



# FootNotes \*



\* Newsletter of the Highlanders Chapter,  
Florida Trail Association  
January – February 2016  
Volume 17, Issue 1

## Mission of the Florida Trail Association

The Florida Trail Association develops, maintains, protects and promotes a network of hiking trails throughout the state, including the unique Florida National Scenic Trail. Together with our partners we provide opportunities for the public to hike, engage in outdoor recreation, participate in environmental education and contribute to meaningful volunteer work.

## Highlanders Nature Notes

Most of you have seen the very large spiders hanging from the underside of their slightly inclined orb-webs in our heavily shaded hardwood or palm forests. One of the most common is the Golden Silk Spider or Golden Silk Orbweaver (*Nephila clavipes*). It is also called “banana spider” by many locals because of its long, cylindrical abdomen that can be a yellowish-orange or greenish-gold in color. As with most orb-weaving spiders the larger ones are the females. The males are often so small by comparison as to be hardly noticeable. I don’t recall seeing very many males lurking at the edge of the female’s large web, but the female can’t be missed. This is one of the very biggest spiders in Central FL and their webs are also large enough to be easily seen if you’re paying attention.

In addition to its size, the web silk has a golden tint to it (rather than the white color of most other spider webs) that makes it stand out, especially when hit by sunlight. This silk is said to be very strong and has even been studied by the U.S. Department of Defense in an effort to duplicate it with man-made materials (so far, unsuccessfully). I have even read that Pacific Islanders have gathered this silk and used it to make net pouches in which to carry things by attaching them to their hip belts.

This spider is harmless to us, though you might be understandably intimidated by its size if you have a fear of spiders. As is true of all spiders, it does us a great service by catching and eating many insects. Some of these insects are formidable, biting, blood-sucking pests (think Horseflies and Deerflies). So before you knock down her web, consider which is worse: being bitten by a large Horsefly or walking *around* the web that blocks your path?

Another tiny spider associated with the Golden Silk Spider is the ‘parasitic thief’ (*Argyrodes nephila*). This spider will not be easy to find as it hangs out on the frame and barrier web strands of the web of its host spider. It is way too tiny to serve as a food consideration for spiders as large as the Golden Silk Spider (and a few other similarly-sized spiders it chooses as hosts). Its most distinguishing characteristic is its pointy, dome-shaped and chrome-silver colored abdomen. It waits patiently for a tinier insect like a mosquito, which its large host would hardly be interested in, to get caught in the web. Then it sneaks out carefully onto the web to eat it. If it does its job well, the larger spider will never even notice it. It also sometimes steals a tiny portion of larger insects caught after the host spider has eaten its fill and leaves the wrapped prey unattended.

So next time you come across a Golden Silk Spider's web, look at it carefully, and see what details you notice. If you approach her slowly and don't make any sudden moves as you observe her, the spider might remain still and let you get a good look at her. Who knows, you might even learn something about this fascinating creature. –Mike Barnett

Sources:

Howell, W. Mike and Ronald L. Jenkins. *Spiders of the Eastern United States*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2004.

Marshall, Sam and G.B. Edwards. *Florida's Fabulous Spiders*. Tampa: World Publications, 2001.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Position	Description	Contact
Development Officer	Oversee the chapter's fund-raising efforts.	Howard Pospel
Facebook Coordinator	Create and maintain a chapter Facebook site.	Howard Pospel
Videographer	Videotape chapter activities for broadcasting on VNN, The Villages television channel. Should be a member from the Villages.	Bob Schultz

## Notes from the Chair – A New Development and an Old Problem

When Carmen and I transferred from the Big Cypress Chapter of the FTA to the Highlanders Chapter in 2005 there were only three Highlanders from The Villages so far as I remember: Bob Schultz and Will and Frances Bell. John Grob joined the chapter the next year.

In 2005 almost all Highlanders hailed from Lake County or from parts of Sumter County that lie outside of The Villages. How that has changed! Today 88 of our 194 members reside in The Villages (compared with about 100 from Lake County) and 51 of those 88 Villagers joined the FTA this year! The chapter is stronger today than it has been because of the involvement of the Villagers. Their impact is particularly evident on our work hikes but Villagers have been volunteering in other capacities as well. Let's hope that in the future more and more Villagers join the chapter and take up our cause. It would also be good to add more members who are not Villagers. (It is well known among us that John Grob has been instrumental in the surge of members from the Villages so I won't go into details about his work.)

The Villagers have strengthened our chapter in several ways but there is one problem that they have not

been able to help us solve, and that is the problem of a graying membership. The large majority of our members are retirees. This is true of the state organization but true in spades of our chapter. In some ways a graying membership is a strength since retirees have more time to devote to philanthropic activities. They are also accustomed to volunteering and are willing to pitch in, and it is my biased belief that on average older folks are more dependable than younger folks.

At the same time it would be great to have some younger members including multigenerational families in our group. Younger people have more energy and endurance when it comes to trail maintenance. And speaking nationally if we don't interest the younger generation in woods walking where will tomorrow's hikers come from? One reason this is serious is that hikers are an important part of the conservation movement. And it would be healthier for the young people if they would holster their cell phones and I-pads and walk into the forest with us.

How can we Highlanders do a better job of reaching out to younger folks? I'm a member of the Nantahala Hiking Club (a dues-paying member only I'm sorry to say), which is one of the ATC member organi-

zations. The NHC maintains 59 miles of the Appalachian Trail (about the same amount of trail that we maintain in FL) as it winds from the Georgia border to Wesser, a few miles south of Smoky Mountains N P. The NHC maintains a close working relationship with the public schools in Macon County, NC. Every year club members give talks about hiking to elementary school children and they take entire classes on overnight hikes. Some of these children will so love their hiking experiences that they will continue the activity in adulthood. And some of them will join the NHC and support the mission of that organization. I wish our chapter and our state organization could establish similar programs.

Another similar idea is to partner with local Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs. Mike Barnett is on the right track with his Tavares Family Nature Club, which will be the subject of our February program.

Maybe in the future we Highlanders will develop a systematic program of outreach to younger folks. I hope so.

*–Howard Pospesel*

## Highlanders Activities for January and February 2016

### **Saturday, January 9, 2016**

**Half Moon Wildlife Management Area. 7-8 mile hike: 9:00 AM.** This hike will take us through pine woods with panoramic views of prairie, oak hammocks and swamps to Mill Creek Bridge. Bathrooms are at the check station 2 miles in from the trailhead. This is an out and back hike. Bring water, snacks, lunch, and bug spray.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take SR 44 west out of Wildwood for 7.5 miles . You will see a brown sign for Half Moon WMA. Turn right onto CR 247 and go 1.5 miles to a grassy parking lot and kiosk on your left. For more information contact Jon Leavers, 352-360-1717 or jonleavers@yahoo.com **28.872361, -82.220123**

### **Saturday, January 16, 2016**

**Trail Maintenance Workhike, Ocala National Forest, Paisley Area: Meet before 9:00 AM** in the parking lot at Clearwater Lake, off Hwy 42. Please be on time as we will be shuttling to another area to work. If you have further questions call or email bobbiszoo@yahoo.com 787-8654 Bring hat, gloves, sunscreen, bug repellent, lunch, and lots of water. **Please let us know if you are attending so that we can plan tools and mowers. 28.974889, -81.549956**

**Thursday, January 21, 2016, Highlanders Board Meeting:** Host for January Board meeting, Howard Pospesel. Highlander Chapter members are welcome. Please give the host one day's notice by emailing hikeft@embarqmail.com **Details will be supplied.**

### **Friday, January 22, 2016**

**Florida Greenway Land Bridge Trailhead: Meet at 9:00 AM.** Twelve mile hike. This out and back hike will take us from the land bridge trailhead west through ancient oak hammocks over I-75 on the land bridge toward SR 484. This is a rugged hike with lots of ups and downs left over from piles of fill during the canal diggings. Bathrooms at the land bridge trailhead. Bring snacks, lunch, bug spray, and plenty of water.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take 75 north from Wildwood to exit 341. Exit and take a right on SR 484 to the light immediately ahead. Make a left on 475 and go north 2 miles. Make a left into the land bridge trailhead and follow the curving road to the right. Park by the bathrooms. For more information contact Jon Leavers, 352-360-1717 or jonleavers@yahoo.com **29.059735 -82.154948**

**Saturday, January 23, 2016, Annual Chili Party at Trimble Park: 11 AM or before.** Bring your canoe/kayak, hiking shoes, bicycle or just sit and visit for Chili Party. You might want to bring your own lawn chair. Trimble Park is located in the Tangerine Area off Hwy 441, south of Mt. Dora. The park is between Lake Beauclair and Lake Carlton. We will be in Pavilion #1 which is near the wooden docks. Highlanders Chapter. No Pets. Contact Mary Ellen & Bill Milton to make your reservations & decide what to bring, 352-357-3723 or MEM32735@aol.com **28.769171 -81.656442**

**Thursday, January 28, 2016, Highlanders Chapter Monthly Meeting: 6:00 PM.** Leesburg Public Library, 100 E Main Street. Use the entrance on Main Street. Meeting room just inside the entrance to the library. The program to be presented by Scott Spalding, the Ranger from Lake Louisa State Park. Park Bring a snack to share and your aluminum cans to recycle. Questions? 352-787-8654 or email Bobbi Keenan bobbiszoo@yahoo.com **28.811093 -81.874858**

**Saturday, February 6, 2016, Trail Maintenance Workhike, Ocala National Forest, FR 30 to Hwy. 40, Participation LIMITED by the need for 4X4 Transport: Meet before 9:00 AM** in the parking lot on the West side of Hwy 19 that is 2 1/2 miles North of the turn off to Alexander Springs (Hwy 445). Please be on time as we will be shuttling to another area to work. If you have further questions call or email bobbiszoo@yahoo.com 787-8654 Bring hat, gloves, sunscreen, bug repellent, lunch, and lots of water. **Please let us know if you are attending so that we can plan tools and mowers. 29.073833 -81.629374**

**Saturday, February 13, 2016, Hike Emerald Island Conservation Area: 9:00 AM.** Hike 7.5 miles. This hike is mostly on limestone roads with little shade until a half mile section along Haynes Creek. The marshes are usually alive with bird life. No bathrooms. Bring water, snacks, lunch, and bug spray. DIRECTIONS: From Leesburg, take SR44 east. After you cross the bridge at Haynes Creek, take the first left onto Emerald Ave and go .8 miles to the stop sign. Turn left and go .6 miles to the parking area on the left. For more information contact Jon Leavers, 352-360-1717 or jonleavers@yahoo.com **28.886748 -81.790763**

**Sunday, February 14, 2016, 22nd Annual Sweetheart Bike Ride - Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge: 9:00 AM.** Take a 7 mile bike ride around Black Point Wildlife Loop and see lots of beautiful birds, gators. Otters, and wildflowers. Mary Acken will bring her spotting scope for bird watching. Lunch afterwards at Dixie Crossroads. Meet at the Cruishank Trailhead parking on the Black Point Loop Road. Contact leaders for more information. Co-Leader - Mary Acken - 407 496 3903 - chess@maryacken.com Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352 669 2898 - cell 352 552 0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**Thursday, February 18, 2016, Highlanders Board Meeting:** Host for February Board meeting, Mary Ring. Highlander Chapter members are welcome. Please give the host one day's notice by emailing momring@yahoo.com **Details will be supplied.**

**Friday, February 19, 2016, Hike the Florida Greenway Land Bridge: 9:00 AM.** Meet at the trailhead & hike 14 miles. This long hike starts at the land bridge trailhead and goes east to Santos trailhead and back. Bathrooms at both ends. This out and back hike is mostly flat and shady through oak hammocks and pine forest. Bring, bug spray, snacks, drinks, and lunch. DIRECTIONS: Take I-75 north to exit 341 and go right onto SR484. make a left at the very next light onto 475A and go 2 miles. Make a left into the trailhead entrance and curve around to your right to parking and bathrooms. For more information contact Jon Leavers, 352-360-1717 or jonleavers@yahoo.com **29.059735 -82.154948**

**Saturday, February 20, 2016 Recreational Hike Seminole State Forest: 9:00 AM.** Four mile or 7.5 mile options, meet at Brantley Branch Road, N. Entrance to Seminole State Forest in Cassia, this will be a shuttle, some of you will need to be prepared to drive on dusty forest roads. If you have further questions call or email

bobbiszoo@yahoo.com 787-8654 Bring hat, gloves, sunscreen, bug repellent, lunch, and lots of water.  
**28.890749 -81.461616 No Pets Please.**

**Thursday, February 25, 2016**

**Highlanders Chapter Monthly Meeting: 6:00 PM.** Leesburg Public Library, 100 E Main Street. Use the entrance on Main Street. Meeting room just inside the entrance to the library. The program to be presented by Mike Barnett about the Tavares Family Nature Club. Bring a snack to share and your aluminum cans to recycle. Questions? 352-787-8654 or email Bobbi Keenan bobbiszoo@yahoo.com  
**28.811093 -81.874858**

<b>2016 WINTER WEDNESDAY "WALK IN THE PARK" SERIES"</b>
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*The 23rd Annual Winter Wednesday Hike Series will explore the varied and interesting trails in our Central Florida County Parks, State Parks, and Recreation Areas each week in January, February, and March. The hikes will start at 9:00 AM and consist of a 7-8 mile loop with shorter distance options. There will be breaks during the hike and we will have lunch on the trail. It is a great experience being out in the woods and hiking with a group, so join this group if you can for one or all of the winter walks.*

**January 6, 2016**

**1st Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Seminole County's Black Bear Wilderness: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the trailhead parking area at 5298 Michigan Ave. West of Sanford for a 7 mile hike with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**January 13, 2016**

**2nd Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Orange County's Kelly Park/ Rock Springs: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at Kelly Park located at 400 E Kelly Park Road in Apopka. Sign-in at the parking area near the springs for a 7 mile hike with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**January 20, 2016**

**3rd Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Ocala National Forest / Clearwater Lake Rec Area: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the hiker parking area just outside the campground entrance on CR 42 west of Paisley for an 8 mile hike with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352 669 2898 - cell 352 552 0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**January 27, 2016**

**4th Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Withlacoochee State Forest / Silver Lake Recreation Area: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the Recreation Area on the Croom Rital Road. Go beyond the entrance station to the boat ramp / day use area parking for an 8 mile hike with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**February 3, 2016**

**5th Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Orange County's Moss Park / Split Oak Forest: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the Moss Park campground. The 8 mile hike begins at the Split Oak trailhead parking area next to campsite 7. There will be shorter hike options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - lourayfl@mac.com

**February 10, 2016**

**6th Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Blue Springs State Park: 9:00 AM.**

The park is located on French Ave. in Orange City. Meet at the last parking area near the Thursby House for an 8 mile hike with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - [lourayfl@mac.com](mailto:lourayfl@mac.com)

**February 17, 2016**

**7th Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Seminole County's Chuluota Wilderness: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the Chuluota Wilderness trailhead parking at 3895 Curryville Road Chuluota. The hike will be 8 miles with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - [lourayfl@mac.com](mailto:lourayfl@mac.com)

**February 24, 2016**

**8th Winter Wednesday Walk in the Park - Bulow Creek/ Plantation State Parks: 9:00 AM.**

Meet at the Bulow Plantation Ruins Historical State Park north of Ormond Beach. Continue past the entrance station to the parking area at the Sugar Mill Ruins. The hike will be 8.5 miles with shorter options. Contact leaders for more information. Rachael & Lou Augspurg, 352-669-2898 - cell 352-552-0626 - [lourayfl@mac.com](mailto:lourayfl@mac.com).

**Note:** The Hikes Series will continue each Wednesday in March

Camping is available nearby for most of the hikes. Anyone interested in camping the night before, contact leaders. [lourayfl@mac.com](mailto:lourayfl@mac.com)

## Hiking at Flat Island Preserve and Ridge Manor



*Dec. 2 hike at Flat Island Preserve. Naturalist Lavon Silvernell led one of three groups. Photo by Judy Leavers.*



*Dec. 9 hike at Ridge Manor. (From left) Cathy, Ron, Nancy, Judy, Jane, Steve, Nora, Dee & Bob pose under the resurrection fern. Photo by Jon Leavers.*

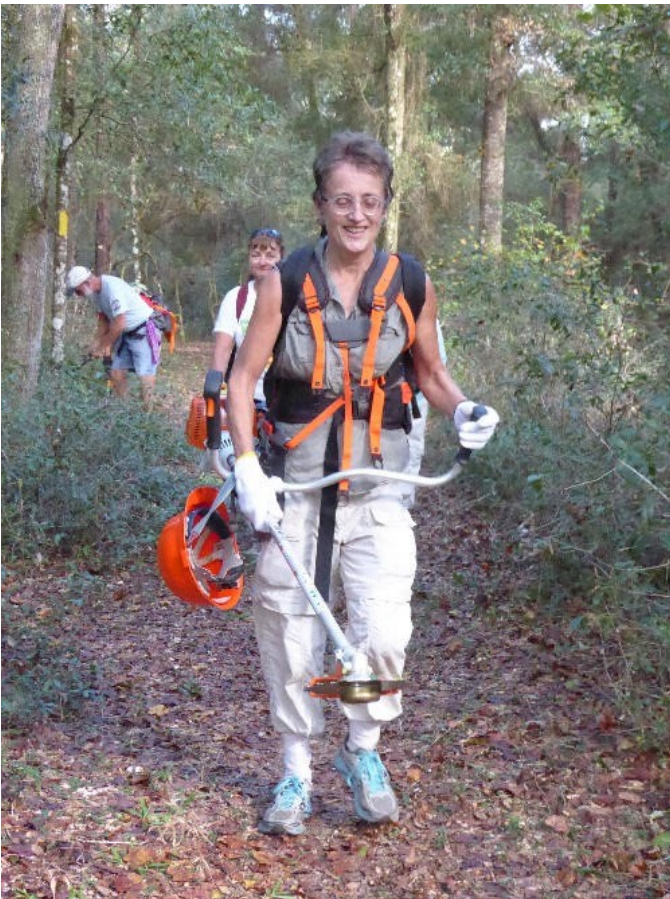
**December 16<sup>th</sup> Work Hike at Hog Island (Photos by Judy Leavers)**



*New field mower arrives in our newly acquired utility trailer.*



*New sign on the back of the trailer.*



*Bernice breaks in the new brush cutter.*



*Steve pilots the new field mower.*



*Bernice's famous lunch buffet.*



*Bill, Ginger & Bernice enjoy lunch beside the Withlacoochee River after the work is done.*

### Chapter Officers and Committee Chairs

Chapter Chair, Howard Pospesel, [pospesel@embarqmail.com](mailto:pospesel@embarqmail.com) or 352-589-2543  
 Vice Chair, Eugene Bouley, [etbouley@embarqmail.com](mailto:etbouley@embarqmail.com) or 352-314-9335  
 Secretary, Mary Ring, [momring@yahoo.com](mailto:momring@yahoo.com) or 352-250-1426  
 Treasurer, Diane Roesch, [cattail3638@gmail.com](mailto:cattail3638@gmail.com) or 407-469-3638  
 Trail Coordinator, Francis Keenan, [fkeenan@embarqmail.com](mailto:fkeenan@embarqmail.com) or 352-787-8654  
 Activity Chairs, Mary Ellen Milton, [mem32735@aol.com](mailto:mem32735@aol.com) or 352-357-3723 &  
     Bobbi Keenan, [bobbiszoo@yahoo.com](mailto:bobbiszoo@yahoo.com) or 352-787-8654  
 Membership Chair, Mary Ellen Milton, [mem32735@aol.com](mailto:mem32735@aol.com) or 352-357-3723  
 Chapter Coordinator, Bobbi Keenan, [bobbiszoo@yahoo.com](mailto:bobbiszoo@yahoo.com) or 352-787-8654  
 Outreach Coordinator, Kathy Lamb, [kalamb1950@gmail.com](mailto:kalamb1950@gmail.com) or 352-383-1950  
 Newsletter Editor and Meetup Coordinator, Wade Williston, [wwillist01@gmail.com](mailto:wwillist01@gmail.com) or 407-584-7431  
 Program Chair, Ginger Leach, [gingerleach@hotmail.com](mailto:gingerleach@hotmail.com) or 352-728-6438  
 Chapter Council Representatives, John Grob, [johndgrob@gmail.com](mailto:johndgrob@gmail.com) or 352-750-0341 &  
     Lia Bostick, [liabostick@gmail.com](mailto:liabostick@gmail.com) or 352-288-0392  
 Webmasters, Bobbi & Francis Keenan, [bobbiszoo@yahoo.com](mailto:bobbiszoo@yahoo.com), [fkeenan@embarqmail.com](mailto:fkeenan@embarqmail.com) or  
     352-787-8654  
 Chapter Photographers, Judy Leavers, [jvleavers@yahoo.com](mailto:jvleavers@yahoo.com) or 352-360-1717 &  
     Diane Dammiller, [Dammiller@aol.com](mailto:Dammiller@aol.com) or 407-832-1214  
 Grant Writer, Dee Bender, [deebender829@gmail.com](mailto:deebender829@gmail.com) or 352-460-7085  
 Quartermaster and Archivist/Historian, Christine Pena, [pena2081@comcast.net](mailto:pena2081@comcast.net) or 908-499-2215  
 Media PR Coordinator, Glenda Moore, [gmaemoore@yahoo.com](mailto:gmaemoore@yahoo.com) or 352-324-2570  
 Recycling Coordinator, Bill Leach, [wwleach@hotmail.com](mailto:wwleach@hotmail.com) or 352-728-6438



## Trailmasters and Activity Leaders

Trailmasters: Arlene Beal and Mary Ellen Milton, Dee Bender and Kathy Lamb, Gene Bouley, Stuart Force and Karen Harrington, Francis Keenan, Bill Leach, Jon and Judy Leavers, Gene Molnar, Steve Nemeth, Rollin Patrick and Diane Roesch, Howard Pospesel, Mary Ring and Jane Williams, and Bruce Zollner

Activity Leaders: Mike Barnett, Arlene Beal, Gene Bouley, Diane Dammiller, Ken Dammiller, John Grob, Bobbi Keenan, Francis Keenan, Jon Leavers, Bill Milton, Mary Ellen Milton, Steve Nemeth, Howard Pospesel, Bob Sippey, Suzanne Sippey, and Bruce Zollner

## Links

Florida Trail Association:	<a href="http://www.floridatrail.org">http://www.floridatrail.org</a>
Highlanders Chapter, FTA	<a href="http://www.highlanders.floridatrail.org">http://www.highlanders.floridatrail.org</a>
Meetup for	
Highlanders Chapter:	<a href="http://www.meetup.com/Florida-Trail-Association-Central-Florida-Chapter">http://www.meetup.com/Florida-Trail-Association-Central-Florida-Chapter</a>
Highlanders Photos:	<a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/highlandersfta/albums">https://www.flickr.com/photos/highlandersfta/albums</a>