

Marine Resources Council to celebrate International Mangrove Day with 'Mangroves Matter,' event July 20

By Steve Sharkey
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 Marine Resources Council

PALM BAY — The Marine Resources Council will celebrate International Mangrove Day by hosting "Mangroves Matter," a free event from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 20, at the MRC's Ted Moorhead Lagoon House Learning Center at 3275 Dixie Highway NE.

The international day for the conservation of the mangrove ecosystem — an official UNESCO observance — was initiated by Ecuador and officially established in 2015.

MRC's Science, Education, and Mangrove Teams will answer mangrove and lagoon questions. The event will feature a menu from Coastal Crab Co., live local musicians, along with a mangrove donation and planting drive.

This celebration is designed to help raise awareness and funds to restore the Indian River Lagoon. Educational presentations will include a rain-barrel workshop, mangrove propagule collection contest, artisan rain-

barrel auction, silent auction, prizes, and more.

To RSVP to attend the event, call (321) 725-7775 or visit MangroveDay.eventbrite.com. Attendees are encouraged to preorder food, merchandise, and VIP passes at time of registration.

The MRC is seeking event volunteers, sponsors, vendors, and auction donations.

To get involved, visit SaveTheIRL.org/whats-new/international-mangrove-day-celebration/ or email Steve at SharkeyMRC@gmail.com. The Facebook event page is www.facebook.com/events/384898715453470/.

The event will include:

- Mangrove Donation Drive. For every \$20 raised MRC will plant one mangrove into the IRL estuary. To contribute, register at MangroveDay.eventbrite.com.

- Rain Barrel Workshop (9:30 a.m.) Free to attend. The fee is \$55 to build a 55-gallon rain barrel at the workshop to take home.

The City of Melbourne is offering a \$50 rain barrel rebate for its residents at www.MelbourneFlorida.org/departments/public-works-utilities/environmental-community-outreach/rain-barrel-rebate. Attendees will

learn the benefits of saving water and how to construct a rain barrel. One barrel can prevent more than 50,000 gallons of polluted stormwater from entering the IRL.

- MRC Mangrove Talk (10:30 a.m.) Learn the importance of mangroves in the IRL and the regulations in place to protect them. This is great for lagoon residents to learn how to manage their mangroves and restore their shorelines.

- Mangrove Propagule Collection Contest! Propagules are starting to fall and wash up on our beaches and lagoon shorelines. The attendee that brings the most live mangrove seeds and propagules to the event will win a 55-gallon rain barrel and an event T-shirt. (Propagules must be turned in by 10:30 a.m. the day of the event. The winner will be announced at 1 p.m.)

- Mangrove Potting/Planting Workshop (11 a.m.) Come get your hands dirty with mangroves! (Adopt a Mangrove and join the MRC Mangrove Team. You can register to learn how to grow mangroves at your home, for MRC's future shoreline restoration projects.)

- Coastal Crab Co. Menu: (food service 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.)

- Live Local Music (11:30 a.m.–2 p.m.)

- Education Presentation TBA (12:30 p.m.)

- Local Vendors, Art and Gift Booths

- Limited edition event T-shirt. Shirts are only available on a preorder basis (the cost is \$20 and must be ordered by July 14). Proceeds go to MRC's effort to Save the IRL.

Established in 1983, the MRC of East Florida Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to improve water quality and to protect and restore the fish and wildlife resources of the IRL, coastal waters, inshore reefs, and the watershed by advocating and using sound science, education, and the involvement of the public at large. MRC is a donor and grant-based funded organization.

For more information on the organization, visit SaveTheIRL.org.

WFIT launches weekly 'Lagoon Minute' program, station partnering with Indian River Lagoon Coalition

Florida Tech's WFIT 89.5 FM and the Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition have teamed up to produce "Lagoon Minute," a weekly radio segment designed to highlight the value of the unique estuary and the challenges it faces.

A new Lagoon Minute will air on Thursdays at 7:48 a.m. and 5:48 p.m., during National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" and "All Things Considered," respectively. The segment can also be found at www.WFIT.org/programs/lagoon-minute.

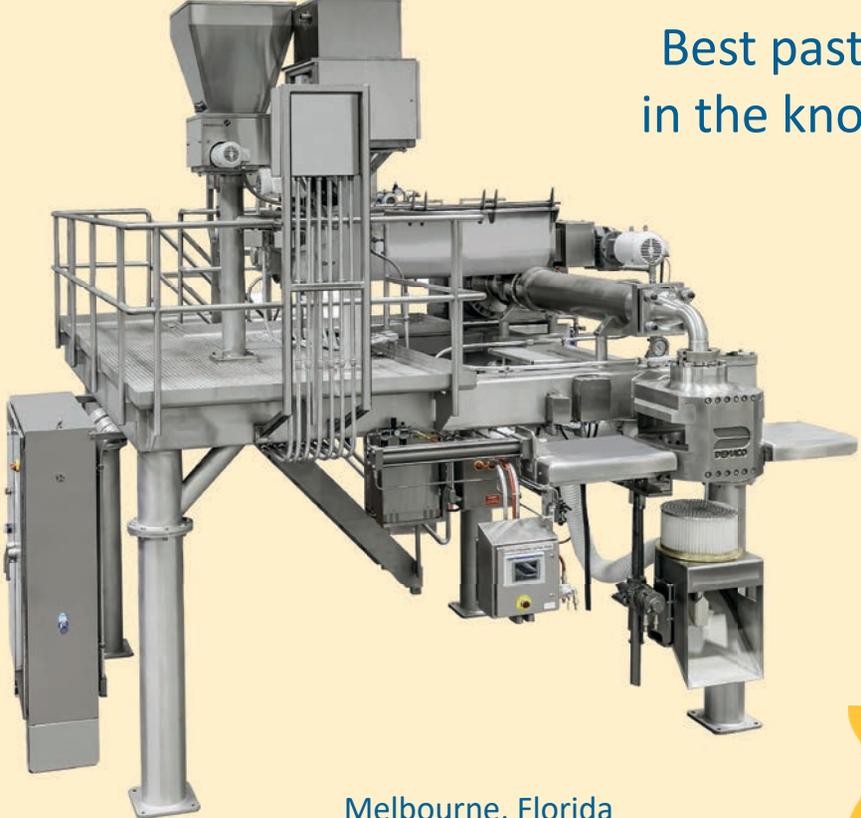
Lagoon Minute is hosted by MJ Waters, chair of the Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition.

The Indian River Lagoon is one of the most biologically diverse estuaries in the Northern Hemisphere. It touches five state parks, four federal wildlife refuges and a national seashore.

Estimates show that the Indian River Lagoon's economic impact is \$7.6 billion a year, but the health of the lagoon is in peril. Learn more at HelptheLagoon.org.

Scientists and engineers at Florida Tech and the university's Indian River Lagoon Research Institute are working to both pinpoint causes of the lagoon's problems and help find real solutions to bring the majestic natural and economic resource back to health.

See what Florida Tech is doing at www.FIT.edu/Indian-River-Lagoon.



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