

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lee County parks and preserves celebrate National Public Lands Day with Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz events

Fort Myers, FL, Sept. 2, 2022 — Lee County Parks & Recreation invites visitors and residents to explore the parks and preserves of Lee County with a series of free Parks for Pollinator BioBlitz events celebrating National Public Lands Day.

The Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz events allow community members work with park staff to create a snapshot of the variety of wildlife that can be found in local parks. Participants will use an app to take pictures of plants, insects and animals to see which wildlife is present in the park on the day of the event and provide the park system with more information about local pollinators, which are essential to our ecosystem.

The free events are offered in five preserves and parks, including:

- **8 -10 a.m. Friday, Sept. 23, Pollinator Plant Walk, Hickey Creek Mitigation Park, 17980 Palm Beach Blvd., Alva**
Join Lee County staff on a guided walk throughout the park identifying and counting pollinators and identifying and removing exotic/invasive plants. This event is for all ages. To register, call 239-229-0522. All participants will meet at the trailhead.
- **8:30 -10 a.m. Friday, Sept. 23, BioBlitz Hike, Wild Turkey Strand Preserve, 11901 Rod and Gun Club Road, Fort Myers**
This hike will be on the ADA-accessible path and will focus on the biodiversity of wetlands at the preserve. This will be a 0.3-mile, one-way hike that will end at an observation deck where visitors will have the option to continue on a solo hike through potentially wet trails or return to the parking lot. To register, call 239-533-5313. Participants will meet in the pavilion and should bring water and sun protection.
- **9-11 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 24, National Public Lands Day Community Event, Prairie Pines Preserve, 18400 N. Tamiami Trail, North Fort Myers**
This event will help participants learn more about Lee County public lands. Activities include a scavenger hunt, invasive plant identification, information sessions, guided bird walks and the opportunity to view the equipment used to protect public lands and preserves.
- **9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24, BioBlitz Event, Lakes Park, 7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers**
This event celebrates the biodiversity of the park and engages participants in the natural resources around them. Activities include an outreach tent, children's activity tent, a biodiversity scavenger hunt, mini-guided walks, an iNaturalist demo, and a fishing demo. Partners of this event include the Audubon Society, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Native Plant Society. No registration needed. Parking fees apply. \$1 per hour; \$5 per day.
- **8:30-10 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 25, Pollinator Walk, Manatee Park, 10901 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers**

This Volunteer led Pollinator Walk will allow participants to learn about the park's history, butterfly gardens and the native flora and fauna that reside in some of Florida's habitats. Visitors will enjoy walking the ADA accessible paths through the restored native plant habitats and butterfly gardens. To register, email Lcarr@leegov.com. Participants will meet behind the welcome center. Parking fees apply. \$1 per hour; \$5 per day.

- **8:30-10 a.m. Monday, Sept. 26, BioBlitz Hike, Pine Lake Preserve, 27225 Kent Road, Bonita Springs**
Staff will guide visitors along the preserve firelines through a variety of natural plant communities and the hydrologic restoration project area to educate about local flora, fauna and the Imperial River watershed. This hike will be an intermediate level, as there may be uneven surfaces and loose materials. The hike is a 1-mile loop. To register, call 239-533-5313. Participants can park in the nearby YMCA parking lot and meet at the trailhead. Bring water and sun protection.

For more information about Lee County Parks & Recreation locations, amenities and special events, visit www.leeparks.org, call 239-533-7275 or email leeparks@leegov.com.