

Florida's proactive approach to prescribed burning helps prevent catastrophic wildfires that threaten habitat as well as homes and helps fulfill its responsibility to pass on these vital natural places to future generations.

Florida Wildlife Action Plan

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

Florida's wildlife action plan identifies 974 animals and the actions needed to conserve them. A landscape approach categorizes the state into freshwater, saltwater and land systems totaling 45 habitat categories. By sustaining the health and integrity of these habitats, the broad array of wildlife and natural places within them are conserved for future generations.

Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People **Restoring Fire-Dependent Ecosystems**

Florida's wildlife action plan identifies prescribed burns as a priority because the decrease in natural fires imperils many plants and animals that depend on periodic fires for their reproduction, growth, and survival. Florida's Wildlife Legacy Initiative helps land managers meet prescribed burning goals by supporting two fire-based efforts. The Upland Ecosystem Restoration Project conducted prescribed burns on more than 10,000 acres of private land, and the Lake Wales Ridge Prescribed Fire Strike Team conducted prescribed burns on 17,600 acres on 24 natural areas.

This proactive approach to conservation helps Florida prevent catastrophic wildfires that threaten habitat as well as homes and helps fulfill its responsibility to pass on these vital natural places to future generations.

Gathering Information to Take Action

Improving Knowledge about Aquatic Caddisflies

The health of wildlife, particularly aquatic insects, is often an early indicator of disease and pollution that affects us all. Improving knowledge about invertebrate wildlife so that appropriate conservation measures can be taken is one of six top priorities in Florida's wildlife action plan. Caddisflies are aquatic insects that live



Prescribed fire/Tall Timbers Research Inc.

in streams and are species of greatest conservation need. To document caddisfly distribution and health, existing data are being compiled and field collections of caddisfly specimens are taking place at 108 sites in 39 out of 67 counties in Florida. With this improved knowledge, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and all Floridians can take proactive action to identify and prevent pollution before it threatens other wildlife and people.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Restoring Native Vegetation Vital to Migratory Birds

Restoring native vegetation is an important aspect of Florida's wildlife action plan. Hurricane Charley provided Florida with a unique restoration opportunity in 2004 by blowing down thousands of non-native Australian pines. After the hurricane, the city of Sanibel re-established over 200 acres of diverse wildlife habitat at Bowman's Beach Park by completely removing the remaining non-native Australian pines and replanting the full range of native vegetation. Over 21,000 trees and shrubs of 70 native species were replanted, including strangler fig, gumbo limbo, and mahogany trees that provide exceptional food for migratory songbirds. This restoration project will allow citizens and tourists to experience the tens of thousands of warblers, vireos, orioles and tanagers that migrate through the area every spring and fall.



Caddisfly survey/Florida A&M University

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Restored vegetation at Bowman's Beach Park/City of Sanibel