

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE BALLENSLES WILDLIFE FOUNDATION



# NATURE MATTERS

Winter 2016



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Photo by Paul Goldstein

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to 2016! We at BIWF begin the New Year with this first paperless issue of *Nature Matters*. It looks pretty much the same as our printed magazine, but it has the advantages of being better for our environment and allowing our email subscribers anytime anywhere access. If you haven't subscribed, please do so by clicking on

[balleniseswildlifefoundation.org/join-our-email-list](http://balleniseswildlifefoundation.org/join-our-email-list). Stay tuned for details on our complimentary educational seminar on Saturday, April 16, and a field trip or two (still in the planning stages). We are in the process of finalizing our 2016–2017 activities calendar and the accounting from our recent fund-raiser and will provide details in the spring issue of *Nature Matters*.

*Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each New Year find you a better person.*—Benjamin Franklin

Naturally yours,  
Marianne Guerra

### Mission Statement and Foundation Goals of BallenIsles Wildlife Foundation

BallenIsles Wildlife Foundation (BIWF), a nonprofit 501©(3) charitable organization, is a group of volunteers who love and respect animals. Our inspiration comes from Mona Roberts, a resident of Bermuda Bay, who during her 18 years in BallenIsles devoted herself to the rescue and rehabilitation of animals in need.

#### BIWF MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of BallenIsles Wildlife Foundation is to preserve, foster, and respect all animal life in the BallenIsles community.

#### BIWF FOUNDATION GOALS

- Aid and assist injured animals, stray animals, and lost pets found in BallenIsles.
- Maintain a feral cat TNVR (trap, neuter, vaccinate, return) program for the BallenIsles community to avoid overpopulation.
- Educate and inform BallenIsles' residents about wildlife/animal/flora matters.
- Maintain and establish working relationships with, assist, and endorse wildlife and animal organizations that help BallenIsles Wildlife Foundation achieve our mission and foundation goals.



To learn more, visit the BIWF website at [balleniseswildlifefoundation.org](http://balleniseswildlifefoundation.org) or our Facebook page [facebook.com/BallenIslesWildlifeFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/BallenIslesWildlifeFoundation).

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# In the Spotlight

by Jackie Fabisch

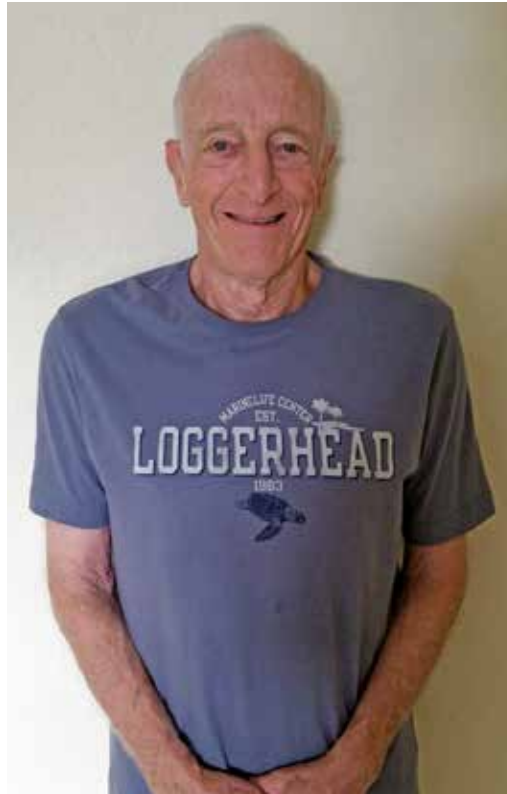
**DR. PAUL A. BROWN**, a 15-year resident of BallenIsles, has an admirable attitude about living a fulfilling life: “It’s important to have long-term goals and new goals to replace them when they are accomplished.” And Paul certainly lives by this creed.

When Paul graduated from Harvard College, he had three goals: 1) to become a millionaire, 2) to achieve a black belt in martial arts, and 3) to speak French socially. He has attained the first, earned a second-degree black belt in Okinawan Karate, and is taking private French lessons.

His belief in setting goals has made Paul successful in his professional life. During the time he was receiving his pathology training at Tufts Medical Center and Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, he noted the need for quality control in diagnostic laboratories. He borrowed \$500 from his father-in-law and in 1967 founded Metropolitan Pathology Laboratories, which shortly thereafter shortened the name to MetPath. On July 24, 1980, Paul appeared on *60 Minutes* to discuss a pending laboratory test and therapy for cancer. MetPath later was acquired by Corning Glass. When Corning divested MetPath via a stock dividend to the Corning shareholders, the business became known as Quest Diagnostics. After a short retirement Paul then established a hearing aid enterprise, *HearX*, known today as *Hear USA*. This company was acquired and sold later by Siemens. In addition, he coauthored a book, *Success in the Business Jungle*, which was published in February 1998.

His goal-oriented attitude carries through to his personal life. He met Cynthia when she was 14½ years old and after their first date told his mother that he was going to marry her. Paul considers marrying Cynthia as his greatest accomplishment. They will have their 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary this coming June and have two sons and daughters-in-law and three grandchildren.

Now that Paul has retired, he has many other objectives. Presently, he is studying Krav Maga, an Israeli form of self-defense, improving his tennis by playing singles with



the BallenIsles pros, and is now a certified swim instructor for adults under the auspices of the U.S. Masters Swimming organization—making “house calls” as the “Swim Doctor” and approved to teach adults in BallenIsles where he offers swimming lessons at no charge. He also serves on the Advisory Board of Lifelong Learning at FAU and is scheduled to give a lecture there on stress on March 30, 2016.

But one of his favorite activities is the work he has been involved in at the Loggerhead Marinelife Center of Juno Beach. Shortly after Paul became a full-time retiree in 2010, Cynthia saw a newspaper article entitled “Opportunities for Volunteers.” Knowing his interest in animals, she circled Loggerhead. Cynthia was sure that involvement with animals,

especially a reptile, would be a perfect fit for him. In his youth he had snakes in his bedroom, a wounded duck with a pillow-case diaper that he walked on a leash, a Norwegian rat that infiltrated a wall in his home, a Caiman (a small reptile closely related to alligators and crocodiles) in his dorm room at college, and a baby squirrel, frogs, and turtles as pets—all a result of willing parents. Paul has been with Loggerhead for 7 years, and for the last 4 years he has given and continues to give weekly “Science for Seniors” lectures every Tuesday at 2 p.m. Paul has retained his love for all living things. His quite successful Loggerhead lectures deal with various health issues common to animals and human—especially the “dating and mating lecture.”

In addition to the inspiration he gets from his family, he respects Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg “not for what they made, but for what they give.” Another of Paul’s goals is to encourage BallenIsles residents to include the BallenIsles Charities Foundation in their donations, often ending with the message, “If not to that charity, just give!”

***Aren’t we lucky to have Paul and Cynthia Brown as full-time residents of BallenIsles!***

# ALL ABOUT FOXES

Of the five species of foxes found in North America, the only two commonly seen are the red fox and the gray fox. Both are members of the dog family.

The red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is probably not native to North America. Many were brought here from Europe for sport hunting. Introduced to Florida by hunting clubs, they are now found in many areas of the state in uplands mixed with weedy pastures. They avoid heavily wooded areas. Red foxes are outgoing but not aggressive. Often a red fox will not retreat from a human but rather be totally oblivious and harmless.

The gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) is native to North America, and although found throughout Florida, it is far more abundant in the northern wooded areas. It is sometimes referred to as the tree fox because of its ability to climb trees; the red fox, in contrast, is a poor tree climber. The gray fox is shy but aggressive when it comes to defending its territory.

## PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

There is almost never any cause for concern if you see a fox in your neighborhood. Foxes are not dangerous to humans, except when rabid, and fox rabies is extremely rare.

With regard to pets being outdoors when foxes are around, cats can be at risk if allowed to roam freely; the best way to avoid conflicts between foxes and cats is to keep cats indoors. Foxes seem to pay little heed to adult cats, recognizing that they are dealing with an animal almost their own size. Kittens and small or elderly cats, however, could be easy prey for a fox.

Keeping these cautions in mind, most encounters with foxes are an exciting reminder of the beauty and diversity of our wild neighbors. Your best chances of viewing one are in the early morning and late evening hours along the edges of forests and fields—and golf courses.

Photographs by Paul Goldstein taken July 2015 on hole 6 of the East golf course.

Sources: [The Humane Society of the United States](#) and [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#)



## PLEASE DO NOT FEED FOXES

When foxes, which are typically very shy, are seen FREQUENTLY during the day, chances are someone is feeding them. Although often well intended, feeding wildlife is a big mistake—for you, your neighbors, and the wildlife. Feeding them makes them trusting of humans and somewhat tame and puts them at great risk from uninformed humans who want them “removed.” Instead it is more humane to frighten foxes by making very loud noises—using a loud voice or banging on a pot or pan. Eventually, if not fed by humans, foxes will move on.

## What Red and Gray Foxes Have in Common

1. Both are able to thrive in forests and fields and on a variety of foods, ranging from their mainstay diet of rats, mice, and rabbits to insects, berries, and fruits, and occasionally small birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Both are nocturnal but can be seen during the day basking in the sun or foraging for food.
2. Both species appear to be larger than they are because of their relatively long legs and long bushy tails. However, red foxes are larger (weighing about 15 lbs. and 3 feet long plus a 12 inch tail) than gray foxes (weighing 12 pounds at the most and often less).
3. Both red and gray foxes can run at speeds up to 26 miles per hour, and rather than fight competitors they tend to circle and backtrack.
4. They both mate seasonally beginning in mid-January, generally giving birth to kits (AKA cubs or pups) in March or April. The litter size varies between three and eight depending on population density and food supply. Kits are fully furred at birth, blind for 9 days, and weaned by 9 weeks; both parents are devoted to the kits, providing food, care, and training, including teaching them to hunt. They stay with mom and dad for about 6 months and then they are on their own. A pair usually mates for life.
5. They either dig their own dens or recycle abandoned dens of woodchucks, badgers, or other burrowing animals. Dens are used when raising kits.
6. Both species have very similar coloring, making it hard to distinguish the two. A red fox can appear gray, and a gray fox often has quite a lot of red hair. The tip of the tail is the way to tell them apart; the end of the red fox's tail is black with a white tip whereas the end of the gray fox's tail is all black.



# Spinner Sharks Swim by the Beach for Winter Migration

by Cheryl A. Houghtelin, Executive Director, MacArthur Beach State Park



Every winter, thousands of spinner sharks swim along the Atlantic coast of Florida, the largest shark migration in U.S. coastal waters. Often these migrating sharks swim within a few feet of the shoreline at MacArthur Beach State Park. From October through March, you may witness quite a sight as spinner sharks literally spin out of the water as they hunt and feed.

Cold winter air over the northern hemisphere gradually cools the ocean waters, bringing a migration of stocks of fish into our area. The spinner sharks are not necessarily present constantly during these months, but generally we see a migration south in the fall and then north in the spring.

Spinner sharks are a fast swimming species of shark that leaps out of the water and spins three to four times around its axis before landing; these jumps are the result of feeding runs during which the shark corkscrews vertically through schools of small fish, and the momentum launches it into the air. They average between 4 and 6 feet in length as adults with a gray-bronze back and white belly. They have a thin white band along their flanks, and very noticeable black tips on both dorsal fins, pectoral and anal fins, as well as the lower lobe of the tail fin.

Ordinarily these sharks do not pose a substantial danger to humans as they perceive us as too large a prey. Their small narrow teeth are more adapted to grasping than cutting; however, caution should be taken if you find yourself surrounded by large amounts of schooling fish. Florida beaches use a uniform marine warning flag system. A purple flag indicates the presence of dangerous marine life, including sharks or other organisms such as jellyfish or Portuguese man-of-war, which may sting the skin on contact. If you see a purple flag, ask a Ranger or staff person which organism(s) to be wary of. Remember: When in doubt, don't go out.

Following these guidelines before entering the water can help ensure your safety:

- avoid the water at dawn, dusk, or night, when sharks tend to feed.
- avoid murky water or waters with poor visibility.
- be aware that birds diving into the water indicates the presence of schooling fish.
- avoid swimming alone--always swim near a group of people.
- refrain from excess splashing or movement.
- avoid wearing shiny jewelry and/or bright clothing, all of which can attract sharks.
- avoid entering water if bleeding from an open wound.
- avoid areas where the remains of fish have been discarded into the water, e.g., near fishermen cleaning their catch.

As top predators, sharks help to manage healthy ocean ecosystems, and as their numbers decline, the oceans may suffer unpredictable and devastating consequences. Sharks help maintain the health of ocean ecosystems, including seagrass beds and coral reefs.



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# Featured PETS

## Meet Buddy and Lacey

In December 2014, **Pet Haven Rescue** in Loxahatchee, Florida, scooped up two unkempt young dogs roaming city streets, hungry, afraid, lonely, and looking like no one had cared about them for quite a while.



BEFORE

Irwin and Frankie Edenzon, already owners of two rescue cats, had been thinking about rescuing a dog, but they couldn't decide on size. Someone told them that two approximately one-year-old puppies were available for adoption but only if they were adopted together because they were so attached to each other.

The Pet Haven adoption bus pulled into the Mirasol Walk Shopping Center in January 2015, and the Edenzons were there to check out the puppies. The owner of Pet Haven believed the puppies were siblings (littermates). After surviving together "on the street," the puppies had become indisputably attached to each other. It only took a few minutes of holding them and watching them interact with each other for the Edenzons to realize that their plan to adopt ONE dog was history.

A few days later, Buddy and Lacey joined the Edenzon family and met Zoe and Aurora (both adopted as kittens but now

adults). The puppies had a veterinarian check-up, which ensured no major concerns, and a grooming appointment that totally transformed their appearance. Next, DNA tests confirmed that Buddy and Lacey are indeed brother and sister. It took a little time for the cats to accept their new siblings, but soon all four were fast friends.

Puppy training at Dog Days in Palm Beach Gardens was both fun and productive—for Irwin and Frankie, too. Although the puppies learned quickly, it took a few sessions to get Buddy to focus. The trainer speculated that Buddy was still intent on protecting his sister as he likely had done during their time on the street. A few weeks later Buddy "loosened up" in the training sessions, but the puppies' nightmares took a bit longer to go away. In time the entire family finally slept through the night. Buddy and Lacey finally understood that they now had a safe place to sleep.

Irwin and Frankie are relatively new members of BallenIsles. They have been involved in animal rescue for many years, so becoming a board member of the BallenIsles Wildlife



AFTER

Foundation was an easy decision for Irwin. Frankie is a BIWF committee member and also volunteers at the Peggy Adams Animal Rescue Foundation. Large numbers of kittens, puppies, cats, and dogs need a good home. **Irwin and Frankie ask that if you can't adopt, volunteer; and if you can't volunteer, please donate to a reputable shelter or rescue organization. So many homeless animals need your help.**

## Marlberry (*Ardisia escallonioides*)

Photo by Sue Dingwell



Marlberry (*Ardisia escallonioides*), a very handsome plant with dark green foliage, is a Florida native plant that is indigenous to our state's coastal hammocks, thickets, and pine rockland and is extremely adaptable to our urban setting. Its growth habit is taller than broad, and with periodic pruning it can be used as a hedge or allowed to grow into a small tree from 6- to 15-foot tall. Flowers and fruit are present throughout the year. The fragrant flowers range in color from white to pink with blooms peaking in the fall. At the height of flowering it has been described as "freshly deposited mounds of snow."



Photo by John Bradford

The flowers are followed by black fruits about ¼ of an inch in diameter that are quickly gobbled up by hungry birds. The trunks and branches are slender and erect with the tips of the branches becoming arched under the weight of flowers and fruit. The bark is pale gray to almost white.

Although Marlberry normally grows as a shrub under trees in light to moderate shade, it can be highly adaptive to full sun. It does best in moist, well-drained soil and once established is tolerant of short periods of drought. In its natural environment it grows in soil with poor nutrient

content; however, given some organic material it thrives easily. Marlberry is an easy care plant making it an excellent specimen or accent shrub/tree for residential and commercial landscapes. As with so many of our Florida native plants that provide beauty, food, and shelter for people and wildlife, it should be used instead of exotic plants that provide little for our native wildlife!

When purchasing Florida native plants, use the scientific name, in this case *Ardisia escallonioides*, to make sure you are buying the correct plant. Common names vary greatly and can more often than not be confusing. Also, make sure you are dealing with reputable and knowledgeable nurseries that know their natives. Do not confuse *Ardisia escallonioides* with *A. elliptica* (Shoebuttan Ardesia) or *A. crenata* (Coral



Photo by Shirley Denton

Ardesia), both of which are non-native and have become very invasive exotic pest plants!

Article sources: Florida Native Plant Society, Native Choice Nursery, The Institute for Regional Conservation, Florida Association of Native Nurseries

### BNY MELLON PRESENTS: THE EMPOWERED WOMEN'S SERIES

Women's busy lives can often take precedence and shift our focus off of taking care of ourselves; we are head of households, make up a majority of the workforce in the U.S. and 80% of us are making ALL financial decisions for our families. BNY Mellon Wealth Management is FOCUSED on assisting women with their financial GOALS. Our local Empowered Women's Series covers topics such as life's transitions, the importance of estate planning and wills as well as retirement planning. We hope you can join us in our Palm Beach Gardens location for an upcoming event.

For more information or to join our "emailing" list contact: Johna B. Fidanza,  
[johna.fidanza@bnymellon.com](mailto:johna.fidanza@bnymellon.com) or 561-868-7434





# Rain or Shine: The BIWF Polo Event Attendees Had a Fine Time

On the afternoon of January 10, the BallenIsles Wildlife Foundation hosted its first major fundraiser at the International Polo Club in Wellington, Florida. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Linda Hornsby and her events committee (Donna Shaw, Margie Block, Linda Weiss, Joyce Cornick, Linda Teitelbaum and Rhonda Paston) as well as Donna and Harty Blanchard, Jody Passov, and the BIWF Board of Directors, the event was very successful with about 130 people attending. The money raised will help fund field trips and complimentary educational seminars for BallenIsles residents, BIWF's paperless magazine *Nature Matters*, and rescue activities and more to be determined.



On hand as escorts to the BIWF private seating area were five young Naval Sea Cadets and five young Marines. Everyone in attendance was educated about the game of polo by Kylie Sheehan, a charming and knowledgeable polo player and polo pony trainer. Even having Steve Weagle, the popular and esteemed News Channel 5 Weatherman, as the guest speaker didn't stop the downpours in the morning, and the polo match was cancelled for the safety of the horses as well as the jockeys. However, the guests, who seemed to know their way around a buffet table, spent the afternoon sampling and resampling a sumptuous spread and visiting with old and new supporters of BIWF.



Suffice it to say, a good time was had by all.



Photographs by Jim Adelman

# KIDS' NEST

by Judy Grace, Jackie Fabisch, and Diane Feldon

## FOXY FACTS

Foxes are small members of the dog family,  
But are like cats in the way that they see.  
Foxes and felines when stalking their prey,  
Do their hunting in a similar way.

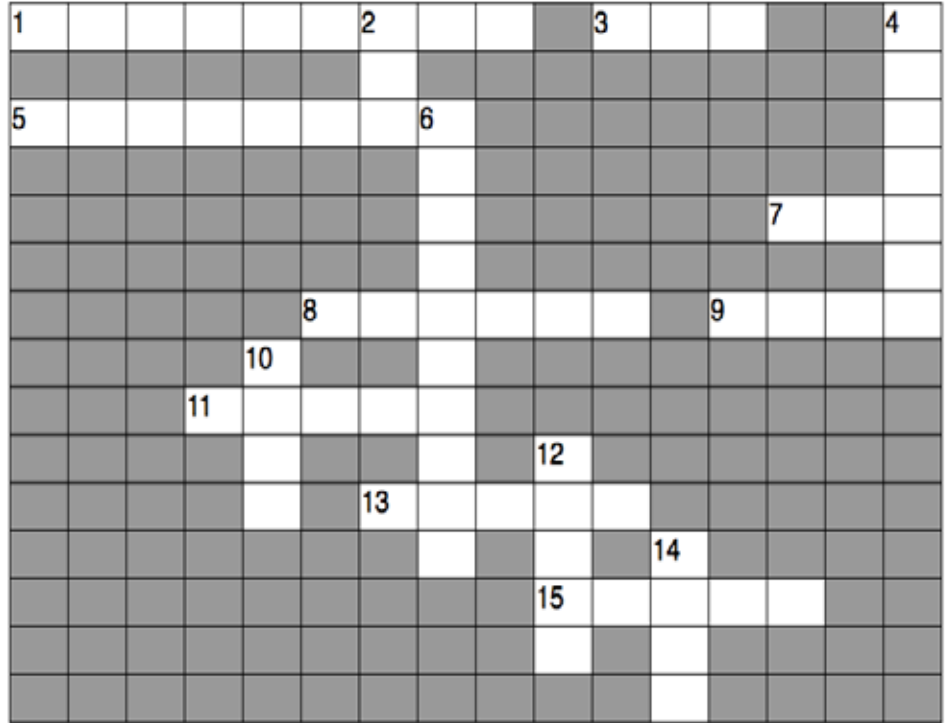
The red fox is the most common one  
Foxes are speedy—how fast they can run!!  
Slightly bigger than cats, they hear very well.  
Their tails, called brushes, make them look pretty swell.

These tails serve foxes well in several ways.  
They keep them warm on cold winter days  
And serve to signal or to warn  
Other foxes—works better than a horn.

Females are vixens, while males have more names,  
They're called dogs or reynards, both mean the same.  
The babies—cubs, kits, or pups—with their mothers stay home,  
After 6 months or so, they are then free to roam.

Foxes are omnivores, eating plants and meat.  
They live in a den and may store food to eat.  
A fox's pack, called a skulk, does sometimes roam,  
But usually foxes live alone.

Now try the crossword, finding the clues  
Right in this poem—which will you choose?



### ACROSS

1. Foxes eat meat and vegetation
3. all are related to but just males are called this
5. another name for male foxes
7. what the foxes call home
8. members of the dog \_\_\_\_\_
9. baby foxes: rhymes with rubs
11. female fox
13. their hearing is like their teeth
15. a fox group—not just sneaking around

### DOWN

2. The most common fox species
4. foxes see and hunt like \_\_\_\_
6. after this time the babies can roam
10. another name for fox babies: rhymes with sits
12. a fox tail
14. another name for fox babies: rhymes with cups

Answers: Across: 1. Omnivores, 3. Dogs, 5. Reynards, 7. Den, 8. Family, 9. Cubs, 11. Vixen, 13. Sharp, 15. A fox group—not just sneaking around. Down: 2. Red, 4. Felines, 6. Sixmonths, 10. Kits, 12. Brush, 14. pups

Kids' Nest Crossword Answers