


CONSERVANCY
of Southwest Florida
OUR WATER, LAND, WILDLIFE, FUTURE.
WWW.CONSERVANCY.ORG



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of Southwest Florida
OUR WATER, LAND, WILDLIFE, FUTURE.

IMPACT

// The Florida Conservation Coalition is grateful to have the Conservancy of Southwest Florida on our Steering Committee. The Conservancy leapt to the community's aide, helping to provide invaluable information on the critical importance of the 404 program to the protection of Florida's abundant wetlands. //

-Senator Bob Graham, Chairman, Florida Conservation Coalition

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ON THE COVER:
Conservancy Sea Turtle Intern, Jenny Wissman working on Keewaydin Island

Board of Directors*

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida thanks the community and business leaders on our Board of Directors who are passionate about protecting our quality of life ...now and forever.



Officers



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Van Williams



Vice Chair
Stephanie Goforth



President & CEO
Robert J. Moher



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Ed Eaton



Secretary
Gerri Moll

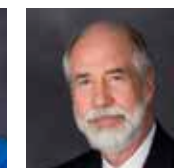
Board Members



Lew Allyn



Edie Andrew



Dennis Brown



Phil Collins



Carol Dinardo



Phil Douglas



Barry Frank



Phil Gresh



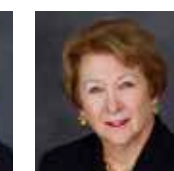
John Hall



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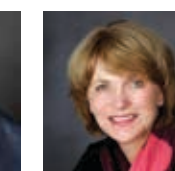
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Nick Penniman



Dave Rismiller



Mayela Rojas



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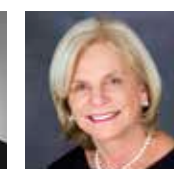
Dr. J.P. van Dongen



Sharon von Arx



John R. Walter



Nancy G. White

* Board members who served between October 2017 – September 30, 2018

Note from the Board Chair



Van Williams
Conservancy Board Chair

Your Conservancy has made tremendous progress this past fiscal year (10/1/17 – 9/30/18). The Board and the staff teamed up on both field operations and serious planning for the future, following, of course, recovery from Hurricane Irma. As you read through the pages that follow, you'll learn more about our accomplishments and the impacts we've had on behalf of our region's water, land, wildlife and future.

None of this could happen without the incredible investment, you, our generous supporters and members continue to provide. Your help enables the Conservancy to continue as a region-wide leader in protecting our quality of life now and for future generations. Here are just a few of the year's most significant successes.

- Sustained our 4-star rating (the highest award) from Charity Navigator;
- Completed a comprehensive review of our Nature Center facilities and other assets resulting in a roadmap for future renovation and replacement;
- Completed a Climate Change task force that has recommended how the Conservancy should tackle this issue of growing national concern;
- Under the great leadership of Chair Carol Dinardo, we enjoyed the most successful Magic Under the Mangroves gala in our organization's history, raising \$1.9 million net.

While we are proud of these accomplishments, there is much more to be seen in the rest of this report. Yet, our work is not complete. We are at a crossroads as a region, as we continue to attract more and more people as visitors and residents. The land use and water quality decisions we make today will frame our future. Happily, your Conservancy is well-positioned to continue to take the lead on many of these challenges, offering balanced, informed solutions. With your help, we will take on our most pressing environmental issues using common sense and a science-based approach.

On behalf of the Conservancy's Board, thank you again for your sustained support. We look forward to another successful year together.

Sincerely,

van Williams

President's Update



Robert M. Moher
Conservancy President and CEO

Making a positive impact on our water, land, wildlife and future is at the heart of our mission here at the Conservancy. This year's Impact Report is a summary of what we have accomplished on behalf of you – our members and supporters – in advancing our mission of protecting our quality of life for future generations.

Our ability to make a positive impact is why you, our generous members and supporters, continue to believe in our work year after year. While we are proud of our many accomplishments, we face many challenges. Among our core areas of focus in the year ahead are:

1. **Water Quality** – We will advocate for a comprehensive set of solutions to the polluted water pouring into our estuaries, the Gulf of Mexico and the Everglades. The Conservancy will continue to pursue science-based solutions such as:
 - a. The immediate construction of EAA reservoir;
 - b. Updating state stormwater standards; and
 - c. Advocating for stronger fertilizer ordinances.
2. **Smart Growth for Eastern Collier and Lee Counties** - The planning decisions made in the coming year will impact the future of our ecosystems and our quality of life indefinitely. The Conservancy will be advocating for smart growth, directing development away from our most sensitive natural resources, including water resources and panther habitat.
3. **Oil Legislation** - Our number one state legislative priority in 2019 will be to grow bi-partisan support for a state-wide ban on fracking and enhanced well stimulation practices. These practices use a massive amount of freshwater, which is already in short supply in Florida. Given the poor quality of oil in our region and with Florida's unique hydrology and geology, extreme oil extraction techniques simply do not make sense for Florida.

As always, we need you working alongside us to keep up our high-quality impact, now and into the future. We thank you for your trust in us and shared belief in our mission.

Sincerely,

Rob Moher

IMPACT

Special Report: Pythons in Paradise

www.conservancy.org/pythons

"With few natural predators, the Burmese python is devastating native wildlife. From rabbits to deer, there isn't much that a full grown Burmese python can't consume. They now pose a significant threat to native wildlife across the greater Everglades."

- Ian Bartoszek, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, environmental science project manager

Burmese python study

The Conservancy's collaborative python research and removal project began in 2013. The team has made many groundbreaking discoveries about this invasive species. The Conservancy's research team seeks to better understand how Burmese pythons are navigating, breeding and eating in Southwest Florida in order to apply that information to more effectively remove them from the ecosystem. To do this, we track pythons using radio-telemetry.

Radio-telemetry Tracking

Adult pythons are captured, surgically implanted with a radio-transmitter, and released back at the capture site. These individuals are referred to as "sentinel snakes" for their ability to lead researchers to other pythons during the breeding season. A primary objective is to develop a database of behavior and habitat uses to better understand invasive Burmese python activities in Southwest Florida. This information will be used to help land managers develop a management strategy for this invasive species. By exploiting their breeding season behavior the Conservancy has removed approximately 10,000 pounds of python and 3,000 developing eggs from Southwest Florida.



Fawn vs. Python

Conservancy biologists documented a Burmese python eating a white-tailed deer that weighed more than the python itself. The fawn weighed in at 35 pounds, the python weighed 31.5 pounds. The fawn was 111% of the weight of the python. This is believed to be the largest prey to predator weight ratio ever documented for the Burmese python, and possibly for any species of python. The findings were published in the March 2018 issue of Herpetological Review.



Connecting with Kids

In a Conservancy collaboration, members of our Science and Education teams partnered to use the Burmese python as the 'poster child' for invasive species. The Conservancy engaged high school and university students with hands-on research performing python necropsies. Students were asked to help count python eggs, study stomach contents, weigh, measure and document alongside Conservancy biologists.



Naples Zoo President and CEO, Jack Mulvena, and Conservancy President and CEO, Rob Moher, formalize the organizations' Python Partnership.

Python Partners

The Conservancy and Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens established a partnership to advance Burmese python research and education in Southwest Florida. The two longtime neighbors will study the impact of Burmese pythons on native wildlife. The Zoo has committed \$75,000 over the next three years to fund the Conservancy's research initiatives.



Teaching the Teachers

In June and July of 2018, the Conservancy partnered with Florida Gulf Coast University's Whitaker Center for STEM Education to facilitate the Schulze Foundation's STEM Summer Institute for 50 K-12 teachers from all over Southwest Florida. These 50 educators participated in a python necropsy, followed by a STEM education workshop, led by Conservancy Education Director Heather Skaza Acosta. The workshop led teachers through a lesson on python population growth that they could take back to their own classrooms - ultimately impacting more than 1,700 students in our region.

Research and Removal Project by the Numbers:

4
Scientific Notes
Published in the Journal
Herpetological Review

48
Adult pythons tagged and
tracked to date

500
Pythons removed from
Collier County

3,000
Eggs removed

10,000
Total pounds of pythons
removed

7,500,000
Youtube views of
Conservancy python
necropsy

IMPACT

Wildlife Rehabilitation

www.conservancy.org/wildlife

Providing medical care to injured native wildlife has been a priority of the Conservancy of Southwest Florida since 1979. This year, the von Arx Wildlife Hospital admitted more than 3,700 patients including small mammals, reptiles, and birds. The wildlife hospital is open 365 days a year from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

“The commitment, passion and care for wildlife that would probably never see another day are just a few reasons why I volunteer at the von Arx Wildlife Hospital. There is no greater joy when an injured animal is admitted and recovers from serious injuries and is released to go home.”

- Doug Becker,
von Arx Wildlife Hospital Volunteer



Lingering Red Tide Devastates Wildlife

Red tide extended through the summer and had a devastating impact on manatees, sea turtles, and many species of coastal birds. Double-crested cormorants, gulls, plovers, herons, and sanderlings all spent time at the von Arx Wildlife Hospital recovering from toxicosis caused by red tide. March saw the height of the red tide outbreak in our area with more than 30 double-crested cormorants receiving treatment in the hospital at the same time. Typical symptoms of toxicosis include paresis (partial paralysis), weakened strength, and respiratory distress.

Standard treatment protocol for toxicosis patients at the von Arx Wildlife Hospital includes providing supplemental oxygen along with administering electrolytes, Chinese herbal supplements, anti-fungal medication, and eye lubricant multiple times throughout the day. Recovery can take several weeks depending on the severity of the toxicosis.

UBER Turtle

A woman working in Bonita Springs found a striped mud turtle injured by a vehicle strike. Fear of losing her job made it impossible for the Good Samaritan to transport the turtle to the Conservancy for care. Undeterred, the woman arranged for an Uber driver to transport the injured turtle to the von Arx Wildlife Hospital. The turtle was released after a month of care.



Car Strikes and Home Care Problems Continue

A Virginia opossum was released after requiring long-term care. The opossum suffered lacerations (road rash) over a good portion of his body after being hit by a car. The injuries were exacerbated when a member of the public attempted to care for the opossum at home. When the opossum arrived at the hospital, infection had set in. Antibiotics, pain medication, Chinese herbs, acupuncture, and laser therapy were all part of the opossum's treatment plan.



“Foster” Fawn

Homeowners heard distress calls coming from a fawn and discovered it stuck between the bars of their metal perimeter fence. Hospital staff arrived on scene and tranquilized the fawn, which had minor injuries from struggling against the fence. A second fawn, already recovering at the von Arx Wildlife Hospital, served as a “foster” sibling. Both fawns were later transported to a rural facility on Florida's east coast where a doe serves as a surrogate mom for orphaned fawns.



A fawn recovers in the von Arx Wildlife Hospital.



Birthday Donation

Three-year-old Gwynnie Carr donated her birthday to the Conservancy and collected hundreds of dollars' worth of items for the von Arx Wildlife Hospital. Lauren, Gwynnie's mom, says they wanted to teach her there is more to birthday parties than just getting presents and that doing something for you community can sometimes feel better than getting gifts.



IMPACT

Environmental Science & Research

www.conservancy.org/science

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida Environmental Science team is dedicated to providing unbiased research and enjoys a national reputation for its expertise. With more than 100 years of collective experience, the scientists provide a depth of experience and knowledge ranging from conducting environmental assessments to detailed wildlife research.

“If and when conditions improve, we will be in a unique position to study how this endangered species, the Kemp’s ridley sea turtle, adapts to catastrophic changes in their foraging habitat.”

- Dr. Jeff Schmid, Conservancy research manager



White Horse Key Sept. 2018, Ten Thousand Islands in the background

Post-Irma Research

For the past year, Conservancy biologists have been collecting data on how Hurricane Irma affected mangrove forests. While some areas held up to the storm, others did not fare so well. Generally, we can say the responses to mangrove forests in locations across Southwest Florida were primarily dependent upon mangrove condition prior to Irma, forest age, and the storm’s strength at the respective site.

The mangroves at the restoration site at Fruit Farm Creek weathered the storm well. These younger and supple saplings were able to bend with the wind gusts. And while they lost some leaves, they’re still standing, unlike at the adjacent reference site, where older trees snapped under the full force of Irma. The good news is with time, nature can heal itself.

Unfortunately, mangrove forests in the Ten Thousand Islands took the brunt of Hurricane Irma. While they protected us and our property from more severe damage, there was a cost. To date, recovery has been minimal.

Christopher B. Smith Preserve

Biologists Melinda Schuman and Leif Johnson spent four months gathering the resident tortoises within the Christopher B. Smith Preserve, recording length and weight information, and releasing them back after each received a full health check.

A total of 109 burrows were located in the preserve during the April 2018 burrow survey. Of this total, 90 burrows were active and 19 were inactive. Burrow counts are a snapshot in time, as many new burrows were created and/or abandoned during the summer months alone.

With help from our exceptional volunteers, a great deal of time and energy also went into habitat improvement through the removal of exotics, increasing growing space for forage plants, and planting seeds for the future. Life in the preserve is healthier than ever!



109

Total number of burrows located in the preserve



8.9 lbs

Average weight of the gopher tortoises



11.4-35.8

Average carapace lengths in centimeters



Red Tide’s Impact on Sea Turtles

Numerous individuals and organizations, including Conservancy biologists participate in the Statewide Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network. Its purpose is to report dead or impaired sea turtles they encounter. So far, 2018 has been a record year for strandings with 1,232 stranded turtles reported from Pinellas to Collier Counties. State biologists attribute 563 of these to red tide, an increase of 2.5 times the 5-year average. In Collier County there were 125 strandings, 85 of these were attributed to red tide. These numbers represent a fraction of the actual mortality. Most of the sea turtles that die never wash up on our beaches. The same holds true for manatees, dolphins, shorebirds, fish and countless other species.

On a better note, hatchling recruitment on Keewaydin Island set a record in 2018 with 21,467 assumed to have reached Gulf waters. Hatchlings don’t feed during the swimming frenzy once they enter the water so their exposure to red tide is limited.



Urban Ecology

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida recently completed a study on how wildlife can utilize golf courses and ways to enhance their presence without interfering with the game; in other words — a little bit of Urban Ecology.

Conservancy biologists were able make recommendations on how to maximize the diversity and abundance of wildlife by increasing or enhancing the available space. Approximately 24,113 aquatic invertebrates were found during the study representing 88 species. Biologists captured and released 20,970 fish representing 25 species. A total of 7,346 birds were documented during the study, representing a total of 75 species.

IMPACT

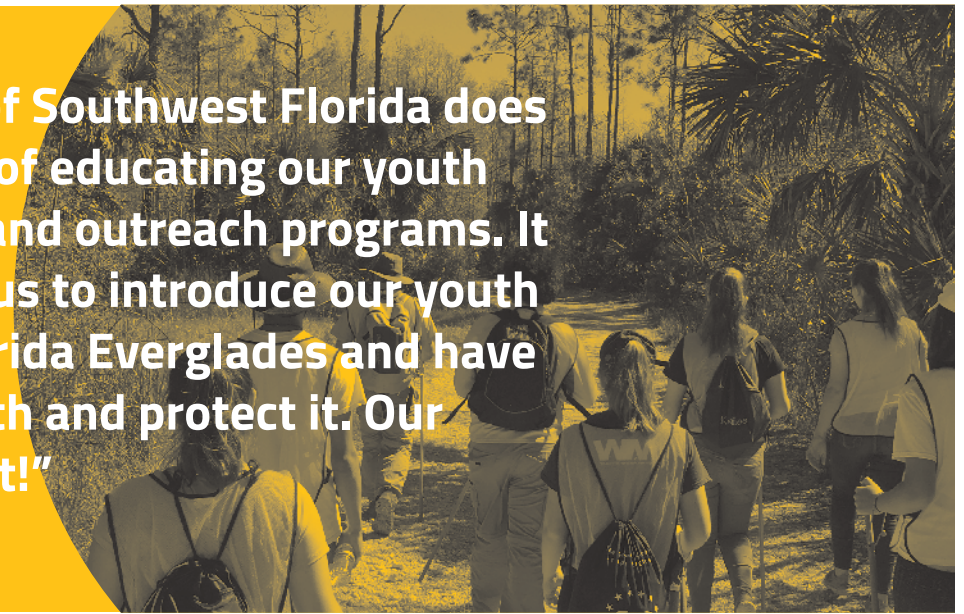
Environmental Education

www.conservancy.org/education

At the Conservancy Nature Center, and throughout the Southwest Florida community, the Environmental Education team provides children and adults an appreciation and understanding of Southwest Florida's unique natural resources. We reach more than 52,000 people a year with high-quality environmental education.

"The Conservancy of Southwest Florida does an outstanding job of educating our youth through field trips and outreach programs. It is so important for us to introduce our youth to the beautiful Florida Everglades and have them fall in love with and protect it. Our future depends on it!"

- "Alligator" Ron Bergeron,
former FWC Commissioner



Teen ECCO group aboard the *Good Fortune II*

Teen Program officially launched

This year the Conservancy launched the Teen ECCO (Exploring Conservation Career Opportunities) program for high school students. The program welcomed eight students representing four area high schools. The goal of this program is to immerse students with an interest in environmental and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) careers in hands-on experiences to provide knowledge and to help guide their career paths.

Students shadowed Conservancy staff members, learned from professionals in the field, interacted with guests at our Earth day event, toured FGCU's Vester Marine Lab and Big Cypress National Preserve, and even assisted in a Burmese python necropsy with our science team.

Looking ahead, students will work in small groups to complete scientific research projects that they will present at the conclusion of their program. Plans are underway to expand the program.

Luna

Luna, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida's ambassador loggerhead sea turtle, was released into the Gulf of Mexico near the Ten Thousand Islands.

Luna came from a turtle nest located on Sanibel Island, and was hatched at Gumbo Limbo Park in Boca Raton. She was included in a gender research study as part of a joint partnership between Gumbo Limbo and Florida Atlantic University.

Luna served as an "ambassador" in the Dalton Discovery Center's Ocean Gallery, providing visitors with a unique opportunity to learn about sea turtle conservation.

On the date of her release, Luna weighed approximately 36 pounds, and her carapace (her top shell) was about 46 centimeters in length.



Moira Murray, Samantha Arner, Conservancy Animal Care Naturalist, and Katrina Reusche prepare for Luna's release.

New Animal Ambassadors

Several new animals found a home at the Conservancy's Nature Center this year. NIN, the ambassador loggerhead sea turtle arrived in April. We believe he is the first male loggerhead we've had here at the Nature Center. Olive, a barred owl, is now helping to educate guests in the von Arx Wildlife Viewing Pavilion. And Gumbo, the Conservancy's green moray eel is getting a lot of attention in the Dalton Discovery Center's patch reef aquarium.



Barred owl Olive

Moray eel Gumbo

Education Alliance Expands

The Conservancy hosted the 5th Annual Environmental Education Alliance in October. Partnering with the League of Environmental Educators of Florida (LEEF) and Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), the Conservancy's Education department brought in educators of all backgrounds from across the state. Covering a wide variety of topics and current events in the world of education, the conference was a great opportunity to expand partnerships and networks, while allowing educators to grow their skillsets.



IMPACT

Environmental Policy & Advocacy

www.conservancy.org/policy

A critical role played by the Conservancy Environmental Policy team is to provide our region's decision makers with the tools necessary to make informed choices on environmental and conservation issues. The Environmental Policy team ensures the proper stewardship of Southwest Florida's water, land, wildlife and future.

"The Conservancy has been a great advocate in our fight for a healthy Everglades ecosystem. I am thankful to work with the Conservancy on these critical environmental issues."

- U.S. Congressman Francis Rooney



Conservancy Senior Environmental Policy Specialist Marisa Carrozzo was part of an NBC Nightly News report about the toxic algae in our waterways, a topic which gained national attention.

Toxic Algae Crisis in Southwest Florida

The summer of 2018 will be remembered as the summer of algae in Southwest Florida. From red tide plaguing our coast, to blue-green algae in the Caloosahatchee from Lake Okeechobee discharges, the ecological and economic impact has been devastating. In response to these Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), the Conservancy relaunched our Ripple Effect campaign in order to raise awareness about the cascading impacts of polluted Lake Okeechobee discharges.

The Conservancy has been actively engaged in supporting the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir's authorization and funding to reduce the high-volume damaging discharges to the estuaries and send clean water south to the Everglades and Florida Bay. The Conservancy is also working with local entities impacted by the toxic algae to advance shared priorities: Federal authorization and funding of the EAA Reservoir; \$200 million match in federal funding for Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects; groundbreaking on the EAA Reservoir within the new governor's first year; and cleaning up our waters by employing strategies to stop pollution at the source and implement enforceable clean-up plans. The Conservancy is also collaborating with local business interests in bringing new and powerful voices to the table advocating for Everglades restoration and clean water.



Fracking Ban Progress

For the second year in a row, Senator Dana Young introduced legislation that would ban fracking and other well stimulation treatments in the state of Florida. The bill was heard in two of its Senate committees, and while it did not make it beyond that point, the unanimous committee support that it did receive demonstrates the fracking ban continues to maintain strong support and momentum. Supporting a ban remains the Conservancy's top legislative priority for 2019.



Collier-Hogan Well

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) will begin to test for more toxins at the Collier-Hogan well, the site of Florida's first documented fracking and subsequent illegal dumping of oily waste. FDEP will now test for several chemicals used at the wellsite that can be cancer-causing, and will continue to test for important markers of oil contamination that were proposed to be discontinued.



Eastern Collier Growth Plans

With unbridled growth expected in eastern Collier County, the Conservancy continues to advocate for a common sense approach that directs development to appropriate locations, while protecting ecological resources, listed species and taxpayers. Unfortunately, at both the local and federal levels, there is tremendous pressure for authorization of more development, and thus, more impacts to species such as the endangered Florida Panther. The Conservancy has launched our new Eastern Collier County webpage, providing information necessary for members to be engaged as the future of Eastern Collier County is decided over the coming months and years.



Estero Preserve

The Conservancy was a vocal supporter of the Village of Estero's decision to acquire 62 acres of land along the Estero River. This parcel, which contains a mosaic of uplands, wetlands, cultural resources and river access, is in the heart of Estero and is a tremendous opportunity to save a portion of "Old Florida" for generations to come.

Above and Beyond

Exceeding expectations in order to make a positive impact on the natural environment is a hallmark of Conservancy supporters, members, volunteers and staff. These are just a few highlights from 2018 that demonstrate how the Conservancy team and its supporters go above and beyond to advance our mission.



Rob Moher, Edie Andrew, Sudie Geier and Nancy Seeley

Eagle Award 2018

The Conservancy proudly honors three longtime supporters, Edie Andrew, Sudie Geier and Nancy Seeley, with the prestigious Eagle Award for their commitment to protecting the natural environment and quality of life in Southwest Florida. All three are environmental trailblazers. Their passion for environmental education has inspired generations of future conservationists.

Each year, the Conservancy presents the Eagle Award, the organization's highest honor, to individuals and organizations that provide leadership on environmental causes, shepherd philanthropic initiatives and participate in grass-roots activism.

“We are so grateful to the trust Edie, Sudie, and Nancy have placed in the Conservancy’s environmental education programs. Their long-standing leadership and support allow us to reach more than 50,000 people each year with high-quality learning opportunities.”

- Rob Moher, Conservancy president and CEO

Volunteer of the year

Susan Synder



Susan Synder documenting species.



Jim Synder accepting Susan's award with Rob Moher.

Around the Conservancy, Susan Snyder is known as Wonder Woman. It is almost impossible to convey the impact she has had on our organization. She generously shares her wealth of knowledge and years of experience with our Environmental Science department. Susan has worked with our Science department for over 15 years. During that time, she has helped collect water samples from Naples Bay and the Gordon River - willingly encountering foul smells, polluted water, and hurricane debris. She has documented more than 1,000 species making a home in the Conservancy's Christopher B. Smith Preserve! Susan has shared her incredible leadership skills with the Conservancy by leading teams and organizing groups of volunteers. The Conservancy is proud to honor Susan as the 2018 volunteer of the year.



“From the day-to-day professionalism - a smile at the front gazebo or Welcome Center - to providing support for our groundbreaking scientific research, each of volunteer can make a positive impact.”

- James Kintz, Conservancy volunteer coordinator

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

Among the Conservancy's more than 600 volunteers, this year volunteers donated their time documenting new animal species, rescuing injured wildlife, even making a little boy's day by going the extra mile on the electric boat tours. In total, Conservancy volunteers donated the equivalent of nearly \$1.4 million in staff time.



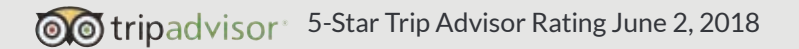
L to R: Conservancy volunteers present a check to Rob Moher at the annual Volunteer Recognition Breakfast. Rob Moher with Pam Fultz, community relations manager at Vi at Bentley Village. Vi generously hosts the annual Volunteer Recognition Breakfast.



Highlights and Achievements

As part of our mission, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida is committed to ensuring our pristine paradise for future generations to enjoy. The following are just a few examples from 2018 highlighting the endorsements we have received from outside agencies.

“The hidden nature jewel of Naples! There is a wildlife hospital, touch tank and daily talks on local nature. You can take an electric boat ride or rent a kayak to ride in a beautiful estuary with mangroves. Enjoy!”



40 Under 40

Jonee Miller, manager of the von Arx Wildlife Hospital, made the Gulfshore Business 40 under 40 list, which recognizes young professionals in Southwest Florida for their contributions to the community.



Women of Initiative

Judy Hushon, a Conservancy board member and longtime volunteer, was recognized for her achievements and named as one of the 2018 Women of Initiative honorees by the Community Foundation of Collier County.



Heather Donlan for eBella Magazine

Front Row- Bunny Brooks, Judith Hushon, Wynnell Schrenk, Alice Arena. Back Row-Emily James, Amanda Jaron, Patricia Jilk, Brenda Melton, Jeanne Nealon, Debra Haley

Everglades Coalition

Marisa Carrozzo, a senior environmental policy specialist at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, has been named the new co-chair for the Everglades Coalition.



Charity Navigator

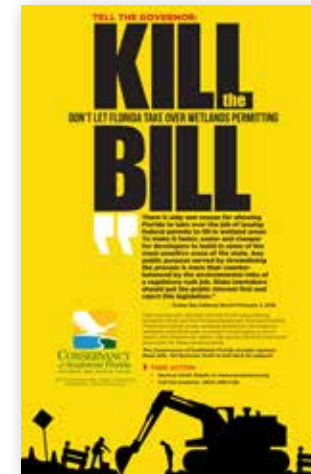
The Conservancy's sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency have again earned the organization the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities.



Marketing Awards

In 2018, the Conservancy Marketing Team won 12 ADDY awards for excellence in advertising and marketing initiatives. The team also won three Charlie awards from the Florida Magazine Association.

Florida Magazine Association Charlie Award: Best Advertisement for “Kiil the Bill” ad



American Advertising Federation District Addy awards: Gold for “Through Their Eyes Campaign”



Best of the Best

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida was a finalist in the 2018 Annual Gulfshore Life Best Of the Gulfshore Awards in the Best Nature/Wildlife /Collier County category.

National Recognition and Presentations

Two Conservancy Education research proposals were accepted by the North American Association for Environmental Education. These proposals focused on research topics and current events in the growing environmental education world. These presentations highlight the Teen ECCO program in its pilot year, and the findings of a project with a volunteer group known as the Trailblazers.



A Trailblazers volunteer cleans up a nature trail.



L to R: Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife; Amber Crooks; Nancy Payton, Florida Wildlife Federation; Larry Williams, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Panther Recovery Team

Amber Crooks, environmental policy manager, was elected chair of the transportation subteam for the Panther Recovery Implementation Team.

Our Events

The Conservancy's mission is supported by premier events and activities throughout the year. Funds raised at events directly support our work to protect Southwest Florida's water, land, wildlife and future.

For years, The Naples Trust Company has been proud to partner with The Conservancy of Southwest Florida in its mission to educate area residents and visitors about our water, wildlife, and environment."

- West McCann, President, The Naples Trust Company



Conservancy interns on stage at 2018 Magic gala



Henry and Carol Dinardo with Robin and Scot Hamilton

\$1.9 Million Record-Breaking Magic Under the Mangroves Gala presented by Northern Trust

Interns: Inspire, ignite, invest

Conservancy interns took center stage at the 2018 Magic Under the Mangroves gala. The 14th annual event raised a record \$1.9 million net, providing key funding that directly enhances the Conservancy's mission. Additionally, the event highlighted the Conservancy's long-running intern program.

Conservancy interns have gone on to become veterinarians, Ph.D. researchers and faculty throughout the community, the country, and even the world. Many become Conservancy staff. The von Arx Wildlife Hospital Director, Joanna Fitzgerald, came to the Conservancy as an intern in 1994.

The four-hour event was chaired by Carol Dinardo and featured a seated dinner by her award-winning, certified green caterer, Windows Catering, of Washington D.C.

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RedSnook Fishing Tournament

With red tide and toxic algae plaguing area beaches, the Conservancy's annual catch and release fishing tournament was more important than ever. Hundreds came out in support of the Conservancy's work. The event was co-chaired by Mokey Shea and Henley Shotwell.

2018 sponsors: The Beacon Group at Morgan Stanley, RGM Capital, Tompkins Family, Century Link, Collins Vision, Sticky Holsters, CliftonLarsonAllen, Costa, Naples Beach Brewery, Northern Trust, Harrison Design, Bond, Schoeneck & King, LongHorn Steakhouse, Gallagher Lutgert, The Lutgert Companies, Newbury North Associates, Florida Weekly.



Earth Day Festival

The Conservancy welcomed 1,000 guests to our biggest community event of the year. With new vendors, familiar faces, and activities galore, we were inspired by all who came out to celebrate our water, land, wildlife and future.

2018 Presenting sponsors: Arthrex and Bank of America

Supporting sponsors: Florida Weekly, D'Latinos, Univision and Naples Daily News.



Annual Members' Meeting

The Conservancy hosted its 54th Annual Members' Meeting on January 11, 2018 at the Conservancy Nature Center. During the meeting, the Conservancy members welcomed five new directors to the board, including Dr. J.P. van Dongen, Phil Douglas, Barry Frank, and Jean Hartman. Returning to the board was Nicholas G. Penniman IV. Each is elected to serve a four-year term.

2018 Sponsor: The Moran Edwards Asset Management Group of Wells Fargo advisors.

COMING UP:

Annual Members' Meeting
Thursday, Jan. 10 at 5 p.m.

Evenings at the Conservancy
Select Tuesdays
6 p.m.

Give Where You Live
Wednesday, Feb 20 through
Thursday, Feb. 21
12 p.m. – 12 p.m. (24 hours)

Patron Party
Magic Under the Mangroves
Sunday, Feb 10
4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Magic Under the Mangroves Gala
Thursday, March 7
5:30 p.m.

Earth Day Festival
Saturday, April 13
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

SNAPSHOTS

Conservancy scenes from 2018



Hoots & Hisses

From face painting to spooky science experiments to dance parties with Gordon B. Eagle, Hoots and Hisses is a perfect way for families to spend time together celebrating the beautiful fall season in Southwest Florida.



Save Our Water Summit

Senior Environmental Policy Specialist Marisa Carrozzo was invited to speak at the 2018 Save Our Water Summit, hosted by the *The News-Press*.



Tesla Charging Stations

The Conservancy Nature Center now offers six charging stations for electric cars - four exclusively for Tesla vehicles and two for universal use.

SNAPSHOTS

Conservancy scenes from 2018



Annual Meeting

During the Conservancy's Annual Members' Meeting, outgoing Conservancy Board Chair, Ken Krier, accepts a heartfelt thanks from Rob Moher and Phil Gresh for his volunteer service to the organization.



Congressional Visit

Congressman Francis Rooney and Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart invited Congressman Mike Simpson to meet with Conservancy staff and tour the nature center and discuss the importance of robust and consistent funding for water quality initiatives and Everglades Restoration projects.



Great Release

Conservancy interns Bekah Holder and Kendyl Combs release a great egret after recovering in the von Arx Wildlife Hospital.



Conservancy Interns

From hosting Nature Center programs, to supporting the work inside the von Arx Wildlife Hospital, the Conservancy hosts approximately 30 interns each year. Interns allow us to expand the reach of our mission, while providing valuable professional training for young conservationists.



Senator Graham Seeks Algae Solutions

The Conservancy hosted Senator Bob Graham and Adele Graham to talk about the harmful algae bloom crises and ways to collaborate on solutions. Senator Graham is one of the co-founders of the Florida Conservation Coalition, which works to build consensus on key environmental issues.



Caloosahatchee Excursion

Conservancy supporters and staff travelled along the Caloosahatchee River in April to learn more about water challenges. The group met with Lee County Commissioner Frank Mann to discuss the history of the Caloosahatchee.

You Can Make an Impact

Preserve the reasons you love Southwest Florida and the Conservancy's work.

The Conservancy enjoys a reputation for excellence as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit funded by generous members, donors, corporate sponsors, grants and private foundations. We are recognized by the most reputable ratings agencies for financial transparency, stability and guest experience. 100% of donations support local projects.

- 4-Star Charity Navigator rating
- Guide Star Gold rating
- Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence
- 2018 Best of the Gulfshore

■ **Donate**

■ **Make a Planned Gift**

■ **Become a Member**

■ **Attend a Special Event**

■ **Volunteer**

■ **Connect: conservancy.org**



Protecting Southwest Florida's unique natural environment and quality of life ... now and forever.



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