

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Nature Center, 3333 Sanibel-Captiva Road (1 mile west of Tarpon Bay Road)

Nature Center (239) 472-2329 www.sccf.org

Trails with Observation Tower • Education Center with Touch Tank: \$5/adult, children under 17 free, members free.

BAILEY HOMESTEAD PRESERVE DONOR TOURS

Campaign contributions from almost 2,000 people made SCCF's acquisition of 28.5 acres along the Periwinkle corridor a reality. Many of these generous donors missed the opportunity to see the progress at the Thank You Celebration in November. Join SCCF staff for a behind-the-scenes tour of this unique piece of land and see displays depicting the history of agriculture on the islands and ways in which weather has shaped SCCF's conservation programs. **Because the Bailey Homestead Restoration Project is still underway, the property is not open to the public yet.** *Reservations are required for both February 16 and March 15 at 2 p.m. Please call us at 472-2329 for reservations and parking instructions.*

BEACH WALKS AT HISTORIC ISLAND INN

Meet your SCCF guide in the parking lot of Island Inn at 3111 West Gulf drive at 10 a.m. Take a walk on the beach identifying what the local tides, currents, and winds have deposited for you to see. Sanibel continues the commitment to protect local beaches by leaving the wrack community of cast ashore seaweeds and sea grasses that feed the insects, shorebirds and beach plants that live there. Monday, February 13 and 27 at 10 a.m. This program is free to all.

BIRDING AT THE PRESERVES

Join experienced birders on Friday morning outings to preserves owned and managed by SCCF. Both new and experienced birders will enjoy a variety of birds in a diversity of wildlife habitats. Botany enthusiasts are also welcome to help identify plants along the trails. All walks begin at 8 a.m, but the locations do vary. Walks are free for members and non-members. Please call 472-2329 for more information.

BOBCAT TALES

"Bobcat: Master of Survival" is how author Kevin Hansen describes *Lynx rufus*. While other wild feline species are in trouble, bobcats seem to be flourishing through most of their North American range. No one knows how many bobcats there are on Sanibel and Captiva but according to the book this adaptable feline's ability to survive close to humans is one of the reasons for the bobcat's success. Rats and mice can make up to 40% of the bobcat's diet.

To learn more about the biology and society of this shy feline that moves so peacefully among us, you are invited to attend "Bobcat Tales" on *Wednesdays, February 1 and 22 at 10 a.m. in the SCCF auditorium. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

BUTTERFLY HOUSE TOURS

A guide will teach you about the life cycle and behavior of butterflies. *Tuesdays at 10 a.m. \$1 donation. The house is also open to visitors without a guide.*

CALOOSAHATCHEE OXBOW & RIVERLORE CRUISES

The upcoming season of the Oxbow & Riverlore Cruises begins in November. Come with us to experience the historic meanders of the upriver Caloosahatchee, following the river back to a time when a waterfall served as the headwaters of the Caloosahatchee and settlers braved living amongst the wilderness. Guided by SCCF Natural Resource Policy Director Rae Ann Wessel, this 2.5 hour adventure departs Saturday at 1 p.m. from the W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam Park off SR 80 in Olga. Advance reservations and payment required. \$40 per person. Space is limited. To reserve your spot call 472-2329. Cruises are offered on the following Sundays in 2012: February 26, March 11, April 15 and on Mothers Day, Sunday, May 13.

THE CITY THAT ALMOST WASN'T AND THE SANIBEL PLAN

The City of Sanibel was the first in the country to adopt a comprehensive land use plan based on the island's natural systems. This program is the story of the City's creation and the shaping of its future through the Sanibel Report. This work led in turn to the Sanibel Vision Statement and the Sanibel Plan. It was no accident that this work yielded the preservation of the phenomenal and bountiful natural resources we all enjoy today. Come join us to hear more about the City that almost wasn't and the work that lead to its conservation. *Thursday, February 2 at 2 p.m. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

COYOTE AND BEAR TALES

A coyote and a Florida black bear were documented on the island for the first time last winter. Come and learn about the behaviors of these two new species. Coyotes have now moved into every county in Florida. Both human and bear

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populations are growing in Florida. Eighty percent of a bear's diet comes from insects and fruits. *Thursday, February 2 and Wednesdays, February 15 and 29 at 10 a.m. in the SCCF auditorium. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

DOLPHIN AND WILDLIFE ADVENTURE CRUISES

Narrated by Conservation Foundation docents, Captiva Cruises' trips are a great way to view wildlife in Pine Island Sound. Daily, 4 to 5:30 p.m. in Pine Island Sound, departing from Captiva. *Fee: \$25/adult, \$15/children. Reservations required, call 472-5300.*

THE EAGLES OF SANIBEL AND CAPTIVA

There are four nesting eagle pairs on Sanibel and Captiva this year, compared to three the last nesting season. Come and learn more about these large birds of prey from local eagle and osprey expert "Bird" Westall. Friday, February 10 at 10 a.m. Cost is \$5 for adults with SCCF members and children free.

GATOR & CROCODILE TALES

The biology of alligators and crocodiles is an ancient tale of survival. Come and learn to live with these living dinosaurs to ensure our safety and their survival on the islands. Following the program take a walk on the trails to see an alligator nest that hatched this summer. *Wednesday, February 8, Thursday, February 16 and Tuesday, February 28 at 10 a.m. at the Nature Center. Call 472-2329 for more information.*

THE HISTORY OF RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT OF THE SANIBEL RIVER CORRIDOR

The preservation of Sanibel's interior freshwater wetlands has been one of SCCF's main goals since 1967. It is these wetlands that make us so unique as a barrier island. Executive director, Erick Lindblad, will recreate for us the process of Sanibel's wetland protection through land acquisition, invasive plant control, fire, and the restoration of near historic Wetland water levels. Friday, February 3 at 10 a.m. Cost is \$5 for adults with SCCF members and children free.

HURRICANES!

Wildlife, vegetation and human existence on these islands have been shaped by tropical storms. Most recently Hurricane Charley left his mark on these barrier islands. Storms in 1873, 1910, 1945, and others rearranged sand and with each swipe, they re-sculpted the islands. Spaghetti models provide some of the world's best computer simulations analyzing a storm's behavior. Our growth in technology has improved communication to people who live in the path of a storm, but nothing is powerful enough to alter a hurricane's course. *Thursday, February 9 at 2 p.m. \$5 for non-members; members and children 17 and under are free.*

NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPES

The Native Plant Nursery has been helping homeowners design and install landscapes for wildlife since 1978. These landscapes create habitat for birds and butterflies as well as reduce irrigation and fertilizer usage. Come and learn about the over 100 species of native plants being propagated and raised from nursery manager, Jenny Evans. Friday, February 17 at 10 a.m. This program is free to all.

OPEN HOUSE

Save the date for Open House on Presidents' Day, February 20. This year, we've ramped up the presentations by the Marine Lab, Wildlife Habitat Management and Natural Resource Policy staff to give more insight into their oftentimes behind-the-scenes work. There will also be live animal exhibits, hot dogs and the ever popular Nature Sounds Contest (which begins at 11:45 a.m.) More info to come in the February Member Update. *Presidents Day, Monday, February 20 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Free.*

OTTER TALES

No one knows how many North American river otters live on Sanibel and Captiva. Some say there are fewer since Hurricane Charley. Come and learn about this large, aquatically adapted member of the weasel family. River otters are strong and graceful swimmers that capture the hearts of all who see them. Otter sightings have increased recently on SCCF trails. Following the program take a walk on the trail and view an otter communication sight. *Tuesday, February 7 at 10 a.m. in the Nature Center auditorium. Cost is \$5 per adult, with members and children free.*

OWL TALES

The nesting season for Great Horned, Barn, and Screech Owls of the islands has begun. The Great Horned Owl does not make its own nest but uses one built by an osprey, hawk, or eagle. The Screech and Barn Owls nest in tree cavities made by woodpeckers or nest boxes. There is a nest box on the side of the SCCF Nature Center where Barn owls have nested off and on since 1980... will they return this year? Island Screech owls are in the courting phase with males guarding territory and calling to females. *Tuesday, February 21 at 10 a.m. The cost of the program is \$5 with SCCF members and children attending for free.*

SAILING UNDER THE STARS

Linger out on the water, sail under the stars and enjoy an introduction to our night sky. Planets, stars and constellations will be identified along the way. Mythology and mysteries of the universe will be appreciated under the magic of the night sky. Join us and share in the universal

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and timeless fascination of our night skies. Sailing under the Stars will be offered on Thursdays and Saturdays and will last approximately one and a half hours. *Times, cost, reservations and additional information may be obtained by calling Captiva Cruises at 472-5300.*

SHOREBIRD WALKS AT THE SANIBEL INN

Meet your SCCF guide poolside at the Sanibel Inn, 937 East Gulf Drive. Learn the stories of the shorebirds you encounter, some have migrated thousands of miles to local beaches. Sanibel continues the commitment to protect local beaches by leaving the wrack community of cast ashore seaweeds and seagrasses that feed the insects, shorebirds and beach plants that live there. Wednesdays, February 8, 22, and 29 at 8 a.m. This program is free to all.

THE SNAKES OF SANIBEL AND CAPTIVA

From surveys conducted by the SCCF there are 13 species of snake documented for Sanibel. Two species reported in the past were NOT encountered during these surveys, the Eastern Indigo Snake and the Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake. Come and learn about island snakes from Chris Lechowicz, Director of Habitat Management. There will be live snakes to hold if you are so inclined including an Indigo snake that will be making her home in the nature center in a new exhibit. Friday, February 24 at 10 a.m. Cost of the program is \$5 for adults with SCCF members and children free.

TIDES, CURRENTS AND THE FLORIDA SHELF

Whether it is shelling, fishing, boating, birding or just enjoying the view of the water, tides and currents affect most of our lives daily. If you have wondered why the islands sometimes have just one tide a day – or why you can see seagrasses when the tide chart says it is high tide – this program may be of interest to you. In the past few years more people have become aware of the Florida Shelf. Where is it and why is it important? Come to this introduction to how water behaves as the earth spins, the moon orbits and the winds blow. *Thursday, February 23 at 2 p.m. \$5 for non-members; members and children 17 and under are free.*

TRAIL WALKS: EXPLORE SANIBEL'S INTERIOR WETLANDS

Sanibel Island is a unique barrier island in Florida because it still has an interior freshwater wetland ecosystem that has not been lost to development. This Everglades-like ecosystem supports a wide variety of plants and animals. Join us for a guided walk through the interior wetlands and mid-island ridges of the Center Tract with discussion of native habitats, natural and cultural history and preservation efforts. *Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 11 a.m. Meet at the Nature Center and proceed to the trails. \$5 for non-members; free to members and children.*

TURTLE TRACKS

Sanibel Island had one of the first sea turtle monitoring programs in the country. Learn about the life cycles and habits of the sea turtles and shorebirds that nest on our beaches, SCCF's monitoring activities, and what we are doing to protect them. Meet at the Nature Center for a talk and touch tank program. *Thursday, February 9 and 23 at 10 a.m. Meet at the Nature Center. Free to members and children, \$5 for non-members.*

TURTLES, TORTOISES AND TERRAPINS

The Nature Center now has a tank with live hatchlings of peninsula cooter, Florida softshell, red-eared and yellow-bellied sliders and mud turtles. Bring in the grandkids. And a new addition is a beautiful species, the ornate diamondback terrapin, featured in a new 220-gallon tank. This saltwater species lives in the brackish water of the mangrove creeks where they forage on shrimp, fiddler crabs, and anything else they can dig up. *Join us on Tuesday, February 14 at 10 a.m. Cost of the program is \$5 with members and children free.*

WEEDS AND SEEDS

We are a group of amateur botanists who enjoy finding and identifying native plants on Sanibel. Our walks, visiting different locations on Sanibel, last for two hours, and are guided by a leader with a plant list. The group will meet at the Nature Center porch. Depending on the location visited, you may need parking money. Please bring a hat, water, sun-block and comfortable enclosed shoes with socks. For further information on the January 9 and 23 walks, please call Elaine Jacobson at 395-1878; for the January 16 and 30 walks, please call Betty Eertmode at 395-9240. *Mondays at 8:45 a.m., meet at the base of the Nature Center porch. Walks are free but donations to SCCF are welcome.*

WILDLIFE TOUR AT THE DUNES

Take an SCCF Wildlife Tour by golf cart at The Dunes to see alligators and birds. Last season, an eagle and the crocodile were spotted. The golf course lakes surrounded by SCCF preserved lands make for great wildlife viewing. The tour starts at 4 p.m. from the Dunes clubhouse. *Tuesday, February 7 at 4 p.m. Call the Dunes for reservations 472-3355 and ask for Julayne. Cost is \$18 per adult and \$10 for children. Tours will be held on the first Tuesday of every month through April.*

20th Annual Tennis Tournament

Join us for the premier tournament on the islands:

Cocktails: Friday, March 30

Tournament: Saturday, March 31 - Sunday, April 1

Please call 472-2329 for information

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ON YOUR OWN AT THE NATURE CENTER

BUTTERFLY HOUSE

Learn about the life cycle of the Zebra Longwing, the state butterfly, on a self-guided tour of the Butterfly House.

HUMAN USES OF FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS

Take a self-guided tour of our Ethnobotany garden. Signs briefly explain how Florida native plants have been used for food, shelter, medicine and art by cultures past and present.

WALKING TRAILS & OBSERVATION TOWER

Explore our four miles of walking trails through Sanibel's interior wetlands and climb our observation tower for a bird's eye view of Sanibel's ridges and swales.

Nature Center Hours:

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| Monday - Friday | 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. from October - May 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. from June - September |
| Saturdays | 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. from December - April Closed Saturdays from May - November 21 |

Native Plant Nursery Hours:

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| Monday - Friday | 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. |
| Saturdays | 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. from December - April Closed Saturdays from May - November |

FEBRUARY 2012

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 Weeds & Seeds-8:45 | 7 Otter Tales-10 Butterfly House Tour-10 Wildlife Tour (D)-4 Trail Walks-11 | 8 Shorebird Walk (SI)-8 Gator/Croc Tales-10 Life Member/Benefactor Luncheon-11:30 | 9 Turtle Tracks-10 Hurricanes-2 | 10 San-Cap Eagles-10 | 11 |
| 12 Caloosahatchee Oxbow & Riverlore Cruise SOLD OUT | 13 Weeds & Seeds-8:45 Beach Walk (IsI)-10 | 14 Turtles, Tortoises & Terrapins-10 Butterfly House Tour-10 Trail Walks-11 | 15 Coyote/Bear Tales-10 | 16 Gator/Croc Tales-10 Bailey Donor Tour-2 | 17 Native Plant Landscapes-10 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 OPEN HOUSE-11 | 21 Owl Tales-10 Butterfly House Tour-10 Trail Walks-11 | 22 Shorebird Walk (SI)-8 Bobcat Tales-10 | 23 Turtle Tracks-10 Tides, Current-2 | 24 San-Cap Snakes-10 | 25 |
| 26 Caloosahatchee Oxbow & Riverlore Cruise-1 | 27 Weeds & Seeds-8:45 Beach Walk (IsI)-10 | 28 Gator/Croc Tales-10 Butterfly House Tour-10 Trail Walks-11 | 29 Shorebird Walk (SI)-8 Coyote/Bear Tales-10 | | | (D) - The Dunes ((FL) - Fraklin Lock IsI) - Island I(IsI) - Island Inn (SI) - Sanibel Inn |