

BAY REFLECTIONS

Restoring Our Bays

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Newsletter

May 2011



Anhinga by D.L. Rusty Rust
See more of Rusty's collection of wildlife paintings and other artists on the Creative Expressions Page at www.sarasotabay.org

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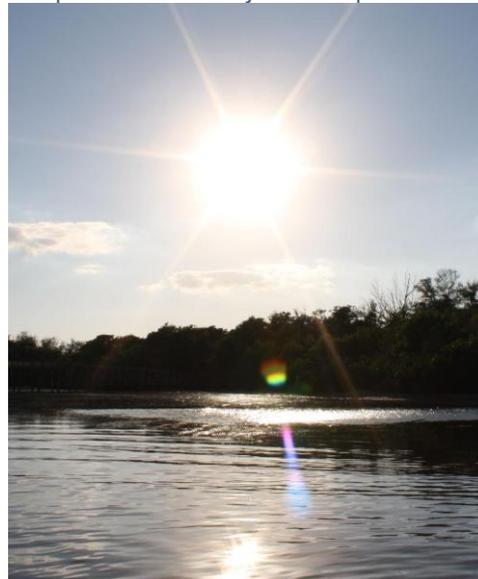
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Survey of 300 Business Professionals Focuses on Issues Impacting on Sarasota Bay

Triple 3 Marketing, on behalf of the SBEP, recently conducted a survey of 300 business professionals operating on or near Sarasota Bay Estuary. The survey participants own or work for businesses located between Anna Maria Island and the Venice Inlet. Bryan Moore with Triple 3 Marketing completed the surveys from April 1 through May 6.



Final Reflection: Artist Jimmy White

What is Bay Reflections?

Bay Reflections provides information about projects, programs and events associated with the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP).

Bay Reflections is emailed in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Join us on Facebook.

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Survey participants were asked what they regarded as the most important issues facing the Sarasota Bay Estuary. The most frequent responses referenced water pollution and water quality. Other responses included fertilizers and pesticides running into the Bay, challenges with urban development, loss of habitat, potential threat of future red tide occurrences, the need to reopen Midnight Pass, diminished fishing and marine life, and concerns about boat traffic and the enforcement of boating regulations.

Many survey participants said they believed the overall health of Sarasota Bay was okay or pretty good. A smaller number said they believed the Bay was unhealthy. Areas of concern included recent news reports about beach closings at Venice Beach and high bacteria counts at Palma Sola Bay.

Bryan Moore acknowledged the 300 individuals participating in the survey. "I met so many interesting people with thoughtful insights," he said. "A lot of respondents were impressed to learn about the various efforts by the SBEP and other local organizations to restore and protect Sarasota Bay."

**The SBEP and Project Partners Complete
New Tidal Tributary at North Lido Park; Project
Restores 30 Acres on 70 Acre Site Near the Beach**



Photo by Bob Thill

Local contractors working with the SBEP and its partners completed the development of a new tidal tributary in March at North Lido Park adjacent to the beach access. The restoration project will improve about 30 acres on the 70 acre site. The collaborative effort launched in September removed non-native vegetation, excavated the tidal wetland, contoured the upland area, created dunes, and planted thousands of native plants.

The tidal wetland was created to provide essential habitat for estuarine dependent fish species, according to the SBEP staff scientist Jay Leverone, PhD. The restoration also provides improved habitat for birds, reptiles and other wildlife. Local residents have already reported seeing eagles, ospreys, a gopher tortoise, and numerous schools of small fish.

Florida Native Nursery planted more than 8,700 plants and 500 more plants will be added this summer by volunteers with the Bay Guardians, the volunteer group supported by SBEP and Around the Bend Nature Tours.

Major funding for the project comes from Southwest Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Other partners include the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County. Community supporters included the Lido Shores Property Owners Association, Lido Key Residents Association, Sarasota Audubon Society, and Captain Jeffrey Karr with the Sarasota Police Department.

Since its inception in 1989, SBEP has been involved with more than 200 projects related to habitat or water improvement within the Sarasota Bay watershed. A dozen projects are currently

in planning, permitting or construction phase.

The SBEP to Make Recommendations Regarding Socio-Economic Study

The SBEP will be making recommendations to the Policy Board in May for implementation of the SBEP Socio-Economic Study scheduled to be launched this year. The socio-economic study was originally recommended by the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). The study will be a comprehensive economic assessment that helps determine the economic value of Sarasota Bay and adjacent natural resources.

A similar study of the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) System in 2007 reported that the value of the highly urbanized water system on the east coast of Florida is worth more than 3.7 billion dollars annually.

Bay Guardians Remove Invasive Plants at Neal Preserve on March 26; Volunteers Kayak to Help Audubon of Florida Remove Debris and Non-Native Plant Seedings at Bowlees Creek Island April 16



Student volunteers at Neal Preserve

The SBEP Bay Guardians worked with Manatee County Natural Resources and Around the Bend Nature Tour on March 26 to remove invasive plants at Neal Preserve located on Manatee Avenue West in Bradenton. Additional volunteers also worked with Audubon of Florida and Around the Bend Nature Tours on April 16 to remove debris and non-native plants from Bowlees Creek Island Audubon Sanctuary on April 16. More than 33 bags of debris was removed with an estimated weight of 1,000 pounds.



Bowlees Creek Island volunteers

The SBEP welcomes new volunteers to participate in the Bay Guardian program. Future projects include a June 4 planting event at Emerson Point Preserve in Manatee County and a second planting event later this summer at North Lido Beach in Sarasota County. [Click here](#) for updates about future Bay Guardian events. The Bay Guardians volunteer program is a great way to make a meaningful contribution to Sarasota Bay in a concentrated period of time. Most outings are only two or three hours. Learn more by emailing Sara Kane at sara@sarasotabay.org.

**Christine Callahan from Anna Maria Island
Joins SBEP's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)**



Christine Callahan recently joined the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Christine and her family moved to Anna Maria Island in 1996 from Philadelphia. She owns her own business as a custom software developer. One of her major passions is to educate elementary school children about the importance of conservation. After completing the Master Gardener Program in 2005, Christine devoted volunteer time in support of Anna Maria Elementary School.

Her efforts included starting a recycling program for ink cartridges and helping to design and install a Peace Garden featuring plants that attract butterflies. Her next project was Cultivating Kids, an education program focused on protecting Sarasota Bay. The plan included rain gardens to help reduce non-point source pollution and the creation of a path lined with native plants and student-created signage. Cultivating Kids received funding from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) and also won the Golden Mangrove Award as TBEP's most outstanding mini-grant project for 2008.

SBEP expects to add additional members to the 20-member CAC over the next few months. An application can be downloaded at sarasotabay.org. Questions can be

directed to sara@sarasotabay.org.

New Creative Expressions Page Acknowledges the Beauty and Importance of Sarasota Bay Estuary

SBEP launched a new Creative Expressions page in April to acknowledge the beauty and importance of Sarasota Bay. [Click here](#) to visit the new page. The initial contributions included bird photos from CAC member Lou Newman, photos and essays from local naturalist Fran Palmeri, poems by the late Jack Taylor, and cartoon strips from Rick Hotton's Holy Mole collection.

More recent contributors include professional marine photographer Jimmy White of Bradenton, artist Victoria Miller of Venice, wildlife photographers Marla and Terry Frankford of Sarasota, the prolific painter D.L. "Rusty" Rust, and Sarasota photographer and writer James Phillips.

Most of the images and prose focus on the local habitat, coastal scenes, and diverse wildlife associated with Sarasota Bay and other coastal ecosystems.



Photo of Eastern Swallowtail by Marla and Terry Frankford

SBEP News Briefs

Habitat Restoration Map

The SBEP website now features a digital habitat restoration map showing completed, current and planned restoration projects throughout the Sarasota Bay Estuary spanning Manatee and Sarasota County. [Click here](#) to see the new map. [Click here](#) to visit a companion page showing the 31 local, state and federal organizations that have served as project partners for the SBEP. The page provides direct links to the various websites used by these organizations.

SBEP Press Coverage

The press coverage associated with the SBEP has been significant the past few months. Part of the heightened attention was due to the one year anniversary of the Gulf Coast oil spill. The SBEP also sent out a record number of press releases in March and April. [Click here](#) to see all of the links to recent press coverage from local media and other online sources.

Bay Wise Kayak Tour Program

The annual Bay Wise Kayak Tour Program came to an end in April. Kayak expert and program manager Brad Tanner led 10 free trips with two excursions monthly to Leffis and Jewfish Key, South Lido Mangrove Tunnels, Lyons and Blackburn Bay, and Whitaker Bayou. The season ran from December 2010 through April.

Congratulations Yvette Little

Congratulations to Yvette Little, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for winning a mentor award from her peers with the TogetherGreen Program. Yvette was acknowledged at a special luncheon held in Washington, D.C. She was a major advocate for the Pooches for the Planet Program developed by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and supported by the SBEP.

Congratulations Brittany Gleitsman

Brittany Gleitsman, a marketing intern with the SBEP, won the Outstanding Graduate Award for her graduating class at the USF Sarasota Manatee Campus. Brittany was singled out for her community involvement and advocacy for environmental stewardship.

CAC Member Profile:
**Lori Zaworski Explores the World of Science
While Enjoying International Travel for Fun**



Lori in New Zealand

Lori Zaworski works as a chemist and research scientist for Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota. Her activities have included research on red tide and the nutrient dynamics of the Gulf of Mexico. She worked previously as a research assistant focused on sharks at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina. Lori completed Bachelor of Science Degrees in both Biology and Marine Science at Coastal Carolina University. She has also done graduate work at Nova Southeastern University focused on coastal zone management

One of Lori's passions is international travel. She spent nine months visiting more than 12 countries in 2005-2006. Her destinations included Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Cook Islands, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, France, Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands, and Iceland. Highlights included scuba diving Fiji, the underwater kelp forests in New Zealand, Australia's Great Barrier Reef, and shipwrecks along the northern coast of Bali, Indonesia. Lori has also traveled to Kenya, Costa Rica, Bahamas, and extensively

throughout the US and Canada. She owns a home in Bradenton Beach and her family live in Illinois.

[Click here](#) to read short profiles about all of the CAC members. The CAC welcomes applications from prospective new members. Learn more at sara@sarasotabay.org.

Final Reflection: Jimmy White of Bradenton Lives the Passion of Underwater Photography Everyday

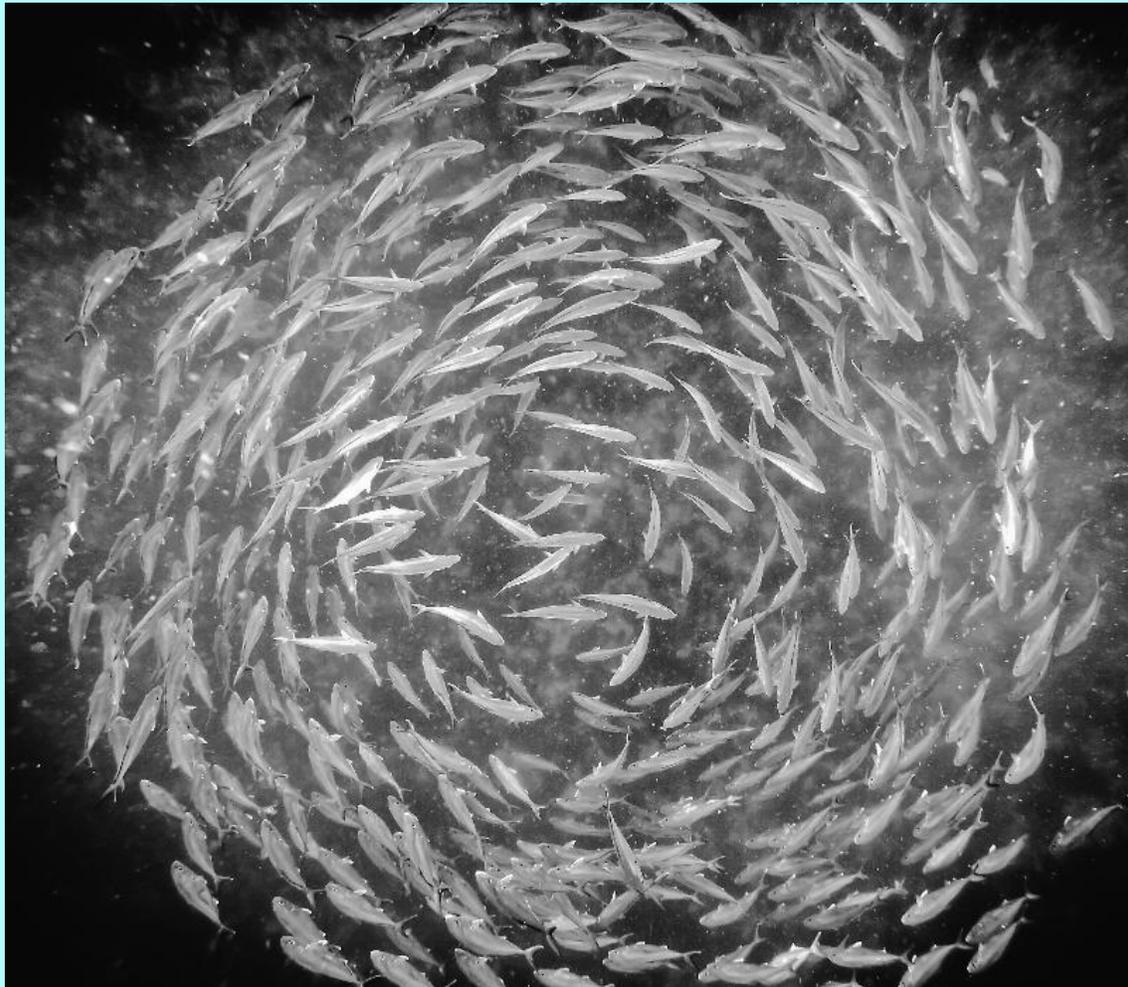


Photo by Jimmy White

This image of a school of amber jacks was taken by professional photographer Jimmy White. Jimmy owns a studio in Bradenton and he has an impressive collection of images of marine life. You can see more of his work at www.sarasotabay.org, or Jimmy's website at www.jimmywhitephoto.com. New content from photographers and artists will continue to be added to the SBEP website as a way to showcase the passion many people feel about the beauty and importance of Sarasota Bay Estuary.

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