



FRIENDS OF

MacArthur Beach State Park

Winter - Spring 2011

# Dune NEWS

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John D. MacArthur Beach

### STATE PARK

10900 Jack Nicklaus Drive  
North Palm Beach, FL 33408

#### Park Office:

561.624.6950

#### Nature Center:

561.624.6952

#### Fax:

561.624.6954

#### Friends Office:

561.776.7449

#### Websites:

[www.macarthurbeach.org](http://www.macarthurbeach.org)

[www.floridastateparks.org/macarthurbeach](http://www.floridastateparks.org/macarthurbeach)

## The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park

is a non-profit corporation with a mission of generating supplemental resources to preserve, restore, and interpret the natural and cultural assets of the Park for present and future generations

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

## Winter at MacArthur Beach

The weather is cooler and there are more people, visitors and volunteers, at the park. Winter is a wonderful time at the park and while some things stay the same year round, there are quite a number of exciting changes during these cooler months.

For starters the cooler weather allows us to tackle big work projects. Not only is this time of year more conducive for work since we do not have to deal with the sweltering heat of the summer, but we also have a lot of extra help. Our volunteer force is in full swing, adding to our year round volunteers, our wonderful seasonal and resident volunteers arrive to lend a helping hand to the staff. These volunteers help in every area of park operations – school programs, kayak tours, the gift shop, tram driving, beach cleanup, invasive removal, construction, special events, they help with it all! The park would not be what it is today without their help!

Winter also brings change to the natural environment at the park. Although the water may be cooler than the summer, it is still some of the warmest in the country this time of year. The Gulf Stream brings up warm water from the south and typically the water temperature never dips below 70 degrees. This may sound a little chilly for us locals, but for our friends from the north that it is very pleasant indeed. Even some Floridians will brave the water if a nice swell is present to go surfing. The warmer water also attracts a wide variety of 'critters'. Fishing off of the beach is usually productive this time of year. We have regular reports of people catching Crevalle jacks and bluefish from the surf, and if they are



lucky a Spanish mackerel or pompano. Another bigger fish that we see this time of year are spinner sharks (*Carcharias brevipinna*). These sharks are at the highest concentrations January through March. For those who have not witnessed this spectacle, it is must see. These sharks come in to feed on the small baitfish present in the water, but they have a very unique way of doing so. They come up from underneath or the side of the school of fish as fast as they can to surprise the fish so they don't have time to swim away. Typically they do not slow down until they breach the water and spin several feet into the air! There are some days when you can stand on the crossover to the beach and lose count of how many sharks you see jumping and spinning out of the water. We are also hearing regular reports of manatees close to shore. The ocean water is typically warmer than the water in the estuary. So keep your eyes peeled for a snout or large fluke (tail) in the surf.

Another great beach activity this time of year is beach combing. The higher waves and stronger winds bring in lots of neat things to discover. One of the most addictive hobbies is collecting drift seeds aka sea beans. The Gulf Stream, the same current that brings us the warm water, also brings us seeds from tropical regions like the Caribbean.

*continued on page 4*





## John D. MacArthur BEACH STATE PARK

### Staff

**Don Bergeron**, Park Manager  
**Pat Rash**, Asst. Park Manager  
**Lynn Desy**, Admin. Assistant

### Park Services Specialists

Art Carton  
Mykl Wallrath

### Rangers

Steve Desy  
Scott Duncan  
Charlie Hein  
Rob Matricino  
Mike Watts  
Bill Wilson

### OPS Staff

David Gelb  
Megan Harris  
Douglas Sutherland  
Sarah Waddell

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Gilda Vogel

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Giselle Gusman-Patenaude, *Administrative Assistant*  
Martin Shiffman, *Administrator*  
Kari Foster, *Assistant Administrator*  
Debbie Coyle, *Weekend Manager*

[www.macarthurbeach.org](http://www.macarthurbeach.org)

*Thank you* to all those that helped make our December Blizzard at the Beach a great success. The event helped raise money for the Natural Science Education Fund and provided 'mounds' of fun for everyone who attended. Thanks again to all attendees, Sponsors and Park Staff.



## FRIENDS OF MACARTHUR BEACH STATE PARK, INC.

Membership Application

A not-for-profit Citizens Support Organization

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

Name(s): M \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this application along with your check or credit card information to:  
Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, Inc.

10900 Jack Nicklaus Drive  
North Palm Beach, FL 33408

Or join through the web site - [www.macarthurbeach.org](http://www.macarthurbeach.org)

For more information regarding the "Friends" please call 561.776.7221.





Zack Wilson with winter spoils

## Winter Surf & Sea Changes

It has often been said that 'the only constant is change' and at the beach at MacArthur Park that is probably most evident. As we transitioned from a summer/fall beach to a winter/spring beach the changes are visible with the beach sand profile, as well as what you can find swimming in our waters off the beach.

With a predominant current and wind flow from the south, and typically smaller more gentle wave action in the summer and early fall (barring any activity from the tropics), we tend to have sand that resides out on the offshore and nearshore sandbars deposited back onto the beach. In winter and spring we tend to have cold fronts and areas of low pressure that come off the continental U.S. and produce strong northerly winds, and in turn larger breaking waves from the north that move the sand back off the beach and reform the offshore sandbars. This is the ebb and flow of the ocean and is in constant change.

In the summer time when we predominantly see calm sea conditions and great snorkeling opportunities, it is not uncommon to find yourself in view of sea turtles, the occasional snook coming out onto the reefs from the estuaries and inlets and various other fish species. Some of the staff and volunteers took part in the reef's annual fish count. Spotted were colorful reef fish such as Sergeant Major's, Yellowtail Parrotfish, Black Margate, Bar Jack and Barracuda just to name a few that are most common.

In our winter time it is generally time to leave the mask, fins, and snorkel at home. We begin to feel the northerly winds, the cooler water, larger waves and with that a migration of thousands of mullet that make their way south. Chasing after them are the tarpon, and other fish such as Spanish mackerel, jack crevalle and blue fish. For those that don't fish or the water is a bit too cool for swimming, you can always watch from the beach in the winter months as the migration of the spinner and blacktip sharks occurs. If you spend enough time scanning over the surface of the ocean you can catch a glimpse of them breaching the water and spinning forward as they seek out their prey. And as winter begins to wane we begin to see our leatherback turtles begin to nest, this is when we know summer is not far away.

*Ranger Rob*

## Volunteers and Friends are Happy to Help!

MacArthur Beach State Park is fortunate to have an army of volunteers who give their valuable support and time to keep the Park and their many programs running smoothly and efficiently. So staff and Friends did not hesitate to give back to one of the volunteers in need. A dinner was held at Duffy's in North Palm Beach on January 26th for the friends and family of James Wilbers, who has been in the hospital in Boston. Jim's wife Jan Wilbers greeted over 90 people and park well-wishers to the evening's event. Duffy's donated 20% of the proceeds to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and everyone was happy to help one of the Park's special volunteers.



Attending the event, Park Ranger Rob Matriscino, Volunteers Elizabeth Ortman & Lu Dodson

# CURRY<sup>PL</sup>



601 Heritage Drive  
Suite 203A  
Jupiter, Florida 33458-2777  
Tel: (561) 578-4685  
[www.currypl.com](http://www.currypl.com)

**How would you like to get your message out to thousands of like minded people.**

Put an ad in the Dune News! The Dune News quarterly newspaper is sent to over 2,000

Friends of MacArthur Beach members. It is a great way to showcase your particular cause or business.

Ads start as \$250.00 for business card size. Please call Denise Burnside, 561-776-7221 for details.



## Changes at Munyon Island

The Munyon Island dock is slowly progressing and we have a new completion date of May 30, 2011. Once finished it should increase visitation dramatically which will in turn create more for the staff and volunteers to do. Look for my column next issue for an update and list of volunteer opportunities. On April 23, 2011 there will be an island cleanup day in conjunction with the great American cleanup. The assault on exotic vegetation continues on the island. Staff and volunteers have removed thousands of square feet of *kalanchoe pinnata* also known as air plant, and *sansevieria trifasciata* aka mother-in-laws tongue. These two enemies of the native vegetation are especially nasty because any piece of the plant left behind can start a new plant by vegetative reproduction. The captain of this war against the aliens would have to be resident volunteer Sheila Leavitt. One of her favorite places in the park is crawling through the understory of Munyon Island. If you would like to join the ranks, look for Munyon Island work day opportunities in the Volunteer Happenings.

*Patrick Rash*

Assistant Park Manager

## Winter *continued from page 1*

South America, and the Amazon. There are some common seeds like tropical almond and sea coconuts, more rare seeds like hamburger beans and sea hearts, or possible even some of the rarest beans like a Mary's bean, which most 'beaners' are consider to be the holy grail of sea beans. To learn more about these curious finds, stop into the gift shop and pick up a book on drift seeds. There are a few things to be cautious of while beachcombing, namely man o war (*Physalia physalis*). If we get strong, persistent east wind this time of year it will usually bring in these jellyfish like creatures. In life man o war have a float above water and are pushed around by winds. Underneath the water hangs stinging tentacles that can be several feet long. Even when they get washed up on the beach their nematocysts, or stinging cells, can still sting you for several days after being beached, so use caution. Two other man o war cousins that can be sometimes found on the beach are by-the-wind-sailors (*Velella velella*) and blue buttons (*Porpita porpita*). These guys have the same coloration as the man o war but their stinging cells are mild and typically humans can not feel it.

Also down this time of year are the birds. No, I am not talking about human "snow birds" rather the winged kind. We usually see large congregations of gulls and terns on the beach. There is also an increase in the population of wading birds in the estuary – herons, egrets, and ibis, just to name a few. The hammock is also a popular habitat for birds. You can usually find cardinals and warblers flitting around throughout the foliage. The trees and plants throughout the hammock are also changing. While some plants fruit this time of year, like snowberry and white indigo berry, others like to save their energy. Mulberry trees will loose all of their leaves and almost look dead, until the spring when they grow back their huge leaves and produce very tasty fruit. Seagrapes will actually change their leaf color from green to very pretty shades of reds and purples, reminding some of fall in the north.

Macarthur Beach State Park is always an exciting place year-round and each season has its special attributes, and the winter is no exception!

## Volunteer Spotlight



Get to Know –  
Sheila Leavitt

**Volunteer Full Name:**  
Sheila R. Leavitt

**Job Assignments:**  
Munyon Island Exotic  
Plant Removal  
Tram Driver  
Gift Store  
Special Events  
Administration  
Everything and Anything

**Occupation:**  
Retired County Finance  
Director in Maine

**Birth Place:**  
Milo, Maine

**Years as a MacArthur  
Beach Volunteer:**  
4 Years as a RV Resident  
Volunteer along with her  
husband Ted

**Other State Parks that  
you have volunteered at:**  
Lovers Key State Park  
St. George Island State Park  
Fort Clinch State Park  
Gamble Rogers Memorial  
State Recreational Area at  
Flagler Beach

**Favorite Part of  
MacArthur:**  
Sitting at the Park's dock  
as sunset and driving the  
tram

**Looking forward to:**  
Spending more time on  
Munyon Island when the  
dock is completed





## Manager Matters



The Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park recently hosted a supporter's 'sneak peek' of the new Pew Family Natural Science Education Center. As Park Manager of MacArthur Beach State Park, it was an honor to have the opportunity to thank many of our supporters personally for their remarkable gifts which made this project, the new center, so much more a reality.

It would be easy to think of this Friends project in terms of the tangibles; the wonderful new center which will soon house an expanded Friends-operated gift store as well as the new classroom, wet lab, and library, or the new interpretive displays, aquariums, and theater equipment soon to be in the Nature Center next door. When you think about it though, the real difference our supporters have made is somewhat less tangible. It's the thousands upon thousands of Palm Beach County students who will develop a greater appreciation of the natural sciences, as well as our Park, and become our future environmental stewards. It's the increased test scores for those very same students. It's the 130k+ annual visitors to our park who will gain a better knowledge of the Park's features and enjoy an even better visitor experience.

Our generous supporters didn't donate to this project to simply build the new center or upgrade the existing Nature Center at MacArthur Beach State Park. They wanted to make a significant contribution to their community. They were aware of the issues facing our county school students and wanted to help. In short, they decided to make a difference and to do it in a big and far reaching way.

So to the many generous supporters at the 'sneak peek' event, as well as those who were unable to attend, I would like to again say thank you. Thank you for enabling us to better serve our visitors and for making this a model public/private partnership. Thank you for making a great place to visit even better. Finally, thank you for caring so much about our community.

*Don Bergeron*  
Park Manager

## Friends are a winner in the FTI Winter Equestrian Festival Great Charity Challenge.

Equestrian Sport Production's second annual Great Charity Challenge raised almost one million dollars to benefit 32 Palm Beach County Charities. Over 160 charities vied to be one of the charities picked, and the Friends of MacArthur Beach were thrilled when their name was called! All the charities were paired with a team of one professional; quite a few Olympians in the mix, and two amateur riders to compete in an evening show jumping at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center in Wellington. It was a great night with of food, entertainment and top class show jumping all going towards some very worthy causes. The Friends team, Sand Castle Farm and Friends showed well and the Friends were proud to accept a check for \$13,500! The Friends of MacArthur Beach extend a heartfelt thank you to Sand Castle Farm and Friends and Equestrian Sport Production, and we will keep our fingers crossed that we will be lucky enough to be picked again next year.



*Friend Board Members Stephanie Pew, Rebecca Doane & Gretta Curry celebrate with Sand Castle Farm & Friends Marsha & Dennis Dammerman, Bill & Sue Conaty, Don & Judy Little and Ken & Barbara Horowitz. Riders are Sarah Segal, Donald Little & Tori Corts.*

# New and Renewing Members

JUNE 1, 2010 THRU AUGUST 30, 2010

## Individual

Miss Marnie Abraham  
Mr. Paul Aleskovsky  
Mr. Nidal Ali  
Mr. Joshua Allein  
Mr. Dominic Aloia  
Mr. Leonardo Amat  
Mr. Dayron Luis Amat  
Ms. Kathleen Andio  
Mrs. Rosetta Anthony  
Mr. Sam Anthony  
Ms. Kelly Bartlett  
Miss Charlotte Baxter  
Ms. Josephine Bayard  
Ms. Sharon Bell  
Mr. William Benjamin  
Mrs. Elaine Bloom  
Mr. Gerald Boivin  
Ms. Kristen Boivin  
Mr. Carl Boudreau  
Ms. Evike Boudreau  
Ms. Jennifer Brame  
Mr. Steven Brighton  
Mrs. Sonya Brooks  
Mr. Chris Brooks  
Miss Kayla Brzozowski  
Mr. Ralph Buliung III  
Ms. Betsy Burden  
Mr. Melvin Burnside  
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Mr. Neil Capozzi  
Mr. Cody Chen  
Mr. Tim Christopher  
Mr. Daniel Cohen  
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Mrs. Sandra DeVries  
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Ms. Caroline Dixon  
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Ms. Joy Fletcher  
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Mr. Scott Link  
Mr. Steve Lippard  
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Lopez  
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Ms. Dana Marcus  
Dr. Val Marino  
Dr. James Martin  
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Ms. Meredith Trim  
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Doane  
Mr. Hal Reed



## Friends Gift Shop

### NEW ITEMS

We Now Have  
**PILLOW PALS**  
*(stuffed animals that  
convert to pillows)*  
in the Following Styles:  
Frog, Dog, Ladybug,  
Raccoon, Bumblebee  
& Turtle

### Florida State Park Neon T-Shirts in Adult Sizes

### New Luggage Tags

### NEW GIFT SHOP/ WELCOME CENTER

The Gift Shop/  
Welcome Center is preparing  
to move into our new facility.

We will have an updated  
computer system which  
will enable us to improve  
service to our customers.  
This includes touch screen  
registers and slide thru credit  
card system on the registers.

Also, we will have snack  
machines, soda machines  
and a sandwich machine.

Look for New Gondolas  
and Displays.

**Watch the MacArthur  
Beach web site for the  
exact opening date.**





# Up and Coming Activities

## MARCH

05	Saturday	1:00 p.m.	Raptor Ecology
06	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks
10	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
10	Thursday	10:30 a.m.	Reading with a Ranger
13	Sunday	2-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with Conch Stomp Band
19	Saturday	7-9:00 p.m.	MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert
20	Sunday	1-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with the Untold Riches
24	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
26	Saturday	1:00 p.m.	Recreational Skills: Introduction to Kayak Fishing
27	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	Birding at MacArthur Park

## APRIL

02	Saturday	11:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk
03	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks
07	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
10	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Birding at MacArthur Park
10	Sunday	2-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with Conch Stomp Band
14	Thursday	10:30 a.m.	Reading with a Ranger
16	Saturday	8-11:00 a.m.	The Great American Cleanup
16	Saturday	10-4:00 p.m.	NatureScaping: A Green Celebration
17	Sunday	1-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with the Untold Riches
21	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
23	Saturday	7-9:00 p.m.	MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert
24	Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Recreational Skills: Introduction to Surfing

## MAY

Every	Sunday	Noon	Introduction to Snorkeling
01	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Learn to Kayak by Adventure Times Kayaks
05	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach
07	Saturday	1:00 a.m.	Incredible Edible Insects: Entomophagy
08	Sunday	2-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with Conch Stomp Band
12	Thursday	10:30 a.m.	Reading with a Ranger
14	Saturday	7-9:00 p.m.	MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert
15	Sunday	1-4:00 p.m.	Bluegrass Music with the Untold Riches
15	Sunday	1:30 p.m.	Birding at MacArthur Park
19	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Yoga on the Beach

- Daily Guided Nature Walks at 10:00 a.m.
- 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, followed by a snake feeding

## Activity Details

- All activities except MacArthur Under Moonlight concerts are free with Park admission -

**Birding** - Learn the names, characteristics and behaviors of the common and rare wading birds that browse the exposed mud flats at low tide.

**Bluegrass** - Listen to some of the best bluegrass music in South Florida; The Untold Riches and The Conch Stomp Band will be playing bluegrass music in the amphitheater.

**Butterfly Walk** - Join a staff naturalist on a mile long walk identifying the butterflies that inhabit the park. Reservations recommended.

**Great American Cleanup** - Come join one of the largest community litter reduction events. Help cleanup the beach at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park. Participants will receive snacks, refreshments and free giveaways. For more information and to download a participation form, go to the website, [keeppbcbbeautiful.org](http://keeppbcbbeautiful.org).

**Incredible Edible Bugs: Entomophagy** - For hundreds of years insects have been eaten by many cultures around the world. This program

discusses science, home economics, world cultures and participants will be able to sample bug products. Live specimens of insects and arachnids eaten in their native lands will be on hand to see up close. The program is free with park admission. Please call (561) 624-6952 for reservations.

**Introduction to Snorkeling** - Join volunteer, Bruce Kay, and learn the basics of snorkeling. The program will start on land and participants will learn how to choose the right equipment, diving techniques and safety. The program will also be in the water if the conditions allow. Bring your mask and fins if you have them, otherwise the park has equipment for use. Participants must be 9 years old and anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult in the water. Reservations required.

**Learn to Kayak** - Adventure Times Kayaks teaches the basic skills necessary to safely enjoy the exciting sport of kayaking; instruction

on land only. Reservations recommended.

**MacArthur Under Moonlight Concert Series** - Join us for a magical night of music, gates open at 6:00 p.m. Concert 7-9:00 p.m. with a fifteen minute intermission at 8:00 with stargazing on the boardwalk. \$5.00 per person; Friends of MacArthur Beach members with one guest and children under the age of 10 are free.

**NatureScaping 2011** - Come down to the park and take part in one of the areas biggest "Green" events. There will be over 50 vendors and exhibitors, guest speakers, a silent auction, photography contest, live animal show, kid's crafts, music, food and more. There will be free entry to the park all day.

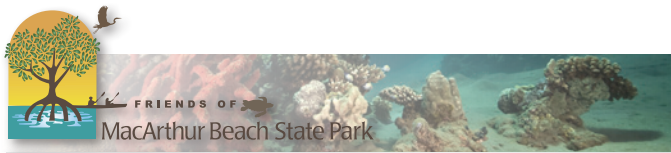
**Reading with a Ranger** - Story time for pre-school aged children with an age-related craft. Reservations required, space is limited.

**Recreational Skills: Introduction to Kayak Fishing** - Join Park Ranger Bill Wilson and learn

the techniques and equipment needed to go kayak fishing in South Florida. The program is on land and reservations are recommended.

**Recreational Skills: Introduction to Surfing** - Join Park Ranger Rob Matriccino and learn the techniques and equipment needed to go surfing in South Florida. The program is on land and in the water. For ages 10 years old and up. Participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by their parent. Surfboard not required to participate. Reservations are required.

**Yoga on the Beach** - Join a certified yoga instructor for a one hour yoga session on the beach. This class is for beginners or experienced participants. Reservations recommended.



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North Palm Beach, FL 33408

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## Thank you for your membership in the Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park!

All funds raised by the Friends through memberships, the Gift Shop and kayak rentals stay in the Park. YOU assist the Friends to -

- Purchase equipment and supplies for the Natural Science Education Program
- Provide funding to purchase Passenger Trams and other equipment
- Fund volunteer training and recognition
- Provide funding for Picnic Pavilions and Playground
- Purchase and maintain the kayak fleet
- Fund Park printing, supplies and technology needs
- Provide funds for Park Staff Training
- Operate the Gift Shop
- Produce the Park quarterly newsletter, The Dune News

*Thanks!*