



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

aqua-notes

3125 Agricultural Center Drive
St. Augustine, FL 32092
904-824-4564



May, 2002

Mark your calendars...

- May 10—Estuary workshop for educators at Marineland. Call 904-461-4054 for information.
- May 11—Marine explorer program at Whitney Lab (see page 2)
- May 16—Duval Environmental Educators' Network meeting at Tree Hill—3:30 pm
- May 25—Safe Boating Day at The Landing (Jacksonville)
- More on back page!

Summer's around the corner!

What happened to spring? All of a sudden it's time for preparation for summer camps and fishing tournaments! It's hard to believe that I've been doing this job for a little over a year already—I'm having a great time and it has been very rewarding to see my programs take off. Inside this issue of Aqua Notes you'll find updates on the monofilament (fishing line) recycling program, which is gearing up to go state-wide, information on rip tides, some more teacher opportunities, a list of marinas with pumpout stations and information about sea oats and turtles. As always, if you have ideas for topics you'd like to see covered in the newsletter, please let me know!



Educators clean up a mock oil spill as part of the estuary workshop

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Maia McGuire
Marine Extension Agent

Right Whales have headed back north...

- 16 mother-calf pairs were spotted off Florida's east coast this year
- Right whales must eat at least 2000 lbs of copepods each day during the summer
- Look for new right whale license plates in 2003 (Designed by Wyland). Funds from the plates will go to help the Marine Resource Council's whale program
- Check out the new right whale website at www.rightwhaleweb.org
- The Northern Right Whale monitoring program phone number is 1-888-97-WHALE

Marine Explorer Program

Youth aged 14-20 are invited to participate in the Marineland Marine Explorer Program. This co-ed program operates under the “umbrella” of the Flagler County Boy Scout program but is open to all youth who are interested. Meetings are held monthly and participants learn about a variety of marine-related careers. Annual dues are \$10. Adult facilitators are Maia McGuire (Sea Grant), Terran Rosenberg (Marineland), Janet Zimmerman (Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve). Bill Buzzi (Whitney Lab) and Mike Beer (Flagler Boy Scouts). For information, call Mike at 386-257-2244.

4-H summer camps with marine themes

There will be a number of marine-related 4-H summer camps this year, coordinated by the Sea Grant agent:

- May 20-23—Nassau 4-H marine camp; ages 7-12, 9 am—noon (call 904-879-1019 for info)
- June 4-7—Duval 4-H Marine Discovery Camp; ages 7-12, 9 am—noon (call 904-387-8850 for info)
- June 17-20—St. Johns 4-H Bugs, Blossoms, Bats and Beaches camp; ages 7-12, 9 am—noon (call 904-824-4564 for info)
- June 24-28—Marine Science Camp at Marineland; ages 13-18, 9 am—3 pm. Bring a bag lunch each day. Students will design, complete and analyze data collected during research projects. Call your local 4-H office for information. Open to 4-H members in Flagler, St. Johns and Duval counties.



Fernandina Beach home to 45,000 new sea oats...

Thanks to the approximately 125 volunteers who showed up on March 29, 30 and April 20 to help plant 45,000 sea oats plants along the dunes at North Fernandina Beach. Volunteers donated about 250 hours of time, which equates to a planting rate of about 180 plants per hour—well done to all! The sea oats were purchased by a grant from the state to the city of Fernandina Beach and were planted to help stabilize a section of dunes that has been damaged by storms and constant foot traffic. More information about the importance of dunes can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.



Volunteers planting sea oats on Earth Day, April 20, 2002

Fishing line recycling program keeps on growing!

A total of 69 monofilament recycling stations have now been sponsored by groups or individuals in Nassau, Duval, St. Johns and Flagler counties. Sponsors since the last newsletter include Goodrich Real Estate (2), Gecko Latitudes, Amelia Island Sailing Club, Palm Coast Resort Marina, A Friend of Guana River State Park, Arlington Lions Club (4), Screen Arts (2) and TREES. The program is spreading to Putnam County (contact Sherrie Lowe at 386-329-3663 for info) and Clay County (contact Parks and Recreation Department at 904-284-3678). Thanks to the volunteers who are helping to empty the recycling stations. Anyone interested in finding out more about the program should call Maia at 904-461-4014 or 904-824-4564.



The recycling station at the Arlington Lions Club boat ramp

Monofilament recycling website coming soon!

Leesa Souto, who started the original monofilament recycling program in Brevard county, has received a grant from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to develop a monofilament recycling website. This website is expected to be online by early summer. The web address should be fishinglinerecycling.org and the website will contain information about starting monofilament recycling programs (including downloadable resources) as well as lists of existing recycling locations around the state.

Monofilament recycling workshops around the state

In addition to funding the website mentioned above, Leesa's grant is also going to fund four monofilament recycling workshops around the state this fall. The locations were selected based on their lack of existing recycling opportunities, so we will not be having one of these workshops in NE Florida. The locations and dates are as follows: August 14, Panama City; August 15, St. Petersburg; August 28, Ft. Pierce; August 29, Orlando. If you would like more information about these workshops, let Leesa know and she will put you on her mailing list. Her phone # is 321-723-4547 ext 200 and her e-mail is lsouto@mrresearch.org.

The flier below was produced for distribution to property rental managers in Fernandina Beach. The information in this flier will also be appearing in the "Guide to Responsible Tourism" which is being produced by Visit Florida. For information about Turtle Watch groups, contact Beth Libert (Flagler, 386-767-5257), Peter Lardner (Vilano Beach, 904-819-6229), Robert Stoll (Ponte Vedra, 904-285-1547), Sandy Stam (Ponte Vedra, 904-798-5327), Andy Rich (Southern Anastasia Island, 904-471-0116), Evelyn Stauber (St. Augustine Beach, 904-823-2670), Mort Hanson (Jacksonville Beach, 904-241-7631), Mary Duffy (Amelia Island, 904-261-2697) or the park rangers in the state parks.

Enjoy Florida's beaches, but please help protect the natural environment

In addition to Florida being a great place to enjoy the sun and surf, our beaches are important nesting areas for sea turtles and the sand dunes are home to many unique plants and animals. Dune vegetation (plants) like sea oats are very important. The roots and blades of these plants help hold the sand in place and reduce the amount of dune erosion. Sea oats are able to withstand harsh salty and windy conditions, but they cannot survive a great deal of trampling. Please help protect the sand dunes by using walkovers to access the beach rather than climbing over the dunes.



- Florida statute 370.041 prohibits harvesting of sea oats.
- Healthy, stable sand dunes help protect the houses from wind damage and prevent sand from blowing onto the road behind the dune.
- Vegetated dunes indicate to nesting sea turtles that they have reached the appropriate part of the beach for laying their eggs.

Please help protect Florida's sea turtles. Florida is the most important nesting ground for loggerhead turtles in the Western Hemisphere. The sea turtle nesting season in northeastern Florida runs from May 1 through October 31. During the sea turtle season, please remember a few simple things to help protect these magnificent creatures and their habitat:

- It is against the law to touch or disturb nesting sea turtles, hatchlings, or their nests. Sea turtles are protected by both the Federal Endangered Species Act and the Florida Marine Protection Act.



* Avoid going to the beach at night. If you must be on the beach at night, limit your walking and do not use flashlights or flash photography. The light may cause the female to abort the nesting process, or other sea turtles nearby may be discouraged from nesting if there are lights on the beach.

* While enjoying the beautiful beaches during the day, avoid disturbing marked sea turtle nests and please take your trash with when you leave the beach.

* If you see an injured or dead sea turtle, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Division of Law Enforcement at 1-888-404-FWCC or contact Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Turtle Stranding Staff by Pager at 1-800-241-4653 (ID#274-4867). Please be prepared to answer the following questions: What is the exact location of the animal? Is the turtle alive or dead? What is the approximate size of the turtle? Is the turtle marked with spray paint? (This indicates that the turtle has been documented.) What is the location of the closest access point to the turtle?

- If you have any questions, please contact the Sea Grant Extension Agent at the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service: 904-824-4564.

Marinas with pumpouts

Several boaters have asked me if I can tell them where the closest pumpout station is...well now I can! The following list of marinas comes from the Department of Environmental Protection and includes all marinas that have received grants to install or upgrade pumpouts. Note that some of these marinas are still in the process of making these upgrades...

Nassau: Amelia Island Yacht Basin, Tiger Point Marina

Duval: Beach Marine, Cedar Point Marina, Edwards Marina, Epping Forest Yacht Club, Goodby's Lake Marina, Jackie's Marina, Julington Creek Marina, Lakeshore Dry Storage, Lamb's Yacht Center, Mandarin Holiday Marina, Mayport Marina, Mayport Public Boat Ramp, Metropolitan Park Marina, Ortega River Boat Yard, Palm Cove Marina, Pier 68 Marina and Boatyard, Queen's Harbor Yacht Club, Sadler Point Marina, Seafarers Marina, Sisters Creek Marina Park

St. Johns: Camachee Cove Yacht Harbor, City of St. Augustine Municipal Marina, Conch House Marina Resort, English Landing Marina, Sea Tow St. Augustine, Sebastian Harbor Marina, St. Augustine Marine

Flagler: Palm Coast Marina



Fantastic inservice opportunities

- June 23-July 11, Biloxi Mississippi. COAST:PILOT. Includes stipend, graduate credit, free room and board. Requires a team of three teachers (1 elementary, 1 middle, 1 high school). See www.aquarium.usm.edu/coast for more info. Letters of support available from Sea Grant.
- August 11—16, MARE summer institute (Rutgers). This one's not free, but includes some amazing opportunities for a team of K-12 teachers. See marine.rutgers.edu for more information.

Teachers...

Summer beach safety

- If you are not a strong swimmer, stay out of the water, especially when waves are large. If you are about to be hit by a large wave, duck under it to reduce its impact.
- If caught in a rip current, stay calm. Do not fight a rip current; swim, tread water or float with the current parallel to the beach. Eventually the current will dissipate and you will be able to get back to shore.
- Remember that the sea floor is not level and smooth. Many children drown when they step off shallow sand bars into deeper water. Do not leave children unsupervised even in shallow water.



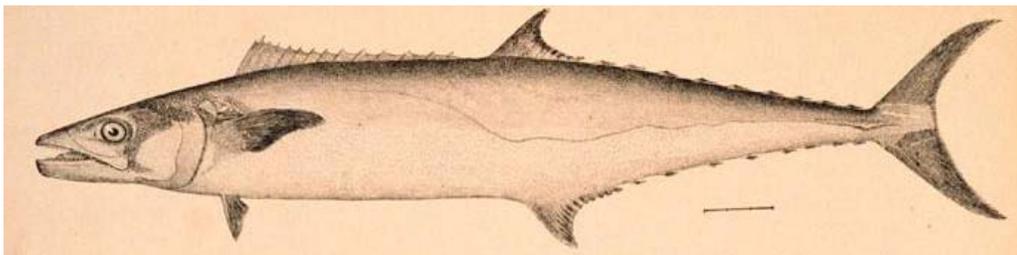
NE Florida Sea Grant Extension Program
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*Science serving
coastal Florida*

More “Mark your calendars”

- June 1—Ladies Let’s Go Fishing (Camachee Cove)
- June 19—Environmental Summit at World Golf Village (contact Patsy Heiss at admbcc2@co.st-johns.fl.us for more information)
- 4-H summer camps (see page 2)
- July 22-27—National Marine Educators Association Meeting (CT)
- Look for monofilament recycling information at the Nassau Kingfish Tournament (June 27-30) and the Jacksonville Kingfish Tournament (July 8-13)



Aqua Notes is provided as one of the many services relating to educational programs offered by the University of Florida/IFAS cooperative extension service. This publication is available in alternative format upon specific request. For more information about this document, contact Maia McGuire at the St. Johns county extension service at 904-824-4564