



## JUNE 2010 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

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

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

*Trails, Education Center, Nature Shop and Bookstore: \$3/adult, children under 17 free, members free.*

### 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 *Wednesday, June 9 at 10 a.m. in the SCCF auditorium. Cost of the program is \$5 per adult, with members and children attending for free.*

### CRUISE INTO THE PAST

In cooperation with Captiva Cruises and The Mound House Cultural Resources Center, this special trip will cruise to the historic mound house on Estero Bay. Learn about the dynamic history and ecology of Punta Rassa, Pine Island Sound and Estero Bay along the way to our destination. While at the Mound House, Theresa Schober, Director of Cultural Resources, will give you a sneak peak and tour of the new underground archaeological exhibit. This exhibit offers a rare opportunity to walk in an actual Calusa shell mound to observe its construction, its layers and to see this cross section of two thousand years of Southwest Florida history. Cost for this unique opportunity is \$45/person and includes a donation to The Mound House Cultural Resources Center. *The cruise will depart Punta Rassa at 9 a.m. on Friday June 18 and return to Punta Rassa at 1:30 pm. Additional information and reservations may be obtained by calling Captiva Cruises at 472-5300. Reservations are required as space is limited.*

### PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

*Week of May 30* -- Gator Tales, Snowy Plovers, Turtle Tracks

*Week of June 6* -- Bobcat Tales, Snowy Plovers, Turtle Tracks

*Week of June 13* -- Gator Tales, Turtle Tracks

*Week of June 20* -- Snowy Plovers, Turtle Tracks

*Week of June 27* -- Snowy Plovers, Turtle Tracks

### 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; departs McCarthy’s Marina, Captiva. *Fee: \$25/adult, \$15/children. Reservations required, call 472-5300.*



### GATOR TALES

The biology of alligators is an ancient tale of survival. Florida’s history of gators and humans are closely intertwined. To learn about these fascinating creatures and what we must do to ensure our safety and their survival on the islands please attend “Gator Tales” on *Wednesday, June 2 and 16 at 10 a.m. at the Nature Center. Call 472-2329 for more information.*

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#### SCIENCE AT SEA CRUISE

Be a Marine Biologist for the Day! This 90-minute trip will be a hands-on scientific inquiry and voyage suitable and fun for all ages. Crab traps and a plankton net will be hauled for a look at some of the components of the food chains. Learn by taking part in actual scientific research that will be utilized by SCCF's Marine Lab. Kids will use compasses for navigational aid and magnifying viewers making this a worthwhile and exciting trip for the whole family. This 1-1/2 hour trip is \$30/adult, \$20/child. Call for times and reservations, 472-5300.

the ongoing SCCF research and conservation efforts on Sanibel and around Florida. Join us for a short Power Point presentation at the Nature Center and then carpool to the beach to observe live plovers *Fridays, June 4, 11 and 25 (not the 18th) at 10 a.m. Meet in the Nature Center auditorium. Cost is \$5 per adult, with members and children free.*

#### TURTLE TRACKS

Sanibel Island has 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. You will also learn about the forces that shape the beach habitat and other local marine life. *Thursdays at 9 a.m. Meet at the Nature Center. Free to members and children, \$5 for non-members.*

#### SNOWY PLOVERS

Have you ever wondered about the staked nests on the beach or the families of birds with tiny chicks running around? Do you simply want to know which of the birds on the beach actually is a Snowy Plover? Learn about the biology of the Snowy Plover, the threats to their survival, and



#### 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.

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## Sea Turtles and the Deepwater Horizon Spill

By Amanda Bryant, Biologist and Sea Turtle Coordinator

In light of the recent Deepwater Horizon oil spill there has been great concern over sea turtles and this year's nesting season. These concerns are well placed. The explosion and subsequent oil spill occurred just ten days before the official May 1 start of sea turtle season along Florida's gulf coast.

The Gulf of Mexico is full of a diversity of life and is home to five species of sea turtle (loggerhead, green, hawksbill, leatherback, and Kemp's ridley turtles). One species, the Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), is most at risk from the impacts of the oil spill. It spends its entire life in the gulf: hatching on the beaches of Playa de Rancho Nuevo, Tamaulipas, Mexico or along the Texas and Florida coasts, growing and reaching adulthood in the gulf, and returning to Mexico or Texas and Florida to nest.

As the most endangered sea turtle in the world, the Kemp's ridley has



rebounded from a low of only 702 nests in 1985 to over 20,000 nests last year. This recovery was possible because of the tireless efforts of scientists and conservation workers.

The other species of sea turtle may not spend their entire lives in the gulf, but nest on the gulf's beaches and utilize the estuaries as nursery grounds where they grow to adulthood and are also facing threats from the spill. The risks to sea turtles posed by oil include damage to the digestive tract and internal organs from oil-contaminated

food, a refusal to nest on oiled beaches, death or inhibited development of eggs exposed to oil, and deformities in hatchlings exposed to oil during incubation. Oil on beaches can also alter the temperature of the sand (which determines sex in sea turtles), skewing the sex ratio of hatchlings.

The potential impact of this spill to current and future sea turtle generations is daunting to consider, and while the exact toll of this environmental disaster is currently unknown, it is sure to impact sea turtle populations.

Story from our June 2010 newsletter. You'll find our newsletters on our web site: [www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org), click on News & About Us and then click on News From SCCF

### Nature Center Hours:

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:

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Saturdays Closed

**Nature Center and Offices: (239) 472-2329**

**Marine Laboratory: (239) 395-4617**

**Native Plant Nursery: (239) 472-1932**

**Wildlife Habitat Management: (239) 472-3984**

[www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org)

### **Visit our Nature Center**

- Trails
- Education Center
- Nature Shop & Bookstore

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Find the latest real-time water quality readings from our RECON sensors at

[www.recon.sccf.org](http://www.recon.sccf.org)