



Dune News

A quarterly newsletter sponsored by The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, Inc.

Summer 2007

What's Inside?

New Ranger, Tyler Seevers.....	2
Unforgettable Vital Habitat.....	3
One Good "Tern" Deserves Another...	3
Artist In Residence.....	4
School Tour Guide Wanted....	6

Regular Highlights

Shorelines.....	2-4
Under the Hammock.....	5
Volunteer Spotlight.....	6
Up-n-coming.....	7



Kids! Can you find me in this newsletter?

MacArthur Nightlife

by Stephanie Gardella

Although our Park has spectacular wildlife viewings during the day, there is an equally interesting "night shift" that takes over after the sun goes down. These nocturnal animals spend the daytime hours in hiding and sleeping, and therefore go unnoticed.

One of the most elusive animals in the Park is the spotted skunk. It is not much bigger than a squirrel. The stripes are irregular and broken up, making the coat appear spotted. In fact, the markings are unique to each animal, and no two skunks have the same pattern.

Raccoons can occasionally be seen in the daytime but are usually nocturnal. These intelligent animals are sometimes regarded as pests, but they are beneficial in that their diet includes undesirable rodents and insects.

Other nocturnal mammals include opossums, gray foxes, armadillos, and occasionally bats. Opossums are our only native marsupial (pouched-mammal). Many people fear bats, but they are extremely beneficial pollinators and insect-eaters.

Screech owls are common in the Park. These tiny owls have big voices and may be more often heard than seen. The much larger Great Horned owl can also be found here.

Fireflies make a walk through the hammock truly magical. They are not flies but beetles. Their green, bioluminescent abdomens flash to attract mates, and each species has a unique flash pattern. Crickets and other insects can be heard throughout the night, and wolf spiders are on the prowl.



On the beach, ghost crabs are active at night. Yellow-crowned night herons are often seen feeding on these crabs. On the reef, octopus, sharks, and other predators emerge to hunt. Though not truly nocturnal, sea turtles are our most celebrated nighttime visitors. Female loggerhead, green, and leatherback sea turtles come ashore during the summer months to lay their eggs.

The numerous nocturnal animals attest to the species diversity of the Park. Because we close at sunset, most visitors don't get a chance to encounter these wonderful creatures. If you happen to attend a Turtle Walk or a Moonlight Concert, take the time to look and listen for some of our "denizens of the dark". Or, try sitting quietly in your own backyard one night. You may be treated to the sight or sounds of nocturnal wildlife.

**John D. MacArthur
Beach State Park**

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Shorelines

**Welcome New
Friends Members!**

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Mike Bates
Elliott Bennett Family
Reid Bierer
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Lauren LaPlante
Thomas Laussermair
Frank Lucas
Meaghan Manning
Craig McBay
Chris McCarthy
George McDermott
Paul Meyaart
Carol Mix
Andrew Murray
David Negri
Anton Petree
Aldjenatu Romero



New Ranger, Tyler Seevers

I appreciate the big welcome I got from everybody. I feel that I fit in with all the other oddballs that work here. This job is very important to me, and I hope to continue my contribution to the preservation of wildlife in this career.

If you're wondering who I am and where I came from, then my answer is Tyler and this weird state called Ohio. I was born up there, but I consider myself more of a Floridian than anything else, since I have lived in the Acreage for 18 of my 21 years.

I started volun-

teering for Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management when I was 16 and became their youngest employee at 17. In 2004, I began working for the Florida Department of Agriculture in the Bureau of Plant Pest and Control regulating businesses. Now I am here at MacArthur Beach State Park, and I hope to be a valuable asset to this wonderful place.

See you around,

Tyler

Christian Romero
Esther Rosenbaum
Andrew Rubin
John Sammis
Charles Schenk III Family
Roy Schumacher
Scott Simon
Val Smith
Carl Suedhoff
Kevin Suncine

Paul Szlasa
Barbee Taggard
Lori Tanner
The Tice Family
Helenanne Tress
Will Tylander
Denise Vogel
Mark Williams Family
Peter Woititz
Ingrid Zea

Shorelines

An Unforgettable Vital Habitat

by Art Carton, *Park Services Specialist*



Sea Lavender

Everyone can name three of the four habitats at MacArthur Beach State Park: estuary, hardwood hammock, and rock reef. The one habitat that most people forget about is the coastal dune.

The coastal dune plays a vital role at the Park. Stable dunes protect the coastline, provide a buffer against wave damage from storms and provide habitat for many rare and endangered plants. These plants help to stabilize the dune with their deep root system and keep the dunes from eroding. Dune plants consist of common species such as the Sea Grape and a few rare and endangered plants.

One of these endangered plants is the burrowing four-o'clock, *Okenia hypogaea*, also known as beach peanut. It is closely related to two of our favorite landscape plants: the bougainvillea and the four-o'clock



Railroad Vine

(*Mirabilis jalapa*). It occurs from east-central Florida to southwest Florida and also occurs in Mexico. The plant can be found growing on the dune throughout the Park and some consider it one of the prettiest dune plants. The flowers are rose purple and a large plant can have dozens of flowers open at one time. Fruit of this plant develops beneath the sand, hence the name. Once pollinated, the maturing fruit is pushed underground in the same manner as the unrelated peanut.

Another endangered plant, which just happens to be effective at shoreline erosion control, is sea lavender (*Malotonia gnaphalodes*). It is a sprawling clump-forming 2'-6' hairy shrub. The leaves are slender, narrow and whitish to gray in color. The flowers of this plant are white and not very showy. When I first came to the Park, I was greeted with three hurricanes. After the hurricanes, some of the Park staff thought

Continued on page 8...

One Good "Tern" Deserves Another

by Stephanie Gardella

Fishing is a big industry in Florida, supporting a lot of jobs and the state's economy. On the other hand, discarded fishing line is a serious problem. It is not uncommon in the Park to find an injured animal tangled in fishing line. Park staff encounters with injured animals don't always have happy endings. Annually, thousands of marine animals perish due to discarded fishing gear and other pollution. Every piece of litter picked up helps prevent harm to animals.

One morning, Park visitors noticed a bird in the estuary that was tangled in fishing line. They notified tram driver, Bill Nolan, who in turn told the Nature Center of the situation. Ranger Rob Matriscino and I kayaked to the bird—a Royal Tern—and freed it from the fishing line. It was caught on the pilings of the pedestrian bridge in the estuary. We tried to release the bird at the beach, but it was so tired and cold from its ordeal that it couldn't even stand.



Stephanie helping rescued tern.

We then brought the tern to the Nature Center, where it received tender loving care. The lucky bird was wrapped in a dry towel and placed in a carrier so that it could rest undisturbed. In a short time the tern recovered. We gave it fresh water to drink, which lifted the bird's spirits even more. It was then time to free the tern. We released the tern and watched as it walked around and stretched its wings. Happily, after a few minutes the tern flew away. This rescue was a success because of the efforts of many caring people.



Rescued Royal Tern returning to flight.

Shorelines



Marilyn Muller graduated from SUNY Albany with a Bachelors degree in Theatre Arts in 1972. She went on to study Education and the Visual Arts, receiving her Masters in Teaching from Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY and studying Art at California State University, Long Beach, Florida Atlantic University,



Artist In Residence

privately under Keiko Akutsu Schwartz, and later with Mahlon Cline at the Lighthouse Center for the Arts.

Ms. Muller is primarily an oil painter of landscapes and

seascapes, both in studio and as a plein air painter. She continues on the Faculty of the Lighthouse Center for the Arts and accepts both commissions and select private students. Her paintings are in private

collections nationwide, including the Grau-Trump collection. She has exhibited both in the United States and the Netherlands, and now may be viewed all summer at the Park's Nature Center.



Under the Hammock

Gift Gab

The Gift Shop needs volunteers!

Mon, 1-5 p.m. (2 people)
Tue, 9-1 p.m. (2 people), 1-5 p.m. (2 people)
Wed, 9-1 p.m. (1 person), 1-5 p.m. (2 ppl)
Thur, 9-1 p.m. (2 ppl), 1-5 p.m. (1 person)
Fri, 1-5 p.m. (1 person)
Sat, 9-1 p.m. (2 people), 1-5 p.m. (1 person)
Sun, 9-1 p.m. (1 person), 1-5 p.m. (1 pers.)

You can work one shift or multiple shifts. If interested, please call Junko Nomura at the Nature Center: (561) 624-6952 or Marty at (561) 776-7449.

We have a new shipment of "turtle eggs" that hatch. Watch them grow!

NEW! Lizard Eggs that hatch and grow!

NEW! Wooden Figurines: Pelican with fish in its mouth, Pelican on Pilling

NEW! Metal/Glass Votives: Turtle, Pelican, Blue Heron

We have more caps with MacBeach logos, caps with Florida designs, bucket hats with MacBeach embroidery.

We have completed the replacement of the kayak fleet; we have also replaced all of the adult and kids life jackets.

The Friends membership has increased to 369 members!



Marty

*Gift Shop Guru, Administrator,
Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park*

All profits from the gift shop go to the Park to support the programs and activities that you, your family and your friends enjoy all year long.

Manager's Musings

Summer has arrived, following a dry spring. Leatherback turtles have also arrived in record numbers, and the loggerhead turtles are making grand appearances, too. The storms of spring have brought changes to the beach, but not the rains we have needed for relief from the drought.

The fact that our beach is natural and undeveloped may have saved it from the complications faced at other beaches. It reinforces the idea that a natural beach can withstand the impact of nature better. The sand gets moved around, but it almost always returns to an equilibrium.

The longer days mean more time to enjoy adventures at the Park. Kayaking has been popular, and there's been an increase of surfers, challenging the big waves at the beach.

Progress continues with our Friends-supported, Park enhancement programs. Thanks to your support, we

will soon be seeing the fruits of the labor of the Citizen Support Organization and the Capital Campaign.

One of our young volunteers was recently recognized at the Statewide Park Manager's Meeting held in central Florida. Sarah Widlansky was recognized as Outstanding Youth Volunteer of the Year. Many thanks go to Sarah and volunteers like her. Volunteers are a significant part of our staff. We are always looking for new volunteers to help us meet the needs of over 100,000 Park patrons each year. Please contact the Nature Center at to see how you can volunteer.



Terry

Terry Coulliette, Park Manager

Did You Know...

...that John MacArthur had an all metal home built in his city of Palm Beach Gardens? This was the first one of its kind in the world. MacArthur had it built by the United States Steel Company.

...that on March 21, 1962 a symbolic key to the City of Palm Beach Gardens was presented by MacArthur to Zsa Zsa Gabor, as she inspected the city. Also in town for this extravaganza was movie and cowboy star, Dale Robertson.

...that in June, 1962, MacArthur, in an effort to promote his city of Palm Beach Gardens, held a parade of homes. 40,000 people attended this event. At that time, MacArthur said "In the not too distant future, my dream city will house 100,000 residents."

...that John MacArthur, during one of

my many conversations with him, told me: "Bob there is only two ways to get things done right: first, do it yourself; second, appoint someone to do the task, and then follow them around and make sure it was done right."

...that these are excerpts from Bob Sanford's biography of John D. MacArthur—*A View from the Bar*—that you may buy in the Nature Center?



Volunteer Spotlight

by Junko Nomura, *Park Services Specialist*

CHRIS HALFPAP

I've known Chris for four years, but he's known the Park since his childhood. Chris was a camper at Marine Biology Camp for four years and says that led him to snorkeling.

He enjoys volunteering for Reef Tours, Turtle Walks and special events, such as NatureScaping. Volunteering for Turtle Walks requires a lot of time and energy—walking on the beach late at night to look for a sea turtle for a few hours—but he has done it more often than anybody else. He says, "I like walking on

the beach at night. I have seen a number of sea turtles. I just try to find one for people."

He loves the outdoors, kayaking, snorkeling, and even skydiving. He also likes foreign cultures and traveling. He talks to me in Japanese, which he has taught himself, and he just visited Panama with friends.

When I first met him, he had just graduated from high school and was looking for a job. He was young (and still is) and a little shy. I see that he's changed a lot. He has been working for the U.S.

Department of Agriculture (the Natural Resources Conservation Services) as a land survey technician. He has become more self-assured, experienced and broadminded. He is one of the most experienced and regular volunteers who the Park can rely on.

"I like volunteering at the Park because I can do what I like with other people," Chris says. Thank you for volunteering at the Park and thanks too for sharing your interesting experiences and your ever-present friendliness.

School Tour Guide Wanted *Call Art Carton: (561) 624-6952*

Make a difference! Help to teach and inspire the future stewards of Palm Beach County's fragile environment.

Orientation Dates: August 22: 4th grade guides • August 23: 3rd grade guides • August 24: Kindergarten to 2nd grade



Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, Inc.

Membership Application

A not-for-profit Citizens' Support Organization

☐ Benefactor... \$500+ ☐ Patron... \$100-\$499 ☐ Family... \$75 ☐ Individual...\$40 ☐ Student... \$20

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please send this application along with your donation to:

The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, Inc.
PO Box 32395 • Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33420

For more information on the "Friends" please call (561) 776-7449

A copy of the official registration and financial information of the "Friends" may be obtained from The Division of Consumer Services by calling 800-435-7352

Up-n-Coming

July

01	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	<i>Intro to Kayaking</i> by Adventure Times Kayaks
05	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
07	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Birding at MacArthur Park
07	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
08	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Rec. Skills: <i>Introduction to Surfing</i>
08	Sunday	1-3:00 p.m.	Volunteer Orientation
14	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
15	Sunday	1-5:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Jam Music Session
19	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
21	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk
21	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
28	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour



August

02	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
04	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
05	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	<i>Intro to Kayaking</i> by Adventure Times Kayaks
11	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
11	Saturday	11:00 a.m.	Rec. Skills: <i>Kid's Cast netting</i>
12	Sunday	1-3:00 p.m.	Volunteer Orientation
16	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
18	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk
18	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour
19	Sunday	1-5:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Jam Music Session
25	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Guided Reef Tour



September

02	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	<i>Intro to Kayaking</i> by Adventure Times Kayaks
06	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
08	Saturday	1:00 p.m.	Birding at MacArthur Park
09	Sunday	1-3:00 p.m.	Volunteer Orientation
16	Sunday	1-5:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Jam Music Session
20	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
22	Saturday	7-9:00 p.m.	MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert: <i>TBA</i>
29	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk

Every Weekend Animal Feeding in the Nature Center at 11:00 a.m.
Every Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Snake Talk in the Nature Center





**John D. MacArthur
Beach State Park**

10900 State Rd. 703 (A1A)
North Palm Beach, FL 33408

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Nature Center:
(561) 624-6952

Fax:
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Friends Office:
(561) 776-7449

Websites:
www.macarthurbeach.org
www.floridastateparks.org

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the sea lavender plants on the dune had been wiped out. In the past two years, we have discovered three or four clumps of sea lavender within the Park boundaries. Recently, I have obtained permission to take cuttings from our population of plants in order to propagate them. With the help of Palm Beach Community College, many new sea lavender seedlings will be planted along the Park's dune in the near future.

Bay cedar (*Suriana maritima*) is another endangered dune plant which grows in the Park. This tree is usually small, ranging from 3'-4' but it can reach a height of 16'. The leaves are paddle shaped, grayish in color with yellow flowers occurring throughout the year. Although many of the dune plants don't transfer well to the home landscape, bay cedar

does well in coastal settings and can be used as a hedge.

Sea oats, railroad vine and sea purslane aren't endangered plants, but they are some of the most important erosion controlling and dune stabilizing plants at the Park. This summer, Park staff, along with the help of scouts and volunteers, will be planting these species on our dunes. If you are interested in propagating dune plants in our shade house or lending a helping hand, please call Art at (561) 624-6970.

Next time you are visiting the Park, remember to stop and take time to appreciate the coastal dune plants of the Park. Without these species, there wouldn't be a dune to protect the largest tract of coastal maritime hammock north of Key Largo.

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