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SARASOTA BAY
ESTUARY PROGRAM
Restoring Our Bays

BAY REFLECTIONS

News from the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

September 2016



Phillippi Creek - July 2016

SBEP awarded \$288,000 for tidal creek study

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program was recently awarded a second Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4 Wetland Program Development Grant to continue their work on southwest Florida tidal creeks. Dr. Jay Leverone, SBEP staff scientist, will be leading this collaborative effort, which includes both Tampa Bay and Charlotte Harbor Estuary Programs as well as staff from six coast coastal counties. [Read more...](#)



We're celebrating National Estuaries Week!

September 17-24 is [National Estuaries Week](#). It's a time to learn about and celebrate estuaries across the United States, including our own Sarasota Bay.

- Check out the SBEP pages on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for fun facts about Sarasota Bay.
- Join us, Manatee County Parks & Natural Resources, and the Tampa Bay Estuary Program for a day of estuary celebration at Robinson Preserve Extension on Saturday, September 24. Help us plant native grasses and then enjoy lunch and a small educational festival featuring a "taste of the estuary." Register [here](#).
- Let us know what you're doing to celebrate Sarasota Bay during National Estuaries Week! Find us on [Facebook](#) or send us a [tweet](#). Remember to include the tag #EstuariesWeek on your posts.

National Estuary Program spending authorized through 2021

In May, President Obama signed a reauthorization of the National Estuary Program (NEP), allowing up to \$26.5 million in spending for the NEP from fiscal years 2017 - 2021. This authorization allows the SBEP and our 27 partner programs to continue restoring and conserving our nation's estuaries for years to come. The NEP covers more than 42 percent of the continental U.S. shoreline and 15 percent of all Americans currently live within NEP designated watersheds.

We'd like to extend thanks to our local U.S. House Representative Vern Buchanan and Florida Senators Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio for their continued support for all estuary programs in Florida.

SBEP Staff Updates

Darcy Young takes on the role of Public Outreach Manager after 9 months as the Public Outreach Assistant. When she's not in the office, find her at Bay Guardians events, on her bike, or in her garden. Email Darcy at darcy@sarasotabay.org.

Cheryl Dexter joins the SBEP as the Executive Assistant to the Director. Cheryl brings a great attitude and a multitude of expertise to the position. Welcome, Cheryl! We're so glad to have you on board. Email Cheryl at cheryl@sarasotabay.org.

Lesley Fleming joins Sarasota Bay CAC

Bradenton Beach resident and nature enthusiast Lesley Fleming joined the SBEP's Citizens Advisory Committee in August. Lesley has two degrees in political science and is a registered horticultural therapist, Florida Master Gardener, and volunteer at Anna Maria Elementary School's edible garden. Welcome, Lesley!

U.S. EPA visits Sarasota Bay

In June, SBEP, Tampa Bay Estuary Program, and Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program hosted our colleagues from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Gulf of Mexico Program in Mississippi and the EPA Region 4 office in Atlanta. We got the opportunity to show off the multitude of successful restoration projects that the three Gulf Coast National Estuary Programs have completed over the years. We also talked about areas that still need work, such as South Lido Park in Sarasota. We want to thank Ben Scaggs, Lael Butler, John Bowie, Felicia Burks, and Mark Nuhfer for visiting us.



SBEP Executive Director Mark Alderson and Gulf of Mexico Program Director Ben Scaggs.



Volunteers plant Herb Dolan Park shoreline

Ten visitors from Richmond, VA came together to help us plant the upper bank of the living shoreline at Herb Dolan Park in Bradenton Beach. Four middle schoolers, their three adult chaperones, and two college student mentors put 35 native plants - wax myrtle, Indian blanket, and beach sunflower - in the ground. Several local residents stopped by to tell us how much they love the park. We also got a surprise visit from Bradenton Beach Mayor Shearon! Special thanks to Booker High School marine sciences teacher Sue Forrest for connecting the volunteer group with us and to [Florida Natives Nursery](#) for donating the plants.

The Sarasota Bay Guardians return this fall!

Throughout the 2015-2016 season, **455 Bay Guardian volunteers** busted air potato spuds at Red Bug Slough, planted native grasses at Perico Preserve, cleaned up trash from Bowlees Creek Island, and more. Thanks to Around the Bend Nature Tours, Manatee County Parks & Natural Resources Department, Sarasota County Parks, the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, the Science and Environment Council of Southwest Florida, the Serenoa chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, and all of the dedicated Bay Guardians who helped make the Sarasota Bay watershed a better place to live.

Fall Bay Guardians dates

We're excited to announce fall dates for the Sarasota Bay Guardians! You can pencil in these dates now, enter your email address [here](#), and then wait to receive emails when online registration opens for each event.

September 24 - Rendezvous at Robinson Extension

October 1 - Planting native grasses at Perico Preserve

October 15 - Busting air potato spuds at North Water Tower Park
November 5 - Busting air potato spuds at Red Bug Slough
November 19 - Bagging oyster shell at Reef Innovations

FNPS Fall Wildflower Festival & Native Plant Sale

The Florida Native Plant Society and the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program will hold their 16th Annual Fall Native Plant Festival and Sale on **Saturday, October 8th** at **Sweet Bay Nursery** located at 10824 Erie Road in Parrish.



Plants to be included in the sale include a large selection of native trees, shrubs, grasses and blooming wildflowers for use in any garden. There will also be FloriMulch® for sale. This sustainable mulch is made from the exotic and invasive melaleuca tree and is an excellent garden mulch alternative to non-sustainable cypress.

The sale is from **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** and is open to the public. Free parking is available. There will also be information available from local nature groups including Manatee Audubon, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program and more.

Enjoy guided nature walks through the woods with Around the Bend Nature Tours. Fun children's activities will also be available. Experts will be available to answer questions so that you can plant the right plant in the right place.

Events Calendar

Upcoming SBEP events, including public meetings and volunteer days, are always posted on our [website calendar](#).

SBEP Board and Committee Meetings

Policy: 9/16, 1:00 pm, Manatee County Administration Center
CAC: 10/3, 4:30 pm, Dan McClure Auditorium
TAC: 11/3, 9:00 am, location TBD

Sarasota Bay Guardians Volunteer Workdays

Sign up [here](#) to receive emails about Sarasota Bay Guardians events.

- September 24: [Rendezvous at Robinson Extension](#)
- October 1: Planting native grasses at Perico Preserve
- October 15: Busting air potato spuds at North Water Tower Park
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Partner Events

- [Florida Waters Stewardship Program](#): Register by September 13
- September 24:

- [National Public Lands Day Festival](#), Oscar Scherer State Park, 9am - 2pm
- [National Public Lands Day Volunteer Cleanup](#), Pinecraft Park, 9am-12pm
- [National Estuaries Week Volunteer Cleanup](#), Phillippi Estate Park, 8am - 1pm
- October 8, 9am - 3pm: Florida Native Plant Society's [Fall Wildflower Festival & Native Plant Sale](#), Sweetbay Nursery, Parrish
- December 1: [Sarasota County Sustainable Communities Workshop](#)

Water Reading Around the Web

Read on for curious news about water from around the globe.

[How to Restore an Urban River? Los Angeles Looks to Find Out](#)
Yale Environment 360

Much like many of our creeks, the 51-mile long Los Angeles River is lined with walls to prevent flooding. Now, several groups are working to restore it. Many questions remain: what should be the focus of the project - beautification or restoration of natural processes? How far should you go to restore natural habitats in urban areas? This will be a fascinating project to follow as it moves forward and it could contain lessons for those of us interested in tributary restoration here in southwest Florida.

[Blue Carbon Study Supports Tampa Bay Habitat Restoration and Resiliency Planning](#)
Restore America's Estuaries

Our sister program to the north, the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, teamed up with Restore America's Estuaries and Tampa Bay Watch to study "blue carbon" in Tampa Bay last year. Seagrasses, mangroves, salt marshes, and other kinds of aquatic and coastal vegetation capture and store tons - literally - of atmospheric carbon in and around our waterways, leading scientists to name this stored carbon "blue carbon." This assessment of blue carbon in and around Tampa Bay will help chart the course for habitat restoration, sustainable development, and sea level rise in the Bay area. The study highlights the need for protected upland areas where mangroves and salt marshes can migrate when they are pressured by sea level rise. Using the data from this study, planners can make sure that they manage land use appropriately so that Tampa Bay ecosystems can continue to capture and store carbon for years to come.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset - Sarasota Bay. We offer special thanks to our partners: Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton, Town of Longboat Key, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Southwest Florida Water Management District.



