



# Tigertales

## President's Message

Debbie Roddy

The Board of Directors wishes you and your family a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season!

On Saturday, Dec. 8th, we will be hosting our quarterly beach cleanup from 8 a.m. until noon. Volunteers will meet at the kiosk. FOT will provide bottled water, garbage bags and work gloves. Call Susan at 239-394-1470 to register.

**Here is our schedule of events for 2013 and all of them will be held at Tigertail Beach.**

**January 12th, Breakfast & Birds — Identifying Birds:** Learn to identify our wintering shorebirds and waders. Meet at 9 a.m. at the picnic tables at the Tigertail Beach kiosk. Bring your own coffee, donuts, etc., and meet fellow birders. Birding will begin at 9:30 a.m. Bring binoculars. Wading shoes are recommended. Birding ID cards will be available for sale. Free admission and free parking with a Collier County Beach Parking Sticker. No reservations are necessary. Call Susan at 239-642-7740 with questions.

**March 2nd, Annual Meeting:** At 9:30 a.m., FOT's 2013-2014 Board of Directors will be introduced.

**March 2nd, Discover Tigertail:** Naturalists will introduce you to the unique jewel called Tigertail Beach from 10 a.m.—noon. Browse, at your

own pace, through the information stations about:

- Butterflies
- Creatures of the Lagoon
- Egg Casings
- Fish
- Loggerhead Sea Turtles
- Manatees
- Osprey Family
- Plants
- Shells
- Tigertail's Living Beach: What Is This?

Free admission and free parking with a Collier County Beach Parking Sticker. No reservations are necessary. Call Susan at 239-642-7740 with questions.

In this issue, you'll find an alert on membership renewals (see side bar), an update on the new boardwalks, a report on the Nov. 2nd Breakfast & Birds—Northern Nesters, the 2013 Beach Cleanup schedule, a follow-up on our Sept. 15th International Coastal Cleanup, more changes at Sand Dollar, results of this year's bird nesting and hatching season, facts about fiddler crabs and welcome to our newest members.

Looking forward to seeing you at Tigertail!

### Board of Directors 2012-2013

Debbie Roddy — President  
Susan Kubat — Vice President  
Susan Purvis — Secretary  
Ken Kubat — Treasurer  
Linda Colombo— Hospitality & Butterfly Garden Chairs  
Fran Huxley — Bulletin Boards & Special Events Chairs  
Susan LaGrotta — Stewardship Chair  
Marty Roddy — Membership Chair

### Alert: Membership Renewals are due Feb. 1, 2013

Households with memberships due in 2013 should have received a bright green renewal post card by now. If the postcard has been misplaced, you can renew by printing out a membership application from our website [http://www.friendsoftigertail.com/FOT\\_Home\\_files/Friends%20of%20Tigertail%20Membership%20Application.pdf](http://www.friendsoftigertail.com/FOT_Home_files/Friends%20of%20Tigertail%20Membership%20Application.pdf) and mailing it along with your payment. Please provide your current e-mail address so you can receive FOT's correspondence in a timely manner.

Go to: [www.friendsoftigertail.com](http://www.friendsoftigertail.com) for the latest information and news about our upcoming events.

### Update on New Boardwalks

After many months of delays due to supply shortages and a labor strike, we are happy to report there is progress! Construction on replacing the current boardwalks and building a new one, at the south end of the parking lot, started again in the fall. The Collier County Project Manager now estimates this project will be completed in January.

### Breakfast & Birds: Northern Nesters by Susan Kubat, Vice President

Friends of Tigertail (FOT) held its first “Breakfast & Birds” program of the 2012-2013 season on the morning of Saturday, Nov. 3rd, a “welcome back to our northern nesting shorebirds.” This free program was held at Tigertail Beach and began at 9 a.m. People arrived with breakfast in hand, water shoes on feet and binoculars hanging around necks. Over forty people were welcomed by FOT board members along with a great blue heron looking down at the crowd from the top of a tall tree.

The program guides were Fran Huxley and Susan Kubat. Before going out to the beach to bird watch, Fran explained that last season FOT hosted a January program focused on identification of wintering shorebirds and waders followed by a March program focused on breeding plumage changes. This latest program’s focus was on migrating shorebirds which nest in the north and return to their winter home on Tigertail Beach. Susan explained that our shorebirds leave here in April and travel north to their nesting areas along the coasts, the prairies in the northern United States, and the bogs and Arctic tundra regions in Canada.

Delaware Bay and the Copper River delta in Alaska are vital stopover spots for millions of shorebirds which rest and refuel on the millions of horseshoe crab eggs and tiny clams before they continue on their journey to the Arctic. The birds migrate and nest in the north to take advantage of emerging insects, an abundant food source. Spring migration tends to be more rushed to take advantage of the short season during which they will pair up, lay their eggs in shallow nests scraped on the ground, and raise the next generation of birds. The return trip in the fall often is more leisurely.

Susan and Fran told the crowd they expected to see ten different species of northern nesting shorebirds; black bellied, piping and semi-palmated plovers, willets, dunlins, dowitchers, western and least sandpipers, sanderlings, and ruddy turnstones. In addition to these ten, seeing red knots and yellowlegs would be a treat, but not expected. Many red knots travel nearly 20,000 miles round trip annually between the tip of South America and the Arctic. Some stop over at Tigertail on their journey south.

On the beach, Fran pointed out the special characteristics and Susan described behaviors to help participants identify the shorebirds. The group saw all ten of the expected birds. In addition, they were treated to the rare sightings of one red knot and six killdeer. In all, twenty-five different species were seen by participants on a clear beautiful day at Tigertail Beach.



Breakfast & Birds participants observing an unexpected sight ...  
(Photo by Marty Roddy)



A rare Red Knot  
(Photo by Marty Roddy)

### 2013 Beach Cleanup Schedule

Susan LaGrotta, FOT Board Member & Stewardship Chair, has scheduled our beach cleanups for the new year.

April 13: 23rd Annual Bay Days—Keep Collier Beautiful—Earth Day Beach Cleanup

July 13: Quarterly Beach Cleanup

Sept. 21: 28th Annual Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup

Dec. 7: Quarterly Beach Cleanup

### Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup by Susan LaGrotta, Stewardship Chair

On September 15th, Friends of Tigertail sponsored the 27th Annual Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup.

Keep Collier Beautiful provided garbage bags, data cards, work gloves and T-shirts. Kinetico Water Systems donated bottled water for FOT’s volunteers.

A record number of ninety-five (95) volunteers registered, including members of Friends of Tigertail, Marco Island residents, visitors, seasonal residents, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts Troops #467 and #234 (along with their parents and leaders) and 23 employees representing Walgreen’s stores from Naples to Ft. Myers. Everyone met at the kiosk to get supplies to clean up the beach, boardwalks, parking lots, pathways, picnic area, playground, butterfly garden and the lagoon.

Volunteers collected over fifty (50) bags of debris. The most unusual items were six (6) tires, a plank of artificial wood from a dock or boardwalk and the carcass of a batfish. As usual, the number one item collected was cigarette butts. The remaining debris included aluminum cans, plastic cups, glass bottles, beach toys, plastic bags, candy wrappers, plastic straws, cup lids, used diapers and feminine hygiene products.



Volunteers lined up to register for the beach cleanup. (Photo by Marty Roddy)



Cub Scout Troop #467 volunteers in International Coastal Cleanup t-Shirts. (Photo by Marty Roddy)

Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup by Susan LaGrotta, Stewardship Chair — Continued



Volunteers from Walgreen’s in their International Coastal Cleanup t-shirts. (Photo by Marty Roddy)



Some of the results from our volunteers’ efforts. (Photo by Marty Roddy)

**Sand Dollar Continues to Change**

In the last newsletter, we announced a second smaller breach had formed on Sand Dollar in early June of this year. Then Tropical Storm Debby came through in mid-June and made this breach larger, approximately three hundred feet wide.

Looking at the aerial photo below (taken July 2, 2012 at low tide), you can see the second breach. Start in the upper left corner where the mangroves stop and follow the coastline to the small patch of mangroves (to the right of center). The dark area in the middle of the sand is water. During October this area filled in except for the section now called the “Third Breach”, where the Gulf of Mexico has now broken through and flows into the lagoon.



Third Breach—October 2012  
The Gulf has now broken through and flows into the lagoon.

Second Breach—June 2012  
This area is now filled in except for the section now called the “Third Breach”.

Original Breach — July 2011

Photo courtesy of Hideaway Board of Directors and Humiston & Moore Engineers

## Sand Dollar Continues to Change — Continued



Mangroves have shallow roots and are vital to keeping sand in place. Unfortunately on Sand Dollar, these mangroves are dead or dying because they are being pushed over by the wind and Gulf of Mexico. (Photo taken by Marty Roddy — Oct. 2012)



A view of the "Third Breach."  
(Photo taken by Marty Roddy — Oct. 2012)

### Results from the 2012 Shorebird Nesting & Hatching Season

This year's nesting and hatching season was a challenging one for Least Terns, Wilson Plovers and Black Skimmers. The posted nesting area near the South Seas Condominiums was washed over twice during crucial times in the season — when nesting began and just before eggs were about to hatch. Black Skimmers were also impacted by erosion. Portions of Sand Dollar have lost so much sand that these areas are washed over daily by high tides. As a result, nests of Wilson Plovers were inundated.

Shorebirds also had to struggle with unnecessary human impacts — dogs allowed to run loose on Sand Dollar, despite the "No Dogs Allowed" signs and people, along with their pets, flushing the birds. Dogs are not allowed on any of Collier County's beaches, with the exception of service dogs.

However, there are two bright spots in this dismal year. Tropical Storm Debby removed some overgrown vegetation on Sand Dollar that is detrimental to Wilson Plovers nesting. Snowy Plovers were spotted on our beaches for the first time in years, even though no nesting was observed.

### Interesting Facts about Fiddler Crabs

- Fiddler crabs are full-time residents at Tigertail Beach.
- Although they are small in size, they are a vital part of Tigertail Beach's food chain for birds and crown conchs.
- Male fiddler crabs are more conspicuous than their female counterparts. The males have one oversized claw. The right claw is typically the larger one.
- When male fiddler crabs eat, they cross their small claws under the oversized claws so it appears they are fiddling.
- Male fiddler crabs wave their large claws to attract females during courtship and as defense against other males.
- If or when male fiddler crabs lose their oversized claws, the remaining smaller claws will grow to become replacements. The missing claws will be replaced in time with smaller claws.
- Fiddler crabs dig burrows about one foot deep in the sand close to the water's edge.
- They run to their burrows when alarmed and when the tide comes in. As the tide comes in, they plug the borrow openings with sand or mud to keep out the water.
- Fiddler crabs maintain their burrows by straining clumps of sand through their specialized mouthparts to maintain their diet of algae and decomposed matter. After digestion, they leave behind sand pellets.
- Fiddler crabs mate during the summer months about every two weeks.
- It is illegal to collect fiddler crabs at any Collier County park, including Tigertail Beach. According to Chapter 18-23.007 (2a) State Buffer Preserves Prohibited Activities include:
  - (2) Hunting, harassing, possessing or trapping wildlife.
  - (3) Use of animal trapping or concealment devices.
  - (6) Transplantation or removal of any plant or animal, or parts of plants or animals (living or dead)."



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**  
 Jane & Glenn Blong  
 Cynthia Corogin  
 Susan Miller

**Membership**

Friends of Tigertail is always looking for new members. If you know of anyone interested in joining, here is a Membership Application to pass along. Thanks in advance for helping to get the word out about our organization and our efforts to preserve, protect and educate!



**Friends of Tigertail Membership Application**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate address for seasonal members:

From: (date) \_\_\_\_\_ To: (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership and annual dues (tax deductible):

\_\_ 1 Year (\$20.00)    \_\_ 3 Years (\$50.00)

\_\_ Total number in family or household

\_\_ New            \_\_ Renewal

Please remit this form with your check  
(payable to Friends of Tigertail) to:

Friends of Tigertail Beach, Inc.  
P.O. Box 722, Marco Island, FL 34146



***HAPPY HOLIDAYS!***