

# Volunteer Bulletin Board

## Great American *New!* Secchi Dip-in

The eighth annual Great American Secchi Dip-In took place from June 30th to July 15th as part of a continuing effort to produce a snapshot of water clarity (i.e., Secchi depth) across North America. Volunteers have contributed more than 17,000 data points on more than 5,000 waterbodies around the world.

Active LAKEWATCH samplers should have received an invitation to participate. However, everyone will receive a summary of results.

To view the results online or to learn more about it, go to:

<http://dipin.kent.edu>



## Big Catch Certificate

Have you caught a big bass lately? To commemorate your outstanding catch, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will send you a full color certificate illustrating the fish species and the particulars (length, weight, etc.) To encourage catch and release, the FWC only requires that you measure the fish's total length, witnessed by one other person, before releasing the fish to receive a special catch-and-release seal on your certificate. With 33 fish species that qualify and three award levels, what are you waiting for?

Applications can be found at many bait and tackle dealers and online at:

<http://floridaconservation.org/fishing/bigcatch/bigcatch.html>

**LAKEWATCH Web Address:**

<http://lakewatch.ifas.ufl.edu>

*Same great web site,  
but now at a new location.*

## Collection Center Changes

**For a complete update of collection centers in your area, call the LAKEWATCH office at:**

**1- 800-LAKEWATCH**  
(1-800-525-3928)

**Grayton Beach Collection Center** has been moved to the Sheriff substation on Hwy 331. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please note that they are only providing freezer space. They are not equipped to answer questions about water monitoring and are not familiar with the supplies needed. (Please call the LAKEWATCH office with any questions.)  
Address: 25221 US Hwy 331 S  
Phone: (850) 267-2700

## New Santa Rosa County Collection Center

Located in Navarre on Hwy 98 at the County Extension Office is open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm. It is staffed only on Tuesdays. However you can drop off samples and pick up supplies at any time during the hours listed.

6051 Old Baghdad Hwy Rm 116  
Milton FL 32583  
Phone: (850) 932-9047

## Salute!

Lindsay Sisco, the industrious young lady featured in our last newsletter placed second at the Florida State Science and Engineering Fair. Her project was based on data collected in cooperation with Florida LAKEWATCH. Congratulations, Lindsay and keep up the excellent work!

## Snake in the Grass?

Regardless of how you feel about snakes, it's important to know that not



all snakes found in Florida are venomous – even those found near water. In fact, poisonous snakes are usually in the minority.

So, where can one go if he or she needs to know for sure?

One of the more popular field guides to snakes is the National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians (ISBN: 0394508246). This comprehensive book contains detailed descriptions and photographs of the creatures, making identification easier and more accurate. It's also handy for identifying lizards, salamanders, frogs, etc.

On the web, the best site for identification of snakes in our state is the University of Florida's **Online Guide to the Snakes of Florida**. The site offers several ways to identify snakes by their habitats, color patterns, and a guide to getting along with snakes in the wild. It's user friendly with plenty of illustrations and additional web links. Check it out.

<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/herpetology/herpetology.htm>

## Nature's Ultimate Mosquito Control

Bat myths have been flitting around for years now and it's time to set the record straight. For starters, bats aren't blind, they don't fly into your hair and they aren't rodents. Instead, they are a natural part of the food chain and an effective pest control for insects. For example, a single brown bat can consume 1200 mosquito-size insects in one hour! Since waterfront property has its fair share of flying insects, many property owners are encouraging bat residency by building bat-houses. Interested in purchasing or building a bat-house? Check out this website:



[www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)

Now Available!

## Aquatic Plant Photo Murals

Two new colorful large posters illustrate, respectively, native freshwater plants of Florida and non-native, invasive plants. Laminated in full color, they are 62 inches x 23 inches in size.

Created at the request of teachers and trainers, they are meant to be attention grabbing teaching tools for science classes, management agency training, homeowner's forums, ecology clubs and others interested in marshes and other wetlands and concerned about the encroachment of non-native plants in the United States and Florida.

### The posters are :

♦ **FREE** to teachers (US K-12) and agency trainers (US). Requests should be made in



**Free to teachers!**

writing on letterhead and sent to the APIRS address below.

♦ For sale to anyone for \$20 each plus S&H. When you purchase a copy, you are also buying one for a teacher! Contact Vic Ramey <varamey@nersp.nerdc.ufl.edu> to order.

♦ Very large edition for loan. This one is 3 feet x 8 feet, available to teachers and agency trainers, eco-groups and eco-events who request them. Contact Vic Ramey <varamey@nersp.nerdc.ufl.edu> for details.

Teachers and trainers, please send your request on letterhead to:

APIRS Photo-Mural  
Center For Aquatic and Invasive Plants  
7922 NW 71st Street  
Gainesville, FL 32653

**Note: There is no need to call or e-mail in advance if you qualify for a free copy – simply request your copy and they'll be happy to accommodate you.**

## Mary Carter Awarded for Her Dedication to Florida Lakes

*LAKEWATCH is proud to announce that long-time volunteer Mary Carter was recently awarded the Scott Driver Award for her dedicated pursuit of the preservation and wise management of Florida lakes. The award was sponsored by the Florida Lake Management Society (FLMS) and was presented at their annual meeting in Tallahassee this April.*

Mary's tireless efforts began in 1992, when she joined the Friends of Istokpoga, a group of fishermen with concerns about the lake. As a result of her involvement and tenacity, the group was able to obtain funding for an aquatic plant management program. Soon after, she became the executive director of the organization and began to expand its scope to include every lake in Highlands County. Her experience with Lake Istokpoga led her to the realization that every lake in the county was in need of better lake management. So she lobbied to have a lake manager position created for the County, which was eventually filled by Mr. Clell Ford.

In March of 1994, Mary became a LAKEWATCH volunteer on Lake Placid. From that moment on, she made sure the lake

was being sampled even when she couldn't do it herself. She also established a LAKEWATCH collection center at the Tomoka Heights Realty office, which continues to be used by area volunteers on a monthly basis.

In 1996, she and Clell Ford worked to develop the *Highlands County Lakes Assoc. Guide to Area Lakes*. The booklets were so popular they've been printed numerous times and have served as a template for others to follow. Mary also published DIP NET, a quarterly newsletter for the Highlands County Lakes Association.

For five years, she was instrumental in organizing annual volunteer appreciation banquets for LAKEWATCH volunteers in her area — always making sure that local media and city, county, and state government officials were invited. She knew virtually every volunteer and also many of the folks involved in local water management issues due to her service on the Highlands County Water Advisory Board and the Central Sewer Study Board, both county commission appointments.

But perhaps her greatest achievement was her involvement in the creation of Lake Awareness Week for Highlands County. In the summer



Clell Ford

### Mary Carter

of 2000 she helped organize the first county-wide Lake Management Symposium, a forum where scientists, biologists, and agency personnel could address specific concerns voiced by the public.

For years, Mary Carter worked to give her community a greater sense of appreciation for the aquatic "jewels" of Highlands County. We're just glad that others have come to recognize how special she is — something we've known all along!