

# Scenic Watch



Covering  
News From  
Dec  
2017

## Happy Holidays



Photo: The Beaches of Ft. Myers and Sanibel

"Three months after Hurricane Irma, canals in the Florida Keys



Fun Festivals  
and Events

### Central

Through Jan 1  
Dali and His Bible Art  
Exhibition, Winter Park  
Through Jan 1  
Space Coast Light Fest,  
Melbourne

are still full of debris"



Photo: Katie Atkins, Miami Herald

"A photo of manatees in a Florida Keys canal surrounded by Hurricane Irma debris posted to Facebook has sparked outrage online.

The photo was posted Dec. 7 in the Facebook group 'Irma Big Pine Key' and it was later clarified the canal is in Marathon's Key by the Sea condo complex, mile marker 50.5 oceanside. As of this week, the canal is still full of debris.

**'The manatees come up through windows of the RVs in the canal. It's just sickening,'** said office manager **Angela Sanders**.

She lives in the park and 'knows it by heart,' she said, adding she believes there are 16 trailers in the canal.

'There are sheds in there, trailers and everything that was in these homes,' Sanders said. 'Their furniture, their silverware, their dishes, their shampoo, bleach, oil, propane tanks — anything you've got in your house right now, 16 of that is in the canal...'

'Last weekend, we went in and started clearing the canal ourselves but there was only so much we could do,' Sanders said.

**Through Jan 2**

A December to Remember, Daytona Beach

**Through Jan 8**

The Christmas at Bok Tower Gardens Holiday Home Tour, Lake Wales

**Jan 3-7**

Walt Disney World Marathon and Walt Disney World Half Marathon, Lake Buena Vista

**Jan 5-14**

Mecum Auction and Collector Car Show, Kissimmee

**Jan 6**

First Saturday Jam, Barberville

**Jan 6**

Annual Epiphany celebration, Tarpon Springs

**Jan 6**

Oviedo Farmers Market, Oviedo

**Jan 6, 13, 20, 27**

Winter Music Series at the Lakeridge Winery and Vineyards, Clermont

**Jan 6-7**

Dade's Battle Re-enactment & Trade Fair, Bushnell

**Jan 6-7**

Sunshine City Antiques and Collectibles Show, Venice

**Jan 6-7**

Coquina Beach Winterfest Arts and Crafts Show, Bradenton Beach

**Jan 7**

Elvis Ultimate Birthday Bash, Clearwater

**Jan 11-20**

Tampa Bay Black Heritage Festival, Tampa

**Jan 12-14**

Gem, Jewelry and Bead Show, Sarasota

**Jan 13**

Celebrity Auto Festival, Tampa

**Jan 13**

As for the manatees, a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation representative could not say how many have been affected by the debris or whether there have been any deaths directly caused by it...

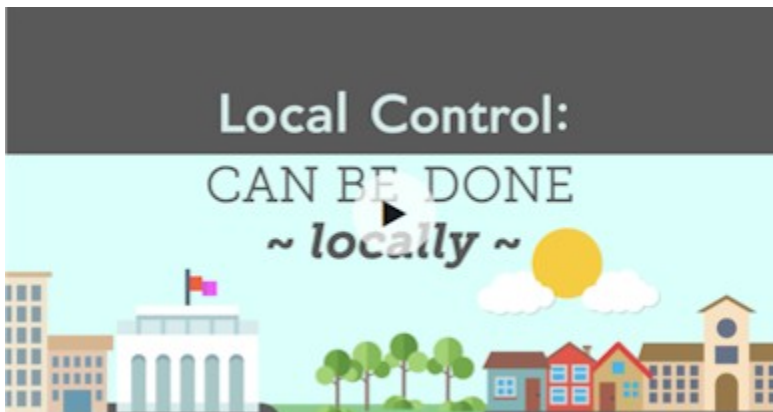
It could be January, four months post hurricane, before cleanup of canals begins. Each municipality has to work out a memorandum of understanding with the state Department of Environmental Protection and the FWC, said county public information officer Cammy Clark.

At Tuesday's City Council meeting, City Planner George Garrett said canal cleanup in Marathon will probably start Jan. 1... "

-- Katie Atkins, Miami Herald

[Read entire article here](#)

## Educational Video on Local Control



Gasparilla Ball, Tampa  
Jan 13  
Dirt Day 2-Four Seasons of Family Fun 2018 Series, Lakeland  
Jan 13-14  
Central Florida Scottish Highland Games, Winter Springs  
Jan 13-14  
Sunshine Music Festival, St Petersburg  
Jan 13-14  
Sarasota Winter Fine Arts Festival, Sarasota  
Jan 13-15  
Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks Art and Craft Festival, Tarpon Springs  
Jan 17-20  
Florida Flywheelers 31st Annual Antique Engine & Tractor "Swamp Meet"  
Jan 18-20  
World Quilt Florida, Orlando  
Jan 18-21  
Yeehaw Music Festival, Yeehaw Junction  
Jan 18-21  
Fellsmere Frog Leg Festival, Fellsmere  
Jan 20-21  
Brooksville Raid Re-enactment, Brooksville  
Jan 20-21  
Sarasota Seafood & Music Festival, Sarasota  
Jan 20-28  
Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities, Orlando/Eatonville  
Jan 24-29  
Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, Titusville  
Jan 25-28  
Community Fair, Winter Haven  
Jan 26-28  
Images, a Festival of the Arts, New Smyrna Beach  
Jan 27  
Gasparilla pirate parade and street festival, Tampa

Photo: Keep it Local Florida

-- Keep it Local Florida

[View video and other materials on the KeepItLocalFlorida.org website](http://KeepItLocalFlorida.org)

## Legal: "Jax City Council defends tree canopy against 'sledgehammer' government in Tallahassee"



Photo: Steve Bisson

"The Jacksonville City Council approved legislation this week that opposes a state bill (HB 521/SB 574) that would cut the heart out of the city's tree canopy protections.

The state bill, filed by Republican Greg Steube in the Senate and Democrat Katie Edwards in the House, would prohibit cities such as Jacksonville from stopping landowners from removing trees located on their own private property.

The Jacksonville City Council bill (2017-822) contends that the legislation is 'harmful to the environment and contrary to the overwhelming wishes of Jacksonville citizens,' and the bills are an 'assault on home rule.'

**Jan 27**

Rollin' On The River  
Casino Night, Palmetto

**Jan 27**

Kumquat Festival, Dade  
City

**Jan 27-28**

Blue Spring Manatee  
Festival, Orange City

## South

**Jan 4-14**

Uncorked Key Largo and  
Islamorada Food and Wine  
Festival, Key Largo

**Jan 6-7**

Las Olas Art Fair, Fort  
Lauderdale

**Jan 6-7**

Downtown Naples New  
Year's Art Fair, Naples

**Jan 6-7, 13-14**

Medieval Faire, Fort Myers

**Jan 7-8**

Bi-Annual Estero Fine Arts  
Show, Estero

**Jan 11**

Hamlet presented by  
Shakespeare Miami, Miami

**Jan 12-14**

Art Deco Weekend, Miami  
Beach

**Jan 12-14**

BayGrass Bluegrass  
Festival, Islamorada

**Jan 12-28**

South Florida Fair, West  
Palm Beach

**Jan 13-14**

Florida Keys Seafood  
Festival, Key West

**Jan 13-14**

Boca Fest, Boca Raton

**Jan 13-14**

Broward Shell Show,  
Pompano Beach

**Jan 13-14**

Historic House Tours, Key  
West

**Jan 13-14**

Florida's Creative Coast  
Weekend, Pine Island

**Jan 13-14**

Cape Coral Festival of the



The city passed a referendum in 2000 to protect the city's tree canopy, with an overwhelming majority (76 percent) voting for the measure.

**'The bill does what Tallahassee does best; preempt local government,' per John Crescimbeni, who introduced the Council bill, a salvo against Tallahassee's 'sledgehammer government.'**

"I don't know what happens to them when they get into the hall of government over there," Crescimbeni said, "but they forget where they came from."

The bill was moved as an emergency with multiple sponsors. The entire Council agreed to sponsor the bill, which passed unanimously. [Here is a copy](#) of the resolution.

--A.G. Gancarski, The Florida Times-Union

[Read entire article here](#)

## Invasive Species: "Space Invaders"



Photo: David Moynahan in Florida Fish and Wildlife

Arts, Cape Coral  
Jan 13-14, Feb10-11,  
March 3-4  
Bonita Springs National  
Art Festival, Bonita  
Springs  
Jan 13-14  
21st Annual Sullivan  
Street Craft Festival,  
Punta Gorda  
Jan 15-20  
Key West Race Week  
2017, Key West  
Jan 14  
Key West Half Marathon,  
Key West  
Jan 16-17  
Big Pine Key Nautical  
Market, Big Pine & the  
Lower Keys  
Jan 17  
Art Palm Beach 2018,  
West Palm Beach  
Jan 19-21  
International Chocolate  
Festival, Coral Gables  
Jan 20  
Project HELP's 21st Annual  
Chocolate Extravaganza,  
Naples  
Jan 20-21  
Downtown Delray Beach  
Festival of the Arts,  
Delray Beach  
Jan 27  
Port Salerno Seafood  
Festival, Port Salerno  
Jan 27-28  
Key West Craft Show, Key  
West  
Jan 27-28  
ClamJam of Southwest  
Florida Seafood & Music  
Festival, Cape Coral  
Jan 28  
Florida Challenge Half-  
Marathon and 5K Trail  
Runs, Lithia  
Jan 28  
Mariners Hospital  
Bougainvillea Ball,  
Islamorada

## North

## Conservation Commission bulletin

"Recently, I was at a local bar shooting aliens. They just kept coming, rows and rows of them, dropping bombs while I tried to pick them off with one puny laser after another. I had a good run for a while, until the speed at which they descended upon me increased to the point where I no longer stood a chance. My defenses were destroyed. My fingers were tired. Those aliens bombed me into obliteration...

I realized that this 1980s throwback serves as a perfect analogy for the real war we wage on invasive species here in Florida every day. Invasive species are not native and are causing, or are thought to have the potential to cause, harm to native ecosystems. Like the rows of aliens in Space Invaders, invasive plants and animals seem to just keep coming no matter how many we eliminate. And, like the token-slurping arcade game, the fight against invasive species will cost a great deal of time and resources if we ever hope to win.

Invasive species closely follow habitat loss as a leading cause of extinction. They cost huge amounts of money to control. In some cases, they are downright dangerous. To put it simply, they're bad news. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) aggressively targets invasive species as part of its overall management of wildlife habitat in Florida. This is especially true in South Florida, a region appropriate to describe as the front line in the war on invasive species here in the Eastern United States.

J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA) occupies 60,478 acres in Palm Beach County, Florida. Invasive species seem to creep in from all directions there, resulting in an uphill battle in the larger war. Carrie Black, the lead area biologist for J.W. Corbett WMA who oversees its management, took some time with me to explain why and how this battle gets fought.

Through Jan 31  
Nights of Lights Festival  
and Celebration, St  
Augustine  
Jan 6  
Guided Exploration Hike,  
Ponte Vedra Beach  
Jan 10  
Mardi Gras Kick-Off  
Celebration, Pensacola  
Jan 12-13  
Apalachicola Oyster Cook  
Off, Apalachicola  
Jan 13  
Pensacola Beach 1/2  
Marathon, 5K and 10K  
Run, Pensacola Beach  
Jan 13  
Tour de Felasco,  
Gainesville  
Jan 13-14  
Florida Manatee Festival,  
Crystal River  
Jan 19-28  
Annual Amelia Island  
Restaurant Week, Amelia  
Island  
Jan 27  
Shakespeare Uncorked,  
Tallahassee  
Jan 27 -28  
Hoggetowne Medieval  
Faire, Gainesville

[For many more events and details please visit the Orlando Times Travel Calendar here](#)



'The problem with invasives is that they're exploiting resources that native species require for their survival because no natural enemies exist to keep the number of invasives in check,' Carrie told me over the phone. 'If there's some disturbance in the environment, [invasive] plants are well-adapted to come in and take over. Open spaces are very important for our native plants and animals, and Florida is a fire-adapted ecosystem. Typically, the pine flatwoods, which is one of the most common communities in Florida, would burn every two to three years. That creates a very open environment. When these exotics come in, they create dense [stands], they don't behave the same way that native plants do to fire, and they really take up valuable habitat, places that other animals would use either for housing or, in some cases, for food.'

A question that came to mind early in the conversation was how it was possible to make even a dent on 60,000-plus acres of invaded land. The answer is two-fold: have your own invasive species biologist and hire contractors to cover as much ground as possible. At J.W. Corbett WMA, the two work in tandem to ensure that the issue is, quite literally, nipped in the bud...

Would you like to play a role in invasive plant management? Check our list of events to find an invasive species workday near you. Each of you can help FWC better understand the distribution of invasive species by downloading the FWC Reporter App, participating in Florida Nature Trackers and/or by downloading the I'veGot1 app. To see the benefits of invasive species management, visit a WMA near you. See you out there!"

-- Peter Kleinhenz, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission bulletin issue #16 2017

[Read entire article](#)

## Addressing derelict boats will take

## more resources in Palmetto, police chief says



Photo: Tiffany Tompkins

"On one side of the Green Bridge in Palmetto sits the Regatta Pointe Marina, where the liveaboard lifestyle is growing and flourishing. Boat owners take care of their vessels, pay their fees and enjoy their 'homes' on the water.

On the other side of the bridge, and many other waterways across the state, it's a different story.

Federal maritime law allows any boater, with any boat, to anchor in navigable water and stay as long as they want. It's a scenario that all too often leaves non-functioning vessels in place to the point they become derelict, a community eyesore and potentially an environmental hazard.

In August, Palmetto updated its property ordinance to include language in a law passed by the Florida Legislature in 2016 that gives local law enforcement agencies more authority to deal with the statewide nuisance of derelict boats. The law allows law enforcement to take action on boats 'at risk' of becoming derelict.

Derelict and abandoned boats tend to draw what are essentially squatters, and the law doesn't solve the overall issues regarding the difficulties of



dealing with irresponsible boat owners. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Officer Randy Bibler was quoted in the Tampa Bay Times, saying, 'Much of the public doesn't understand how the process has to be handled.'

It's essentially an eviction process where certified letters must be sent out and responded to, and tracking down the owners who have long since abandoned a vessel, even if it was registered, can be a daunting process. Agencies can't tow boats off the water without making every effort to find the owner, Bibler said.

**Hurricane Irma and an overactive storm season in Florida made things worse. FWC and the Department of Environmental Protection have been bogged down in trying to find and remove damaged or missing vessels and ensure those boats have not created an environmental hazard...**

'We continue to work on marine enforcement and right now we are working on agreements with the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Manatee County Sheriff's Office to use their boats,' Tyler said. 'The problem with availability is that Irma caused a lot of derelict boats those agencies are busy chasing around.'

Vice Mayor Brian Williams said it's not getting any better: 'When you have a boat tying up to a sunken boat, that's an issue. That group is still an issue and hopefully we can accomplish some change on our waterfront.'

Tyler said the changes in the statute were a good start and the subsequent amendments to the city's ordinance give him the chance to improve the situation...'

-- Mark Young, Bradenton Herald

[Read entire article](#)



Citizens for a Scenic Florida  
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