Objectives

• To provide continuing education for Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, landowners and advocates on the identification and conservation of native wildlife and plant species and the identification of invasive species.

• Participants will demonstrate at least a 30% increase in knowledge after attending W.I.S.E.

Objectives

• 50% of participants will be a part of their Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) after attending W.I.S.E.

• After attending W.I.S.E., participants will list three action items learned from the symposium to help educate the public.
Collaboration of Agencies

• UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources and Conservation
• UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants
• UF/IFAS Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
• UF/IFAS Sumter County Extension
• UF/IFAS Lake County Extension
• UF/IFAS Hernando County Extension
• UF/IFAS Range Cattle REC

Collaboration of Agencies

• McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity
• Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
• Bureau of Plant & Apiary Inspection, DPI
• Florida Forest Service
• Southwest Florida Water Management District
• Nature Coast CISMA
• Lake County CISMA

Program Activities

• Created from a needs assessment from UF/IFAS Hike Sumter events created in 2013.
• Three day event
• $35.00 Registration fee (Covers materials, booklet, snacks and lunch).
• 2 days of presentations, 1 day for field trips and tour
Program Activities – Day 1

• Invasive Plants
  Commonly Sold in Nurseries and Garden Centers
• Florida Panther
• Invasive Fish

Program Activities – Day 1

• Landscaping for Butterflies and other Pollinators
• Nature Coast CISMA update
• Florida Black Bear
Program Activities – Day 2

- European Honeybee
- Coyotes in Florida
- Invasive Pigs

Credit: Raoul Boughton

Program Activities – Day 2

- Lake County CISMA update
- Native Amphibians and Reptiles
- Invasive Amphibians

Credit: Steve Johnson

Program Activities – Day 3

- Field Trips
  - Chinsegut National Wildlife Refuge
  - Dade Battlefield
- Tour
  - Florida Bass Conservation Center
Program Activities –
Educational Booths

• Southwest Florida Water Management District
• Nature Coast CISMA
• UF/IFAS Sumter County Extension
• Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
• UF/IFAS Bookstore

Results

• 120 Attendees
• 70 responded to survey
• 86% Master Gardeners
• 21% Master Naturalists
• County Government
• Native Plant Society
• Park Volunteers

• After attending W.I.S.E., 64% stated they were going to be active in local CISMA’s (6% active prior)
• 88% stated they will use the information learned to educate clientele

Results

• 58 attendees listed three action items learned from W.I.S.E. to educate the public on invasive species.
• 61 attendees listed three action items learned from W.I.S.E. to educate the public on native wildlife and plant species.

• “Not feed wildlife, plant native plants, plant to draw pollinators”
• “Capture Cuban tree frogs and other invasives I come across. Plant more natives. Not run from black bears.”
• “Inform contacts on every level on what they can do to eliminate invasives and caution them on what they bring into Florida.”
Results

- 33% Invasive Plants
  Commonly Sold in Nurseries
  and Garden Centers
- 81% Florida Panther
- 120% Invasive Fish
- 24% Landscaping for
  Butterflies and other
  Pollinators
- 91% Florida Black Bear

Monetary Gain
$492.00
Used to Enhance other Natural Resources
Program Areas

Attitude Changes

- "Share info at plant clinics; alter my own landscaping, educate
  friends/neighbors."
- "Educate people further on invasive species, both plants and animals;
  look for ways in my job to find opportunities to use the knowledge
  learned, visit more natural areas."
- "Participate in a lionfish rodeo; Encourage my hunter friends to
  consider hunting feral pigs; Share information with newcomers to The
  Villages on the consequences of selecting invasive plants when there
  are appropriate opportunities to do so."
- "Educate people. Remove invasive species on my property and on any
  hikes I participate on. Practice what I preach."

Testimonials

- "This was the best workshop that I have attended in my 10 years as a master
  gardener. I also liked that it was affordable. Thanks for the opportunity to learn
  more about our invasives from experts."
- "Very well done with excellent speakers. Especially enjoyed presentation on
  black bears, European honeybees and native pollinators."
- "It was very well organized and the entire speakers were wonderful. It was a
  fantastic opportunity with a very reasonable fee. I would definitely attend in
  the future."
- "Great speakers! Good timing of presentations – not too long, but long
  enough to cover a lot of information; Q&A was helpful."
Conclusion

• Plans for another event in 2017. Topics suggested: Bats, native and invasive rats and mice, human and animal conflicts, whitetail deer, raptors, native and invasive turtles, invasive aquatic plants, Florida bobcat, diseases carried by wildlife, Africanized bees and the invasive feral cat.
• Plans to present to the public
• Plans to increase the number of educational booths and field trips