

Happy Halloween!



LOXAHATCHEE RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

RIVER TIDINGS

Lovin' the Loxahatchee

River Segment Series #4—Seagrass Beds



Seagrass beds cover over 520,000 acres of Florida's coastal marine areas. Of the 52 species of seagrass in the world, 7 species inhabit Florida waters, all of which have been found in the Loxahatchee River. These species are Manatee, Turtle, Shoal, Johnson's, Paddle, Star, and Widgeon grass.

Seagrasses serve a number of important functions that make them a vital part of our river's ecosystem. Their long leaves help maintain water clarity by trapping sediment and small particles and their root systems help stabilize

the sandy bottom. Perhaps most importantly, seagrasses provide a home to a variety of marine life. Large animals, like the manatee, eat seagrass, while smaller animals feed on algae and organisms growing on the grasses.

Seagrasses are flowering plants that live underwater and produce oxygen. Because seagrasses rely on photosynthesis to survive, seagrass beds are generally



found in shallow waters.

You can protect seagrasses by being aware of the damaging effects boat propellers have on seagrasses, picking up litter found in seagrass beds, and promoting the importance of maintaining high water quality.

Creature Feature—Spiny Lobster

Spiny lobsters, also known as "warm water lobsters", inhabit the tropical and subtropical waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico.

Spiny lobsters are named for the forward pointing spines that cover their carapace, or upper body shell. These spines, along with the lobsters long antennae, protect them from predators. Spiny lobster also have smaller antenna-like

antennules, used to sense movement and detect chemicals in the water.

Spiny lobsters vary in color from cream hues to a dark orange-brown. Adult spiny lobsters live in groups, inhabiting crevices in coral and patch reefs during the day, and come out at night to forage for food. Juvenile spiny lobsters inhabit seagrass and algae beds. Spiny lobsters



of food but prefer a diet of snails, clams, crabs, and sea urchins. Spiny lobsters can grow up to 15 pounds and live between 8 and 10 years.

THANK YOU!

RIVER CENTER SPONSORS

TJ Schultz-Eagle Scout
Paul Whalen-TAC Environmental Consulting
Sherry Corbett

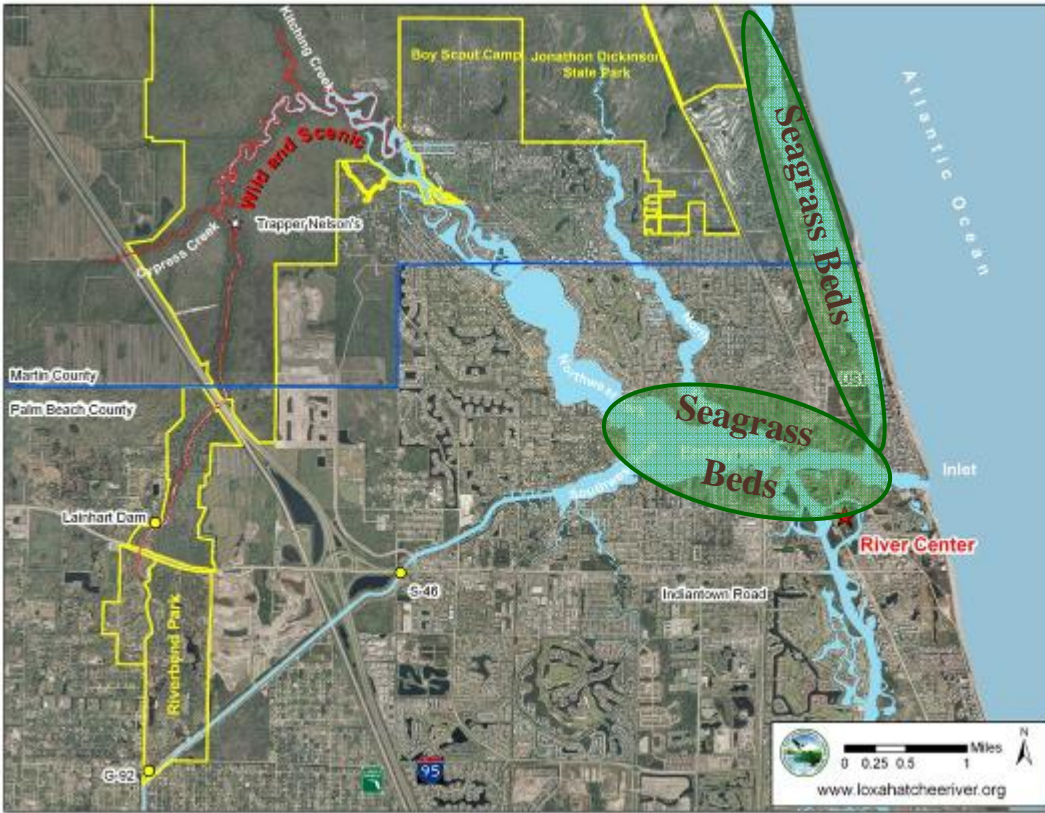
Our annual River Center sponsors are recognized on our donor wall at the entrance. Each tile is 50% off for 2009, so become a sponsor today!

Upcoming Events:

- Oct. 29-Wally McCall Poetry Reading-Jupiter's poet "lawreate", Wine & cheese, 6 p.m.—7 p.m.
- Oct. 30—Haunted Hammock Kids Halloween Party—All ages, 2 p.m.-7 p.m.
- Nov. 6—Friends Meeting—Volunteer Recognition Day, light lunch will be served, 12 p.m.—1 p.m.
- Nov. 13—Migratory Bird Garden Presentation - Florida native plants, 2 p.m.—3 p.m.

Lookin' at the Loxahatchee

Get a bird's eye view



River Fast Facts

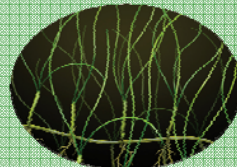
Seagrass Species:

- Sea Turtle
- Manatee
- Tarpon
- Snook
- Snapper
- Sea Urchin
- Queen Conch
- Milk Conch
- Fighting Conch
- Hermit Crab
- Sea Star
- Sea Cucumber
- Juvenile Marine Animals Including:
 - Mangrove/Gray Snapper
 - Sheepshead
 - Red Drum
 - Pinfish
 - Spiny Lobster
 - Pink Shrimp
 - Stone Crab

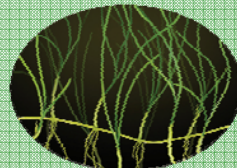
- Johnson's Grass



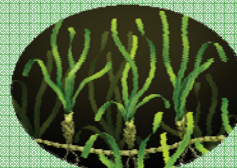
- Manatee Grass



- Shoal Grass



- Turtle Grass



Did You Know?

- Manatee grass resembles long, thin strands of **green spaghetti**.
- Johnson's sea grass was named in honor of **J. Seward Johnson, Sr.**, founder of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution in Ft. Pierce, Florida.*
- Seagrasses are more closely related to **lilies** than actual grasses.*



*flmnh.ufl.edu



Thank You to the Town of Jupiter Charitable Giving Program

Donated \$2,000 towards River Center education programs.



Annual Donor Board Tiles are Still Available!

Buy your tile at a **50%** discount through December 2009.

River Center 1st Birthday Celebration!

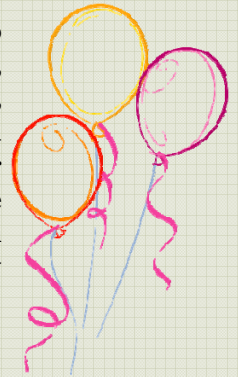


On Saturday, August 22, the River Center hosted a birthday party in honor of our first year of

operation the community! The celebration was a family event that drew over 800 visitors and 30 volunteers. Children's activities were provided throughout the day and included arts n' crafts glitter animals, games, face painting, a bounce house,

and touch tank animals. \$2, \$5, and \$10 raffles were held for over 35 items that were donated by local businesses. The raffles raised over \$1,000 and items including gift certificates to local restaurants, spas, and gyms, as well as local artwork, fishing charters, and dive trips. The birthday cake, baked and decorated by the Krasker family, was cut at noon after everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to the River Center. The River Center

staff would like to thank our Board, S p o n s o r s , Volunteers, and Visitors for helping to make our first year in the community such a success!



Thank you Raffle Donors!

- Baldino's Italian Restaurant
- Busch Wildlife Sanctuary
- Canoe Outfitters of Florida
- Capt. Chad McGann
- Center Street Nook
- Cheeseburgers & More
- Crab House
- Debbie Sabin
- European Bakery
- Fishing Headquarters
- Food Shack
- Hard Exercise Works
- James Barry
- Jersey Mike's Subs
- Jon'Ric Salon
- Jupiter Auto Spa
- Jupiter Dive Center
- Jupiter Outdoor Center
- Miller's Jupiter Ale House
- Motorsports Fox
- Nature's Way Café
- Nick's Tomato Pie
- Nippon Japanese Restaurant
- Ocean Magic Surf Shop
- Palm Beach Ice Cream
- Rinaldi's of Tequesta
- SCUBA Works
- Tabica Grill
- Tan Lines of Jupiter
- Total Image Salon
- West Marine
- Zipp's New York Pizza Kitchen



Recent Events



115 Girl Scouts visited the River Center on Saturday, October 3rd for a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Eco-Action Interest Project Patch Workshop. The girls rotated through five different stations including "Think Outside the Box" Environmental Issues, Hydro Lab, Women in Science Career Fair, "How We Get Water" Technology, and a River Center Garden Service Project.



Local children's author Marianne Berkes was featured at the River Center on Wednesday, September 2nd, for a story reading and book signing. Visitors danced to Marianne's sing-along books and made "underwater scene" crafts out of play dough, similar to the clay figures used in Marianne's books.

Haunted Hammock Kids Halloween Party!



Boys, girls, and ghouls of all ages are invited to our Haunted Hammock Halloween Party on Friday, October 30 from 2p.m. to 7p.m. This "spook"tacular event will feature Creepy Crafts, Ghostly Games, and Trick or Treating. Everyone is encouraged to wear their costumes. Spooky snacks will be served between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Welcome College Intern!



Stop by the River Center and say hello to our new Environmental Education Intern Stephanie Denton! Stephanie will be working with River Center staff on new and exciting education programs at the River Center.