

Tigertales



President's Message

Debbie Roddy

The FOT Board hopes all of you, our members, enjoyed the summer of 2008.

Although it was a relatively quiet summer on Marco Island, Friends of Tigertail was busily working behind the scenes.

As you know, Tigertail Beach is part of the Great Florida Birding Trail and fiddler crabs are a vital part of the food chain for the birds and crown conchs. We continued to work with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, Collier County and the City of Marco Island on the issue of people removing thousands of fiddler crabs.

The taking of fiddler crabs has been going on for many years so resolving this is going to take time. During one of our walks at Tigertail, my husband and I were dismayed to see the significant depletion of the fiddler crab population in selected areas. We need to be patient about a resolution and remember the saying "good things take time."

We held two nature walks during the summer. One was for students from Poinciana Elementary School and the other for a FOT member's adult children and grandchildren who were in town for summer vacation.

Our July 12th Beach Cleanup was successful in spite of the fact it was cut short due to rain. More information about the cleanup is at the bottom of this page.

The FOT Program Committee has identified several interesting topics for the '09 season programs. Topics range from the Everglades to non-native species invading the area. Based on the range of topics being reviewed, our 2009 programs are shaping up to be both interesting and informative. The FOT Board hopes to see you at all of these programs.

Looking forward to seeing you at Tigertail!

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Mark your calendar for the next Friends of Tigertail Beach Cleanup - Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup - on Saturday, Sept. 20th from 8 a.m.—12 p.m. Call Susan early at 239-394-1470 to get a free T-shirt. Bottled water, garbage bags and work gloves will be provided.

Go to: www.friendsoftigertail.com for the latest news and information about Friends of Tigertail.

July 12th Beach Cleanup by Susan LaGrotta, FOT Board Member & Beach Cleanup (Stewardship) Chair

The day started out warm and muggy! Despite the threatening cloud cover, we had nine volunteers who collected six bags of trash. Two of the bags were for trash collected from the parking lot. Items collected include fireworks, plastic bottles, beer cans, cigarette and cigar butts, cigarette boxes, plastic baggies, clothes and shoes.

Sunshine Booksellers has a Friends of Tigertail book display!

This display is a result of numerous requests from customers who have attended nature walks at Tigertail. The owners, Stuart and Theresa Unsworth, approached FOT for a list of recommended books to meet the demand. The next time you are in the store to buy a book or ship a package, check out the Friends of Tigertail book display for more information about the plants and wildlife in our area.

Nature Walk for Poinciana Elementary School Elementary School Students

On the morning of May 12th, Susan Purvis, a FOT Board member, volunteered as a guide for 25-30 first graders and their ten chaperones. Both the kids and adults enjoyed the field trip to learn about the wildlife and plants that live at Tigertail Beach. (Pictures courtesy of Debbie Roddy)



Susan Purvis, in the white hat and green shirt, leading the students to the lagoon for an educational day at the beach.



Kids and parents alike learning about Tigertail's unique ecosystem during exploration of the lagoon floor.

Nature Walk for the Birkeland Family

Roy and Pat Birkeland, FOT members, requested a nature walk for their adult children and grandchildren while they were visiting. We arranged for Susan and Ken Kubat, FOT Board members, to lead the event on June 19th. In response to FOT's efforts, we received this very kind e-mail:

Debbie,

On behalf of my brothers and sister-in-law, I want to thank you very much for arranging the tour of Tigertail. The weather was ideal (dry and with a cloud cover), and the visit was a hit with all of us!

My six nieces and nephews (ages 7 through 18) especially enjoyed it. After finding several horseshoe crab molts on the beach earlier in the week, Susan and Ken gave them the opportunity to hold the live animal and learn how and why the crab molts. We all saw some spectacular birds feeding, learned about the native plants, and how the land mass was formed. I, personally, was totally in my element, having spent a combined 15 years as a volunteer at both the New York and New England Aquariums.

The enthusiasm that Susan and Ken have for Tigertail is infectious, and we enjoyed hearing their talks and spending time with them. All of my future visits to Marco Island will include a visit to Tigertail ... I always knew that a place like it MUST exist on the island. Thank you for the introduction!

Regards,

Teresa Birkeland