

Hammock Happenings

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center: Closed But Still Caring

October 2020

Introducing the Gumbo Limbo Online Store

We're thrilled to announce the Gumbo Limbo store is now available online! We've been hard at work since we've been closed, building our supporters an option to get their favorite Gumbo Limbo gear and eco-friendly gifts from the comfort and safety of home. 100% of the net proceeds from every sale goes directly to supporting the work and efforts of Gumbo Limbo Nature Center. Visit ShopGumboLimbo.org from your desktop or mobile device now!

Featured Collections

Clothing and Hats

Show your support for marine and coastal conservation with the latest Gumbo Limbo Nature Center attire! From t-shirts and rash guards to baseball caps and bucket hats, you can make a difference and be a steward for marine life with each purchase you make.

Eco-Friendly

Our sustainable and eco-friendly products are a great place to start for making a change in refusing plastics. From reusable straws and bags to environmentally focused products, swapping out your single-use items with these products is a step in the right direction for supporting marine conservation.



Ben Hicks X GLNC

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center has partnered with renowned photographer Ben Hicks on these products as we share our love and passion for marine conservation and our local South Florida ocean waters.

4Ocean

4Ocean is a purpose-driven business, focused on the mission to end global ocean plastic pollution. Their bracelet cords and beads are made from 100% post-consumer recycled plastic and glass bottles, and each one purchased supports the clean-up of one pound of trash from the ocean and coastlines. Each bracelet is dedicated to a particular species or ecosystem in need.

ShanOre Ocean Jewelry

Now featuring ShanOre's Ocean Jewelry collection! This Irish silver sea Swarovski jewelry features appealing aquatic creatures. Adorned with sparkling stones and shimmering pearls, the ShanOre Ocean collection takes Ireland's marine traditions to a new level of beauty.

Florida Sea Turtle Company

What started as a simple idea by Skylar Mandell to create bracelets has developed into a successful business. In fact, Skylar gave the first donation from Florida Sea Turtle Company's bracelet sale profits to Gumbo Limbo! It's her dream that this company can truly make a difference. Rest assured, it already has. We're thrilled to carry her bracelets and have her continued support!

Refuse Campaign

Plastic is everywhere. It's on land, in our water, and even in the air we breathe. Plastics end up in our oceans and becomes deadly "food" for many marine animals such as birds, fish, whales, and even tiny sea turtle hatchlings. It's time to not just reduce, reuse, and recycle, but to REFUSE! 100% of the proceeds from the sale of these products support Gumbo Limbo Nature Center's Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility.



SHOP NOW!

Buy your favorite Gumbo Limbo gear online and support marine and coastal conservation!

100% of net proceeds go directly to support the operation of Gumbo Limbo Nature Center

ShopGumboLimbo.org



How You Can Help Gumbo Limbo Nature Center

Adopt A Turtle

It can be tough to find the perfect gift... But look no further! Consider giving the gift of charity to those you care about. Hatchling or resident sea turtle "adoptions" available at GumboLimbo.org/Adopt.

Membership

Become a Friends of Gumbo Limbo member today! Be kept in the loop about upcoming virtual programs and enjoy exclusive discounts and early access. Find the full list of member benefits at GumboLimbo.org/Membership.

Pave the Way

An engraved paver at Gumbo Limbo is a personalized way to show your support for our mission. Find out how you can help pave the way at GumboLimbo.org/Pave-The-Way.

The Gumbo Limbo Gift Shop

Friends of Gumbo Limbo has worked hard at a complete overhaul of our store, with a strong focus on sustainable and recycled products. We're thrilled to announce our new online store, where you can shop from the safety of your own home while still supporting Gumbo Limbo! ShopGumboLimbo.org. Once we are able to open again, you'll be welcome in a new store onsite that will allow appropriate social distancing measures to ensure your safety.

Manager's Corner

Can you believe that the calendar says October? How can it be Fall already? The seasons do change here, you just have to pay close attention to the signs. In fact, as I write this letter to you I am seeing the first signs of Fall in South Florida - a few new birds visiting my backyard feeder. The summer regulars (cardinals, mockingbirds, and blue jays) have been joined by warblers and at least one oriole making the trip from their northern breeding grounds. My neighbors claim they have seen a Ruby throated hummingbird in their yard, but alas, I have not (though I'm not giving up hope!).



As the weather cools (slightly), I encourage you to take a walk on our boardwalk. Though our Nature Center property remains closed, the boardwalk is accessible from the West side of Red Reef Park. This ½ mile walk allows you to explore one of the last remaining examples of maritime coastal hammock forest in Palm Beach County. This unique habitat provides vital resting and foraging areas for the millions of migratory birds making their way South to their winter homes. Make sure to bring a set of binoculars – you never know what you might find! You can learn more about our migrating feathered friends on October 11 during our virtual [The Science of Nature](#) program.

Other virtual programs this month include a new and exciting [Little Wonders and Nature Detectives](#), premiering on October 10. Make sure to call ahead to reserve the educational craft kit for your little explorers. More information about all of our virtual programs and opportunities can be found on our [website](#). As of right now, our programs are all virtual, but we are working hard to create opportunities to bring you safely back in person. We miss seeing you around the Nature Center and can't wait to see you again.

As you start thinking ahead to the holidays, consider a gift that gives back. Our Gumbo Limbo gift store now has some of our most popular and unique gifts available [online](#). All profit from sales goes directly back to supporting our efforts here at Gumbo Limbo. Symbolic sea turtle adoptions (both hatchling and resident sea turtles) make great gifts for kids of all ages and you can feel good knowing that the money raised helps all of our sea turtles here at Gumbo Limbo's Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility.

Thank you for all of your support, we hope to see you soon.

Until next time, Leanne Welch, Manager

Get Social With Us!

#LoveGumboLimbo



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#LoveBocaRaton

[Boca Raton Recreation](#)
[City of Boca Raton Government](#)

Reflecting on E-Waste is in Good Taste

When we first think of being environmentally friendly, we might first imagine tossing a plastic bottle into a blue bin or a fully read magazine into a yellow bin. Fortunately, recycling in these simple ways has become very mainstream, where Palm Beach and Broward Counties have among the highest rates of recycling in Florida. But what about other types of waste?

October 14th is **Electronic Waste Day**, which highlights another important type of waste for us to consider. In order to make electrical parts including computer chips and touch screens, heavy metals like mercury lead, arsenic, and cadmium are used to make those parts work.

Even when they stop working, those heavy metals are still inside our electronics when they are sent to the landfill or dropped off at a recycling center. Electronic waste, or e-waste, is becoming more difficult to properly recycle because of changes in the overseas trading of those materials.

Many overseas locations willing to receive our e-waste do not take measures to prevent these toxins from entering farmlands, rivers, and the ocean. What doesn't pollute the land can be toxic to fish and make pollutants bioaccumulate or collect in their bodies up the food chain!

Fortunately, we can make a big personal difference! It's Gumbo Limbo Nature Center's mission to inspire stewardship of coastal and marine systems, and by taking action we can extend our impact globally! Just like reducing plastic waste, we can apply the Five R's: Reflect, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle for our electronics.

Reflect: Do we need a new smartphone as often as we are tempted to buy one? Could we make do with our currently working one for longer? Are we making purchases because it's necessary or out of impulse?

Refuse: Do we need as many new electronic devices as we are offered? Does a single person need the latest smartphone, smartwatch, tablet, laptop, and desktop all at the same time? Just like refusing a plastic straw offered, we have opportunities to refuse unnecessary electronics as well!

Reduce: Is it possible to purchase a refurbished item rather than new? What if we supported companies that made devices easier to repair, rather than replace? What if we supported companies which make devices that last long, rather than create products doomed-to-fail forcing us to buy new ones more frequently? Another word for this is planned obsolescence. Search this topic online if you are interested in for more information.

Reuse: If you do get a new device, could you repurpose your old device to be your car's mp3 player or road-trip passenger cinema? Could you give your old device to a friend or sell it? This would provide more of those items on the used market, therefore creating less demand for new ones while maybe making you some money!

Recycle: The last resort, disposing of your electronics. They cannot be repaired or repurposed. Make sure you do not send it to the landfill, but to a recycling center where it has a better chance of being actually recycled.

As you might remember from visiting us and attending our daily Outdoor Aquarium Feeding presentations, experts agree that recycling is no longer enough. Make a statement and consider the Five R's if shopping next month. By stopping pollutants from being sent to developing countries and their people, rivers, and oceans, we South Floridians can make a personal difference in coastal and marine ecosystems around the globe!



By Frankie Gorora, Environmental Educator

Gumbo Limbo Nature Programs, Virtually

What, you still haven't had a chance to take part in one of our virtual experiences or explorations yet? You don't know what you are missing! Whether you follow us on Facebook or subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel, you can watch great footage of sea turtles, butterflies, our beautiful trails, and even see some familiar faces. Gumbo Limbo staff has been busy creating virtual opportunities to share our facilities and our work here; we continue to discover new and better ways to reach out and expand the Gumbo Limbo community. Even our [gift shop](#) has gone virtual!

Last month, you heard about our new [Virtually In-Seine](#) program, but did you know that through Facebook Live, people from all over had a chance to join our educators, Christie and Frankie, as they searched the waters of the Intracoastal for fish and marine invertebrates, answered questions, and shared the fun of being out in nature?

For ages 10 and up, we have another Facebook Live opportunity called [The Science of Nature](#). In this month's program, Frankie will give us the scoop on Florida's original snowbirds, as we celebrate World Migratory Bird Day.

[Homeschool Workshops](#) continue twice a month for 3-12-year-olds; this month's topic is Scavengers and Decomposers. Registration information is available on our website.



Then there are our [Little Wonders and Nature Detectives](#) monthly programs for 3-6-year-olds, with free craft kits available for scheduled pick up. Yes, I said free (quantities are limited). It doesn't get much better than that! Check out the craft that will be available for October's Creepy Crawlies!

While we are waiting to re-open, we will keep doing what we do best, sharing our message of conservation and our knowledge of Florida's marine ecosystems. Please join us virtually as we all anticipate the safe opening of Gumbo Limbo Nature Center to the public once again!

By Susan Elliott, Environmental Program Coordinator

October Virtual Programs

Beachcombing Gumbo Limbo Style!

This self-guided adventure will give you both the knowledge and incentive to get out, enjoy the beach, find cool natural treasures, and help wildlife all at the same time. Available anytime on our [website](#).

Homeschool Workshops

Two sessions offered with different activities. [Register](#) (required) for one or both sessions.

Ages 3-5: Tuesdays, October 13 and 27

Ages 6-8: Wednesdays, October 14 and 28

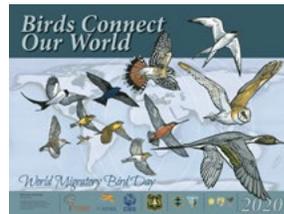
Ages 9-12: Thursdays, October 15 and 29

All sessions: 10:30-11:30am

Cost per child: Resident/Member \$5, Non-resident/Non-member \$8; Sibling Resident/Member \$3, Sibling Non-resident/Non-member \$6

Little Wonders and Nature Detectives

What will we discover? Spiders, snakes, bugs? Find out which creepy critters are not so scary and are even helpful to people! Reserve your free craft kit, available for scheduled pickup (call 561-544-8612). Visit our [website](#) on or after October 10 to follow along a virtual nature exploration about Creepy Crawlies! Previous topics available anytime.



The Science of Nature

Join us on [Facebook Live](#) for this to celebrate the incredible journeys of migratory birds. Learn to identify the bird species that visit warmer winter climates around the world, with a focus on Florida snowbirds. We will

explore natural areas around Gumbo Limbo to observe and discuss bird sightings. Attendee backyard observations are welcome and encouraged! Recommended for ages 10-adult. Sunday, October 11, 10:00 am

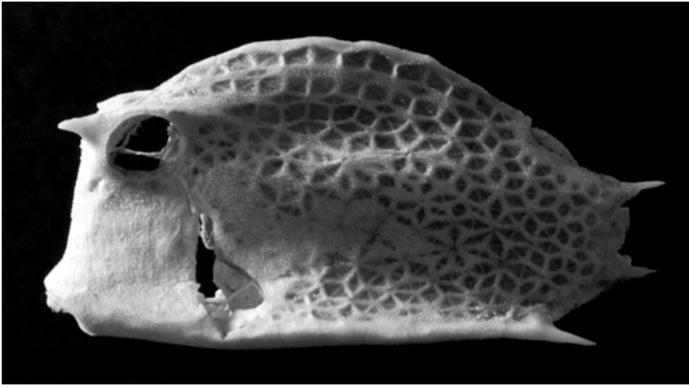
Virtually In-Seine

Join us live from the dry comfort of your home, as we seine for marine life in the Intracoastal Waterway behind Gumbo Limbo Nature Center. What's seining you may ask? Watch our seining [video](#) anytime and then on join us on [Facebook Live](#) as we explore the Intracoastal waters together. Pufferfish, shrimp, triggerfish, and juvenile barracudas are some of our regulars. What do you think we will collect this time? Join us and see for yourself!

Sunday, October 25, 10:00am

What Are Boxfishes?

What are those weird fish swimming around that look like boxes? How in the world did they evolve to have such an odd shape? Well, since you asked, today we are going to talk about boxfishes! These unique fishes make up the family Ostraciidae. Five species are native to our Southeast Florida waters: the scrawled and honeycomb cowfishes and the smooth, spotted, and buffalo trunkfishes. These fishes are commonly found in harems with one male guarding a territory containing several females. They eat sedentary invertebrates such as tunicates, gorgonians, anemones, and sponges, slow-moving crustaceans, and marine vegetation.



Cowfish skeleton. Photo credit: inkmousestudios.com.

Boxfishes have a triangular or square box-like body that is created by scales that have been transformed into bone-like structures (Randall 1972). All these bones are securely fused together to form a “carapace.” Pictured is an example of what the “carapace” looks like under the skin. There are small openings only for the eyes, gills, mouth, and fins. Originally, it was believed that although they have a very non-streamlined shaped, they were still capable of streamlined swimming. However, it turns out the boxy shape of the fish makes it hard for them to swim in a straight line, but this actually increases their maneuverability. These fish can turn 180 degrees on the spot and dart away from

would-be predators into the safety of the reef. This is important as they have evolved away from a streamlined, fish-like body for quick swimming to avoid predation.

But, that’s not the only way they have evolved for protection. It turns out that most boxfishes also produce a toxin in their skin that they can secrete and disperse into the water around them when they are stressed, that can be very toxic to other fishes (Thomson 1964). This has been documented, rarely, in aquariums where a boxfish was stressed for some reason and released the toxin that killed all the other fish within the aquarium! Luckily, this is an uncommon occurrence, and because our aquariums at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center have a flow-through system, our other fish residents should be protected against any accidental toxic excretions. Plus, this is yet another reason to provide the absolute best care we can to reduce the stress on our residents. Just like many other toxic creatures (for example, poison dart frogs, or monarch butterflies) boxfish have bright and beautiful colorations as a warning to would-be predators, like our small green buffalo trunkfish in the Nearshore Aquarium, and our scrawled cowfish in our Coral Reef Aquarium.



Juvenile trunkfish. Photos credit: B. Danson.

Until next time, keep your fishy friends close and your anemones closer.

By Bryan Danson, Aquarist

The 2020 International Coastal Cleanup

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center and the City of Boca Raton have been participating in the annual International Coastal Cleanup every fall for over 25 years! But the [International Coastal Cleanup](#) (ICC) is going to have a different look this year. Due to COVID-19 restrictions prohibiting large gatherings, we will not be coordinating an annual community beach cleanup this fall. Instead, we are asking anyone who is able to please make a trip to the beach to pick up trash and record your findings.

The [Ocean Conservancy](#) has extended the ICC dates to include all of September-December, for families and individuals to get out onto the beaches and make a difference. They have even provided a way to track the trash removed from specific beaches or communities.

In 2016, the [Clean Swell App](#) was introduced to track trash collected by their volunteers worldwide. Free and easy to use, modeled after the cardboard data sheets previously used in their events, with trash items categorized for easy tracking, keep this app on your phone and submit data anytime, anywhere, as often as you like! You can find instruction sheets and tutorials on the Ocean Conservancy website.

If you are able to pick up trash on the beaches in Boca Raton, please download the free Clean Swell App and use the group name **BocaBeaches2020**, so we can see just how much we collect between now and December 31! For those of you who pick up trash at Spanish River Park, Red Reef Park, and South Beach Park, we have made it even easier for you! There are clean, sanitized collecting buckets at each beach, located at Lifeguard Towers 4, 9, and 16. Just bring your own gloves or trash pickers!

Our beaches are now, more than ever, in need of help. Please continue to support the efforts of the International Coastal Cleanup by joining with your community to keep the beaches and oceans free of marine debris.

GUMBO LIMBO NATURE CENTER

HOW TO SAFELY CLEAN UP THE BEACH

While Observing COVID-19 Safety Measures

-  Take some alone time (or with those that have been quarantining with you) and head out to the beach!
-  Don't forget to bring your reusable water bottle, reusable mask (freshly cleaned for each new wear), and reusable gloves.
-  Trash pickers are a great tool to minimize contact between you and any PPE that has been littered or improperly disposed of.
-  Grab a bucket and start making a difference in your community!
If you're local to the Boca Raton area, you can grab reusable (and clean) buckets at lifeguard towers 4, 9, and 16.
-  Be sure to bring along hand sanitizer and properly sanitize hands and tools immediately after clean up. Once you are able, clean hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
-  Remind your family and friends about the negative impact of single-use PPE and how reusable protective equipment is better for our environment when properly cleaned and maintained.

SHARE YOUR BEACH CLEAN UP WITH US
#BeachCleanWithGLNC

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center

Hours & Information

We remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Boardwalk is open 7:30 am - sunset with access from Red Reef Park West parking lot. Check gumbolimbo.org for updates.

General Information (561) 544-8605 · Volunteer (561) 544-8538
Friends of Gumbo Limbo (561) 544-8608 · Gift Shop (561) 544-8610
1801 North Ocean Boulevard, Boca Raton, Florida 33431
gumbolimbo.org

Suggested donation of \$5 per person.

Your donations go to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Inc. to support Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, including, but not limited to, feeding the animals, purchasing supplies and services for the Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Program, and creating exhibits.

City of Boca Raton Recreation Services Staff

Administration & Operations

Recreation Services Director - Michael Kalvort, CPRE
Deputy Recreation Services Director - Michelle Zimmer, CPRP
Manager - Leanne Welch
Secretary - Darlene Rosa
Volunteer Coordinator - Rebecca Germany
Visitor Hospitality Representative - Debra Wilson
Environmental Program Coordinator - Kristin Child
Community Events Assistant - Kayla Caldwell

Aquarium

Senior Aquarist - Keith Herman
Aquarist - Bryan Danson

Education

Environmental Program Coordinator - Susan Elliott
Science Educators - Christie Collins, Alyssa Saldarriaga
Environmental Educator - Frankie Gorora

Exhibits

Exhibits Coordinator - Cory Keester-O'Mills
Exhibits Assistant - Megan Barry
Exhibits Intern - Winston Miller

Facilities Maintenance

Maintenance Supervisor III - Reed Benardo
Custodian - Kevin Addison
Groundskeeper - Cary Boudreau

Sea Turtle Conservation

Marine Conservationist - Kirt Rusenko, PhD
Sea Turtle Conservation Coordinator - David Anderson
Marine Turtle Specialists - Rachel Brown, Lisa Esposito,
Carlee Jackson, Kylea Perrin, Taylor Roe

Sea Turtle Rehabilitation

Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Coordinator - Whitney Crowder
Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Assistants - Caitlin Boverly, Emily Mirowski

Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Inc.

Staff

Executive Director - John Holloway
Administrative Assistant - Andrea Atkins
Business Manager - Pam Mulcahy
Gift Shop Sales Associates - Brittne Funez,
Amy Sarnow, Lisa Stamp

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Vice President - Manjunath Pendakur
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