



# The Ghost Writer

**FEBRUARY 2014**

**NEWSLETTER of the Friends of Fakahatchee, "Home of the Ghost Orchid"**

## EVENTS

**MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS  
for our activities at  
[www.orchidswamp.org](http://www.orchidswamp.org)**

### **WET WALK & TRAM TOUR**

**Wed, Feb 26, 9:30am**

**Thurs, March 6, 9:30am**

\$60/person, Reservations Required.

*See article at right for details.*

### **GHOST RIDER TRAM TOURS**

**Tuesdays and 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 10am**

\$25/person, Reservations Required.

### **COASTAL CRUISES**

**Tues, Feb 18, 2:30pm**

**Wed, March 19, 2:30pm**

\$75/person, Reservations Required.

### **ART IN THE PRESERVE**

**Saturday, February 15**

**Saturday, March 15**

**Saturday, April 19**

*See article in right column.*

### **BOARD MEETING**

**Sunday, February 16, 10 a.m.**

Ranger Station, Copeland

### **ULTRA MARATHON**

**Saturday, February 22**

*see [www.evergladesultras.com](http://www.evergladesultras.com)*

### **FAKAHATCHEE ORCHIDS:**

#### **LOST & FOUND IN CUBA**

**Saturday, March 1, 5:00pm**

**Reservations Required.**

*See article in right column.*

**You can download the handy FOF  
events calendar from our website  
[www.orchidswamp.org](http://www.orchidswamp.org)**

## **FAKAHATCHEE ORCHIDS: LOST & FOUND IN CUBA**

Two local biologists well known to the Friends of Fakahatchee for both their scientific and presentation skills will team up on **Saturday, March 1**, at Rookery Bay for a program about their efforts to restore rare and extinct orchids to Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park.

Dennis Giardina (*right in photo*), Everglades Region Biologist for Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, and Mike Owen (*left in photo*), Park Biologist for Fakahatchee Strand, have traveled to Cuba in their quest for a seed source of Fakahatchee's two "lost" orchid species. Their colorful photographic presentation ranges from today's Havana to the wilds of Cuba and Southwest Florida.

All proceeds from this event sponsored by the Friends of Fakahatchee will support their orchid restoration work. Admission of \$50 per person includes hearty appetizers and beverages. Advance reservations are required.



## **"BEST OF BOTH WORLDS"**

The new Wet Walk & Tram Tour begins with a three mile ride on the Ghost Rider tram to the site of the swamp walk. After about 90 minutes of walking in the knee-high water through the swamp, participants board the tram for the return trip. Naturalists leading the group will share their insights about the Fakahatchee's flora and fauna on both wet and dry portions of the adventure.

"This new offering combines elements of our longer tram tours and swamp walks to give participants a great introduction to the Fakahatchee," says volunteer naturalist Glen Stacell.

Reservations are required. See our website to book online.

## **En Plein Air**

There were 8 attendees at Art in the Preserve on January 18 in the Fakahatchee Strand. Weather was beautiful. Lots of subject material to choose from. Great camaraderie and fun. Everyone is welcome. For info and to book places, call Karen Relish at 239-695-2886 or email Elizabeth Smith at [lizardart@gmail.com](mailto:lizardart@gmail.com).



## **LOST & FOUND IN CUBA – INSERT**

If you're fascinated by Fakahatchee orchids and curious about Cuba, then you'll want to learn more in our saga of trying to restore plants that are extinct here but thriving on the Hispanic island. Biologist Dennis Giardina has written about his third visit there in the attachment to this issue of *The Ghost Writer* entitled "Lost & Found in Cuba, Part IV".

And, on March 1<sup>st</sup> you can find out what happened! Did he get a coveted seed pod to nurture? *See the article at the top of this page for details.*

Visit [www.orchidswamp.org](http://www.orchidswamp.org) for events, newsletters, glorious photos, and more.

## *M.O.ZONE - Seen Around the Strand*

On 12/10/13, around 3:30PM, Howard Lubel, Rose Flynn, and Cynthia & Sam Peters observed an adult **Florida Panther** going to the north within the first two miles of the drive. On 12/10/13, at 10:45AM, Glen Stacell, volunteer, observed a **Limpkin** and a **Yellow-Crowned Night Heron** in the north ditch off of Janes Scenic Drive (JSD). On 12/17/13, in the afternoon, Mike Owen, Biologist, heard a **Downy Woodpecker** and **Great Crested Flycatcher** around Gate 2. On 12/18/13, at 1:08PM, Mike Owen and Steve Bass, Park Ranger, heard 2 **Sandhill Cranes** about a half mile north of the shop. On 12/23/13, in the evening, Mike Owen observed a **Black Bear** and 2 cubs off of SR-29.

On 1/4/14, at 10:10AM, Mike Owen and Donna Glann-Symth observed 2 **Wood Storks**, 2 **Belted Kingfishers**, 1 **Great Blue Heron**, 2 **Great Egrets**, 13 Juvenile **White Ibis** just north of Gate 1 and on JSD 4 **Robins**, 1 **Great Crested Flycatcher** and heard an **American Crow**. On 1/5/14, at 8:26AM, Mike Owen observed an **Eastern Phoebe** on a wire in the Park Headquarter area. 1/14/14, between 8:15AM-9:15AM, Dick Brewer, volunteer, observed 32 **Woodstorks**, 13 **White Ibis**, 6 **Great Egrets** in a swale and road by wet prairie and 5 more storks were in the tops of Cypress trees. In the trees of the hammocks of the wet prairie he noted **Yellow-Rumped** and **Palm Warblers**. He also observed an **Osprey**, **Pied-billed Grebes**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Anhingas**, **Double-Crested Cormorants**, and **Great Blue Herons** near the lake off the drive.

On 1/18/14, around 11AM, Jim Gilbert, visitor and artist, observed an adult **American Bald Eagle** and later a **Short-tailed Hawk**, white morph kettling with **Vultures** over Lake Gloria. On 1/20/14, in the mid-morning, a visitor reported observing an **American Kestrel**, 11 **White Pelicans**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, **Turkey** and **Black Vultures**, **Great Crested Flycatcher** and 2 **Ground Doves** while in Dan House Prairie. On 1/22/14, Tom Trotta and daughter Jennifer Trotta observed a **Big Cypress Fox Squirrel** (see photo) in a Cypress Head off the drive. On 1/23/14, around 3PM, Melissa Miano, Park Ranger and Volunteer Coordinator, observed 2 **Roseate Spoonbills** south of US-41 in the marsh.

On 1/23/13, near sunset, Dick and Edite Hughes, volunteers, observed over 100 **White Pelicans** flying west in V-formations as viewed from the East River Canoe Launch area. On 1/25/14, at approximately 4:00PM, FOF members, Rose Flynn and Howard Lubel saw an **Everglades Mink** cross Janes Scenic Drive from south to north approximately 1/2 mile west of gate 3. On the same day at approximately 5:45PM, Rose and Howard saw a sub-adult **Black Bear** 50 feet east of gate 7 on JSD.

On 1/28/14, at about 9:30 on a foggy misty morning, in the flooded fields on the south side of US-41 about 3 miles west of SR-29, Marya Repko observed **Spoonbills** (pink birds) mixed in with huge flocks of **Ibis** and **Egrets** (not sure, lots of white birds, was trying to keep my eye on the road) plus at least 5 cars which had discharged **tourists** with cameras. On the return journey, about 1:45PM, the fog had lifted but most of the birds were still there and the number of cars had doubled.

If you want to report sightings, contact Park biologist Mike Owen or his assistant Karen Relish by phone at (239) 695-2886 or by email at FOF\_90@hotmail.com



Thanks to Jennifer Trotta for this photo of a Big Cypress Fox Squirrel seen (see MOZone above).



Thanks to Jim Woodard for this photo taken on January 5 along Janes Scenic Drive.

### **PANTHER EVENT**



Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge, just up the road from the Fak, are having an informative evening on **Thursday, February 6**, at 5:30 p.m. at the Conservancy in Naples.

One of the speakers will be Larry Richardson who has 35 years of experience as a wildlife biologist. For info, contact FOFPR at [info@floridapanther.org](mailto:info@floridapanther.org).

## BOARDWALK REPORT

by Linda Koreny

The weather is finally warming again and, it seems to me, that I am seeing more activity at the Boardwalk both with our wildlife and with many, many more visitors.

For some reason I particularly enjoy seeing a **Barred Owl**. Perhaps because they seem to be unafraid and curious of people and I often hear them calling "*who cooks for you, who cooks for you all*". For several days this month in the late afternoon one Barred Owl chose to perch on a branch just 10 feet off the Boardwalk right over that small eco-system created when the cypress tree fell over, a short distance past the Bald Eagles' nest. Each time he/she appeared to be intently hunting for something in the water but would occasionally turn its head all the way around just to check to see if we were still there and watching which, of course, we were. Barred Owls are one of only two Florida owls with dark eyes and it gets its name from the brown cross-bars on its chest and neck.



Cathy Hatch and I volunteer on the Boardwalk on different days but we are both noticing quite a number of **Wood Storks** around the 'gator pond at the observation platform. On Tuesday, January 28, Cathy counted 13 of them. She also remarked about the number of **Robins** chirping and flying about.

Maybe due to this now-gorgeous weather but the day before I was delighted to hear the forest alive with a chorus of many, many song birds especially in the area near our very tall Royal Palm tree near the end of the walk.

Though I have not yet seen them myself, a frequent Boardwalk visitor shared that they were certain that there is more than one eaglet in our **Florida Bald Eagles'** nest this season because they distinctly heard the chirping of more than one. I was recently pointing out an adult on the "watching tree" when a lot of chatter began between the two adults (one in the nest) and then they suddenly changed places, a cool sight to witness.

The **Ospreys**, too, appear to have young in their nest again this season. There is no sign to mark the viewing spot but you can see the nest when standing just to the right of the Pond Apple Tree sign shortly after the 2<sup>nd</sup> bench.

Two adult **American Alligators** are still sharing the pond at the observation platform while a couple of juvenile ones are still hanging out in the pond just at the beginning of the boards. Also at the Pond, in addition to our usual company of wading birds, a **Black-Crowned Night Heron** can be seen in the tree on the far side.



If you haven't visited the Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk for a while – or even if you have – today is the day, bring your binoculars and your camera and enjoy a walk among our wildlife.



### VOLUNTEER AT EVERGLADES ULTRAS

#### Enjoy the Race Experience Without Running It!

More than 200 runners will be racing 50 miles or 50 kilometers (31 miles) or 25 km (15.6 miles) in the Fakahatchee on **Saturday, February 22**. Supporting these athletes is a gratifying experience for volunteers, and a vital one for the runners. It would be very difficult to complete these distances without the great help that aid stations throughout the park provide. Volunteering at the finish line and at the post-race celebration under the big tent, at packet pick-up on Friday afternoon, and Saturday morning, setting up the course and transporting people and gear along Janes Scenic Drive, and providing medical support are all crucial to the race's success, are just some of the jobs waiting for you to say, "Yes!"

To volunteer go to the "Volunteers" page on the race website, [www.evergladesultras.com](http://www.evergladesultras.com). Scroll down and click on the green "Signup to Volunteer" button. There you will select the job, location and hours of your choice, and complete volunteer "registration". Questions? Contact Race Director Bob Becker anytime, at 954-439-2800, or [bob@ultrasportsllc.com](mailto:bob@ultrasportsllc.com).

### FOF BOARD ADOPTS NEW LOGO

The Friends of Fakahatchee Board voted to adopt a new logo for the organization at its meeting on Sunday, January 12.



"We were looking for a simple logo that would reproduce well in both color and black and white," said Bruce Bunch, who heads the board's communication committee. "We also wanted a simple design that could be reproduced by embroidery or silk screening on hats and other apparel."

Bunch said the decision to use the ghost orchid as the focal point of the new logo was a "no brainer" given its worldwide prominence. The new logo was derived from the embroidered Fakahatchee Strand design currently used on polo shirts and hats sold by the Friends. Board member Patrick Higgins worked with the online firm Logoworks to develop the new design over the last two months. The new logo will appear on FOF's printed materials as existing supplies are exhausted.

### MSD Festival

Park Manager Renee Rau is among the speakers at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Festival at the Museum of the Everglades, February 18-22. Other familiar Fakahatchee names on the program are Mike Owen, Jack Shealy, and Dennis Giardina. For info, see [www.evergladesmuseum.org](http://www.evergladesmuseum.org) or call (239) 695-0008.

## ***President's Message***

by Francine Stevens

**Communication was the topic** of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida State Parks Friends & Alliances Annual Forum and Workshop held January 17-19. **Tom Maish, Patrick Higgins, Rose Flynn** and myself represented the Friends of Fakahatchee at this Workshop.

**From Tom:** This was my 4th statewide CSO meeting. What is apparent is that the FOF is pretty well known and held in high regard by our peers. People come to ask how we handled a certain issue or what advice we can give them to improve their own CSO.

There were many positive comments on our display board; especially Jay Staton's DVD "Catching the Fak a Habit" that we kept up on our video monitor. It was good that we had new Board members attending to glean all the ideas that were presented.

**From Patrick:** I thought the Friends & Alliances Workshop was a great opportunity to look at the bigger picture vs. the nitty-gritty we focus on at our Park level, as well as share ideas and network and advocate for Fakahatchee, at both the District and Park Director levels.

**From Rose:** Everybody on the Board needs to go to these workshops!

**And from me:** Attending my first workshop brought a new awareness of how valuable the CSO's are to the State Parks and I certainly side with Rose that all Board members should go to the workshops so they can experience for themselves the sharing of information between CSO's. One hot topic was advocacy versus lobbying; as it turns out most CSO's are struggling with walking the fine line between the two. We can expect to see a change regarding lobbying in the CSO Handbook under revision and due out in the fall.

**Donald Forgione Florida Park Service Director**, was present at all times and made himself extremely available for one-on-one conversation; he certainly gave me plenty of his time to talk Fakahatchee business and I also know he gave **Tom Maish** plenty of time to talk over the new Boardwalk Cracker Cabin visitor-center design and, in case you are not aware, the Boardwalk project is one of the three top projects of the Florida State Parks!



**Patrick Higgins, Rose Flynn, Francine Stevens with Park Service Director Donald Forgione at the CSO workshop. Tom Maish was there, too, but not in the photo.**

**ELECTION** is just around the corner again – time goes by fast when you're involved with the FOF Board. I'm very very proud of the current Board and I do brag that I have the best Board a President could wish for. That said I have a priority on my wish list for the Board going forward and so I'm reaching out to the membership for one particular responsibility to fulfill and it's the financial responsibility. The Board will need a Treasurer as well as more members on the Financial Committee so if you love accounting I would love to have you assist FOF in maintaining its good financial position and financial record keeping.

In closing, the more diverse a Board the better it is for the strength of the organization – in plain English that means putting the right people on the right job. Some folks like to work in the field, some like to teach, some work on their PC, others thrive preparing for events or selling merchandise or raising funds. Luckily we have a spot for everyone. When folks do what they like to do, it comes easy and doesn't feel like work – volunteering should be easy!

## **Annual Fund Contributions Top \$14,000**

With all the envelopes opened and checks deposited, this year's Annual Fund campaign raised a record \$14,550 from 90 contributors. "Both the total and the average donation of about \$160 were impressive," noted FOF President Francine Stevens.

Last year, the campaign raised a total of \$9,027 from 56 donors for a variety of park needs. This year the drive focused on one need – rock for the rutted and potholed park roads. The money raised this year will purchase tons of gravel to smooth the way for park visitors and our Ghost Rider Tram.

"The park staff is really grateful for our response to their needs," said Stevens. "Thanks to everyone who contributed. And to those who were not able to, there's always next year."

Obviously the project consists of more than just trucks dumping the rock on the road so if you have time to volunteer assisting Park staff in their continued effort to get the job done, please reach out to Melissa at the park office on (239) 253-6372.

## BOARDWALK VISION REPORT

by Tom Maish, Committee Chair

The FOF has taken responsibility for preparing plans for our BoardWalk Vision.

After the disappointing design from the Park Service, with none of our requested Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (L.E.E.D.) elements, the Board approved funding our proposed designs from money on deposit from the BoardWalk Vision Fund to which many members contributed in 2010.

David Corban, Architect, was first engaged to develop our L.E.E.D specifications and, with that successful project completed, again engaged to design the Cracker Cabin envisioned by the committee.

The Cracker Cabin and revised parking area designs were approved unanimously by the Board on January 12 and formally presented to B.J. Givens, Assistant Bureau Chief of District 4, and Donald Forgione, Director of the Florida Park Service, at the Citizen's Support Organization (CSO) meeting on January 17 in Clearwater (*see President's Message on previous page*).

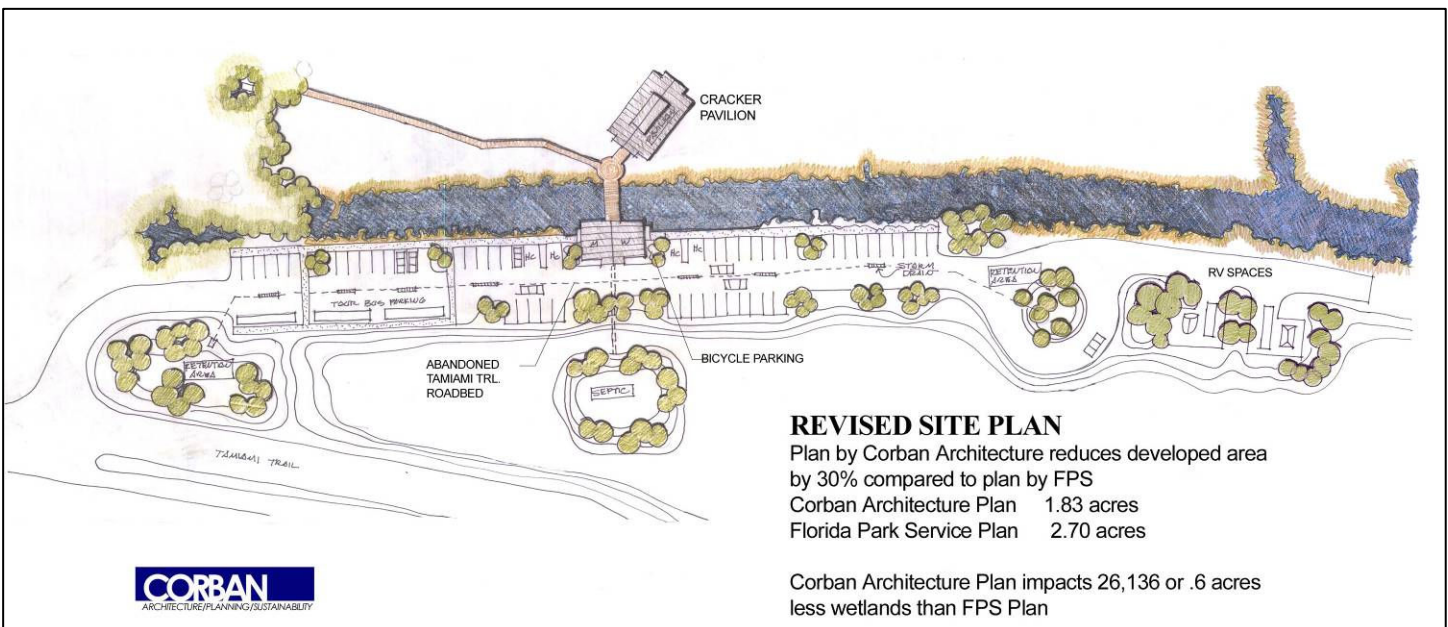
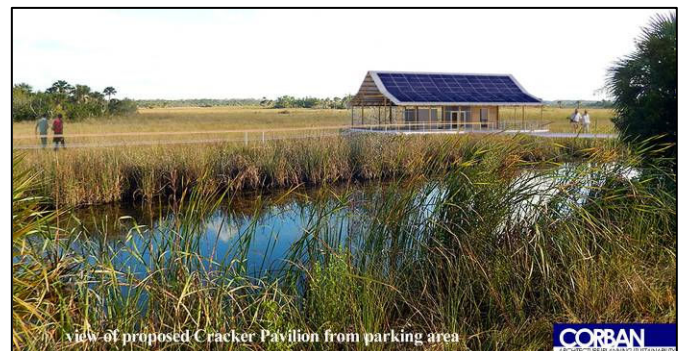
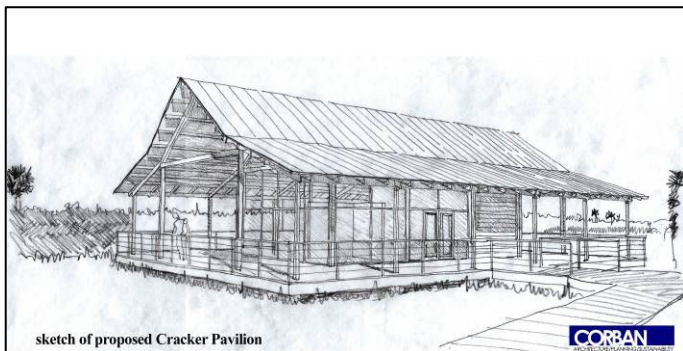
The Cracker Cabin visitors' center will represent the culture of early pioneers who may have lived in the Fakahatchee. Although a representation of the design, it will be hurricane resistant and constructed with L.E.E.D approved materials for low maintenance.

The Cracker Cabin is sited on the north side of the canal in the abandoned old US-41 roadbed just east of the current BoardWalk entrance. This location will give visitors a perspective of the Fakahatchee from the late 1800's.

The restrooms will also be L.E.E.D. designed and constructed, serving as the entrance way to the bridge across the canal leading to the new entrance to the BoardWalk.

Corban has redesigned the parking area to have 30% less in wetlands footprint than the original design and other proposed changes will lower construction and maintenance cost.

Renderings for the full plan will be on display at the "Lost & Found in Cuba" event on March 1<sup>st</sup> and the FOF Picnic for your review and comment.



### REVISED SITE PLAN

Plan by Corban Architecture reduces developed area by 30% compared to plan by FPS

Corban Architecture Plan 1.83 acres

Florida Park Service Plan 2.70 acres

Corban Architecture Plan impacts 26,136 or .6 acres less wetlands than FPS Plan

## A WINDOW ON THE STRAND

by Patrick Higgins

About 1¼ miles up Jane's Scenic Drive just after the first bend there is a distinct ecotone where the prairie on either side abruptly transitions to forest. You've entered Fakahatchee's strand; the world's largest subtropical strand swamp and a geological feature unique to southwest Florida that provides habitat for many threatened or endangered species. Technically a strand is simply a shallow, water-filled channel in which trees are growing. But it's more than that. The Strand's canopy moderates extremes, creating a microclimate that retains humidity, making it just a little bit cooler in the summer and a little bit warmer in the winter. This in turn allows a rich community of native bromeliads, ferns and orchids to flourish; it literally drips with life.

180 yards beyond the entry into the Strand, where a culvert passes under the Drive, there's a small semicircular pond on the right that provides a window into this world. It's worth pulling over to dwell a while, but best to go on some 20 yards and then double back on foot so you can approach slowly and quietly.

A broad slough spills out of the swamp here before it is channelled under the road. On this windless early January day, mottled grey pop ash trunks and a blue sky were perfectly reflected in the pool below. Despite the Sun's glare I could see a school of sailfin mollies (*Poecilia latipinna*) close by, hanging almost motionless in the 2 foot deep, tea-colored water. This robust native fish is the same that is often chosen for home aquariums, probably because they can tolerate a wide spectrum of conditions from low oxygen to high salinity. Their natural range is a crescent from North Carolina around through Texas to Mexico's Yucatan, including Florida. Sadly someone thought it would be a good idea to introduce them to California's hypersaline inland Salton Sea. A perfectly benign species here is now out-competing the endangered desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius*) there. We can't leave well enough alone.

Beyond the mollies but still beneath the surface are feathery patches of bladderwort (*Utricularia inflata*). The whole plant is submerged with only their yellow buttercup-like flowers poking above the surface. Their flimsy roots do little more than serve as anchors. The plants absorb what nutrients they can directly from the water through their thin cell walls. But the slough's acidic waters are nutrient poor.

Like some other bog and swamp plants, the bladderwort has evolved a means to supplement this pathway by exploiting the ready availability of essential biochemicals in animal tissue. It is carnivorous. Some of its leaves are modified into bladder-shaped traps to ensnare passing zooplankton and even small fish hatchlings. These operate like the compressed bulb of an eye-dropper. Minute hairs around the bladder's mouth are sensitive to passing prey. When stimulated they cause the bladder's walls to relax, sucking in their prey, which is then slowly digested.

At the back of the pool is a rhizomatous mass of emergent vegetation between a wall of heavily buttressed pop ash trunks. Their buttresses probably serve a similar function to those of cypress trees, helping to absorb oxygen. Today this part of the Strand is a pop ash swamp, but it wasn't always so. These trees would have been an understory species before the cypress was logged. Even though logging ended almost 60 years ago, the damming affect of the road and the culvert's channelization has probably kept the water high enough at this particular spot to prevent cypress seedlings from establishing. It's very hard to undo man's work.

Something caught my eye at the back of the pond; an almost imperceptible out-of-place shape. The principles of camouflage and concealment from my army days (shape, shine, shadow, sound, movement and color) came seeping back into my mind as I peered harder. Yes! I could just make out an alligator's eye ridge barely above the surface. Nearby a darker crouched shape attracted my attention. It was a little green heron obscured behind a tangle of leaves. It slowly emerged, picking its way towards the hidden gator. I suspected that they were both aware of each other because it foraged just so close, then changed direction. And when it did so, the gator, now discovered, moved out a little into the open pond to expose and orientate the bony scutes along its back to the Sun and warm up. If dinner was out of reach, there was no point in being cold.

But most notable was that midway up the pop ash trunks, amongst the narrower-leaved cardinal airplants (*Tillandsia fasciculata*), a scattering of giant airplants (*Tillandsia utriculata*) still hung on. These bromeliads are ecosystems in themselves. Their aerial ponds support a microcosm of life.

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Sadly these giant tank epiphytes are an increasingly rare sight due to the depredations of the Mexican bromeliad weevil (*Metamasius callizona*) – an invasive exotic. This so-called evil weevil arrived in Florida from Mexico on imported ornamentals. The giant airplant is particularly susceptible because of its “big bang” reproductive strategy. All our other native bromeliads reproduce both asexually (typically by pupping) and sexually. The giant doesn’t propagate vegetatively at all, and only flowers once in its 10-20 year life span, after which it dies. That’s a long time to be susceptible to the weevil with plenty of opportunity for infestation before reproducing. If it does successfully reach this stage, the giant airplant pushes up a huge flowering shoot over 6½ feet high in a final burst of energy. This may ultimately bear 10,000 seeds which are then dispersed on tiny wind-borne parachutes. Several stages of the weevil’s life cycle may be busy eating away various parts of the plant at the same time, but the death blow is when their larvae bore into and shred the plant’s stem tissue to build cocoons.

The answer may be biological control. A lot of work has been done on an imported parasitoid tachinid fly, *Lixadmontia franki*. After extensive testing these have been released in small numbers but rearing them in sufficient quantities has been problematic. You have to have bromeliad weevils for them to prey on and these then need bromeliads to feed on. They’ve tried using trays of pineapple tops leftover from supermarkets for the latter, but the process isn’t completely cracked yet.

The weevil’s devastation has been progressing inexorably southward through the Fakahatchee. But I’m an optimist and like to believe that perhaps the solution lies here in the bromeliad’s gene pool by our little pond. Maybe the random genetic shuffle of sexual reproduction has produced a combination that is somehow resistant in this location. We’ll have to keep observing.

Another possible salvation might be giant airplants surviving in isolated hammocks or cypress domes. The weevil is a weak flyer that travels from branch to branch rather than over long distances and perhaps these reservoirs may serve to repopulate the Fakahatchee in the future.

My thoughts returned to the scene before me and my eyes moved upward to the grass-like tufts of reddish-tinged southern needleleaf (*Tillandsia setacea*) higher in the trees. Behind them I could just make out the white blotches of several roosting egrets. As I lingered I heard the plop of a fish, then the mutterings of some herons and finally the flap of wings. I turned to leave. On the other side of the road, a limpkin was patiently stalking over some logs floating in our slough which continued ever so slowly to carry the Strand’s waters towards the sea. All this in a fifteen minute stop. That’s the Fakahatchee!

*Patrick Higgins has been tromping around the Fakahatchee since 2004 and has helped with FOF Coastal Cruises and Ghost Rider tram tours as an expert interpreter. He operates his own eco-tour company [www.tropicbirdsailing.com](http://www.tropicbirdsailing.com)*



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We have 380 memberships including 24 from the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter who received renewal notices in early December.

### Welcome to new members since our last newsletter:

Michael Daniel, Naples  
Ana Easton, Miami  
Lyne Flaherty, Marco Island  
Jack Murray, Marco Island  
Nancy Richie, Marco Island  
Jack Shealy, Everglades Adventure Tours, Everglades City

### Volunteers Wanted for Park Visitor Center

New Park Ranger Melissa Miano has taken over the job of coordinating volunteers for the Fak. She wrote in an email:

We would like someone to be at the Visitor Center at Park HQ from 10-2 Friday through Sunday and weekdays 11-2. It would be real simple to greet the visitors, let them know what Fakahatchee has to offer and, of course, let them know about the Friends – becoming a member and attending your activities.

You can call her at (239) 695-4593.



On Saturday Jan 4, 2014, led by Park Ranger Steven Bass (background in photo), FOF Fak-a-Hacker volunteers Paul Joslyn (foreground in photo) and Dino Barone (photographer) worked on East Main Tram, focusing on a very aggressive, invasive non-indigenous, invader of the hammocks, the dreaded *Schinus terebinthifolius*, commonly known as Brazilian Pepper, and the dense canopy they can quickly establish.

### What Are We? Who Are We?

The **Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation Citizen Support Organization, provides financial and volunteer support to preserve the unique ecology and cultural heritage of Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park and to educate the public about its importance. The Fakahatchee is the largest cypress strand in the world and the deepest slough in the greater Everglades. Its 80,000 acres are bordered by I-75 (Alligator Alley), US-41 (Tamiami Trail), SR-29, Fakahatchee Bay, and Picayune State Forest.

**The Ghost Writer**, named after the endangered Ghost Orchid which blooms in the Preserve, is edited by Marya Repko with contributions from members and friends. It is issued at least six times a year and has an average circulation of over 300 copies.

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	Secretary – Jinny Ball	Treasurer – Kathleen DaSilva			
BOARD:	Jinny Ball	Bruce Bunch	Kathleen DaSilva	Frank Denninger	Shaun Floyd
	Rose Flynn	Dennis Giardina	Patrick Higgins	John Kaiser	Howard Lubel
	Tony Marx	Ken Shapiro	Glen Stacell	Francine Stevens	Tina Streeter

LIFETIME PRESERVERS: Bruce & Janet Bunch

LIFETIME FAMILY MEMBERS: Tom & Judy Maish, Glen & Laura Stacell

LIFETIME INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: Warner Blow, Peter Haffenreffer, James Nici, Ken Shapiro, Carol Vartanian

BUSINESS PATRONS: EarthTech Environmental, Everglades Adventure Tours, Naples Bicycle Tours, North American Canoe Tours  
Shurr Adventures, Tour the Glades

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## NEW MEMBERSHIP

date \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to "FOF" and send to: FOF Membership, P.O.Box 35, Everglades City, FL, 34139

\_\_\_ Individual (\$20)    \_\_\_ Family (\$30)    \_\_\_ Supporter (\$50)    \_\_\_ Patron (\$100)    \_\_\_ Benefactor (\$500)

\_\_\_ Business Patron (\$200)    \_\_\_ Business Benefactor (\$500)    \_\_\_ Extra Donation (\$ \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_ Youth (\$10) under 18 (birth date: month \_\_\_ day \_\_\_ year \_\_\_)

\_\_\_ Lifetime Individual (\$1,000)    \_\_\_ Lifetime Family (\$1,500)    \_\_\_ Lifetime Protector (\$2,500)    \_\_\_ Lifetime Preserver (\$5,000)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET / P.O.BOX: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
ALTERNATE ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

MONTHS AT ALTERNATE ADDRESS:

\_\_\_ JAN \_\_\_ FEB \_\_\_ MAR \_\_\_ APR \_\_\_ MAY \_\_\_ JUN \_\_\_ JUL \_\_\_ AUG \_\_\_ SEP \_\_\_ OCT \_\_\_ NOV \_\_\_ DEC