



The Council Quarterly

Quarterly Newsletter of the Florida Urban Forestry Council

2022 Issue One

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MANAGING URBAN FORESTS FOR BIRDS

Submitted by Robert J. Northrop

The urban forest management should include habitat for birds. Birds make significant contributions to the function of forest ecosystems. Birds deliver ecosystem services that have direct benefits to people.

Songbirds and raptors provide a level of control for insect and rodents. Vultures and other scavengers dispose of waste. Birds contribute to local economies via eco-tourism (i.e., birdwatching trips) and the purchase of birdseed and other bird related products.

Birds impact our quality of life by boosting cultural and spiritual well-being, enhancing aesthetic experiences and strengthening sense of place. According to a study by the University of Exeter (UK), vegetation cover and afternoon bird abundances were positively associated with a lower prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress. In urban areas, birds represent the most frequent and consistent contact between people and wildlife.

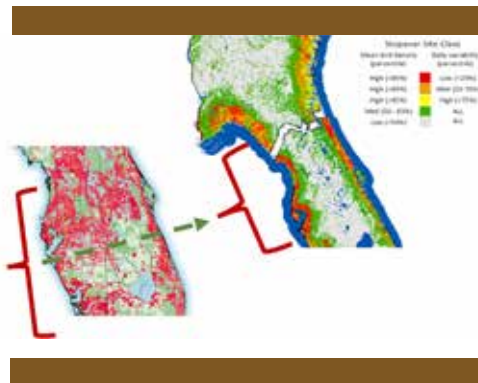
While birds can be found most everywhere, people are actually seeing far fewer of them than just 50 years ago. Bird population losses have been documented for much of North America over the past 48 years. These losses include once-common species

and most regions and habitats. Recent scientific investigations indicate a net loss approaching 3 billion birds, or 29% of the recorded 1970 abundance. That is 1/3 less birds present today then in 1970.

“Migratory birds have experienced significant population declines. Approximately 2.5 billion of the estimated 2.9 billion North American birds lost in the past 50 years have been migratory birds.”

Migratory birds have experienced significant population declines. Approximately 2.5 billion of the estimated 2.9 billion North American birds lost in the past 50 years have been migratory birds. Most migratory birds rely on spatially distinct stopover areas and move between these areas in predictive patterns. The quality

and the availability of stopover habitat are crucial for the survival of migratory birds. Cities along Florida’s coastlines are hot spots for migratory bird stopover (fig. 1).



Bird habitat contains everything a species needs to find and gather food, select a mate, and successfully reproduce. It provides a suitable arrangement for shelter, water, food, and space.

I do not want to oversimplify the need to manage bird habitat in developed areas. There are varying degrees of specificity among bird species for their essential needs. Some birds are specialists with a narrow range of preferred foods and plant communities they call home. They often have a difficult time adapting to the changes associated with urbanization. Many of our most endangered and threatened species are specialists such as the Florida scrub jay. Other birds, are generalists, have a wider range of acceptable habitat characteristics and are better at adapting to change.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I don't think it's coincidental that this issue of the *Council Quarterly* has a wildlife theme. At best, I speak trees, not wolf. Though lately, the universe has been speaking to me in "wolf analogies." For example, the old adage "a lone wolf cannot take down big prey" keeps whispering in my ear. As I sit back and reflect on the first few months as President, I can appreciate its deeper meaning as it relates to our urban forestry community.

In January, we lost a beloved friend and valuable member of our pack – Sandy Temple. Sandy has been the Executive Director for the FUFC since its infancy. Suddenly, the immediate path before us became a steep uphill climb. The needs of the FUFC could not be met by a "lone wolf." Any sense of loneliness was brief and faded away as I watched in awe as the pack pulled together with true strength. The Council's Executive Committee members volunteered extra hours to ensure the Council's needs were met. Past committee members returned and took on additional tasks to assist the Council. The Urban Forestry Institute (UFI) Committee worked tirelessly to ensure that the program content, that nourished the pack, was up and running. Our urban forest community was patient and supportive as we rounded the top of the slope. It is with great pride and gratitude that I say, "the pack tackled and brought down BIG prey." We have much to howl about – Owooooooh?

Recently, stopped at a traffic light, I glanced over to a church sign that read, "The strength of the wolf is the pack. Be part of a good pack!" Perhaps the universe was speaking wolf to me again. The FUFC pack is strong because we represent various disciplines in urban forestry. We have municipal arborists, traditional foresters, nursery growers, landscape architects, utility arborists, parks & recreation, consultants, tree advocates, city officials, and more. Collectively, we bring a diversity of experiences though we are a pack of like-minded people. We have common ground with the urban forest. We all share in the mission to promote the value, enhancement, and sound management of urban forests through leadership, collaboration, guidance, and education.

To walk and work amongst the trees is a beautiful thing, but to work along this pack of people has proven to be extraordinary. Together we have been able to pack life with good memories. Together we are stronger; together we can take down BIG prey. We have much to howl about. Thank you for howling along and joining our song.

Sincerely,

Erin Givens
FUFC President

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Let's look at a couple of key attributes of bird habitat that the municipal arborist, urban forester, landscape architect or consulting arborist can affect directly on a daily basis.

Tree selection and placement will have a long-term effect on the composition of the urban forest.

Local and migratory birds have evolved to depend on native trees and plants for food and shelter. Insects, particularly the larvae of butterflies and moths, are critical to the reproductive success of bird populations. Native insects, such as butterflies and moths, and native tree species have co-evolved. Butterfly and moth caterpillars have developed specific mouth structures and digestive systems to successfully use a very narrow suite of native plants. Of all terrestrial birds in North America 96% rely on insects (and other arthropods – spiders that eat insects) to feed their young. Non-native vegetation reduces the amount of caterpillar food available, reducing nesting success.

Studies conclude that woody plants supported more species of butterflies and moths than herbaceous plants. Native woody plants with ornamental value supported more butterflies and moth species than introduced woody ornamentals. Native trees produced 4x more biomass than non-native woody plants; supported 3x as many herbivorous insects associated with native than non-native woody plants; and native woody plants produced 35x more caterpillar biomass than non-native woody plants.

The structure of urban forests has two attributes that are directly affected by landscape design and arboricultural practices. Vertical structure is the vegetation from the ground to top of tree canopy. A complex, or connected, vertical structure is required to meet the needs for a large number of perching songbirds. Other attributes of vertical structure include tree health (stages of growth and decay); tree canopy cover; shrub canopy cover; and tree density. Arborist must consider if pruning operations will occur during the bird breeding season. Will pruning remove branches or limbs needed for nesting or interfere with



reproductive success? Arborists can make recommendations to clients concerning how pruning and other arboricultural decisions may affect bird habitat.

Horizontal structure, or the distribution of the urban forest across the urban landscape, concerns the connectivity of individual trees, and small clumps of trees with larger patches of woodlands often found in city parks and increasingly along rivers and coastal zones. Parkland and natural areas should be managed to develop and maintain large continuous patches of forest with a representative complement of native trees and shrubs. Composition and density of trees and shrubs should mimic the native forest. Examples can be drawn from state parks and forests within the metropolitan region.

Vertical and horizontal structure often determine the suitability of a site for nesting, resting and protection from predators - all critically important to survival and reproduction. The larger the patch size the more birds can use it and the greater diversity of bird species will be present. The size of the habitat patch has also been correlated with habitat quality. The larger the patch the higher the quality. Interestingly the recommendations we have for developing wind resistant urban forests coincide with the planting and management of trees in patches.

Individual street trees do have value as habitat. For birds, they become the bridges or connectors from one habitat patch to another. Individual trees allow birds to traverse otherwise dangerous open areas used by predators; and helps them to avoid hitting windows of our tall buildings. Investigations highlight the positive influence of street trees on urban avifauna. Studies suggest that improved street-tree management in lower-income communities would likely positively benefit birds. Affluent communities harbored a unique composition of street trees, including denser and larger trees than lower-income communities, which in turn, attracted nearly five times the density of feeding birds.

An important goal of urban forest management is sustainability – the sustainability of the ecological processes that produce resources, beauty and all the rest. In a world where people live increasingly urbanized lifestyles, the nature around where they live, and work forms a critical component of their daily nature interaction. A major challenge in harnessing people's interest in local and broader conservation issues is that many people simply do not notice the nature that is around them. The urban forest – the whole forest that includes the insects, birds, amphibians, mammals and fishes – reinforces this connection.

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Central Florida Tree Selection Chart

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Palmetto	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	20-30'	20-30'	Full Sun	Dry	Low	Native tree, excellent for shade.
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TOPPING TREES IS A DEAD ISSUE

Submitted by Dalton Smith – Urban Forester, City of Jacksonville, FL

Topping trees should be a dead issue. When is it appropriate to top a tree? The most likely response by a forester or arborist would be “Never.” Topping a tree is seldom an acceptable pruning practice. Topping has a host of negative effects and consequences to the health and structure of a tree. When it comes to managing an urban forest, however; there is one instance where topping a tree may be highly beneficial, and often overlooked in the management of urban trees and forests – topping dead or hazardous limbs in order to preserve dead stems.

When it comes to managing the urban forest, most people see a dead tree as a hazard and a safety risk that must be removed. Although it is true that dead and dying trees do pose a higher risk to public safety, sometimes the decision to completely remove a dead tree can reduce the integrity of a complete urban forest ecosystem. Urban forest management aims to maximize the benefits trees provide while also reducing the risks and liabilities. Depending on the situation, dead trees can provide a value that a live tree cannot yet provide.



Tree risk assessments identify existing factors that lead to failure of a tree, or tree parts. However, not all tree parts carry the same degree of risk. When considering a dead or declining tree, limbs will fall off over an extended period of time. Limbs are not necessarily a hazard if the likelihood of failure and the likelihood of impact are both low. Removal is the correct decision for trees on rights of way or in high traffic areas where the likelihood of impacting a target is high and the consequence of failure is severe. What about a dead tree in an area with no targets and seldom used by people? If a dead tree poses little risk to public safety, other considerations might be made regarding the contributions the tree has to offer a mature urban forest. Topping lofty dead, or rapidly declining branches can eliminate prominent and immediate risks. There can be many useful years, and biological benefits left in

the remaining snag long after the tree has biologically died. Those benefits are lost if the tree is completely removed.

Natural and dynamic forests ecosystems are littered with dead trees in various stages of decomposition. Every stage provides a different habitat for a range of species from insects, to fungi, birds, reptiles, and mammals. Their lifecycles and behavior patterns are often linked with one another. Woodpeckers will create nesting cavities in dead or decayed trees. In turn, these cavities provide suitable nesting requirements for other small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and other bird species. A great diversity of fungi and insects require dead wood for food and other habitat requirements. Wildlife are dependent upon dead and decaying trees that contribute to food chains and other natural processes.

Topping trees can be a dead issue which will bring new life to a dead tree. Topping can be a sound management decision when addressing dead trees, mitigating risks, minimizing costs, accommodating wildlife, and supporting natural processes within a functioning urban forest.



PLT – TREES & WILDLIFE

Sometimes learning about trees & wildlife can be rather childish – and it should be! Introducing children to the value of trees as habitats for wildlife can be a fun and rewarding family activity. Project Learning Tree (PLT) can help reveal how trees, from their leafy branches to their tangled roots, provide habitat for a host of plants and animals with the following activity, <https://www.plt.org/family-activity/trees-as-habitats/>. This family activity is adapted from Project Learning Tree's *Explore Your Environment: K-8 Activity Guide* and *Pre-k-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide* which can be obtained from PLT's shop or in conjunction with an in-person development workshop or online course.



The Florida Urban Forestry Council (FUFC) celebrated its long-standing tradition of presenting the annual Urban Forestry Institute (UFI) conference. In 2022, the UFI was presented in a complete virtual format. Speakers from across the United States and leaders from Florida's urban forestry joined in the conversation about Community, Environment and Unity.

The UFI Program Committee and the FUFC Executive Board would like to thank all the speakers that made the UFI possible by sharing their insightful presentations. We extend a BIG thank you to the participants that were willing to come together in this relatively new virtual format to soak up the latest urban forestry developments and interact with a community of scientist, planners, and practitioners. A Huge

shout out for the financial support of the UFI sponsors and exhibitors. They were present to support the urban forestry industry with various products, services, and solutions,

As a quick recap of the presentations:

- **Enhancing Social Connectivity in Urban Forests & Greenspace**, by Dr. Mysha Clarke, Assistant Professor UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries and Geomatic Sciences
- **Staying Innovative with Emerging Technology – Drones**, by Deb Sheeler, Production Manager, Davey Resource Group, Inc., and Rachel Miller, Project Mgr, Davey Resource Group, Inc.
- **Urban Forest Inventory & Analysis**, by David Nowak, Senior Scientist USDA
- **Assessing the Benefits of Residential Landscaping**, Jesse Jones, PhD student at UF
- **Multispecies Lawns: An Alternative Strategy for Water Conservation & Ecosystem Services**, by Brooke Moffis, Extension Agent and PhD student at UF
- **Community Greening: An urban forestry non-profit**, by Mark Cassini, and Matt Shipley
- **GIS Analysis of street Trees and Road Safety**, by Nicholas Coppola, Civil Engineering Lecturer, Colorado Univ., and Wesley Marshall, PhD Civil Engineering, Colorado Univ.
- **Piecing the Urban Forest Together** (Panel Discussion)
- **Florida ISA Legal Update**, by James Spratt, Magnolia Strategies, LLC
- **Expanding Tree Species Availability: Insights from Green Industry Professionals**, by Deborah Hilbert, PhD, Many Trees Consulting, LLC
- **Trees and People: The influence of Risk Perception and Professionalism on the Decision-Making Process**, by Ryan Klien, PhD, Assistant Professor, Univ FL
- **Blending Homeowners' Associations into Urban Forestry**, by John Snow, Platinum Tree Management
- **Tree Advocacy – Improving the Urban Forest through Public-Private Partnerships**, by Lisa Grubba, Executive Director of Greenscape of Jacksonville
- **Understanding participants' reasons for participating in tree giveaway programs**, by Lillia Dinkins, PhD student, UF/SFFGS
- **Weathering the Storm: Urban Forest Manager's Perceptions of and Experiences with Tree-related Risks and Collaboration**, by Stephanie Cadaval, PhD student, UF/SFFGS
- **FUFC Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation**
- **Drone Use in Tarpon Springs**, by Shannon Brewer, Municipal Arborist, City of Tarpon Springs
- **Maps for Urban Foresters – combining urban heat islands, environmental inequity, and social vulnerability**, by Christopher Benigni, Storm Water Program Administrator, City of Largo.
- **The Power of Community-Campus Collaboration: Tree Campus Programs**, by Logan Donahoo, Program Manager – Tree Campus programs, Arbor Day Foundation
- **Urban Forests and the Urban Water Cycle: Principles and Practices for Utilizing Trees in Stormwater Management**, by Eric Wiseman, Associate Professor of Urban Forestry, Virginia Tech.
- Conference Wrap Up, by UFI Committee Chairpersons.

As we adapt to the changes occurring in our environment and society, we need to keep our field relevant in service to our community. It is only through careful observation and measurement that we can understand and describe our environment. It is only through understanding of our diverse perspectives that we can create unity, in our approach to protect and manage our urban forests. We encourage you to connect with the Florida Urban Forestry Council and help us build a more diverse and inclusive organization that will better serve our community and build a tree-mendous future for Florida's urban forests.

Special Thanks to the UFI Committee Members:

- **Carolyn Cheatham Rhodes** – Env Prg. Mgr & Urban Forester, Pinellas County; FUFC President Elect.
- **Darryl Richard** – FDOT Landscape Architect; FUFC Vice Presidents
- **Dr. David Fox** – UF/School of Forests, Fisheries, and Geomatic Sciences
- **John Snow** – Platinum Tree Management, Tarpon Springs, FL
- **Bill Lester** – UF/IFAS Extension Agent; UF/IFAS Rep for FUFC
- **Justin Freedman** – Resource Environmental Solutions; ISA Rep for FUFC
- **John Harris** – Earth Advisors; FNGLA Rep for FUFC
- **Jonathon Wolfson** – Sherlock Tree Company
- **Greg Wright** – City of Largo
- **Kathleen Brennan** – Florida League of Cities
- **John Rohan** – Davey Resource Group
- **Kristen Kosik** – Florida Audubon
- **Erin Givens** – FUFC President



URBAN FORESTRY INSTITUTE

Working in Harmony with Nature

Sumter Electric Cooperative has always placed a high priority on the environment by working to stay in harmony with nature. Evidence of SECO's environmental stewardship is displayed through the following programs.

Sumter Electric Cooperative:

- was named a *Tree Line USA* utility for the fourth consecutive year by *The National Arbor Day Foundation*. Employee arboriculture training, public education, and maintaining abundant, healthy trees in SECO's service area are common practices.
- installs osprey nesting dishes atop of the utility pole cross arms as needed for these magnificent birds.
- places squirrel guards atop the transformers to protect a variety of animals from danger, particularly squirrels.
- offers net metering to members interested in renewable generation such as photovoltaic systems.
- recycles retired power equipment, scrap steel, aluminum, copper, porcelain, fluorescent lights, ink printer and copier cartridges, plus much more.
- researches and writes *Nature's Reflections*, a special column in the members' newsletter developed to educate the community on the flora and fauna of Florida with eco-friendly topics like xeriscaping and conservation.



OUR TEAM

JOHN HOLZAEFFEL, CA, TRAQ
(352) 238-0917

ERIC HOYER, CA, RCA, TRAQ
(863) 670-0734

CHARLIE MARCUS, CA, TRAQ
(850) 570-5963

STAN ROSENTHAL, TRAQ
(850) 508-6771

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Whether it is an outdoor environmental event or conference trade show, The Florida Urban Forestry Council's display booth will help provide information about the Council and Urban Forestry educational resources for citizens and communities. To request the booth at your event email info@fufc.org.



2021 FRIENDS OF OUR URBAN FORESTS AWARDS PROGRAM

Submitted by the the FUFCA Awards Committee

Throughout Florida, urban forestry programs and initiatives are always underway. The Florida Urban Forestry Council's *Friends of Our Urban Forest* awards recognize achievements, organizations, and individuals advocating and promoting community and urban forests. Are your people, places, and programs being recognized, announced, and celebrated? Does your community forest have outstanding people and programs? Have you ever applied for, or submitted an award nomination to the Florida Urban Forestry Council? You can find out more about the Friends of Our Urban Forest Award program at <https://fufc.org/awards-information/>.

DALTON SMITH
OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL



Dalton Smith, Urban Forester for the City of Jacksonville works diligently to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks and hazards of Jacksonville's urban forest canopy. Dalton holds a degree in Natural Resources & Forest Conservation, an ISA arborist certification and a TRAQ qualification. Among a long list of projects and programs, Dalton oversees the City's urban forestry's Remove & Replace program – removing dead and declining hazardous trees and replacing with a healthy new tree. This is no small task. Dalton is a 24/7 urban forester providing creative solutions, unparalleled customer service, a positive attitude, and a resilient urban forest canopy.

CAROL MINI
OUTSTANDING TREE ADVOCATE

Carol Mini, Urban Forester for the City of Palm Coast is indeed an Outstanding Tree Advocate with many achievements and contributions relating to urban forestry. Through her passion Carol inspires and engages diverse audiences to the value and proper care of community trees. Carol was instrumental in creating a City trimming certification program, urban forestry internships, and the Tree-City-USA designation. Carol is an active member of FL-ISA, and the FUFCA and continues to “branch out” and expand her contributions to Florida's urban forestry community and industry.



**JACKSONVILLE EQUESTRIAN CENTER
OUTSTANDING URBAN FORESTRY PROJECT**

Jacksonville Equestrian Center – a.k.a. “Gem of the Westside” now shines with the planting of 101 new, tall trees. The project included soil mitigation, an irrigation system, community collaboration efforts, and a long-term management plan. Partnerships were formed between the Equestrian Center, Greenscape of Jacksonville, City Public Works, City Parks, and local tree-care professionals. The successful project enhanced the Right Tree/Right Place concept with a Right Team/Right Project inspiration.



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
OUTSTANDING URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM**



Florida International University (FIU) is absolutely committed to preserving and improving the University’s contribution to a well-managed campus forest canopy. The campus forestry program includes a tree inventory, tree assessments, and a management plan. The team at FIU is committed to a science-based approach to their tree management plan. The forest management program at FIU will set the stage for resilient tree canopies on all FIU South Florida campuses and centers.

**JEA
OUTSTANDING UTILITY**

JEA’s innovative performance in vegetation management, safety, and utility arboriculture showcases JEA as an outstanding utility and friend to our urban forests. JEA employs a talented staff of professional foresters, vegetation specialist, certified arborists, and engineers to oversee a diverse vegetative management program. JEA is dedicated to building reliable utilities along side a resilient urban tree canopy. JEA has been recognized as a Tree-Line-USA for over 10 years- applying best practices in utility arboriculture.



**ELIZABETH HARKEY
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**



Elizabeth Harkey, Urban Forester for the City of Sanford, is more than a friend of our urban forests, she is a long-standing family member of Florida’s tree community. Elizabeth’s work with plants, trees, and people include municipalities, parks, nurseries, contractors, engineers, and the public. As the Urban Forester for the City of Sanford she has built an impressive tally of urban forest projects, programs, and stories. Elizabeth has been instrumental when advancing urban forestry programs, practices and professions. For over 12 years, Elizabeth has served in many capacities on the Executive Board for the FUFCA; and can be found on the honorary list of Past Presidents. Thank you, Elizabeth, because of you the world is a better place.



Wildlife Corner

FLORIDA SCRUB JAY (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*)

Submitted by the FUFUC Communication Committee

The Florida scrub jay is a true native species to Florida. The jay is distinct, or endemic to Florida. The jay is named after the scrub environments it inhabits. The habitat is home to a small assortment of very specific plants – to include, sand live oak (*Quercus geminate*), sand pine (*Pinus clausa*), Chapman oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), Florida-rosemary (*Ceratiola ericoides*), prickly-pear cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*), and other hardy, scrub species. As with other natural environments, quality scrub habitat has dwindled considerably over recent years. Development, climate change, and the succession of large oaks and trees threatens to reduce natural scrub habitats essential for the survival of a healthy bird population. The Florida scrub jay was officially listed as a Florida threatened species in 1975, and as a federal threatened species in 1987. Brevard County, once host to the greatest population of scrub jays has noted declines near 33% since a 1993 census. It is estimated that in the last 100 years, 90% of the bird's population has been lost.

Bird and habitat preservation efforts have included prescribed burns and the clearing of large trees to encourage increased scrub habitat. This can be a controversial issue with adjacent land use – to include urban forest environments. Urban forest management practices generally strive to encourage large trees for the diverse and quantitative value they bring to an urban tree canopy. Jeopardizing established large trees and high forest canopies can create cause for alarm. It should be no surprise that the removal of trees at the Malabar Scrub sanctuary has been brought to the attention, and has raised the curiosity, of the Florida Urban Forestry Council (FUFUC). The FUFUC is focused on the wellbeing of Florida's trees and forest resources as they relate to, and in conjunction with, land use. In most cases, our mission orbits around urban and peri-urban development, but not in all cases. Maintaining reasonably open

flatwood habitats and other forest types, while incorporating low shrub, scrub-like corridors and natural areas in adjacent land use areas may help combat the increased fragmentation of scrub jay habitat, in-and-around existing scrub jay populations.

The jay itself may be doing all it can to encourage the establishment of the desired scrub oak habitat. Scrub jays are omnivores and eat a wide variety of acorns, seeds, insects, caterpillars, small frogs, snakes, lizards, and young mice. The jay is known to bury and stash large caches of acorns in the ground. If conditions are favorable, many of the acorns will germinate, making the scrub jay an effective agent of habitat restoration with scrub oak species.

Characteristics: The Florida scrub jay displays a pale blue head, nape, bib, wings, and tail. The head is round without a crest. A whitish eyebrow or forehead may be visible. The breast and back are grayish. The jay has a stout black beak, and black legs and feet. The size is 9-10in in length, with a wingspan of 13-14 inches.

Behavioral Characteristics: The Florida scrub jay is one of the few “cooperative breeding” birds. They often form family groups, of 2-8 birds, that help rear young, locate food, and defend a territory as large as 24 acres.

Vocal Characteristics: The jay is a vocal bird. The frequent call is a raspy weep, chirp, or scold; often repeated in quick succession. They will sound in flight, or more commonly perched in the top of a shrub.

Interesting facts:

- Oscar Scherer State Park, near Sarasota devotes land use management practices to establishing and maintaining native scrub habitat.
- In an attempt to increase its profile and survival, there is an on-going campaign to classify the Florida scrub jay as the new state bird of Florida – replacing the Eastern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*).
- The jay is attracted to, and may collect and stash, small tiny objects like coins and jewelry.
- Florida scrub jays are relatively tame; but its illegal to hand-feed the bird.



STUMP THE FORESTER

QUESTION: What do we need to know about managing wildlife in urban forests?

ANSWER: Habitat, habitat, habitat. If we can accomplish these three things, we will be leaning in the right direction. It may seem like a witty play with words, but not necessarily. The term habitat identifies an array of physical and biotic elements necessary to support the survival and reproduction of a particular species. Habitat is often species-specific. Therefore, it is most advantageous that our urban, and peri-urban environments accommodate more than one wildlife habitat, or ecological niche. To combat the fragmentation of natural environments for diverse wildlife populations to roam and thrive, different habitat-types should be linked, in close proximity, to create safe and sustainable wildlife corridors and subsequent natural areas. These links could be local, regional, or even global in nature.

We live in a world of wonderful wildlife. Advances in technology, competitive markets, and emerging economies have elevated urban forests as perhaps the fastest growing forest type throughout Florida – in the U.S. and throughout the world. Our long-term planning and day-to-day decisions will have a profound influence beyond our “wildest” dreams. Flora and fauna naturally come together. Wildlife populations are tree-dependent. They will

require trees and forests for food, shelter, reproduction, rearing young, perches, cover, travel, recreation, and other purposes yet unknown to us. The care and management of our trees will likely have the greatest impact on the resilience and sustainability of our furry, feathered, slippery, and scaly wildlife populations. Planting the right tree in the right place and continuing the care of trees as they mature will preserve the bundle of benefits trees have to offer.

When managing urban wildlife sometimes the right answers are only found if we are asking the right questions. Are you hanging out a welcome sign for wildlife? Do we benefit from beneficial bees in trees? Do you want to hear from an UF/IFAS Extension Forester about wildlife and urban forests? What does a Master Gardener have

to offer about weeding unwanted wildlife? Is “urban wildlife” a contradiction of terms? Why is South Florida going batty over wildlife projects? Is it legal to have a squirrel, skunk, raccoon, or an opossum as a pet? *The Council Quarterly* newsletter has addressed these very questions in previous years. You can revisit previous wildlife stories and articles at, <https://fufc.org/downloads/councilquarterly18v3.pdf>, and, <https://fufc.org/downloads/councilquarterly16v4.pdf>.

The more connected, curious and familiar we are with urban flora and fauna, the less forgiving we will be toward their decline and ruin. As urban forests expand and subsequent habitats shrink, municipal foresters, arborists, landscape architects, city planners, tree advocacy groups, tree care specialist, and educators will play a significant and ever increasing role in the care and stewardship of wildlife.

Answer provided by Joe Anderson – JEA Utility Forester, ISA Certified Arborist



If you would like to 'stump the forester,' see page 15 for information on submitting your question!

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FLORIDA BONNETED BATS IN URBAN FORESTS UPDATE

Submitted by Jen Savaro - Project Scientist, E Sciences



Do not bat an eye. The December 2013 Florida bonneted bat (FBB) (*Eumpos floridanus*) guidelines were updated.

In October 2019, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) revised the FBB guidelines and provided a Consultation Key. The intent of these guidelines and key was to aid the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and other federal agencies, in making appropriate effect determinations for the FBB and to streamline informal consultations when the effects determinations are consistent with the key. These guidelines are primarily for use in evaluating regulatory projects where development and land conversions are anticipated.

FBBs are the largest bat species in Florida, helping distinguish them from the smaller Brazilian free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*). FBB are suspected to be found only in six counties in southern Florida, including Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. Only a few bonneted bat roosts have been documented, including only one natural roost.

The FBB Consultation Area was expanded to include most of south and central Florida. There was also the addition of the South Florida Urban Development Boundary in Miami-Dade and Broward County. The USFWS is developing separate guidelines for consultation in the Urban Bat Area. As of now, applicants in the urban development boundary should contact USFWS for specific guidance.

The key uses type of habitat (i.e. roosting or foraging), survey results, and project size as the basis for making project determinations.

Typical foraging habitat for the FBB includes open freshwater, permanent or seasonal freshwater wetlands, within and above wetland and upland forests, wetland and upland shrub, and agricultural lands. In urban areas habitat can include golf courses, parking lots, parks and small patches of natural habitat.

Potential roosting habitat for the FBB includes forests and other areas with tall mature trees, including pine flatwoods, scrubby flatwoods, pine rocklands royal palm hammocks and other forest types. Trees that qualify for potential roosting habitat typically are greater than 33 feet in height, greater than eight inches in diameter at breast height (DBH), with cavity elevations higher than 16 feet above ground level. These trees contain deformities, such as tree snags, cavities, hollows, decay, crevices or loose bark. Potential roosting structures can also be part of the built environment such as bridges, chimneys, gaps in soffits and gaps in gutters.

For projects less than or equal to five acres, a limited roost survey is conducted. Limited roost surveys rely on peeping and visual surveys to determine if whether roosting is likely. Limited roost surveys may also include acoustics, observations at emergence and visual inspection of trees with cavities or loose bark using tree-top cameras. For projects greater than five acres, a full acoustic and roost survey is required.

During your next tree survey, peep inside that cavity, you might just find a Florida Bonneted Bat!

TRIBUTE

A “tree-mendous” thank you to **Elizabeth Harkey**, City Arborist for the City of Sanford, for her 12 years of dedicated service to the Florida Urban Forestry Council. Elizabeth served in many essential leadership positions throughout her tenure – Committee Chair, Vice-President, President Elect, President (2013), and Past President. She played an integral role in many of the programs that exist today and made a valuable contribution wherever she served. We couldn’t have done it without you; we wouldn’t have wanted to do it without you. Thank you for your dedication and service to the Florida Urban Forestry Council!



Join Us

Our members are the lifelines of our mission.
Thank you for your continued support.

New and renewed members through March 31, 2022. Please let us know if we fail to mention your name.

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- **Todd Little** – City of Jacksonville, FL
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- **Carla Shelton** – Sr Forester, Hillsborough Co., FL
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- **Kimberly Stidham**
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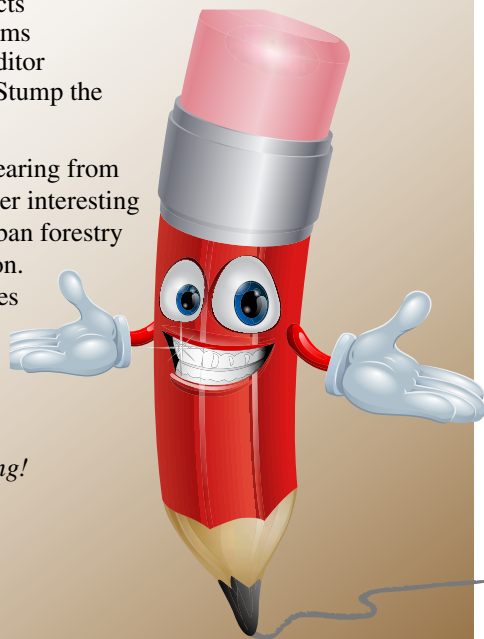
REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

Please let us know what urban forestry projects you have going on in your neck of the woods. The Florida Urban Forestry Council would greatly appreciate the opportunity to share your information in our newsletter. These articles can include:

- New trends in the industry
- News about tree advocacy groups
- Volunteer projects
- City tree programs
- Letters to the Editor
- Questions for "Stump the Forester"

We look forward to hearing from you on this or any other interesting topic related to the urban forestry industry and profession. Please send any articles or ideas to Joe Anderson, FUFCC newsletter editor, at andejs@jea.com.

Thanks for contributing!



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