



trail tales



Loxahatchee Chapter, Florida Trail Association

Volume 30, Issue 1: Bi-monthly Publication

January/February 2020

CHAPTER MEETINGS

First Monday of every month
Social 7:00 p.m.; Program 7:30 p.m.

Jan. 6 - TBA

Feb. 3 - TBA

OKEEHEELEE NATURE CENTER

Located in Okeeheliee Park on Forest Hill Blvd. east of the turnpike. Follow the main park road for about a mile, turn left at the Nature Center sign and continue to the building.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Chapter Officers

Chair: Roy Moore, 561-422-2189, shotgun.mgc@gmail.com

Vice/Trails: Fred Davis, 561-779-0273, fdavis6539@msn.com

Secretary: Ruth Scott, ruthfla@aol.com

Treasurer: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423, cummingsps@att.net

Council Rep.: Bea Rogers, 561-644-0777, bznest22@gmail.com

At Large: Christopher Knight

Committees

Membership: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189, mhm27@juno.com

Newsletter/Website: Shannon Moore, 561-422-2189, shanroy@bellsouth.net

Public Relations: position open

Trail Section Leaders

Jonathan Dickinson: Jeff Andrews, 561-310-6950, jeff4sail@mac.com

Corbett: Rick Byrnes, 561-798-6566, r_byrnes@bellsouth.net

DuPuis: Scott Lunsford, 561-441-1251, tblazer7579@comcast.net

Lake Okeechobee: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423, cummingsps@att.net

Hobe Sound & LOX Slough: Bea Rogers, 561-644-0777

Knowing Your Blazes

by Ryan Lusk

So, we have all been there. It is day one of your newly found passion... hiking! And you are ready. Shoes, day pack, hiking poles, food, water and all the other home shopping network gadgets necessary for my survival... check! Time to get out there and be one with nature.

You drive to a location you found online or maybe a friend told you about. The anticipation builds the entire way there. You are so excited you are about to burst! Or it could be the entire pot of coffee you had right before you left, but you don't care. You are ready!



You find the spot, park the car, grab the gear and you are off. This is it. You have taken your first steps on the trail. You are a hiker!

The breeze rustles the leaves around you and brushes your face. The earth at your feet pushing you along the trail as if you were floating on air. This is amazing.

Such beauty... such wonder. You feel like the explorers of old seeking out new lands and treasure.

Then something catches your eye in the distance. "What is that?" you say aloud. You get a little closer and curiosity turns to frustration. You stop before a magnificent old oak and there you stare in puzzlement. There in front of you is a small rectangular orange strip of paint. A question begins to form on your lips as it has with many before you. "What dumb@\$ would paint a perfectly good tree!?"

Well, for you that still do not know, this article is for you. The Florida National Scenic Trail along with some trail extensions (like the Ocean to Lake Trail) use orange paint marks, or "blazes" on trees, rocks, posts, bridges, and whatever else we need (without upsetting too many people) to signal hikers that they are on the trail and where to go. Blazes are the breadcrumbs that lead you to your destination.

In many cases, you will be able to see the next blaze from the previous one. This rule is not always the case so continue walking up the trail for a bit to see if you see the next one. Blazes will be seen from both directions on the trail. If you are walking for more than a couple of minutes without noticing a blaze, you may need to stop and assess if you are still on the

cont. p.2

trail. Look both ahead of you and behind you to see if you notice any blazes. Also, look to see if you are on a well beaten path or if you have gone off trail. If you feel you have gone off trail or do not see any blazes in front of you on the trail you are on, try to go back exactly the way you just came and find the last blaze you passed. Then reassess the correct direction and continue along the trail. Always make sure to bring your emergency whistle and charged phone in case you get lost!

Please know that the blazed trails can merge or crisscross with other trails, roads, etc. so you always want to be paying attention to the blazes. Other trails may have a different colored blaze. Let's take a look at what a blaze will look like and what they mean.

The picture to the left is a single blaze. You will come across single and double blazes on the trail. When following a trail, you will mostly come across single blazes. These are first letting you know that you are still on the trail. Secondly single

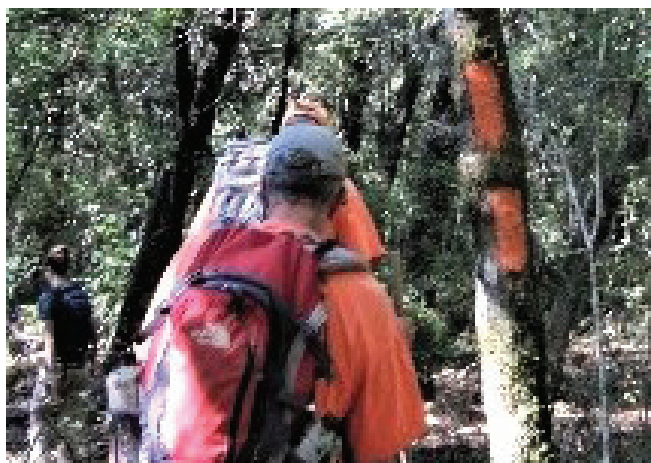
blazes will follow a general "straight" line. Whereas double blazes signal a turn. Now for the double blazes.



Double Blaze LEFT (above)

Double Blaze RIGHT (above)

As mentioned, double blazes let you know there is a more significant turn on the trail and in which direction you should turn. The turn can be just before the double blaze or just past it. This is where most people can accidentally get off trail. The top blaze of a double blaze lets you know in which direction you should turn. The left graphic above shows a Double Blaze LEFT (turn left) while the right graphic above shows a Double Blaze RIGHT (turn right).



Sometimes you come across a double blaze that looks like they are right on top of each other and you cant tell if it is a right or left. This usually means there

was simply no room on whatever they were blazing. In these cases try to find another blaze in the distance and stay on the trail.

Remember, blazes are not always on trees. They can be on a rock near the ground, posts (wood or metal), bridges, etc. The trail will be a combination of single blazes

Okeehetee Nature Center Produce Wish List

As a help to the Nature Center, we've been asked to bring a FEW items to help stretch the Nature Center budget for feeding the "critters" when we attend our monthly meetings. Spoilage is a concern; so if you want to donate, keep that in mind. A piece or two of fruit, some greens or a couple of sweet potatoes, but not all, would be greatly appreciated. Here's a list of acceptable items that the "critters" can eat and enjoy.

<u>Fruits:</u>	<u>Vegetables:</u>	<u>Greens:</u>
Apples	Carrots	Romaine
Bananas	Bell or Sweet	Kale
Grapes	peppers	Collards
Berries	Tomatoes	Swiss Chard
Mangos	Sweet potatoes	Dandelions
Melons	Green beans	No Iceberg
non-citrus fruit	Squash	Lettuce
	Cucumber	

Help Wanted-
Chapter Public Relations Chairman.
Contact Roy

Upcoming Events

As you can see by the next page, our calendar is full of activities. There are several of the old familiar ones including Bird Walks and Backpacking opportunities (including our annual Ocean to Lake Hiking Trail backpacking trip). I'd like to highlight two.

The first event is billed on our calendar as "Loxahatchee Slough". Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources, DERM, has expanded their network of access points and trails to, and in, the Loxahatchee Slough. These improvements include a new trail-head on the Beeline highway one mile NW of PGA Boulevard, a new observation tower (about 1.5 mile north of the trail-head), a new fishing pier, and trails connecting all the above to form a five-mile loop. To celebrate the opening of these new facilities DERM will be sponsoring, and FTA (Bea Rogers) will be leading, an inaugural hike on January 18. Check the calendar and our Meetup site for further details.

Lastly, we've included two non FTA hikes sponsored by the Northeast Everglades Trail Association (NETA) as part of their annual Ocean to Lake Greenways celebration. Note the two hikes on the schedule and see their website for further details and costs.

Chapter Activities for January/February

Jan.

1/1 BEA'S 25th ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S DAY HIKE -Cypress Creek NA -10035 Indiantown Road, Jupiter. Various routes 2 to 12 miles; 7:45 AM at Natural Area Parking Lot entrance (N. side of Indiantown Rd., W of Jupiter Farms Rd.) Contact: Bea Rogers 561-644-0777 Public/Moderate

1/4 JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. 2520 Lake Worth Rd, Lake Worth. Choose your pace and distance. 7:30 AM. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Moderate to Leisure.

1/5 HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. 16450 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound. Bring plenty of water for this 7 to 12 mile hike. Meet at the front gate of the park at 8:00 AM Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate-Strenuous.

1/6 MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING. Okeehelée Nature Center, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, WPB Socialize - 7:00 PM; Program - 7:30 PM. Topic: TBA Contact: Roy Moore, 561-307-7792. Public.

1/11 TRAIL MAINTENANCE. Specifics to be announced, Contact Fred Davis, 561-585-6386. Public/Moderate.

1/11-1/12 BEGINNER BACKPACKING (Introduction to Backpacking for Beginners; held in Jonathan Dickinson State Park 3 PM Sat, Jan.11 until Sun.,Jan. 12, morn.; **Registration required.** Contact: Ryan Lusk at 904-891-4479. Moderate/.Public.

1/12 BIRD WALK AT WAKODAHATCHEE. 13270 Jog Road Delray Beach. Meet at 7 AM in the parking lot. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

1/18 LOXAHATCHEE SLOUGH. Meet at 8 AM at the Loxahatchee Slough NA parking lot located on Beeline Hwy approx. 1 mile NW of the PGA Blvd. traffic signal. A 5 to 6 mile loop hike from the trailhead to the Observation Tower continuing on a portion of the OTLH then returning to the parking lot. Bring water. Contact: Bea Rogers 561-644-0777 Public/Leisure

1/18-21 CITRUS TRAIL LOOP: ADVANCED BACKPACKING EVENT. **RSVP required.** It will fill quickly. For Experienced packers on a 3 night backpacking trip. Contact Ryan: 904-891-4479 for instructions, reservations, and Q&A. Public/Moderate to Strenuous.

1/19 PONDHAWK NATURAL AREA WALK, 1501 NW Spanish River Blvd, Boca Raton, Meet at the Spanish River Library lot, the Hike starts at 7:30 AM. Contact: Alan Collins, 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.

1/25 ARTHUR MARSHALL WILDLIFE PRESERVE, W Boynton Beach on 441/SR 7. Amy will led this hike thru historic Everglades wildlife sanctuary. 9 - 12 mile hike. Call Amy Saperstein, 561-289-5551.

1/26 OKEEHEELEE PARK WALK. 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach. Paul leads a walk in this expansive park. Meet at Okeehelée Park **South**, central Parking lot. 7:30 AM. Contact:Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

Feb.

2/1 JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. 2520 Lake Worth Rd, Lake Worth. Choose your pace and distance. 7:30 AM. For additional information call Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

2/2 HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK, 16450 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound. 7 to 12 miles in JDSP. Meet at 8AM. at the front gate. Bring lots of water. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate-Strenuous.

02/3 MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING, Okeehelée Nature Center 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach. Social: 7:00 PM; Program: 7:30 PM. Topic: TBA; Contact: Roy Moore, 561-422-2189. Public.

2/8 TRAIL MAINTENANCE. Work with fellow hikers. Specifics to be announced, Contact: Fred Davis, 561-585-6386. Public/Moderate.

2/9 BIRD WALK AT WAKODAHATCHEE. 13270 Jog Road, Delray Beach, FL 33446. 7 AM. Meet in the parking lot Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423 Public/Leisure.

2/15 THRU 2/20 OCEAN TO LAKE HIKING TRAIL BACKPACKING EVENT. Annual six-day, 62-mile backpacking strenuous event for experienced backpackers only. Walk from Lake Okeechobee to the Atlantic Ocean. Limited to 25 hikers due to campsite restrictions. Contact: Fred Davis, fdavis6539@msn.com (preferred!), 561-585-6386. Public/Strenuous

2/15 OKEEHEELEE PARK WALK. Meet at Okeehelée Park S, 7500 Forest Hill Blvd., WPB. Meet at Hiking/biking Trails Parking lot. 7:30 AM. Public/Leisure. Contact: Bruce, 772-333-1837. Public/Leisure.

2/22 MAJORIE STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIKE. 3491 Flying Cow Ranch Road Wellington. 7:30 AM. For additional information call Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

2/22 Northeast Everglades Trail Association (NETA) annual Ocean to Lake Greenways event. (events for equestrians, bikers, hikers and paddlers.) **This is not a FTA event.** You must register at <https://www.evergladestrails.org/> **Fee.** Shuttles provided for the hikes. About 12 miles from Sweetbay Natural Area thru the Lox Slough to Jupiter Farms Park. Contact Scott Lunsford 561-441-1251

2/23 WINDING WATERS WALK, 6161 Haverhill Road North, West Palm Beach. This trail is located on south side of Dyer Road west of Haverhill. 7:30 AM. Contact: Alan, 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.

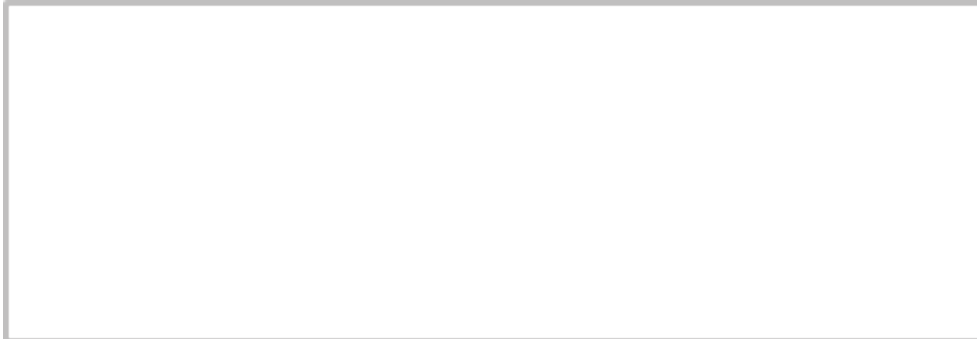
2/23 NETA event hike from Riverbend Park to JD Park Kitching Creek, about 10 miles. **Fee** includes Lunch & shuttle back to Riverbend. **This is not a FTA event.** You must register at <https://www.evergladestrails.org/> for the event. Contact: Scott Lunsford 561-441-1251

2/29 OKEEHEELEE PARK NATURE CENTER Clip And Walk, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach. meet at 7:30 AM to help keep the Okeehelée Nature trails clear. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

**Loxahatchee Chapter
Florida Trail Association
9887 Cross Pine CT
Lake Worth, FL 33467**

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



*For all FTA information: www.floridatrail.org
Chapter Web site: <http://loxfttrail.org/>*



**Coming to the monthly meeting? Don't
forget treats for the Park's critters!**