



For updates on the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, please visit the [website](https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fakahatchee-strand-preserve-state-park) at <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fakahatchee-strand-preserve-state-park>

President and Executive Director's Letter

Although planned for March 20, 2021, we greatly regret we will not hold our Annual Members Meeting combined with the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.

Since we cannot announce the result of the election of new Board Members in person to our membership on March 20, we will send a special bulletin during the week of March 8th with instructions for those who wish to attend a virtual meeting announcing the result of the election. Shortly after the March 20 meeting we will publish the minutes of the meeting to the membership.



It was this time last year when the news of a pandemic came to our shore, and we sent a special bulletin to our membership that the Volunteer Picnic and Annual Members Meeting was cancelled. In retrospect, we were somewhat naïve and never expected the pandemic would last long enough to obligate us to cancel it again. Still, if we compare the current situation to last year, good progress has been made and more is on the horizon. Although millions of people have not yet received their vaccines, more are being vaccinated every day. That medical science prevailed in such a short time has been impressive.

Limited tours season

We want to thank Dr. John Kaiser who is conducting tram tours every other Thursday morning along with the full moon tours, assisted by Tom Maish, Dave Boesche, Richard Grannis and Ted Lock. All tours are sold out with ten people on the tram instead of 20 to allow for social distancing. We also want to thank Howard Lubel, the only volunteer this season who is able to guide swamp walks, determining their feasibility on a case to case basis according to the phone calls we receive.

We close with our sincere gratitude for your generosity with respect to Annual Fund Appeal, we received a little over \$10,000. The installation of four Wayfinding Kiosks will be complete by the time we publish our April newsletter. Kiosks are being installed at the East River, Jones Grade, East Main trail at gate 12 and West Main trail at gate 7. One other kiosk will be installed next to the Visitor Center off Janes Scenic Drive.

Glen Stacell and Francine Stevens

Seen in the Strand

Share your photos of life in the Fakahatchee



This Tricolored Heron was intently looking for his next meal. Photo by Phil McGuire



Remember to look up when you visit the Park. Photo by Phil McGuire.



Spectacular view of this hawk in flight! Photo by Phil McGuire.



Our thanks to Richard Grannis for sharing his photo of deer in the morning. Deer are beautiful and important to the Fakahatchee.

To meet more residents of the Strand, please visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/orchidswamp> where visitors often share images of plants and animals they encounter. Better yet, come visit and submit your own snapshots!

Become a Friend of the Fakahatchee
Visit <http://orchidswamp.org/support/memberships/>

Membership News



If you haven't yet opened your free AmazonSmile account, please take a few minutes to do so. Go to smile.amazon.com, then choose the Friends of Fakahatchee as your charity to receive the donations from your purchases. This works for your shopping all year round, and when more FOF members join in the donation parade, we'll see more money for our Park. Thank you!



You can now donate to FOF via your Fidelity Investment account with a Charitable program called the Fidelity Giving Marketplace, the following link will provide you with more information.

https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/?immid=EML_427_1

Does your employer have a “Matching Gift” program?

Several of our members have taken advantage of their employer's matching program (General Electric, Exxon Mobil) for donations to not-for-profit organizations by sending us the “matching” form. We do the rest – it's that easy! We have revised our Membership Form with a reminder.

Stay up to date with what's seen in the Strand on our FOF Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/orchidswamp>



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.

The Ghost Writer, named after the endangered Ghost Orchid which blooms in the Preserve, is currently edited by Next Steps Collective, LLC, which also manages the Orchidswamp.org website.

Contributions to Ghost Writer that relate directly to the business and

purpose of the Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. are welcome. Please write news@orchidswamp.org, subject line: Ghostwriter.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE FRIENDS OF FAKAHATCHEE, A FLORIDA-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH9223), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING THEIR WEBSITE HERE (<https://csapp.800helpfla.com/>)

Miss an issue of the Ghostwriter? Visit the archives at <http://orchidswamp.org/about-fof/the-ghost-writer-archives/>.

Our mailing address is: Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. PO Box 35
Everglades City, FL 34139

Members make a difference.

Welcome to new members!

Kathleen Pegues, Key Largo FL; Eric and Laura Froht, Naples FL; Denise Link, Cleveland, Ohio
Membership now totals 356.

Continued thanks to our Lifetime and Business Patron Members:

Lifetime Preservers
Bruce & Janet Bunch

Lifetime Protectors
Kit & La Raw Maran

Lifetime Family Members

Jan Bachrach
Richard & Sue Jagels
John and Pauly Kaiser
Tom & Judy Maish
Noel Nation
Jim & Peggy Phillips
Van & Jane Sayler
Glen & Laura Stacell

Business Patron Member
Bay Design Store

Lifetime Individual Members

Karen J. Berkley
Rita Bleasdale
Warner Blow
Elsie Caldwell
John Elting
Carolyn Ginther
Peter Haffenreffer
Don Harmon
Susan Hauze
Terry Heaps
Patty Huff
James Nici
Randy Parks
Mark Perro
Wendy Becker Payton
Ken Shapiro
John Spengler
Carol Vartanian

Board Members

President – Glen Stacell
Vice President – John Kaiser
Secretary – Ken Shapiro
Treasurer – Phil McGuire
Tom DesFosses

Ex-Officio

Bruce Bunch
Dennis Giardina
Patrick Higgins
Tom Maish
Francine Stevens (Executive Director)

BOD meeting schedule

January 17, 2021
February 21, 2021
March 20, 2021
April 18, 2021
Meetings are scheduled for 10:30 AM

Contact the Friends of Fakahatchee at FOF_90@hotmail.com or call 239-695-1023.