

BAY REFLECTIONS

SBEP Newsletter - May 2015 Edition

Welcome Summer!

In this edition: BG at Phillippi Estate Park, Dr. Crosby Interview, Farewell Sara Kane, Blue Dolphin Awards, Bay Roamers Guide, BG at Bowlees Creek Island, Bay Partner Grant Project, Craig Bridges Interview, and Upcoming Events. Thank you for supporting the SBEP mission and its various programs.

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Bay Guardians Remove 2,500 Pounds of Air Potato



The Bay Guardians hosted a volunteer event at Philippi Estate Park on Saturday, April 18. More than 70 volunteers contributed to the air potato roundup. Participating groups included students from high schools throughout Sarasota County from the Community Youth Development Program. Other volunteers included Brookside Middle School students, a girl scout troop, JDubbs Brewery's Street Team and other local residents.

The volunteers collected 2,462 pounds of air potato and prizes were given for the smallest, biggest, weirdest-looking, and most air potatoes collected! The air potato is an invasive vine that covers and shades beneficial native plants. The vine grows a large tuber that looks like a hanging potato. Volunteers enjoyed a

picnic lunch following the project. **Visit Bay Guardian page**.





Dr. Michael Crosby Shares His Passion About Mote



Dr. Crosby with the founder of Mote, the late Dr. Eugenie Clark and Mote's President Emeritus Dr. Kumar Mahadevan. (Photo credit Mote Marine Laboratory).

Michael Crosby, PhD was interviewed recently for Sarasota Bay Today, the Bay-centric website sponsored by SBEP. Dr. Crosby is the President and CEO of Mote Marine Laboratory. He answers questions from Randy Moore regarding Mote accomplishments, current projects, future plans and some of the issues impacting on the Gulf of Mexico and oceans around the world. **Read the interview**.

Sarasota Bay Today features 24 interviews with area scientists, researchers, resources managers, engineers, educators, nature photographers, nonprofit leaders, and elected representatives.

New Adventures for Sara Kane

After five years as Public Outreach Manager, Sara Kane is leaving the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP). Sara is completing her masters in Global Sustainability at the University of South Florida. Sara is going to Brisbane, Australia this summer to work with the **International River Foundation** and complete research focusing on watershed management and policies. When Sara returns in June, she will begin working at Sarasota County as the Sustainability Outreach Coordinator.



While at SBEP, Sara has energized outreach programs and community engagement. Under her guidance, several new outreach and education programs were developed; including the SBEP **Bay Guardians** Volunteer program, **Sarasota Bay Water Festival**, and the **Blue Dolphin Award Program**. Since 2010, almost 2,000 volunteers have contributed to Sarasota Bay Guardians restoration projects. Kane spearheaded production of the SBEP **Bay Repair Kit**, **Rain Garden and Bioswale** brochure, **State of the Bay** reports and Florida's Southwest Gulf Coast **Bay Roamers Guide**. She also managed the Sarasota Bay **Economic Value Study**, **Climate Ready Estuaries** projects for sea level rise education, and numerous grant projects.

Sara says she will greatly miss working with all SBEP volunteers, especially Bay Guardians and the SBEP's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). These volunteers from Sarasota and Manatee Counties have been tireless in their efforts to improve the community's understanding of and appreciation for Sarasota Bay. Kane credits her work with the CAC, SBEP partners, SBEP staff and contractors, school groups, and local community leaders for enhancing her interest in water quality management and policies and encouraging environmental stewardship.

"Working with volunteers and local youth is something I'm very proud of and was the most fulfilling part of my job," Kane explains. "I'm impressed with this community and their dedication to the health of Sarasota Bay. I look forward to continuing work in this region to help improve our environment, economy, and quality of life."

We wish her all the best as she undertakes this exciting new adventure. Her last day with SBEP will be Friday, May 8th.

Blue Dolphin Awards Presented to Sherri Swanson with HDR and Scott and Virginia Lloyd-Jones



The Blue Dolphin Award acknowledges local champions of Sarasota Bay. Sherri Swanson and Scott and Virginia Lloyd-Jones will be joining eight other individuals and groups that have been honored with **Blue Dolphin Awards** since 2012.

Sherri Swanson works as a senior environmental scientist for HDR Engineering, Inc. She's being recognized for her volunteer support of the Sarasota Bay Water Festival, the region's largest public event focused on the welfare and recreational amenities of Sarasota Bay. Sherri also serves on the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

Scott and Virginia Lloyd-Jones are retirees from Sun City Center being recognized for their ongoing volunteer support of the award-winning SBEP Bay Guardians Program. The couple has participated in numerous volunteer outings throughout Manatee and Sarasota County. The Bay Guardians are the largest volunteer organization in the region focused on area projects that benefit Sarasota Bay.



The SBEP **Blue Dolphin Awards** were launched in 2012. Prior winners include: Martha B. King Middle School in Bradenton, Jack Merriam, the former environmental manager for Sarasota County, AMI Turtle Watch and Shorebird Monitoring, Raindrop Cisterns, a company focused on rainwater harvesting, Charles Edwards, a retired biomedical researcher and long-term volunteer with the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee, Denise and Don Elliott with Sunbow Bay Condo Association on Anna Maria Island, Lee Fox formerly with Save Our Seabirds, Inc., and Sean Russell representing the nonprofit Stow It Don't Throw It Project.

Bay Roamer's Guide Launched Throughout Our Region

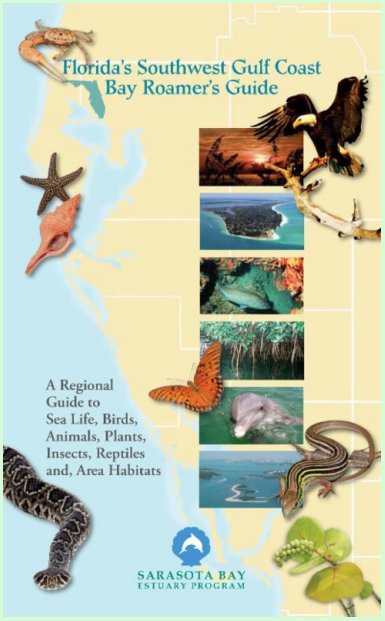
SBEP has released the Florida's Southwest Gulf Coast Bay Roamers Guide in print and **digital formats**.

The colorful spiral bound guide includes multiple fold-outs that are packed with photos of native habitat, birds and aquatic life. The high quality resource provides information for all ages on key subjects related to Sarasota Bay and our region's watershed.

Complimentary copies of Bay Roamer's Guide have been distributed to area schools, tourism offices, local events and other community resource centers. We we're able to print 1,000 copies thanks to donations from Wilson Conservation Trust, Manatee County and Sarasota County.

The Bay Roamer's Guide can be used by school teachers, adult education programs, realtors, economic development organizations, tourism bureaus, vacation rentals, hotels, local businesses and the general public.

Visit the SBEP Brochure Page to download the entire document. You can also download individual sections found on our **Teacher Resources** page and **Education Resources** page.



Bay Guardians Clean Up Bowlees Creek Island



The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) visited Bowlees Creek Island on Saturday, March 28 to remove garbage and debris.

Bowlees Creek Island is located near the boundary between Sarasota and Manatee County. Project partners included SUP Sarasota, Suncoast Waterkeeper, Sarasota Birding Guide, Florida Audubon Society and Around the Bend Nature Tours.

The 28 volunteers paddled kayaks to the island, which is known for catching debris flowing into Sarasota Bay from nearby Bowlees Creek. The volunteers filled bags of garbage and debris before being treated to a picnic lunch. **Bay Guardians love Sarasota Bay**.

Bay Partner Grant Project Completed by Bayshore High School Marine Science Honors Students



This SBEP Bay Partner Grant gave students an opportunity for hands on learning about Sarasota Bay and its aquatic life. It also increased their awareness of problems facing estuarine environments.

The grant allowed students to become comfortable in an aquatic environment. Some of my students had never waded in salt water and had intense fear of walking in the water.

As their familiarity with the water improved, this fear lessened dramatically over the span of the trips. Students also learned why estuarine ecosystems should be protected, and what their role as stewards is, in facilitating this protection throughout their lives. Visit the **Bay Partners Grant page** to learn more.

Craig Bridges with Sarasota Sailing Squadron Shares His Passion for Sailing on Sarasota Bay Today Website



Craig Bridges was interviewed recently for Sarasota Bay Today, the Bay-centric website sponsored by SBEP. Craig is the operations manager of the Sarasota Sailing Squadron and the interview by Randy Moore goes into the history of the squadron as well as Craig's passion about sailing and the sailing community. **Read the interview**.

Sarasota Bay Today was launched by SBEP's marketing contractor Triple 3 Marketing in 2011 to provide information about the people involved with the ongoing efforts to restore, protect and study Sarasota Bay.

SBEP News Briefs

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Like us on FB. We've reached 950 likes and our goal is to reach 1,000 page likes.

SBEP Public Meetings
The next CAC meeting will be 4:30pm on Monday, June 1 at Dan McClure Auditorium.

The next Policy Board meeting will take place at 1pm on Friday, May 8 at the Manatee County Administration Building, 1112 Manatee Ave. W, BCC Conference Room (9th floor). **SBEP Online Calendar**.

Final Reflection with Dotty Motta

Dotty Motta enjoys taking the trails less traveled to explore and capture images of diverse and easy to overlook species of life.

See more of Dotty's work on the **Creative Expressions Gallery**.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset - Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the U.S. that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance."

