



2024: Year in Review

DWPSP STAFFING CHANGES:

- We welcomed our new park manager, Cody Peters, in late June.
- Lauren Hagen, our new PSS, arrived this fall.
- Two new staff members will be joining the park in early 2025.

FRIENDS HAPPENINGS

- Boutique fund raisers were up and running from January through August. We restarted Boutique sales in December and will continue to schedule regularly on the beach—weather permitting. Funds raised via our Boutique events are used for requested park purchases and services.
- In April, we held a special Boutique at the Conservancy of SW Florida Earth Day celebration. Our temporary turtle tattoos were a huge hit with the young crowd!
- Beach clean-ups were held each month on Saturday mornings through early summer.
- Janice Kmetz held a **FRIENDS** shelling excursion in April.
- John Finer led a Native Plant Walk in the Park for **FRIENDS** in late April.
- The Sip, Sand, and Sunset event for **FRIENDS** members also took place in April. Attendees shared delicious food and enjoyed socializing on a perfect spring evening.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- We opened our Adopt-a Turtle Nest program in February and continued to receive donations until late August. In November, adopters received a picture of their nest, hatching information, and their nest name plate. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all who

participated. We hope you will consider adopting again this coming season.

- In May we received a generous donation of a boat! We converted that donation to cash through a boat dealer. A reminder: material as well as cash donations are always welcome.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Volunteers removed invasive plants in February. The group focused on culling Australian pines; an invasive species that outcompetes native plants.
- A small plot of sea oats was planted in the dunes area near the park entrance in early June. They thrived until September 😞.
- The FL State Park Foundation awarded the **FRIENDS** a grant to build and operate a mobile shade house (MoSH). Once assembled, the portable unit will be used to propagate and help re-establish native plant species.
- Several **FRIENDS** participated in the Collier County Coastal clean-up held at DWPSP in September.
- In November, **FRIENDS** volunteers removed storm and hurricane debris from the boat launch and mangrove areas of the park.

Tropical Storm Debbie (August), Hurricane Helene (September), and Hurricane Milton (October) brought surge and unfortunately, redistributed beach sand onto roads, parking lots, and into the mangroves. These weather events also destroyed much of the signage and some park infrastructure. Taking our inspiration from the busy Osprey pair building a new nest in area 5, volunteers hope to assist the park with rebuilding and



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- To assist the park management and staff with facility maintenance, resource management, visitor services and recycling.
- To improve the park facilities by providing amenities through fund-raisers.
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restoration. We also look forward to the time when we can again welcome **FRIENDS** and visitors to our beautiful park.



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