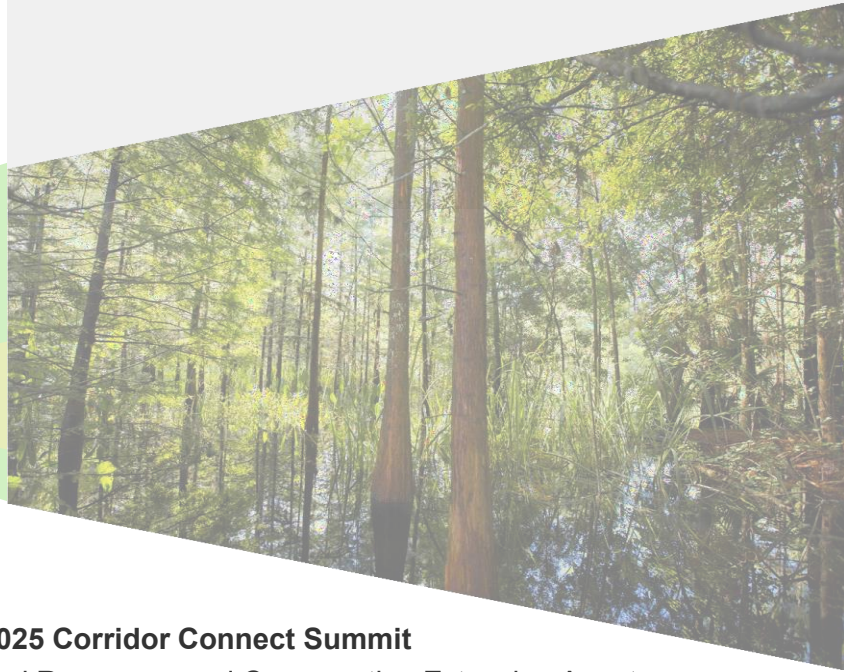


MESSAGE FROM THE FANREP PRESIDENT



Shannon Carnevale



Conference Reflection: 2025 Corridor Connect Summit

Shannon Carnevale, Natural Resources and Conservation Extension Agent,
UF/IFAS Extension Polk County

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Thanks to the support of a FANREP travel scholarship, I had the opportunity to attend the 2025 Corridor Connect Summit, hosted by the Florida Wildlife Corridor. This event brought together a dynamic mix of conservation professionals, municipal leaders, NGOs, and engaged citizens—all focused on the future of Florida’s natural landscapes.

The highlight of the summit for me was the “Mind the Gap” workshop, a four-hour collaborative session that kicked off the event. This invitation-only workshop focused on identifying and addressing development challenges within the Florida Wildlife Corridor, with a special emphasis on Polk County. It was both energizing and frustrating to work on this issue with large maps, alongside local stakeholders and municipalities to explore alternative conservation “paths” through our region. Beyond the workshop, the summit offered rich opportunities for networking and collaboration. I connected with contractors, private entities, and fellow conservation professionals who are actively working on solutions to the complex issues facing our region. These conversations left me feeling optimistic. Despite the scale of the challenges, there is a strong and growing coalition of people committed to protecting Florida’s natural areas.

One of my key takeaways from the summit was a renewed awareness of the economic and ecological value of our natural resources, particularly in Polk County. As the top of the watershed, our region plays a critical role in the health of downstream ecosystems. If we fail to protect our recharge areas and allow unchecked development, the consequences will ripple far beyond our borders. This insight has sparked new ideas about how we might better recognize and compensate the environmental services our landscapes provide. These ideas are something I hope to explore further in my work as an extension agent. Attending the Corridor Connect Summit was not only professionally enriching, but also personally inspiring. I’m grateful to FANREP for supporting this opportunity and look forward to bringing what I’ve learned back to our community and colleagues.



MESSAGE FROM THE FANREP PRESIDENT Continued

FANREP Election Results

Congratulations to our newly elected officers and district directors:

- ☐ **President-Elect:** Alyssa Vinson
- ☐ **Treasurer:** Amanda Marek
- ☐ **Secretary:** Victor Blanco
- ☐ **Southeast District Director:** Alissa Hevesh
- ☐ **Central District Director:** Terra Freeman
- ☐ **Southwest District Director:** Kate Rose

Thank you to our outgoing officers for their service, energy, and time:

- ☐ Marnie Ward – Past President
- ☐ Carolyn Kovacs – Secretary
- ☐ Maxine Hunter – Treasurer
- ☐ Tina McIntyre – District 3 Director (Central)
- ☐ Stephen Robinson – District 4 Director (Southwest)
- ☐ Vincent Encomio – District 5 Director (Southeast)

Meet Our New Urban Entomology Assistant Professor



Dr. Johnalyn Gordon

Assistant Professor
Urban Entomology

Dr. Gordon's research and extension programs focus on the biology, behavior, and control of structural pests, including cockroaches, bed bugs, and termites, with a focus on the impacts of indoor arthropod pests on human health. Dr. Gordon's program is centered in purpose-driven research to solve stakeholder problems related to urban pest management, targeting data-based and pioneering solutions in collaboration with researchers and pest management professionals throughout the state of Florida and beyond to its global (or national if that's more accurate/realistic) network.

Dr. Gordon is also an instructor for General Household Pest (GHP) and Wood-Destroying Organisms (WDO) courses at Pest Management University, a UF/IFAS Extension program (<https://pestmanagementuniversity.org/about-us/>)



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Program Success Story Wakulla County

By Rachel Pienta, 4H Agent Wakulla County



Wakulla 4-H was recognized for “Eco-Education Programs” by Keep Wakulla County Beautiful at the organization’s annual June awards banquet. The Wakulla 4-H Podcast was recognized as the FAE4HA radio/audio program state winner for a podcast highlighting these eco-education programs at the 2025 EPAF conference.

(It was submitted for a FANREP award but did not win.)

Wakulla 4-H members have been volunteering for the International Coastal Clean Up and other Keep Wakulla County Beautiful (KWCB) events since 2017. In 2024, 4-H county council members decided to adopt a road. Through KWCB’s “Adopt-a-Road” Program, Wakulla 4-H has adopted Songbird Avenue. Members schedule quarterly clean ups of a one mile stretch that runs from 319 through the Songbird and Hammocks neighborhoods.





Teen Science Cafe Presents:
Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose, Upcycle

Join us for a Presentation and Hands on Activities to show how we can make a difference!

- Engage with youth about making better choices.
- Present statistics of how much more waste goes to our landfills during the holidays.
- Demonstrations on how to recycle, reuse, repurpose, and upcycle.
- Refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP to Eventbrite: tinyurl.com/RRRU4H

Event Date/Time: November 19, 2024, 6-8pm

84 Cedar Avenue, Crawfordville, FL







4-H agent Rachel Pienta explained how it works, “We schedule a date and let the KWCB organization know what we have planned. One or more of their board members turn out to support our effort. The youth and adult volunteers all clean together. Then, we meet up at a local eatery for an optional meal and time to enjoy 4-H fellowship.”

In addition to participating in road clean ups, Wakulla 4-H has planned and hosted educational programming focused on reducing waste and reusing household items. These educational efforts have been featured on the Wakulla 4-H Podcast. Episode 11 was the state winner recognized this year, and it features the Teen Science Café program, an education program created through a National Science Foundation grant, designed to engage teens in STEM learning.

Link to podcast episode:

<https://soundcloud.com/wave94/episode-11-wakulla-county-4-h-teen-science-cafe-presents-recycle-reuse-repurpose-upcycle>



Program Success Continued

Community members who drive through the Songbird neighborhood along the road that 4-H cleans on a quarterly basis may also notice some special signage featuring artwork by local artist Rachell Mathis. During the 2022-2023 4-H program year, 4-H youth wrote a small seed grant through the Community Pride program to fund their idea of engaging the community in environmental preservation through clean up and anti-littering efforts. Through their work on the project, members learned how to plan an effort from start to finish. Youth also visited a radio recording studio to learn and apply interviewing skills in creating two podcast episodes to support the project.

The project, including the two podcast recordings and a collaboration with local artist Rachell Mathis to create three original art designs, led to the adoption of one design as the 2023 International Coastal Clean Up shirt design for Wakulla's annual effort in September. Project leader Caden Gruebel said, "Environmental awareness is a very important concern in today's society, and the world needs more people to make an effort to keep the planet healthy, safe, and prosperous." The collaboration with Keep Wakulla County Beautiful was recognized as partnership of the year by Keep Florida Beautiful in November 2023.



EPAF Awards

FANREP awards killed it at EPAF Symposium Conference in Daytona Beach in mid May. ! Congratulations for all your hard work.




EPAF Awards



TM



[To see more featured images
of awards go to UF/IFAS
Photography Spotlight, June 2,
2025](#) 



Reminder...



The 2025 Great Southeast Pollinator Census is August 22 & 23rd
For more information visit <https://gsepc.org/>

Promotion Tenure & Permanent Status Congratulations

Congratulations to the following FANREP members who achieved career milestones this year! The following members were awarded Permanent Status, Promotion, or both.

- ❑ Marguerite Beckford, Northeast District (Awarded Permanent Status)
- ❑ Shannon Carnevale, Southwest District (Promotion to Agent III)
- ❑ Taylor Clem, Northeast District (Permanent Status, Promotion to Agent III)
- ❑ Erin Harlow, Northeast District (Promotion to Agent IV)
- ❑ Julie Mcconnell, Northwest District (Promotion to Agent III)
- ❑ Morgan Pinkerton, Central District (Permanent Status, Promotion to Agent III)
- ❑ Nicholas Taylor, Program for Resource Efficient Communities (Permanent Status, Promotion to Agent III)
- ❑ Alyssa Vinson, Southwest District (Permanent Status, Promotion to Agent II)
- ❑ Yilin Zhuang, Central District MREC (Promotion to Agent III)



2025 Faculty Promotion, Tenure, & Permanent Status *Announcement*

UF/IFAS is proud to present 58 UF/IFAS faculty whose record of strong achievement has earned them recognition and advancement in 2025. These professionals have demonstrated excellence and dedication that will advance teaching, research and Extension in Florida for years to come.

Tenure

Christina Romagosa, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure

Miguel Acovedo Torres, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
Jeanette Andrade, Food Science and Human Nutrition
Daniel Czyz, Microbiology and Cell Science
Lauren Diepenbrock, Entomology and Nematology, CREC
Ralph Easterly, III, Agricultural Education and Communication
Melissa Jones, Microbiology and Cell Science
Jonathan Judy, Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences
Bachir Kassas, Food and Resource Economics
Tie Liu, Horticultural Sciences
Rachel Mallinger, Entomology and Nematology
Wilm Martens-Habbena, Microbiology and Cell Science, FLREC
Julie Meyer, Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences
Carlos Alberto Silva, School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences
Ashley Smyth, Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences, TREC
Tara Wade, Food and Resource Economics, SWFREC
Jonathan Watson, Agricultural and Biological Engineering
Chris Wilson, Agronomy

Distinguished Professor Promotion

Kai Lorenzen, School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences

Master Lecturer

Jennifer Drew, Microbiology and Cell Science

Promoted to Professor

Ioannis Ampatzidis, Agricultural and Biological Engineering, SWFREC
Lauri Baker, Agricultural Education and Communication
Samantha Brooks, Animal Sciences
Martie Gillen, Family Youth and Community Sciences
Anne Mathews, Food Science and Human Nutrition
Todd Osborne, Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences, Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience
Kelly Rice, Microbiology and Cell Science
Hardev Sandhu, Agronomy, EREC
Hugh Smith, Entomology and Nematology, GCREC

Research Associate Scientist

Vakhtang Shelia, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Senior Associate In

Cathy Carr, Office of Dean, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Senior Lecturer

Natalie Coers, Agricultural Education and Communication
Jennifer Weeks, Entomology and Nematology

UF/IFAS Extension Agent Promotions with Permanent Status

Extension Agent II

Jay Capasso, Northeast District
Halie Corbitt, Northeast District
Shreemoyee Ghosh, Southwest District
Mary Kerr, Northeast District
Katelyn Mulinix, Southwest District
Shayla Tillett, Southwest District
Alyssa Vinson, Southwest District

Extension Agent III

Taylor Clem, Northeast District
Elizabeth Moore, Northeast District
Morgan Pinkerton, Central District
Nicholas Taylor, Program for Resource Efficient Communities

UF/IFAS Extension Agent Permanent Status

Marguerite Beckford, Northeast District

UF/IFAS Extension Agent Promotions

Extension Agent III

Jonael Bosques-mendez, Southwest District
Shannon Carnevale, Southwest District
Matthew Lollar, Northwest District
Mark Mauldin, Northwest District
Julie Mcconnell, Northwest District
Kristie Popa, Southwest District
Tycee Prevatt, Southeast District
Melinda Souers, Central District
Shaina Spann, Northeast District
Yilin Zhuang, Central District, MREC

Extension Agent IV

Yvette Goodiel, Southeast District
Erin Harlow, Northeast District

Extension Associate Scientist

Eric Cassiano, School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences

Look for an invitation to the September 2025 event to celebrate these faculty.

Program Announcements

Pollinator Ambassador Academy Training

By Lisa Strange, Taylor County AG & Natural Resources Agent / Master Gardener Coordinator

Be a Voice for Pollinators: Join the Pollinator Ambassador Academy

Master Gardener Volunteers are already champions of community horticulture—and now there's an exciting opportunity to amplify that impact. The **Pollinator Ambassador Academy** scheduled for **Saturday August 16th** was developed to offer targeted training on practical skills for pollinator ID, and learn about native plant selections, and explore strategies to engage our community and in support of the **Great Southeast Pollinator Census**. Participants become local ambassadors—leading educational events, guiding garden installations, and empowering their communities to create pollinator-friendly landscapes. Pollinators are essential to the success of our gardens and food systems, yet they continue to face serious threats. Seats are limited : Register on Eventbrite for the Pollinator Ambassador Academy at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pollinator-ambassador-academytickets-1434798493919?aff=oddtcreator>

Whether you're hosting a workshop, helping with a school garden, or guiding visitors in a demonstration plot, your influence can help protect pollinators and promote healthy ecosystems. By participating in the Census and serving as a Pollinator Ambassador, you're not just observing pollinators, you are protecting them. Your expertise and outreach can spark lasting change. Much of the training materials needed for the Pollinator Ambassador Academy have been provided by Jeremy Rhoden on the TEAMS page, Great Pollinator Census.

The Great Southeast Pollinator Census is simple, fun, and incredibly impactful—the data collected on August 22nd and 23rd helps scientists and land managers track pollinator populations and guide conservation efforts. Encourage Master Gardener volunteers to host the event. They can show off their leadership skills and make a citizen scientist out of every participant!

Program Announcements

Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism Educational Webinars Return for the Summer Submitted by Mike Sipos, Florida Sea Grant Agent, Collier County

CHARLOTTE COUNTY, Fla. (June 4, 2025) –The UF/IFAS Extension Florida Sea Grant office is pleased to announce the continuation of the Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism (FLSEE) Educational Webinar Series, which is scheduled from 7-8PM on the second of Wednesday of every month starting in June and ending in November. Designed for ecotourism professionals, enthusiasts, students, and anyone interested in responsible travel and conservation, these online sessions provide convenient access to expert knowledge on a range of relevant topics.

In response to the need for accessible, ongoing education in the dynamic field of ecotourism, Florida SEE has teamed up with Florida Sea Grant to offer this webinar series that will feature experts presenting on diverse subjects. Topics will cover best practices, emerging issues, innovative approaches, and critical conservation efforts impacting Florida's unique natural environments.

"Keeping up with the latest info is key—whether you are a tour operator or just care about protecting Florida's natural places," says Pete Corradino, Chair of the FLSEE Board. "These webinars make it easy to hear straight from the experts and learn what it takes to build a responsible, sustainable tourism across the state."

The webinar series is part of Florida SEE's commitment to fostering informed and responsible stewardship of Florida's natural heritage, which fits with both UF/IFAS's & Florida's Sea Grant's goals of "developing [and disseminating] knowledge... to conserve environmental resources for residents and visitors and enhancing economic opportunities for the people of Florida."

Information on upcoming webinar topics, schedules, and registration can be found on the Florida SEE website's education page: www.floridasee.org/education.

FLORIDA SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL ECOTOURISM
 PRESENTS THE 2025
ECO-TOUR PROVIDER WEBINAR SERIES

Join us the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 7-8pm



June 11 - Living with Coyote



July 9 - Fish Morphology and Ecology

August 13 - Seabirds

September 10 - Enhancing Ecotourism with the Florida Master Naturalist Program

October 8 - Marine Mammals of Florida



November 12 - Mangroves and Salt Marsh: Habitats of the Estuary

Free and open to all
 Advance registration is required
 Register online at
www.floridasee.org/education
 or scan the QR code




Program Success Story

Hillsborough



The Carrollwood Pollinator Corridor Launched!

Tia Silvasy, UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County



The Carrollwood Pollinator Corridor was launched in an effort to raise awareness and expand habitat for pollinators. The corridor includes planting at three Hillsborough County Parks and voluntary participation from local homeowners. The project to plant native wildflowers, grasses and shrubs was funded by Florida Wildflower Foundation's Viva Florida grant for \$5,000.

The first of three phases of the project was recently completed on June 28, 2025 where summer camp kids, park staff, and volunteers installed native plants at Carrollwood Village Park and VISTA Gardens. The pollinator corridor will enhance biodiversity and foster community engagement. Planting phase two will commence in Nov. 2025, stay tuned!

Program Success Story-Part 1

Pinella County

Lighthouse Students Discover Tampa Bay's Estuary at Weedon Island



By: Katie Mastenbrook
Florida Sea Grant
Extension Agent Pinellas
County

This summer, the Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent in Pinellas County partnered with Pinellas County staff and the Friends of Weedon Island to host a special day of immersive outdoor programming for students from the Lighthouse of Pinellas. The Lighthouse's mission is "to advance the independence and quality of life for individuals in Pinellas County who are blind or visually impaired."

At the Weedon Island Cultural and Natural History Center and Preserve, students took part in a variety of hands-on activities that connected them to Tampa Bay's unique ecosystems and cultural heritage.

A highlight of the day was a seining program led by Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent Katie Mastenbrook. To make the experience accessible, simple adaptations were added, such as pool noodle guiding ropes, magnification collecting jars, and pre-collected samples for sensory engagement. During the activity, students worked together to gently pull a large net through the shallow estuary waters and used smaller dip nets to collect specimens individually. Guided by Sea Grant staff and volunteers, they discovered and learned about fish, invertebrates, mangroves, and other fascinating marine life. By feeling the shapes, sizes, and textures of these creatures and plants, students could fully experience the diversity of Tampa Bay's estuarine ecosystem in an engaging, sensory-rich way.



Program Success Story-Part 2

Pinella County

Lighthouse Student Discover Tampa Bay Estuary Continued

The goal of this program partnership was to help advance the Lighthouse's mission by providing a program that fostered meaningful connections with nature, built confidence, and encouraged greater independence. Students shared afterward that they never thought they would be brave enough to try an activity like this—but after holding their first sea snail, the excitement became infectious, and they were glad they tried something new.

This collaboration shows how adaptive, accessible programs can open new pathways to environmental education, ensuring everyone has the chance to explore and care for Florida's coastal resources.



Are you interested in contributing by sharing your program stories to our FANREP Newsletter?

Contact our Newsletter & Communication Team

- ☐ Contact Lorna Bravo/Chair lbravo1@ufl.edu
- ☐ Contact Lisa Strange/Co-Chair lstrange@ufl.edu