BAY REFLECTIONS

Restoring Our Bays

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Newsletter Fall 2010

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SBEP will be displaying its Enviroscope tool Saturday, December 11 at

State of the Bay 2010 Report Documents Significant Improvements



SBEP released the State of the Bay Report 2010 "Celebrating Paradise: Staying the Course" on Friday, September 24 as a community update on the progress made in carrying out the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).

Bradenton's Winter Wonderland Street Festival. The Enviroscope helps the public to better understand how various human actions in our watershed impacts on the vitality of Sarasota Bay. The special holiday event is set for 5-9pm at 456 Old Main Street just north of Manatee Avenue West. Highlights include a variety of exhibitors, food, crafts, music, "snow mountains" and Santa & Mrs. Claus.



click here



click here

Highlights include significant water quality improvements due to an estimated 64 percent reduction in nitrogen pollution since 1988, a 24 percent increase in seagrass coverage above 1950 levels, the return of scallops in 2008, restoration and enhancement of 650 acres of wetland habitat, creation of 28 new ecological parks, deployment of 3,000 artificial reef modules on nine new reefs, establishment of the first oyster re-colonization projects, creation of the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail, and implementation of a comprehensive public education program.

Even with notable progress, SBEP expects continued challenges in the watershed with the region's growing population. "A continuing emphasis of our outreach and education effort is reaching more individuals and families", said Mark Alderson, SBEP's Program Director. "Community-wide stewardship means more people reducing the impact of stormwater runoff, reducing pet waste that increase nitrogen levels, and reducing the use of fertilizers".

A reception held at the Powell Crosley estate in Sarasota celebrated the release of the report. More than 100 community leaders attended the event including representatives of SBEP's major partners and the various boards that provide guidance to the SBEP staff. Event sponsors included Scheda Ecological, Janicki Environmental, Inc., Jones Edmunds & Associates, Adams and Reese LLP, CS&L, Reef Innovations, Wilson Miller Stantec, and Kirk-Pinkerton.

Deborah Getzoff with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Chairperson of SBEP's Policy Board emphasized the vital contributions made by volunteers throughout Sarasota and Manatee County in helping SBEP fulfill its mission. "It's important to acknowledge the CAC and all of the volunteers who care enough to give their time and efforts to enhance Sarasota Bay", she said. "We couldn't achieve these positive results without their personal dedication".

Please contact Sara Kane, the SBEP Public Outreach Coordinator at sara@sarasotabay.org for a printed copy or CLICK HERE to download a digital version.

Free Bay Wise Kayak Tours Launch in December With Two Fun Educational Trips to Neal Preserve



SBEP's free Bay Wise Kayak Tour program begins Sunday, December 12 with an excursion to Neal Preserve. Ten trips are planned throughout Sarasota Bay through April. They include: Neal Preseve (12/12 and 12/18), Leffis and Jewfish Key (1/15 and 1/22), South Lido Mangrove Tunnels (2/5 and 2/19), Whitaker Bayou (3/5 and 3/19), and Lyons and Blackburn Bay (4/9 and 4/23).

Experienced kayaker and naturalist Brad Tanner will lead the fun educational trips. Brad is an American Canoe Association Instructor and the School Programs Coordinator for Mote Marine Laboratory. He's is also a member of SBEP's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The Bay Wise Kayak Tour program is a unique opportunity to discover the plants, animals, habitats, and other natural features that distinguish Sarasota Bay.

All of the kayak trips will be 2-3 hours in duration and will depart promptly at 9am. Pre-registration is required and space is limited to 15 people per excursion. Please register for one trip to give more people an opportunity to participate. Participants must provide their own kayak and gear. Many local companies rent kayaks and offer lessons for beginners. Please register online and notify SBEP if you need to cancel at info@sarasotabay.org. You can also add your name to a waiting list for trips that are already booked.

12/12/10	Neal Preserve	CLICK HERE
12/18/10	Neal Preserve	CLICK HERE
1/15/11	Leffis & Jewfish Key	CLICK HERE
1/22/11	Leffis & Jewfish Key	CLICK HERE
2/5/11	South Lido Mangrove Tunnels	CLICK HERE
2/19/11	South Lido Mangrove Tunnels	CLICK HERE
3/5/11	Whitaker Bayou	CLICK HERE
3/19/11	Whitaker Bayou	CLICK HERE
4/9/11	Lyons & Blackburn Bay	CLICK HERE
4/23/11	Lyons & Blackburn Bay	CLICK HERE

SBEP Provides Grant to Fund Green Roof System at Popular Bayfront Park in Downtown Sarasota



SBEP provided a grant to fund a green roof system on top of the public restroom located next to O'Leary's at Bayfront Park in downtown Sarasota. Sarasota's first green roof project in such a popular location is an opportunity to build awareness about how green roofs benefit the environment. The effort is part of a plan to support Sarasota County's Low Impact Development (LID) plan for mitigating stormwater runoff.

The green roof features a small plot of native plants including weeping lantana, wallyberg and aloe. Cisterns provided by Sarasota County have been installed to gather rainwater to irrigate the plants. The cisterns were painted by students from the Ringling College of Art and Design. Environmental sustainability is one of the City Commission's top five priorities.

Upcoming Events

NOTE: ***Our community has hundreds of events and activities every month that celebrate the natural beauty and diversity of our region's environment. The following is a sampling of upcoming events. SBEP also E-Mails periodic announcements about special events and programs that support SBEP's mission to restore and protect Sarasota Bay. The following events are free unless otherwise noted.***

Friday, December 3, 9-11am - *Photo Safari at Urfer Family Park* - Join local naturalists to learn tips about nature photography. Bring your camera. Contact Lynda Eppinger at 941-650-2487.

Friday, December 3, 6-8pm - *Starry Night Hike* - Get set for an enlightening evening with an easy stroll though Robinson Preserve, searching for planets, stars, and other heavenly bodies. Learn about the winter sky's constellations and hear the stories behind these inspiring designs. Reservations required at 941-748-4501, ext. 8.

Wednesday, December 8, 7:30-10:30pm - *Bird Walk at Shamrock Park* - Join Charlie Sample of the Venice Area Audubon for a guided walk to discover a variety of birds. Meet in the parking lot in front of the nature center.

Saturday, December 11, 9:30am-1pm - *Jiggs Landing Grand Opening* - Join the Natural Resources Department to celebrate the grand re-opening of one of Manatee County's most well-known historical places. Check out the new preserve, cabins, boat ramp, recreational amenities, and boardwalks along the beautiful Braden River.

Tuesday, December 14, 8:30-11:30am - *Manatee Audubon Society Birding Tour* - Birder Lucette Wombacher is back to host her popular monthly tours. Lucette will lead participants on a tour through Emerson Point's coastal hammock and mangrove habitats. Check out the "locals" as well as the migratory birds as they move south on their annual journey. Reservations required at 941-748-4501, ext. 4605.

Saturday, December 18, 9:30-11:30am - *Bay Life Search with Biologist Chuck Idelberger* - Call 941-650-2487.

Saturday, December 18, 1-3:30pm - *Bike and Hike* - Join our guides for a tour of Robinson and Riverview Pointe Preserves from the comfort of your bicycle. Participants will cycle at a leisurely pace and stop along the way to learn about the history and nature of Robinson Preserve, then after a short break head over to Riverview Pointe for a guided nature hike before biking back to Robinson. Reservations required at 941-742-5757, ext. 8.

Tuesday, December 21, 9-11am - *Casperson Beach Walk* - Call 941-488-4158.

Tuesday, December 21, 9-11am - *North Jetty Beach Walk* - Call 941-488-4158.

2010/2011 Bay Partners Grant Applications Available
Bay Partners Grants to promote environmental education, awareness and stewardship that improve the overall quality of Sarasota Bay and its tributaries are now available. Funding is available for projects that focus on Bay Education, Bay Restoration or Bay-Friendly Landscaping. Learn more online by visiting http://www.sarasotabay.org/nar-grants.html
Deadline for receiving applications is 4pm on March 1, 2011.

Volunteer Outreach - Thank You SBEP Bay Guardians

Bay Guardians Team up with Other Volunteers at Robinson Preserve



The SBEP Bay Guardians teamed up with Around
the Bend Nature Tours, Manatee County Natural
Resources, King Middle School, USF SustainaBULLS, and Girl Scout Troup 736 on October 16 for a fall planting at Robinson Preserve
in Bradenton. The volunteers planted 100 slash pine and 20 southern red cedars in an area that will eventually become a pine flatwoods beside the saltern habitat.



Dip Net Estuary Study at Ken Thompson Park Reveals Healthy Diversity of Marine Species

The SBEP Bay Guardians teamed up with Around the Bend Nature Tours on October 17 to catch critters in the grass flats of Sarasota Bay at Ken Thompson Park. Some of the species included a sea horse, a pair of sea urchins, crown conchs, tulip snails, baby blue crabs, spider crabs, a cornet fish, and lots of shrimp, pipefish and pinfish. According to Karen Fraley with Around the Bend Nature Tours, the most exciting find was a scrawled cowfish and a box fish with lovely blue spots.

The diversity of species reflects well on the health of Sarasota Bay. The variety of species found during the recent dip net study is more robust than other parks closer to Longboat Pass. In addition to the hands on dip netting effort, Karen and her staff emphasized the importance of reducing stormwater runoff and pet waste.

Bay Guardians Partner with Local Groups for Whitaker Bayou Cleanup

A team of 55 volunteers from SBEP's Bay Guardians, Keep Sarasota County Beautiful, Ringling School of Art & Design, and New College worked together on September 25 to clean up Whitaker Bayou Greenway. The effort was part of International Coastal Cleanup Day and the National Estuaries Day Celebration. The cleanup took place on land and in the bayou itself. Collected items included bicycle parts, blankets, hats, gloves, and familiar plastic items. Some of the volunteers also removed exotic invasive plants along the shoreline including air potatoes and Brazilian pepper.

Join the SBEP Bay Guardians Today to Help Restore and Protect Sarasota Bay

You can help restore and protect Sarasota Bay by joining the SBEP Bay Guardians. Sign up today to stay informed about upcoming volunteer projects and fun activities throughout 2011. The Bay Guardians is an important and fun volunteer outlet for individuals, families, students, and seniors. Make a difference while learning about our natural environment. Please contact Sara Kane at sara@sarasotabay.org.



SBEP Promotes Medication Take Back Effort at Inaugural Environmental Fair at Local USF Campus



SBEP partnered with the USF Sarasota Manatee campus student government association to host a Medication Take Back effort on Saturday, November 13. The event was part of the first environmental fair ever held at the local USF campus. Nine pounds of medications were collected and safety disposed by the USF Campus Police. That included more than 2,000 pills including popular medications such as paxil, lortab, hydocodone, benadryl, and zyrtec.

The effort to promote safe disposal of prescription medication is a response to pharmaceuticals being detected in the environment. Even small concentrations could have an adverse impact on people and marine life. More than four billion prescriptions are filled in the United States every year, and it has been estimated that as much as a third of the dispensed medication goes unused.

Please remind people you know NOT to flush unused, unwanted and expired medications down the drain or toilet. Sarasota and Manatee County have approved places to dispose of medications safely including the local Sherriff's Offices.

Tribute to Jack Taylor (1932-2010); SBEP Also Acknowledges Former CAC Members and Local Conservationists Chaney, Hegener and Morrill



Our community lost a great friend and respected environmentalist with the passing of Jack Taylor on September 21. Jack led the SBEP Kayak Wise Tour Program for many years and served on the CAC. He inspired numerous people with his knowledge and passion for Sarasota Bay and wildlife in every form. A well attended Celebration of Life service was held in his honor at Mote Marine Laboratory on October 29.

Jack was born October 29, 1932 in Philadelphia. He earned a Ph.D. in Marine Biology from the University of Florida. In addition to contributing his expertise to SBEP's kayak program, Jack was also active with several conservation groups. Donations may be made in his memory to the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center in Englewood. Jack Taylor was a thoughtful and gentle man who will be missed by many people in our community.

Three other respected members of the CAC passed away this year. Don Chaney was a dedicated conservationist who supported many eco-initiatives including the Sierra Club's Red Tide Campaign. Charles Hegener was a lifelong outdoor enthusiast who was dedicated to preserving Florida's natural environment and promoting the expansion of neighborhood parks. John Morrill was a longtime biology professor at New College of Florida. He led the school's environmental studies program during the mid 1970's and was named professor emeritus after his retirement in 2000. The SBEP is grateful for the distinguished service and dedication of these exceptional individuals.

Spotlight on Bay Partners Grant Recipient: Bay Haven Basics Plus - *The Garden of Reign*

Bay Haven Basics Plus and New College worked together to complete The Garden of Reign, a bioswale project that transformed a barren spot between the old and new school buildings on campus into a garden of 38 diverse plants.



The project involved leadership by Dr. Theresa "T" Ramsey and the support of Bay Haven students, parents and teachers including Rolf Hanson, Shelia Sheard and Dr. Deanine Picciano. Other supporters included the Indian Beach/Sapphire Shores Neighborhood Association, the University of Florida/Sarasota County Government Extension Office, the New College Biology Department, and Hazeltine Nursery.

Some examples of suitable projects include creating a wildlife garden, replacing invasive species with native plants, installing signage that promotes Bay education, or installing a rain garden or bioswale. Visit the Neighborhood Action page at www.sarasotabay.org to see a list of the grant recipients from the current year

The deadline for submitting applications is 4pm on Tuesday, March 1, 2011. The winter edition of Bay Reflections will have more details about the program and application process.You can download a copy of the application. CLICK HERE

Applications are available for Bay Partners Grants and this is a good time to plan projects for 2011. The SBEP Bay Partners Grants promote environmental education, awareness, and stewardship that improve the overall quality of Sarasota Bay and its tributaries. Projects should focus on Bay Education, Bay Restoration or Bay-Friendly Landscaping.

SBEP in the News

September 22 - *Pelican Press* - "Bay Slowly Showing Progress". read article

September 23 - *SNN6* - "Release of the State of the Bay 2010" interview with Sara Kane.

September 24 - *Herald Tribune* - Front page article titled "Water is Better and Habitat Richer in Sarasota Bay" with quotes from SBEP staff Mark Alderson and Dr. Jay Leverone. read article

September 24 - *FloridaTrend.com* - "Water Quality is Better, Habitat Richer in Sarasota Bay" referencing the release of the State of the Bay Report 2010. read article

September 24 - *WUSF Radio* - "The State of Sarasota Bay - Stormwater Pollution Still a Problem". read article

September 24 - *WWSB/ABC 7* - Evening news report indicating Sarasota Bay is in good shape includes a number of sound bites from Sara Kane. CLICK HERE

September 25 - *Bradenton Herald* - Front page article "Sarasota Bay Bouncing Back" quotes Mark Alderson and Pat Glass. read article

September 30 - *WSLR* - Radio interview on Sustainable Sarasota program with Sara Kane about the State of the Bay Report 2010.

November 13 - *WWSB/ABC 7* - Evening report about SBEP Medication Take Back effort at the Environmental Fair held at the local USF campus. CLICK HERE

November 2010 - *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* - Article titled "Southwestern Florida Estuary Reborn" with quotes from SBEP Scientist Dr. Jay Leverone. Publication is a peer-reviewed journal published by the Ecological Society of America. read article

November 2010 - *Florida Specifier: Practical Information for Environmental Professionals* - Article titled "SBEP Report: Bay Environment Improving".

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program Hosts National ANEP Conference in Punta Gorda

SBEP participated at the annual conference for the Association of National Estuary Programs (ANEP) November 8-11 in Punta Gorda. Many of the 28 national estuaries in the United States were represented at the conference hosted by the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program. Breakout sessions were organized around two tracks: technical areas and public education and outreach. The conference provided SBEP staff members with an opportunity to interact with government representatives and exchange ideas with colleagues around the nation.

Dr. Jay Leverone, SBEP's Staff Scientist, made a group presentation about oyster habitat assessment and restoration in Sarasota Bay. Sara Kane, SBEP's Public Outreach Coordinator, made a group presentation about SBEP's creative use of brochures to promote various public information campaigns.

SBEP Selects Triple 3 Marketing for Contract

SBEP recently selected Triple 3 Marketing to provide marketing and communication support on a multi-year contract. Sarasota-based Triple 3 Marketing is owned by Randall Moore. Randy published two local magazines from 1999 to 2009. He sold Positive Change Media in April 2009 before launching Triple 3 Marketing. He also served as the executive

director and producer of the E-Fest Green Living Music & Arts Festival, one of Florida's largest green living events. Learn more at www.triple3marketing.com.

CAC Member Profile

Brad Tanner



Brad Tanner has an affinity for the natural environment and water related recreation. In addition to serving on the CAC and leading the SBEP Bay Wise Kayak Tours, Brad has served the past six years as the School Programs Coordinator for Mote Marine Laboratory.

Brad was born in Morristown, New Jersey and he moved to Sarasota from Wilmington, North Carolina in June 2004. He has led hundreds of kayak tours for people of all ages to expand awareness about the wonders of coastal habitats and marine life.

Brad earned a master level certificate from the University of South Florida in Informal Science Education and he also completed courses at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington. His commitment to learning included an opportunity to travel to Indonesia in 2009 with Dr. Eugene Clark, the founder of Mote Marine, where he studied new fish species and provided education programs for children.

He is the past president and current executive board member with the Florida Association of Science Teachers (FAST), board member with the National Association of Science Teachers, and a member of the Florida Marine Science Educators Association. Some of his other interests include scuba diving, hiking, boating, skiing, traveling, and jogging. He has completed two marathons, four half marathons and a handful of triathlons. Brad joined the CAC to help promote conservation and protect Sarasota Bay.

Have a Great Thanksgiving



Thank you to Sarasota cartoonist Rick Hotton for permission to use one of his inspiring cartoons. This particular strip is a reminder that the things we do today in support of Sarasota Bay are having a positive impact on the future of our region. Holy Mole is featured in newspapers, magazines and websites throughout the US, Australia, Great Britain, and Canada. Local media outlets featuring Holy Mole include the *Bradenton Herald*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Lakewood Ranch Herald*, and *Positive Impact Magazine.* Learn more at www.facebook.com/holymolecartoon.

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