



**Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens e-Newsletter
January 2020 Edition**

**UPCOMING
EVENTS!**

**Volunteer
Workday
Saturday,
January 11
9 a.m. - noon**

**Yoga class with
Mind Body
Harmony
Sunday,
January 12
11 a.m. - noon
RSVP**

**This is a kid
friendly family
event. Just bring
yourself and a
smile!**

**The Torreya Project: an Academic
Partnership to Save
an Endangered Species**

In early December, Arboretum volunteer Merrill Varn joined groups from Atlanta Botanical Garden, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens and the Florida Native Plant Society to help with the 2019 census and data collection for the approximately 750 torreya plants remaining in the wild.

Torreya taxifolia, now restricted to limestone bluffs along the east bank of the Apalachicola River, has suffered a 98% decline in its population since 1950 due to infection by a fungus that causes top dieback before the plant begins to seed. Most of the remaining plants are root sprouts, since there are only 10 mature plants known. On its current trajectory, the species will be extinct soon.



Atlanta Botanical Gardens

**Discovering
Nature Nearby:
Alligator and
Reptile Talk
Sunday,
January 18
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

**Doug Leads Public
Nature Walk
Saturday,
January 25
9:30 to 10:30 a.m.**

**Children's Tour
Saturday,
February 1
10 to 11 a.m.
RSVP**

**Arboretum
Gates Open
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday - Sunday**

**SUPPORTERS
& PARTNERS**

is actively propagating fungus-free plants grown from seed for conservation purposes. Torreyia Guardians is piloting a project to relocate the species to the North Carolina mountains. All other known species of Torreyia are mountain inhabitants. The suspicion is that this species is a struggling Pleistocene relic pushed south as glaciers advanced and then isolated when they retreated about 12,000 years ago.

"Spirits Under the Sun" Success

Thank you to our volunteers, sponsors and guests for another successful "Spirits Under the Sun," we met our fundraising goal of \$14,500! Our sixth-annual pairing of food, drink, and nature featured dishes from Jacksonville's most popular restaurants, combined with spirits, an impressive wine selection and local craft beers. Participants enjoyed musical entertainment, a silent auction and guided tours of the gardens.



Thank You Jacksonville Zoo and

GOLD PARTNER
\$1,000+

John and Sondie Frus

Ron and Carol Russell,
Russell Blueberry
Farm

SILVER PARTNER
\$500+

Anthony John Rigney,
PA & Rigney Family
of Jacksonville, FL

BRONZE PARTNER
\$250+

Mary Ann and Shepard
Bryan Jr.

MEMBER FRIENDS
\$100+

Eldon and Martha
Bekum

Stuart and Haze
Bergman

Alex Broner

Marsha Brown and Pete
Starling

Carlos and Davron
Cardenas

Stephen A. Connelly
and Ellen O. Middleton

Catharine Corbin

Gardens!

The Conservation Department of Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens funded a Best Management Practices Study of a section that runs through JAG. The engineer determined that the single most important step JAG could take was to keep visitors off the banks.

JAG Conservation volunteers added 260 feet of post and cable including 80 feet along the bluff above the creek where the engineer determined that the slope was about to fail. In addition to funding the study and the mitigation work, the grant also funded signage to educate visitors about urban creek degradation.

A reprint of the sign, installed by volunteers December 7, can be seen below. You can see a photo of the bluff on the newly installed sign. Look for it the next time you are at the Arboretum walking the Jones Creek Trail...and please stay on the trail.

Urban Creek Degradation

Creeks and rivers get their water from the land (watershed) that surrounds them. A watershed is like a bowl that catches rain. Whatever falls into the bowl is either absorbed by the plants and soil or washed into the river by runoff.

When it rains in a natural area, forests soils soak up rainwater like a sponge and slowly release it. In an urbanized watershed, rain hits hard surfaces, picks up speed and pollutants, then pours down storm drains into nearby creeks and rivers. If sampled, creeks and rivers in urban watersheds frequently have:

- High fecal bacteria from unmaintained septic tanks and excess pet waste.
- Elevated nutrients and hydrocarbons from yard fertilizers, street runoff, and illegal dumping.
- Loss of diversity as plants and animals are poisoned by the contaminants in urban runoff and overrun by invasive species able to withstand the conditions.
- Flash floods and collapsing creek banks because of high speed flow into urban creeks.

The Jacksonville Arboretum and Gardens is in the 2.5 square mile watershed of Jones Creek, which flows into the St. Johns River. Much of the watershed is developed with buildings, roads, and parking lots. The creek is impaired because of high fecal bacteria levels.

Ways to help:

- Pick up pet waste in your yard and pump your septic tank every five years.
- Use a minimum of chemicals on your yard; recycle or reuse plastics and don't litter.
- Don't pour it in the storm drain if you wouldn't drink it.
- Plant, don't pave, your yard. If you must pave, consider gravel or some other pervious surface.

Jones Creek Watershed

© Copyright © 2010 Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens. All Rights Reserved.

Credits: 1. Matthew Babinowski, 2. Samantha Roberts of U.S., 3. Rachel D. Chapman of JAG

REI Gratitude

Conservation volunteers can be seen in the photo below making final changes to the planting area along the new

Carol Spawn Desmond

John Fischer

David and Bonnie
Foster

Pat and Cliff Jeremiah

Charles and Sarah
Kleeman

Jim and Kathy Kotas

Vicki Lake and Nick
Garpetti

Janine Leland and Tom
Larson

Donald Lookingbill

Linda Martin

Julie and Bill Mason

Barbara and Charles
McTiernan

Bonnie Nackino

Peggy Nolan

Vincent and Susan Ober
Jr.

Robert and Vivien Parks

Jane and John Pope

Terrone and Carolyn
Rosenberry

Tony and Rachel
Stewart

section of the REI boardwalk in the Ravine. When you are at their store, please thank REI staff members for their continued support.

Through their nationwide "Loving the Outdoors, Sharing the Love Campaign", the local REI store has funded 100 feet of new boardwalk or accessible trail each year for the past five years with the goal of making the outdoors accessible to all.

JAG is very grateful to REI for sharing their success with local communities nationwide to "help them enjoy more of the outdoors."



Meet Volunteer Arborist Dan Eames

Arborist Dan Eames, visiting from Canada, volunteered about 30 hours of his time to help thin deadwood and cut down diseased trees during December.

He and his wife, Colleen, ran a large tree service

Lorin Thies

Mary and Joel Toomey

Robin Wahby

Michael Zambetti

[Click here to find out more about Donor Programs!](#)

JAG Membership

By becoming a member or donor, you are supporting the Arboretum's operations and improvements. All donations are tax-deductible. Details are available on our website.

Membership Levels

\$ 40 Single

\$ 55 Dual

\$ 70 Family

\$100 Friend

Supporters & Corporate Partners

Bronze Partner \$250

Silver Partner \$500

Gold Partner \$1,000

John Bartram Society Gatekeeper

business in Ottawa, Ontario before selling their business (and their home) and taking off in a 2007 RV with their golden lab and tuxedo cat to travel North America. They have worked odd jobs eastward, searched for whales in Nova Scotia, and then when the weather turned too chilly for RV living, they headed south and crossed into the United States in early October - volunteering and bartering their way down the east coast.



Discovering Nature Nearby

Mark your calendar for our next Discovering Nature Nearby talk on **January 18 at 9:30 am**. Park Naturalist Kelly Ussia will deliver a family-friendly presentation about the snakes and alligators found throughout the State of Florida. Learn about the various species of snakes in our area as well as how to live with our neighbors. Participants will get to see a live snake and an alligator!

\$2,500+
Steward
\$5,000+
President's Council
\$10,000+

To join or purchase a
gift membership, click
[JOIN](#)
Thank you!

Shop at Amazon Smile

The Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens is registered with Amazon Smile, a foundation that donates a portion of all sales to a shopper's favorite charity. Using your normal account and settings you will find the same low prices and availability.

Enjoy shopping and supporting us by visiting smile.amazon.com



Show the World You Love the Arboretum

Show the world you love us, by posting your Arboretum photographs at [#jacksonvillearboretum](#) & www.facebook.com/JacksonvilleArboretumGardens. We appreciate it!

OUR MISSION

*Cultivating a unique environment
for recreation, education, and inspiration.*

Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens, 1445 Millcoie Road, Jacksonville, FL 32225

