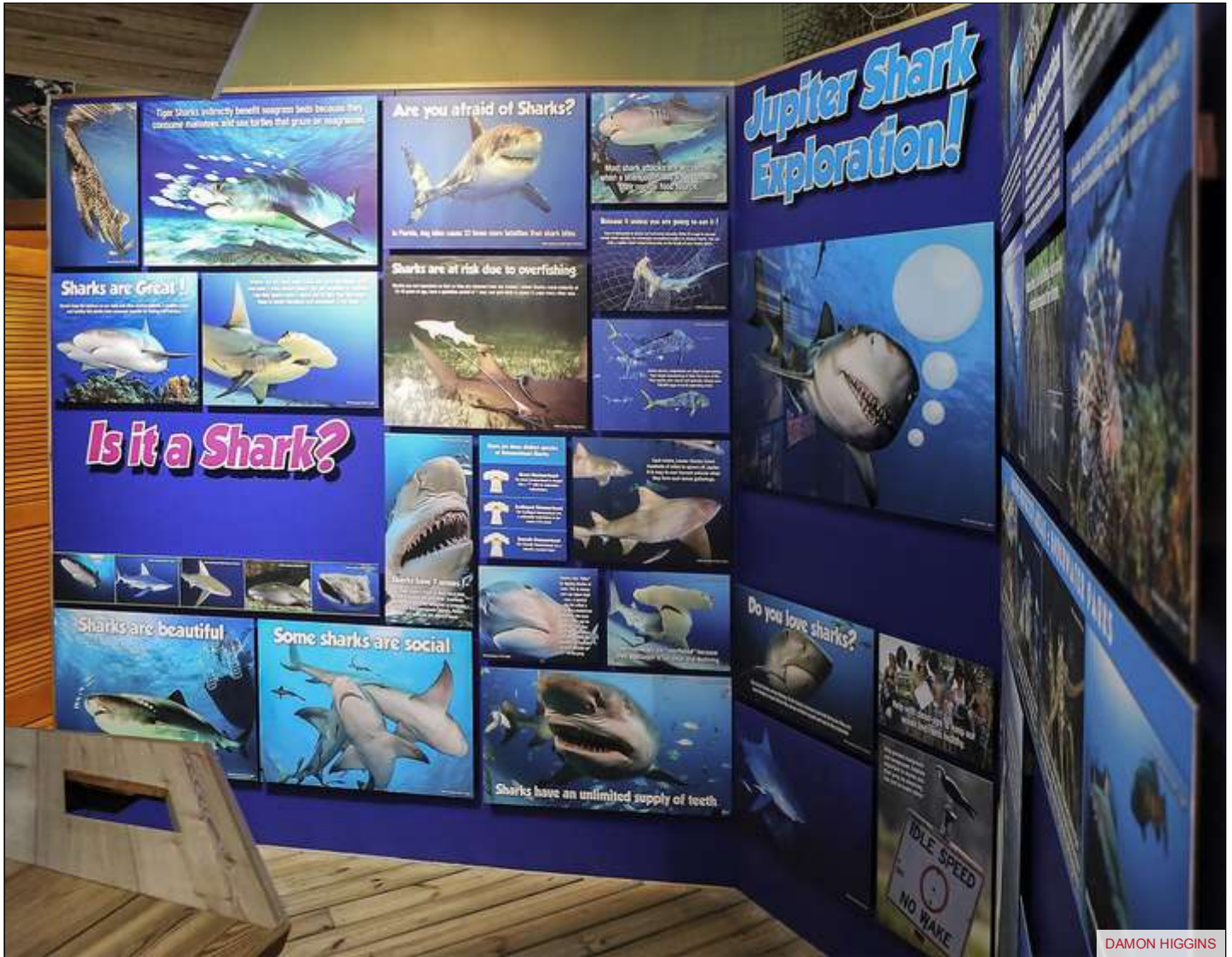
August 13 – 9a-12p: Fishing clinics are a great way for kids to learn the basics of fishing methods and tactics! Parents will learn important safety tips for taking kids fishing and how to abide by regulations when out fishing. The River Center in partnership with Fishing Headquarters provides half-day fishing clinics for kids that give your child a fun, engaging overview of fishing.

August 20 – 8:30a-4:30p: About Boating Safely: Registration will take place promptly at 8:00, the morning of class. Please register online now! www.tiny.cc/boatsafe.

August 17 – 9-11:00a: Family Seine & Snorkel: Join River Center staff and volunteers at Coral Cove Park for a morning of snorkeling, dip netting and seining. Have an interactive “touch tank” right there in the water and discover new critters. Free, but please RSVP.

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Life-sized shark replicas on display at Jupiter exhibit



DAMON HIGGINS

The Loxahatchee River Center has opened a new shark exhibit, Thursday, May 19, 2016. Jocelyn O'Neill, the center's environmental education manager, said the exhibit is designed to dispel myths about sharks and educate the public about their unique qualities. Damon Higgins / The Palm Beach Post



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DAMON HIGGINS

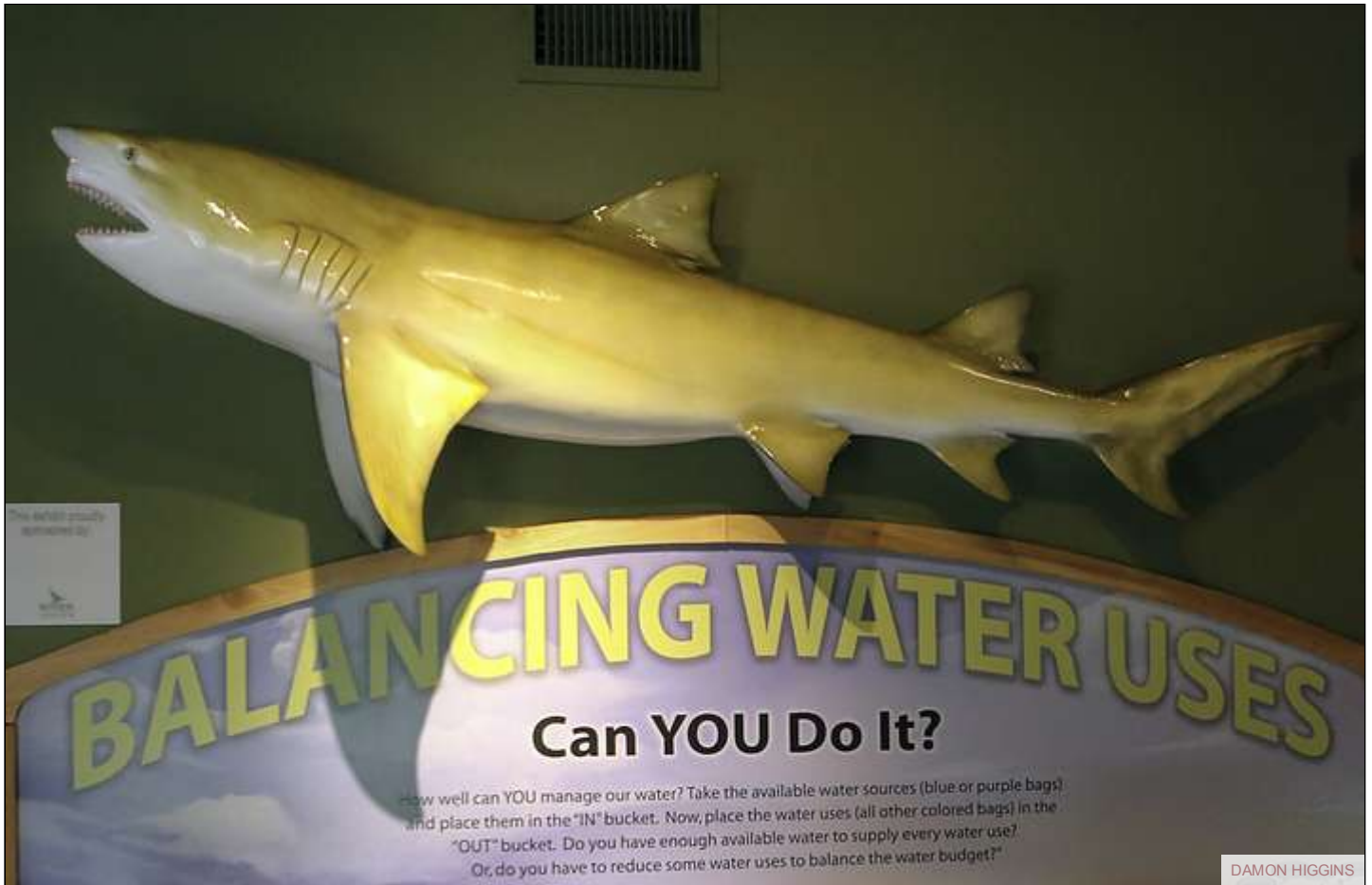
An eight foot Bull Shark display is part of a new shark exhibit at the Loxahatchee River Center, Thursday, May 19, 2016. Jocelyn O'Neill, the center's environmental education manager, said the exhibit is designed to dispel myths about sharks and educate the public about their unique qualities. Damon Higgins / The Palm Beach Post

Reader Comments

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A Lemon Shark display is part of a new shark exhibit at the Loxahatchee River Center, Thursday, May 19, 2016. Jocelyn O'Neill, the center's environmental education manager, said the exhibit is designed to dispel myths about sharks and educate the public about their unique qualities. Damon Higgins / The Palm Beach Post



Reader Comments

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