

### A Message from the President

The Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc. is YOUR organization. Your board of directors exists to serve your needs while fulfilling our mission of Park support. Our board of directors meetings are held at 6:00 PM on third Mondays of each month and you are welcome to join us. Our membership dues provide support of the Elsa Kimbell Environmental Education and Research Center through the purchase of classroom and field experience supplies and learning tools. Friends Volunteers Randy and Ryan Hoefling assist Libby Reinert and her team in providing quality educational experiences for park visitors, local school students and local Scout units. Club Scrub exists to serve the needs of park visitors interested in challenging outdoor bicycle experiences in the park. The Friends hold three major events each year in the park. This year, we begin with our

Spring Fest event on May 7, 2011. Our Events Committee is busy with final plans for this event (more on page 8). Fire Fest will be held again in October.

We want your ideas regarding what our third major event should be. I encourage all Friends to contact your board members and communicate what Friends' events, programs or activities you would like to add, remove or change. Better yet, get involved on a Friends committee and help our organization realize its full potential.

Thank you for being Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park.

*Dave Nickerson*, President

Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc.

# Biologist's Corner

By Rob Rossmann, JDSP Park Biologist

**Plant Name:** Prickly pear cactus  
**Genus/Species:** *Optunia humifusa*  
**Family:** Cactaceae

**Can be found at JDSP:** Open scrub.

**What it looks like:** This plant is a cactus that is short (1 to 2 feet tall), with 1 to 2 inch wide green pads, long spines, yellow flowers that bloom in the spring, and a sweet, reddish berry with many seeds. A lot of times the plant finds you.



Photo Credit: Alana Edwards

**Status:** Not listed in Florida. In some areas around the world the plant is invasive. In other places it is grown commercially.

**Range:** Throughout the eastern United States in arid environments, west to Montana, and New Mexico.

**Interesting Facts:**

- There are about 200 species of cacti in the *Optunia* genus.
- Various parts of this plant are edible including the fruit and the pad – but be careful. Besides the big spines, there are also much smaller spines found on this plant that will hurt you.
- A scale insect called the cochineal (*Dactylopius coccus*) lives on all *Optunia*, feeding on the plants' moisture and nutrients and producing an economically important crimson colored dye called carmine dye (or cochineal).

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**Friends of  
Jonathan Dickinson  
State Park, Inc.**

**Executive Committee**

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Michael Pat Gostel,  
*Vice President*

Lois Brenner-Nickerson,  
*Secretary*

Joanne Talley, *Treasurer*

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State Park Staff**

Mark Nelson, *Park  
Manager*

Thomas Brown, *Asst. Park  
Manager*

Martin Morse, *Park  
Services Specialist*

Libby Reinert, *Park  
Services Specialist*

Rich Hauck, *Park  
Services Specialist*

Scott Tedford,

*Park Services Specialist*  
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Garlene Bosley, *Secretary*  
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Rob Rossmannith,  
*Park Biologist*

Erinn Mullen, *AmeriCorps*

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James Moye

Keith Peterson

Barry Richardson

Bob Schuh

Jane Shauan

Pat Walsh

Cheri Wells

# Enchanted Evening: Loxahatchee River Moonlight Cruise

The February 18<sup>th</sup> evening was a cool and comfortable 69 degrees and the air was calm. We gathered at the River Store after sunset, introduced ourselves and shared conversation at the picnic tables above the glassy Loxahatchee River. All twenty of us were full of anticipation over what we might experience on the inaugural Enchanted Evening Night Cruise.

Park Ranger Barry Richardson, twice honored as Interpreter of the Year for Florida Park Service District 5, briefed us on the schedule for the trip and his expectations for our night adventure on the Loxahatchee. He cautioned us that appointments had not been made with local wildlife so we might experience many or few of the river's inhabitants on our voyage.

The moon had not yet risen when we boarded the *Loxahatchee Queen II* so the aura of bright lights shining from the dock area left a veil of darkness over the river and its shoreline mangrove swamps. Captain Scott guided us safely out of our berth, turned the vessel and headed up river as we penetrated that veil on our way into the darkness of the night. Several of us wondered how in the world Captain Scott will find his way in the darkness to keep the boat in the river channel.

Ranger Barry began his narrative presentation, enlightening us with several unknown (to us anyway) and many interesting facts and history about Jonathan Dickinson State Park and the Loxahatchee River. About seven minutes into the voyage, the full moon topped the mangroves and shone brightly on the river. Captain Scott reduced forward lighting and our eyes adjusted to the soft moonlight on the mangroves, cypress and river. Ranger Barry scanned the river edges with his flashlight for wildlife, advising us to keep a lookout for the golden glow reflecting from a pair of alligator eyes. It was not long before we spotted two gators with their eyes lit up in gold. Captain Scott slowed the engines so all could get a view of the large aquatic Loxahatchee lizards. One submerged, leaving only ripples and the other just lay at the surface and seemed to be watching us watching him as we glided by.

In between seeing other gators, wading birds and cruising through a school of jumping mullet, and prior to landing at Trapper Nelson's dock; Ranger Barry gave us a thorough briefing on the "Wildman of the Loxahatchee". He also advised us that our moonlight tour of Trapper's Zoo and Jungle Gardens would be an abbreviated one for safety reasons because the buildings were not lit and because the ground was not flat and we might have difficulty navigating tree roots and other minor obstructions. The questions came fast and furiously, stopping Ranger Barry in his presentation many times. With all our Trapper Nelson related questions patiently and thoroughly answered, we boarded the boat for the return trip refreshed by the educational experience at Trapper's.

The return voyage was more spectacular than the trip up river. The full moon had climbed about 15 degrees higher in the night sky, casting even whiter light and darker shadows deeper into the swamp and the river. If one looked closely, the shallow sandy river bottom was visible in the moonlight.

*Continued on Page 5*

**NEW BRICK POLICY** Bricks are available again! Bricks will be installed in batches, *four times a year*. So get your order in today!

**YOUR INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Three lines, 20 characters per line, spaces and punctuation count.

1st Line (20) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2nd Line (20) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3rd Line (20) \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK ENCLOSED: ( )**

<b>MEMBERSHIP UPDATE</b>	<b>New Friends</b>	Kelley Kemp	Sara Davies	Darren Obrien
	Charles & Lorene Bachman	Timothy & Lindsay Krutz	Marian Davis	John & Linda Pelong
	Nancy Bennett	Mr. & Mrs. Edward Mackey	Alan & Michele Drake	Susan Picture
	Dale & Carolyn Broadwell	Raymond McDermott	Geoffrey Etherington	Ronald Polsgrove
	Michelle & Todd Erlinger	Paul & Sandra Myrick	Doris Fenner	Lorraine Ripley
	Robert Evans	Winnie & Jose Paulino	Russell & Susan Foley	Laurie Smith
	Susie & Phil Flournoy	Dianne Pickering	Alan Fullilove	Michael J. & Linda Smith
	James & Connie Gentry	Jon Roberts Jr.	Michael Pat & Mary Lee Gostel	Jack & Debra Sobel
	Dana & Kenneth Hielema	Steve Roukes	Karen Kerwin	Rick & Linda Torgeson
	Linda Croghan & Luke Horstmyer	Carla Sheedy	Heather Lamond	Jan Winjnand & Urlula Alebrandt
	Mr. & Mrs. A.L. Jenkins	Lynn & Ralph Soule	Patricia & Bill Magrogan	Tom & Blanche Winton
		<b>Friends Renewed</b>	Chuck & Joanne Mailat	Erik & Karen Zudans
		Lynn Bellizzi	Wally & Michelle McCall	
		Dan & Nicole Bishop	Mary Helen Miller	
		Connie & David Clapp	Don Millure	
	Charles & Donna Conklin	Walter & Bernadette Moore		
		David & Lois Nickerson		



**Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc.**

**Membership Application**

A not-for-profit Citizen Support Organization (CSO)

- Lifetime Corporate: \$2500    Lifetime Patron: \$1000    Corporate: \$500  
 Patron: \$100    Organization: \$50    Family: \$30

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*I am interested in volunteering with the Friends.*

Please send this application along with your donation to:

**The Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc.**

16450 SE Federal Hwy, Hobe Sound, FL 33455

*For more information on the "Friends" please call (561) 744-9814*

A copy of the official registration and financial information of the "Friends" may be obtained from The Division of Consumer Services by calling 800-435-7352

# Changes to the Riverine and Tidal Floodplain Vegetation on the Loxahatchee River in Southeast Florida

by Richard E. Roberts, Marion Y. Hedgepeth and P. Lorraine Roberts

As Florida's first National Wild and Scenic River, the Loxahatchee River and its major tributaries deserve the intensive attention received from federal, state and local agencies, local residents and tourists. Despite an impressive list of enduring natural resources, the Loxahatchee River watershed is now permanently altered by the stabilization of Jupiter Inlet, which heightens the effects of tidal amplitude and saltwater intrusion; and the construction and operation of drainage canal systems which alter the natural pattern of freshwater flow and inundation of the floodplain.

The major concern for the floodplain's natural communities in the riverine reach is the inadequate hydroperiods (depth and duration) which: (1) resulted in the loss of canopy trees; (2) encouraged the intrusion of upland and non-native plant species; (3) resulted in the alteration of riverine forest type communities and (4) may be insufficient for aquatic organisms to fully utilize the floodplain communities. The major concerns for the floodplain communities in the tidal reaches are increased salinity in surface waters and soils and the increase in tidal inundation and amplitude since stabilization of Jupiter Inlet. The emphasis on restoration in the Loxahatchee River will be reducing salinities to below 2 parts per thousand (ppt) at the mouth of Kitching Creek for the tidal reaches and improving hydroperiods on the riverine floodplain, which should in turn improve habitat quality for freshwater seed production, germination and eventually reforestation throughout the river system.

Since 2003, the staff of the South Florida Water Management District and the Florida Park Service District 5 Office have sampled vegetation on ten transects on the Northwest Fork and its major tributaries to investigate floodplain community composition, structure and health. Guidelines were created to identify

*Continued on Next Page*



forest by reach (riverine, and upper and lower tidal) and forest type. The major forest type categories were swamp, bottomland hardwoods, hydric and hammocks and upland.

Between the 2003 and 2009 canopy surveys, several changes were noted in abundance of canopy species. Notable losses occurred in freshwater species: cabbage palm (12.4 to 9.81%), bald cypress (9 to 7.65%) and red maple (3.5 to 2.35%). On the other hand, there were significant increases in saltwater tolerant white mangrove (22.5 to 29.34%) and red mangroves (14.2 to 17.91%) and slight increases in pond apple (13 to 14%), which has been



shown to be relatively saltwater tolerant. Some tree loss can be attributed to Hurricanes Frances, Jeanne and Wilma that passed through the area in 2004 and 2005. In examining groundcover stem counts from the 2003, 2007 and 2010 surveys, the freshwater seedlings of pond apple and bald cypress showed significant increases in 2010 presumably due to the wet winter months of 2009/2010 and after several years of recovery from hurricane damage.

The proposed restoration target flows for wet and dry season established by the Restoration Plan for the river (SFWMD, 2006) should enhance the native freshwater communities in the riverine and upper tidal floodplain of the river by slowing the loss of trees, increasing the hydroperiod, providing additional nutrients to the floodplain and discouraging the invasion of the upland, transitional and non-native species. With the improved freshwater environment in the tidal floodplain, freshwater tree species (primarily bald cypress, pop ash and pond apple) would be expected to increase in abundance, while the saltwater tree species would have decreased abundance except in the lower tidal reach where the limiting factor may be sea level rise and tidal amplitude.

Note: The above article is an excerpt from the Fall 2010 issue of the River Management Society Journal.




**We are now on Facebook! Search for us under *Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park***

*Moonlight—Continued from Page 2*

The temperature had dropped four or five degrees since leaving the River Store and we were glad we brought our sweaters and jackets. We witnessed even more gators on the return; saw two great blue herons, an osprey on a nest and one on the wing as well as a turtle or two. If only we had a zero lux video camera!! Ranger Barry said he was disappointed we did not see any mammals, such as a raccoon, but the voyagers were delighted with the variety of wildlife we encountered. We were treated to a continued education of park and river history by Ranger Barry as we sojourned down river and were quite disappointed when the riverfront dock lights came into view and our moonlight Loxahatchee adventure had come to its end.

In summary, the Enchanted Evening Night Cruise on the Loxahatchee was deemed a success by unanimous opinion of the inaugural event participants. Captain Scott expertly operated and maneuvered our vessel through the tight channel and river courses. It was no wonder to this participant that Ranger Barry had twice achieved the Interpreter of the Year award as the wealth of information he shared was outstanding and he answered all questions fully and with anecdotal facts to complement as well. Take the next Enchanted Evening Night Cruise on the Loxahatchee – your understanding of the river and the park will be enriched and the experience of a moonlight ride on the river will remain with you forever.

**BIRD LIST**  
Jonathan Dickinson  
State Park




Clare-Rue Morgan

**Florida Scrub-Jay**  
*(Aphelocoma coerulescens)*

Jonathan Dickinson State Park (11,471 acres / 4,642 hectares) contains some of the most significant and diverse biological communities in southeast Florida. The park offers a variety of trails to experience these habitats, including sand pine scrub, flatwoods, wet prairies and dome swamps. It also includes 9 miles (15 kilometers) of boating and canoeing along Florida's first National Wild & Scenic River, the Loxahatchee. This mosaic landscape attracts a large variety of birds. Some are permanent residents and others are migratory, but all 158 species have been documented within the park.

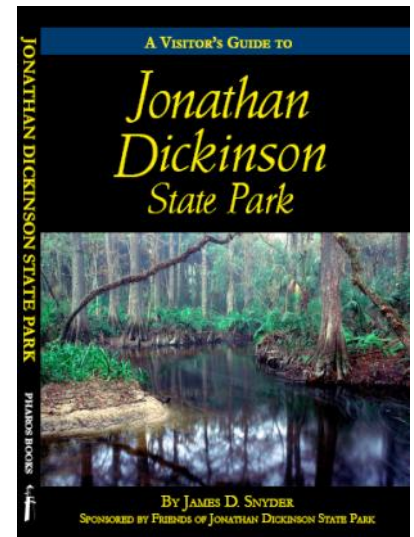
This list was last updated August 2010.



## Hey Birdwatchers!

The park now has a bird list to help you track the bird species that you see in the park. You can pick up your copy at the ranger station or the Kimbell Center, OR you can download a copy from our website at [www.friendsofjdsp.org/PDFs/birdlist.pdf](http://www.friendsofjdsp.org/PDFs/birdlist.pdf).

Available Now!  
A Visitor's Guide to  
Jonathan Dickinson  
State Park  
Only \$9.95  
Pick up your copy  
today at the  
River Store



This 96-page, four-color booklet with 12 maps and 173 photos has sections on:

- Plants, trees and animals in the park.
- The park's eight major ecological systems.
- Activities for visitors – including neighboring sites.
- Stories of Camp Murphy, Trapper Nelson & other highlights of our 5,000-plus years of human habitation.

## Volunteer Opportunities – HELP NEEDED

We are currently defining areas where members of *Friends of JDSP* who wish to volunteer can help. Please identify where you can assist the *Friends* by calling Libby at the Ed Center at 561-745-5551. If you can help with something that you don't see listed here, please let us know. Your comments are welcome.

### Ways you can help the *Friends*:

- Man table at events in park
- Help at socials
- Help with phone calls – for members without email
- Distributing membership forms – libraries, \_\_\_\_\_(other?)
- Help with mailings
- Accounting help
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Education center volunteers can help with:

- Greeting visitors at the reception desk
- Maintaining program and activity supplies and materials
- Maintaining exhibits and displays
- Leading school and visitor programs and activities
- Coordinating special events



Also, please tell your friends or neighbors that might be interested in helping about the opportunities at JDSP. We look forward to hearing from you with any questions or comments and appreciate your involvement. **Thank you for being a *Friend*!**

# 2010-11 Florida Cyclocross Series

By Ken Kandefer

On January 16th, Club Scrub and J.D.S.P. hosted the 12th and final stop in the 2010-11 Florida Cyclocross Series. Turnout was great as riders from all over Florida were seeking their last chance for points and a series crown. The Camp Murphy Cyclocross Challenge is arguably the toughest venue in the series due to the constant elevation change and rough terrain.

What is cyclocross, you ask? Cyclocross is a cross between road racing and mountain biking. Competitors race laps around a course featuring a variety of surfaces (pavement, grass, sand, gravel, dirt, etc.) while negotiating a number of obstacles that may require them to dismount and remount their bicycle.

Cyclocross bicycles are lightweight but durable. They feature mountain bike-style clip-in pedals, which allow racers to wear shoes they can run in when they are forced to dismount. Also, the wider, knobby tires provide better traction on all surfaces.

Beginning in the fall and running through the winter months, cyclocross used to be mostly popular for off-season training, but has become a very popular sport in its own right. Races are very exciting to watch because they consist of fast laps around short courses—typically less than two miles in length. Races last about 45 minutes but vary with skill level. Belgium is the biggest hot spot on the world cyclocross stage, bringing out hundreds of thousands of spectators and airing races on television.

**Photo: Lea-Ann Zub**





### Photo Exhibition/Wine and Cheese Reception Friday, May 6th— 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

The winners of Jonathan Dickinson State Parks first annual photo contest will be announced at this event to be held at the Elsa Kimbell Environmental Education and Research Center. All artists and their guests are invited. Fees will be waived for artists and guests. General public will be charged a \$5 fee at the door. For more information about the event or the photo contest (Deadline April 18th), contact Libby Reinert—  
561-745-5551- [libby.reinert@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:libby.reinert@dep.state.fl.us)



## SPRINGFEST!

Saturday, May 7th  
10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Join us for this exciting event sponsored by Boy Scout Troop #840 and Cub Scout Troop #812. Activities will include a challenge course, river walks, arts and crafts booths, activities and games in the Kimbell Center, hayrides, bounce houses for all ages, and a giant slide. Refreshments will include hot dogs, popcorn, sodas, water, and more. Entrance fee will be charged and additional charges may apply for some activities and food. For more information, contact Libby Reinert—  
561-745-5551- [libby.reinert@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:libby.reinert@dep.state.fl.us)

### Scheduled Activities at the Park

**Family Adventures in the Park**—Offered every Saturday (times vary), these programs are full of fun and adventure for the whole family. Topics vary, so please call ahead for current information and registration (at least 2 days in advance preferred), 561-745-5551.

**Special Film Presentations** - Kimbell Center Theater, 1:00 & 4:00 p.m. daily; Learn about “The Balancing Act” in Jonathan Dickinson’s feature film or enjoy a variety of other film topics. Films are also shown by request. Please call the Kimbell Center for more information, 561-745-5551.

**Hike with a Ranger**—Every Sunday morning JDSP offers a hike with a Ranger. Check for location at the Ranger Station. Hikes begin at 9:00 am. No reservation necessary.

### Loxahatchee River Adventures

Spend a couple of hours sightseeing on the Wild and Scenic Loxahatchee River. Board the Loxahatchee Queen at the concessions area. Pontoon tours depart the boat dock daily at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Cost for the tour: Adults - \$23.47, Children (6-12) - \$15.49 and Children under 6 are free.



The Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc.  
16450 SE Federal Hwy  
Hobe Sound, FL 33455

The Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Inc. is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization whose role is one of advocacy for the historical, educational and ecological enhancement of Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Its mission is to assist park management in meeting the natural and cultural resource management objectives established for the park.

We are on the web at:  
[www.friendsofjdsp.org](http://www.friendsofjdsp.org)