

June 16, 2015

A meeting of the Corkscrew Island Neighborhood Association (CINA) took place at the Corkscrew Sanctuary meeting room on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at 7 pm. Twelve people attended, including a biologist and his assistant to make a presentation. President Bill McDaniel opened the meeting at 7 pm with the pledge of allegiance. Minutes of the April 21st meeting were emailed to members, but not provided in paper form.

Tim Nance Town Hall Meeting

Bill McDaniel gave a report on what took place at Tim Nance's Town Hall Meeting at the Ag Center on May 19, 2015.

Invasive Wild Life Species Presentation

Biologist Frank Mazzotti and his assistant Colleen Closins, gave an in-depth slide show presentation of non-native reptiles which are becoming a growing concern to the environment. Mr. Mazzotti showed a chart of over 140 reptiles and amphibians which could become invasive. He explained that early detection and rapid response is the key to controlling invasive species. It is already too late for the Burmese Python which was introduced in 1970's and 1980's. Only one or two individuals started the invasion. Females grow to about 8 feet long. The largest one found was 18 feet 8 inches. They are increasing in frequency and moving north to this area. The District pays a man to go around and shoot them with a shotgun but, he warned, "Don't shoot native species!" The state started removing Pythons in 2005. A cold snap killed some 400 of them in 2009.

Tegus: He reported that over 400 tegues were removed last year. A red tegu was seen at Platt and Corkscrew Lane. They get to be two to three feet long. There are two types, the black and white tegu and the red tegu. Kill the black and white right away. The red tegu is not a problem. Both black and white and red eat everything, small animals, birds, eggs, sea turtles, small crocodiles, alligators. They burrow and are cold tolerant. They like agricultural land, potato fields and the like, and they carry salmonella.

Monitors are also an invasive species, spreading through southeast Florida. And watch out for chameleons. They are being seeded by people for economic reasons. There are three species and grow to two and three feet, having clutches of 30 eggs. Freezes kill alligators, iguanas, and pythons but not chameleons. When you see a chameleon, take a picture and send it in to www.lveGot1.org.

We trap them with raccoon traps, baiting them with bacon and eggs. But traps are labor intensive. We have to put it out at night and take it in in the morning because of the bears, so we'll put out camera traps first before putting out a live trap.

We have been detecting 1 out of 1000 tegus. We can't detect pythons. We're doing outreach to get people to come forward. If people know what's out there and start talking about it, it helps. They are doing a workshop at the Immokalee Research Education Center, working with ag workers. They see everything and land owners have clout, they can talk to the state.

Mr. Mazzotti told everyone that if they spot a non-native reptile, to report the sighting to www.lveGot1.org, and note the location. Or call the species hotline: 1-888-483-4681 (1-888-ivegot1). All crocodile sightings, both native and nonnative, should also be reported to the University of Florida at 954-577-6304. Crocodiles are sometimes confused with alligators. Crocodiles have a pointed narrow snout, where alligators have a rounded blunt snout. We are urged to go to the website www.lveGot1.org to study the pictures posted there and become informed.

Shawn Clem who is director of the non-native program at the Corkscrew Sanctuary, attended the meeting and

reported that they actively search for invasive species to get a handle on them.

The meeting ended at 8:30 pm.