

The *flora*, FAUNA, & FOSSIL Flash

The Volunteer Newsletter of the Florida Museum of Natural History • SPRING 2009

WINGDING! Butterfly Rainforest Volunteer Enrichment Day

By Julie Crosby

This year marks the 5th anniversary of the Butterfly Rainforest exhibit. Thanks to the efforts of many volunteers and dedicated staff, the beauty and educational value of this special exhibit continues to delight and educate visitors from all over the world. To celebrate the Rainforest volunteers and provide them with updated training and interesting enrichment, a special day of activities just for them was held on March 10 from 9 am to 2 pm.

“Wingding! - Rainforest Volunteer Enrichment Day” was designed to provide information pertinent to all Butterfly Rainforest volunteers – horticulture assistants, interpreters, plant sales assistants, and greeters. The event started with a continental breakfast before the group went out into the Rainforest for “hands on” interactive training. Afterward, special programs on the butterfly and plant species contained in the exhibit were presented by the Rainforest staff, who expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication of all of the volunteers.



Butterfly Rainforest volunteers attend training in the Rainforest. Photo by Mary Warrick.

During a potluck lunch, volunteers were treated to a presentation by Assistant Curator Jaret Daniels and doctoral candidate Emily Saarinen, who spoke on the topics of ant-caterpillar symbiotic relationships and an update on the Blue Morpho butterfly project.

Throughout the day, Rainforest volunteers had the opportunity to ask questions and also receive information to take home and study to improve their knowledge. A field trip is in development for later this year to supplement the training provided at this event.

Letter from the Coordinator



Dear Volunteers,
As I approach the annual volunteer recognition reception, I enjoy recognizing your service hours to the Museum, listening to success stories, and reading the observations of staff and volunteers on the nomination forms for the volunteer of the year award. These opportunities to reflect on our volunteer program highlight its health and the invaluable personal contributions of our volunteers.

There are also less obvious indicators that point out our progress in providing increased volunteer opportunities. For instance, over the recent past, the number of research and collections departments serving as volunteer sites has more than doubled. This has increased opportunities for non-student volunteers who are eager to provide “hands on” assistance to scientists and researchers. Students can

now volunteer as exhibit docents, a position more convenient for them since they often have only one semester (about the same length as many exhibits) available to serve and may need weekend shifts.

Finally, besides increased volunteer sites and positions, there is also an observable increase in the staff’s recognition of the potential for volunteers to help meet the Museum’s mission during this time of budget reductions. Here are some examples I have observed: junior volunteers covering a busy Discovery Room to enable staff to eat lunch; clerical and collections volunteers picking up paperwork and critical data entry tasks; and greeters enabling Rainforest staff to stay inside the exhibit with large visitor groups. These are just a few examples of the impact your service is having upon the important work of the Florida Museum. Thank you for stepping in and filling these needs and many others.

Julie Crosby

Happy Birthday!

APRIL

01 Sarah Penter
04 Trudy McDonald
04 Heidi Williamson
05 Gillian Kartzinel
08 Rubye Sullivan
12 Caroline Beek
14 Lorraine McDowell
14 Kendra Ormerod
14 Letitia Rodriguez
18 Jean Smith
22 La Twania Brown
23 Leonard Tipton
23 Maranda Kles
23 Saajan Panikar
26 Sylvia Moy
30 Jillian Krickovich
30 Laurie Wilkins
30 Julia Profaci

MAY

01 Laura Fishwick
03 Jillian Magley
04 Marcia Philips
05 Marie Cutler
05 Emily Hillaker
10 Betsy Livingston
13 Gail Garcia
14 Thomas Wood
16 Bronia Lowenstein
22 Mary Lynch
23 Sarah Katz
24 Molly Stevens
27 Lia Cary
28 Austin Bell
29 Jerry Hessels
30 Brack Barker
30 Michael Rogal

JUNE

01 Chris Froyd
02 Nina Zagvazdina
05 Rachel Davis
06 Susan Nassif
07 Patti Nunez
08 Johanna Tjeenk-Willink
10 Leslie Klein
12 Katherine Nguyen
18 Robert Tarnuzzer
18 Joanna Tabisz
18 Nikola Kenjic
19 June Sullivan
19 Betty Haesecker
19 Wade Speake
20 Chelsey Spiron
22 Elizabeth Taft
23 Ada Irizarry
27 Margaret Stuebe
28 Monique Rickman

Volunteering *at the* Florida Museum...

Docent Trips to Silver River State Park and Everglades National Park

By Trudy McDonald and Julie Crosby

Florida Museum school program docents are committed to increasing their knowledge and understanding of the exhibits and programs they present to school groups. This is evidenced by the educational field trips they take each year. Already in 2009, school programs staff and docents have taken two such trips. Education staff members accompanied two large groups of docents on these trips to Silver River State Park and the Everglades National Park.

Forty docents took a trip to Silver River State Park on January 4. The goal of the trip was to show the docents a program similar to that of the Florida Museum. The Silver River program was ideal for this, because of its link to the Marion County School District. Marion County school children in grades four and seven are required to partake in an environmental education program at the park. Through learning about Silver River's program, our docents were able to see how important their own work is with school children and how it helps them gain a connection to the natural environment that is all but lost in modern life.

The next trip was to the Everglades National Park, to gain in depth knowledge of the temporary exhibit, "ForEverglades/Alien Attack". Eighteen docents traveled to Everglades City on Feb.10 and returned Feb.13. First on their agenda was a boat tour that took them out to Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Later in the day, they journeyed



School program docents visit Clyde Butcher's studio down the Tamiami Trail in the Everglades.

down the Tamiami Trail to photographer Clyde Butcher's studio, then to Turner River Road Boardwalk where they observed invasive species such as Oscar fish and Brazilian pepper trees, featured in the Alien Attack exhibit.

Another highlight of the trip was a visit to the Seminole Big Cypress Reservation. There they visited the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum to learn more about Seminole history and culture, as well as went on airboat and swamp buggy rides at Billie Swamp Safari. These experiences displayed to the docents how the Seminole Indians balance tradition and modernity.

School programs assistants Jeannette Carlisle and Diane Milner agree that the docents' perpetual energy and zest to keep learning is striking. The trips have been a huge success, enriching staff and docents alike.

Junior Volunteer Program Applications Now Being Accepted

By Julie Crosby

Youth ages 12 to 17 can work alongside Museum staff this summer and share programs and exhibits with visitors and public program participants. This is a great opportunity to learn about the "behind the scenes" work at the museum and make new friends! Reference letters are provided for exemplary work and a party is provided for everyone at the end of the summer. Positions include discovery cart attendant, discovery room assistant, camp teacher's assistant, puppeteers, and more.

New applicants will be scheduled for an interview,

and if selected to serve, are expected to attend a mandatory training on Sunday, June 7. Preference will be given to returning volunteers and new applicants with the strongest interviews, experience and availability.

Hurry! The application deadline is April 14. Late applications will not be accepted. Applicants must be at least 12 years old by June 15.

To download the 2009 Junior Volunteer application, visit www.flmnh.ufl.edu/volunteers.



Above - Junior volunteer Becca Sugrue assists a collector during the Collectors Day event. Photo by Mary Warrick.



Above - Maureen Anderson assisted Public Programs staff during Collectors Day. Photo by Mary Warrick.

STAFF PROFILE:

Rob Robins, Ichthyology Collections Manager

By Rob Robins and Trudy McDonald

Rob Robins is the Ichthyology Collection Manager for the Museum. When asked what his job entails, Rob explains that he is a librarian of sorts. He is the steward of approximately 8,000 different types of fish which he and other staff identify, classify, and make available for research. This collection is international in scope and provides a great opportunity to educate the public and assist in scientific research.

Rob is a Florida native who lived in Miami prior to Gainesville. Both of his parents are retired PhD Ichthyologists. Although never pressured to pursue the field, his interest in living things was ignited at an early age. Every job that Rob has had, from his first summer job in high school onward has been in the biological sciences or involved animals. Prior to working at the museum, Rob worked as a non-indigenous fish biologist with the Department of the Interior. He has been with the museum for 12 years. His wife, Mary, is a biologist with a graduate degree in landscape architecture.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: Tom Wood

By Trudy McDonald

You may have seen Tom Wood some Wednesday wearing his Thai hat in the Butterfly Rainforest. A botanist, nurseryman, and world renowned expert on ginger plants, Tom has volunteered as an interpreter in the exhibit since it opened in 2004.

Tom says he enjoys explaining the biology of butterflies to visitors, studying the co-evolution of butterflies and plants, and the beauty of the Rainforest. He is particularly interested in butterfly wing patterns. His greatest passion, though, is his ginger plants. He has studied gingers for 27 years and has traveled to 24 countries to collect and research them. Tom has received many awards for his ginger hybrids, and they have been featured by companies like Wayside Gardens and The Plumeria.

On a recent trip to Asia, Tom traveled to China, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia and photographed wild butterflies. While in Nai Ping, Cambodia, he gave a lecture on butterfly pollination biology at the first symposium on the flora of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. He has created a Japanese tea garden, is a student of Japanese tea culture, collects rare teas, and has traveled to tea gardens throughout Asia. He also



Rob Robins, Ichthyology Collection Manager. Photo by Jeff Gage.

When not working at the museum, Rob enjoys hitting the open road with his friends in the Cycle Logic Racing Team. He bought his first road bike four years ago and has been training and racing ever since.

Rob notes that he is humbled by the commitment of our volunteers. "Volunteers are in many ways the backbone of this institution," he says. With the collaboration and commitment of volunteers and staff like Rob, the museum is discovering important aspects of our natural world.



Tom Wood, a world renowned expert on ginger plants. Photos by Eric Zamora.

holds a butterfly viewing tea each year. Tom's nursery, Gingers Galore, sells ginger plants to individuals by appointment, and to distributors.

Butterfly Rainforest visitors and staff both benefit from Tom's knowledge and passion for butterflies and plants.



JOIN
the
MUSEUM!

CALL
(352) 273-2086

Welcome These New Volunteers!

D = Dickinson Hall
M = McGuire Center
P = Powell Hall

Berthet, Bill (M)
Cole-Harper, Eve (P)
Collins, Courtney (P)
Cornelius, Janet (D)
Donaldson-Fortier, Gay (D)
Ebeling, Carla (D)
Friberg, Sarah (D)
Froyd, Chris (D)
Gonzalez, Sergio (D)
Ives, Erin (D)
Kamps, Terry (D)
Kipp, Martin (P)
Klopchin, Jeanette (D)
Llanes, Nareiby (M)
Marlin, Sofia (D)
Martinez, Fabiola (M, P)
Maxwell, Megan (M)
McCowan, Mike (D, M)
Norman, Stephanie (M, P)
Panikar, Saajan (D)
Partridge, Erin (M)
Perez, Dan (P)
Picken, Amanda (P)
Profaci, Julia (P)
Robinson, Joshua (D)
Robson, Cherie (P)
Stanley, Paul (M)
Stuzin, David (M)
Thongpravati, Pajaree (M)
Tompkins, Erika (D)
Tseng, Jackie (M)
Walker, Ellen (M)
Walters, Katie (P)
Williams, Pat (M)
Wortham, Ashley (D)
Zagvazdina, Nina (M)



Florida Museum of Natural History
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P.O. Box 112710
Gainesville, Fl. 32611-2710
www.flmnh.ufl.edu

Volunteers recognized for 100 hours or more of service

Please congratulate these 42 volunteers who reached 100 hours or more of service during the fourth quarter of 2008. Each volunteer received four coupons for free entrance into fee-based exhibits.

Marilyn Adams (100 hrs)
Anita Alemanne (200 hrs)
Jon Anderson (400 hrs)
Darrell Anthony (300 hrs)
Austin Bell (100 hrs)
James Beville (1000 hrs)
Jane Blanchard (300 hrs)
Claudia Brown (400 hrs)
Martha Cade (800 hrs)
Sharon Castner (100 hrs)
Frances Combs (200 hrs)

Jennifer Cushman (200 hrs)
Anthony Flanagan (800 hrs)
Linda Goshorn (200 hrs)
Rachel Graham (JV)(100 hrs)
Darrell Hartman (100 hrs)
Russell Henderson (100 hrs)
Elizabeth Johnson (100 hrs)
Pat Hylton (1,200 hrs)
Carol Kenudson (200 hrs)
Elizabeth Lipham (JV)(600 hrs)
Colby Lowe (100 hrs)

The total number of hours served since 4/1/05 is listed in parentheses. Junior volunteers are indicated by 'JV'. Florida Museum volunteers contributed 5,513 hours during this quarter.

Chase Mason (100 hrs)
Lorraine McDowell (600 hrs)
Jim Merkner (300 hrs)
Mary Lou Merkner (200 hrs)
Anna MontMarquette(JV)(200 hrs)
Barbara Muschlitz (500 hrs)
Bonnie Ogle (800 hrs)
Daniel Parker (700 hrs)
Bryan Parnin (JV)(100 hrs)
Jessica Peters (200 hrs)
Mary Ranade (200 hrs)

Mary Rhodes (300 hrs)
Craig Samuel (100 hrs)
Frances Seiler (800 hrs)
Robert Tarnuzzer (500 hrs)
Dean Thomason (JV) (1,100 hrs)
Stacy Veigh (200 hrs)
Richard Walker (200 hrs)
Thomas Wood (300 hrs)
Louie Wu (JV)(100 hrs)

Museum Contact Information

Exhibits & Public Programs (Powell Hall) (352) 846-2000

Assistant Director of Education and Visitor Services
Jamie Creola, 273-2057

Volunteer Program Julie Crosby, 273-2055
Email: jcrosby@flmnh.ufl.edu

School Programs Jeanette Carlisle, 273-2026
(Docents) Diane Milner, 273-2030

Public Programs Kendra Lanza-Kaduce, 273-2064
Tiffany Ireland, 273-2061

Butterfly Rainforest Jeff Hansen, 273-1898
Mike Boulware, 273-2043

McGuire Center for
Lepidoptera & Biodiveristy (352) 392-5894

Research & Collections
(Dickinson Hall) (352) 392-1721

Mark Your Calendar!

April 1 – Volunteer Recognition Reception for All Active Volunteers

5:30-7:30 pm
Call (352) 273-2055

April 14 @4:30 p.m. – Deadline for Summer 2009 Junior Volunteer Applications

Applicants should be 12 years old prior to June 15. Applications are Available at the front desk of the Museum and on the web site:
www.flmnh.ufl.edu/volunteers/vol_juniors.htm
Call (352) 273-2055.

April 25 – Junior Volunteer Interviews

Information and interview time will be sent to all new applicants. Call (352) 273-2055.

April 19 through 25 – National Volunteer Week THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!!!

April 28 - Work of Heart Banquet

6:00 to 9:00 pm, Paramount Plaza Conference Center
The Florida Museum's James Pope Cheney Volunteer of the Year is nominated to receive an award at this county-wide event. For tickets or information, see Julie.
Call (352) 273-2055.

June 7 – Junior Volunteer Training

1:00 to 5:00 pm
Mandatory training for all 2009 junior volunteers.
Call (352)273-2055.

June 13 - Amazing Butterflies Exhibit Opens Through Sept. 7.

June 22 – Discovery Room Opens!