

Happy Hoofers Hoopla

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www.hoofers.floridatrail.org

1-877-HIKE-FLA

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Newsletter of the Happy Hoofers
Chapter of the Florida Trail
Association

Zion National Park, Part of a 42 Day Summer 2014 Trip

By Kathy Bonvouloir

On July 23 we arrived at Zion National Park and the sign at the gate said that the campground was full. We decided to go up to the campgrounds and speak with the host. They said there were a couple spots open. We have learnt that you need to check with the hosts always. We were camping for 2 nights which is \$16 total with the Senior National Park Pass.

After setting up camp we decided to go and hike the Narrows. We went to the Visitors Center to catch the park shuttle. This park has shuttle buses to take you anywhere in park. This is an amazing hike up and in the Virgin River which is in a narrow canyon, hence the name Narrows. This is a moderate hike in the river. It is very cool walking in the river. It was 105 degrees out. We hiked for about 2 ½ hours.

The town is right outside the gate so we walked into town to get some supplies. Had a nice dinner at camp and then early to bed.

On July 24 we got up at 5 AM to catch the shuttle to Angels Landing. Angels Landing is a strenuous hike up a mountain ridge. There are points in this hike where there is 3 feet of path and nothing on either side of you but thousand foot drops.

The hike has 3 sections; the first section is easy walking with a slight incline. The second section became more strenuous with a lot of switchbacks and a steeper incline which gets the heart rate up. The last section was the toughest. It had very narrow steep inclines, rocks,



roots and ridges. There are chains on part of this section to help you, but not in all places. You also have people coming in the opposite direction passing you. I must say I was a little scared; no, a lot scared but I kept going. Rene was moving up at a pretty good pace, I was crawling at times.

After many times thinking we had reached the top (false summits) we finally did. When you reach the top
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it is well worth it, the views are amazing, with a 360 degree view. You are at 1,520 feet above the valley floor.

The hike down was a little less intimidating, but I was still slow and nervous. I was very proud of us when we completed this hike, 5 miles round trip. a once in a lifetime hike!

The next hike we took was to the Emerald pools, 3 different pools, 3 different locations, 3 different views. This was a nice hike, but in comparison to our first hike it paled.

That afternoon we went into town for

lunch at the Pioneer Lodge, very good. We also did laundry right across from the restaurant. The remainder of the afternoon we sat in the Virgin River to keep cool. Again, it was too hot for lighting a camp fire; that's 3 nights.

On July 25 we woke up to a doe and 2 fawns eating beside the tent. We left Zion at 7:40 AM and drove out the east entrance. The road out of the park has a tunnel a mile long and is very narrow. If you are driving an RV you need to purchase a \$10 ticket to use the tunnel, reason being is they have to stop traffic in the opposite direction so you can go through. We spotted a herd of big horn sheep just after leaving the park. Next stop: the Grand Canyon.

Apoxee Trail at Grassy Waters: October 19, 2014

By Barb Johnston

“In every walk in nature, one receives far more than he seeks.” John Muir

This was certainly a hike filled with beautiful views and plenty of wildlife if you looked closely. But this article is not going to be about that. Yes, Mike pointed out some wild orchids, but I can't remember the names. Esther showed us some berries but now I've forgotten if they were poisonous. We saw a yellow snake, which I think was a rat snake, as it slid off the boardwalk and into the water as we approached. We saw some beautiful, wet grassy plains, and much, much more. But as you can tell, I'm not the expert on any of the native plants or animals. There are many others who could explain what we saw and why it belonged right there on that trail.

So, no, you won't be learning anything of the flora and fauna of the area from me. What I want to speak about here is not the nature, but the ambiance of the experience.

I arose earlier than I like to on a mild Sunday morning to make the trek up to the park. I packed my backpack, a little unsure if I had everything I needed, even though this was only going to be a morning, five-mile hike. While I've hiked with the FTA Happy Hoofers many times in the *Continued on Page 5*

Chair's Corner

January 2015

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope you enjoyed your holidays with family, friends, or quietly in your favorite place. (wouldn't that be nice?!)

The New Year is upon us and there are an abundance of activities scheduled for most all types of experience level. Whether you are looking for day hikes, back pack trips, kayak trips, or mountain biking, we've got a trip for YOU! Don't forget to join us on our Fern Forest work days, that's how we "pay" to use the facilities for our meetings. Check our Facebook page under "files" and the full season of trips is posted there. Our website has our activities as well.

We just completed our first weekend of day hikes covering our section of trail from MM63 to John Stretch Park. The group had a fun weekend, got some exercise, a few sore feet, told great stories around the campfire, and got to know each other a little bit better. A big thank you to our shuttle drivers, we couldn't have done it without your help! Everyone has three weeks to recover, then it will be time for part 2 of 3 to continue hiking our section. See the activities list to find details and contact the leaders if you are interested in joining the group for a day, or for all four remaining days.

See you out there

Lynn Thompson

Chair Happy Hoofers

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Upcoming Hikes, Meetings and Other Events, 2015

1/10/15
Fern Forest Work Day
9-12 AM

For more information: Roland Burrows 954-731-8271

1/11/15
Day hike to Gator Hook

For more information: Esther Muram 954 658-8386 ltailusa@gmail.com, Kathy Bonvouloir 954-234-5657 threebons@aol.com,

1/17-1/19/15
3 day backpack Fisheating Creek WMA

For more information: David Denham 305-667-8643 ddenham@consultant.com, Dick Ward 954-523-8897 wrdick@aol.com

1/17-1/18/15
Beginner Backpack and/or day hike to Carpenter Camp

For more information: Constance Mier 954-292-5883 cmier@barry.edu , Janet Leasher 954-261-5836 janetleasher@hotmail.com, Kay Ferrara 954-609-4727 kayferrara@bellsouth.net

1/24-1/25/15
Day Hike FNST from Seminole Indian Reservation, L-3 and L-2 Levees/Deer Fence Rd.

For more information: Kay Ferrara 954-609-4727 kayferrara@bellsouth.net, Mike Thompson 954-850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net

1/30-2/1/15
Savannas Preserve State Park Ladies overnight car camping

For more information: Mary Halferty 954-522-3265 mhalferty@outlook.com, Lori Dillon 561-483-7735 ljdillon@bellsouth.net

2/7-2/8/15
Day Hike Levee sections of FNST south of Lake Okeechobee, car camp at South Bay Campground

For more information: Mike Thompson 954-850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net, Dick Ward 954-523-8897 wrdick@aol.com

2/12/15
7:30PM, Fern Forest Nature Center
Chapter Meeting
201 Lyons Rd. South, Coconut Creek, FL 33063

For more information: Lynn Thompson 954 850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net

**2/14/15
Fern Forest Work Day
9-12 AM**

For more information: Roland Burrows 954-731-8271

**2/15/15
Mountain Bike in Bear Island/Pink Jeep tract of Big Cypress NP**

For more information: David Denham 305-667-8643 ddenham@consultant.com, Janet Leasher 954-261-5836 janetleasher@hotmail.com

**2/20-2/23/15
4 Days Cross Big Cypress Preserve Backpacking**

For more information: David Denham 305-667-8643 ddenham@consultant.com, Larry Alesi 561-445-9251 larrya1049@yahoo.com

**2/28-3/1/15
Crab Fest-Base camp Monument Lake with hike in Fakahatchee, paddle Halfway Creek 3/1**

For more information: Lynn & Mike Thompson 954 850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net

**3/7-3/8/15
Day hike and/or backpack Lake Wales Ridge/Lake Arbuckle**

For more information: Kay Ferrara 954-609-4727 kayferrara@bellsouth.net, Esther Muram 954 658-8386 ltailusa@gmail.com

**3/12/15
7:30PM, Fern Forest Nature Center
Chapter Meeting
201 Lyons Rd. South, Coconut Creek, FL 33063**

For more information: Lynn Thompson 954 850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net

**3/14/15
Fern Forest Work Day
9-12 AM**

For more information: Roland Burrows 954-731-8271

**3/15/15
Day hike MM63 Big Cypress Preserve**

For more information: Lynn Thompson 954 850-3668 ma12thom@bellsouth.net, Tom McDaniel 954-646-2803 gthomasmcDaniel@bellsouth.net

**Visit the Happy Hoofers activities page for further updates at:
<http://hoofers.floridatrail.org/activites.htm>**

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past few years, before that day I had never given a thought to what was needed. But now it was my turn to figure it out.

We all met, 15 of us, at the head of the trail and quickly fell into a friendly groove ready to take on the day. Kathleen Bonvouloir was taking the lead as it was her first time at the helm. She took some friendly ribbing, but did a fine job. Lynn Thompson was the sweeper keeping us all in line.

We strolled through the dry parts of the trail and the occasional boardwalks, and slogged through the parts of the trail that were still underwater. Everyone watched to make sure all got through safely and we all waited for those who needed a little extra time.

Basically, it was your typical hike. But what struck me was the kindness and sense of camaraderie among us. Nobody cared if you were a novice hiker or an expert. We all chatted along the trail and got to know each other. There's such a sense of peace when walking in the outdoors and sharing your experience with others. We were a community of hikers and we all had that in common.

Hiking that morning was a great way to start the day; it set the tone for the rest of my weekend and left me calm and content. But mostly, hiking with this group is about being with people who are eager to share their hiking experiences and happy to have you along on the journey.

For those of you getting this newsletter, but having a hard time making it out to the hikes, this is for you. Try to put aside the myriad of other things that need to be done on the weekend, and make an effort to come along. You'll be sharing an

experience with a group of friendly people who will make you feel welcome and enhance your day. Not only will you be rewarded with the feeling that comes only from being out with Mother Nature, but you'll also leave with a sense of satisfaction from spending time with like-minded people who are happy to see you and glad to have you there.

And what could be better than that?

2014 South Regional Conference

By Lynn Thompson

The Happy Hoofers were well represented with about 19 of the Happy Hoofers in attendance at the South Regional Conference November 7-9, 2014 at Corbett Wildlife Management Area. There were many informative presentations, exercises with compass to find cached treasures, python wrangling, and more. If you haven't visited the Happy Hooper Facebook page, take a look at all the videos of our members handling and bagging pythons! Those of you that didn't go missed a great opportunity to learn new things, meet new people, and socialize with old and new friends of the Florida Trail.

I would like to thank David Denham, Kay Ferrara, Dick Ward, Leah Harmon, Bill Allison, Dave Dyrek, Dave Robinson, Mary Halferty, Nellie Real, Tom McDaniel, Tropical Trekkers Chapter, Loxahatchee Chapter, Paul Cummings, and countless other who contributed donations to the Wuz-Nu for items to raffle. If I missed your name, please forgive me, my memory worsens each passing day.

I'd like to thank Kathy Bonvouloir, Barbara Tschimpke, Mary Halferty, Kay Ferrara, Esther Muram, Polly

Zaldivar, Tom McDaniels, Mike Thompson, and David Denham for helping with the Wuz-Nu tables. Through ticket sales, we took in about \$440 and many people went home with "new" gear to enjoy on their future camping/hiking experiences.

Why We Hike

By Laura Levene

First 2 days of BC (Big Cypress) to BO (Big "O") Hike

After being bit up by mosquitoes and sweating the first eleven miles in unseasonal heat, I asked Esther: "Why do we hike??" She smiled and shrugged her shoulders.

After barely completing a scorching second day - another twelve miles - I thought about the questions some more...

Camaraderie is a big component. I'll never forget how Mike and Patrick helped me along the last leg. Plagued by blisters (Lynn sent us her First Aid Kit) and dwindling energy, they transformed my water bottle into a blue electrolyte cocktail by adding a magic powder.

We took an extra break in some welcome shade. I collapsed on my pack. We sat three in a row and said: "_____ " (Nothing) - a rich and poignant silence.

It's invigorating and challenging to set a goal and attempt or accomplish it...and also, inspiring to maintain a practice of walking and staying in shape for the next challenge...

Esprit de corp is also gratifying: to be part of a wider circle - the group dynamic when we become more powerful and elevated as a whole.

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Experience is a wonderful teacher. I come home and reflect, take notes, and then go shopping and reorganize and get ready for next time...Discomfort is a great teacher- be prepared, or at least, keep trying...

I really enjoyed hiking parts of the Trail within the Happy Hooper jurisdiction that I'd never seen - getting an image of how it all comes together.

I'd passed by the Ah-Tha-Tiki Museum, and finally had an opportunity to visit. I have a Guy La Bree print of the "Waterlilly Lovers" and even wrote a song about it. Guy grew up near the Dania Reservation and was an artist who super-realistically depicted Seminole life. The tribal flags were at half mast because he'd had just passed away on New Year's Day. His "Waterlilly Lover" print adorns the cover of a book about his work.

The scenery is familiar and soothing. The older I get - the better it looks: the vast vistas take us away from the crowding and kitsch.

Driving out of the city and clearing my head always gets the creative juices flowing.

Come hike, camp, learn and enjoy!

Thank you, Happy Hoofers!

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Our Facebook group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/login.php?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F67137159048%2F>

