



# On Our Pond

A NEWSLETTER FOR CLEANER WATER & BETTER POND ENVIRONMENTS



Volume 9 No 2 Adopt-A-Pond is sponsored by Hillsborough County, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and YOU! Summer 2003

## ACTIVITIES UPDATE

### Plantings

- 94-116 Country Grove
- 02-07 Blmgdale West
- 02-14 Adair Family

### Education Meetings

- 03-02 Lake Morley
- 02-12 Country Run
- 02-11 Rustling Oaks
- 03-04 Falconcreek Pl
- 03-03 Friendship Pnd.

### Pond Walks

- Dellbrook Dr
- Herlong Ct
- Preston Woods Dr
- Cross Landing Ln
- Heathridge Dr
- Laurel Cove Cr

## IT'S ALMOST FALL... YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS



## FREEBEE BOX

**-Rain Barrel Booklets & Videos**

**-Carp signs (w/ permit)**

**Call for yours now!**

That's right, the annual shindig, gala, blowout, roofshaker, fiesta, party, celebration, event, otherwise known as the Lake, Pond, & Stream Seminar is on the way! We'll be takin' over the Florida Aquarium for the evening once more, and we want you all to come out! So watch your mail for the invitation, and check out **page 3** for more information on what's in store this year!

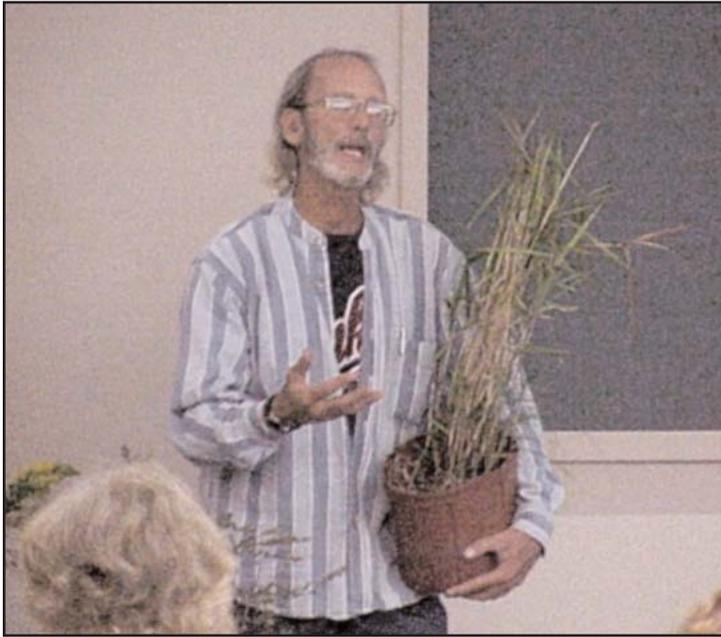
### On Our Pond

Quarterly Newsletter Published By:  
**The Hillsborough County Stormwater Management Environmental Team**  
P.O. Box 1110  
Tampa, FL 33601-1110  
(813)272-5912

<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org>  
e-mail [mcgee@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:mcgee@hillsboroughcounty.org)  
Editor: John McGee

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## WHAT DO I DO NOW?

**I've tried everything, my pond's still a mess!**

Most Adopt-A-Pond members are familiar with the principles of restoring a pond: remove nuisance, replace natives, even limit fertilizer around the pond. But there's one aspect of restoration that our groups have a lot of trouble with: prevention. This is all the more important now that we're getting regular rains. We have to remember that our ponds not only take water from surrounding yards, or the drains right in front of our houses, but also from the rest of the street and the yards that border it. In some cases pipes carry water from blocks away. This means people who never see the pond are affecting what goes on in it, and all of our restoration efforts will become limited by this factor (remember the limiting factor article from last winter?) This means to truly improve our ponds we *have* to do some work out in the neighborhood.

But what can we do? Those residents may not care what happens in the pond, that's true, but they do care about something. The trick is to use something they care about to our advantage. By simply encouraging that, everyone benefits. It's called 'positive incentives', and we use them too! (You wanted a prettier pond, we wanted improved water quality- *DING*- Adopt-A-Pond). So what might they be concerned about? Nice yards, lower maintenance, cheaper water bills, property values, community improvement, selling their house, lower crime rates...you see where I'm going with this? Once you find the right hook, then you have to create the incentive. Just translate what you've learned in Adopt-A-Pond to the rest of the neighborhood. Organize work days for other community areas, present time/money/labor saving tips at HOA's, write your own community newsletter (you could even reprint our articles if you ask). Use existing programs like Florida Yards & Neighborhoods or other Extension Service programs.

Of course you don't have to do this stuff if you're happy with the pond the way it is, but if it still needs help or you want to do more, then you have to move outside the pond borders. Without addressing this source of pollution, all the other restoration work is nothing more than a band-aid.

## THAT'S JUST WHAT WE NEEDED!

### How to get things done in the community

The article above talks about incentives. But how do you find out what incentives will work, how do you implement them, and how do you get everyone involved? One great way to do all of this at once is to create a community management plan. The first step is to gather your stakeholders. Stakeholders are simply all those who have an interest in the community: HOA, Taxing District, homeowners, local businesses, etc. Then hold a meeting to hear problems and suggestions relating to the community. People will have no problem laying them on you. Don't restrict anything yet, listen to them all, but let everyone know that they'll be contacted to help work on solutions. Form a committee to evaluate these suggestions and find possible solutions. Enlist the help of local experts if necessary. Then hold a second meeting to reevaluate what you've come up with. This is your plan outline. By this time you should have come up with real practical ways to make the best suggestions happen. Everyone can vote on it, and there you go! A Management Plan! Set up yearly meetings to update the plan and check your progress. Management Plans are wonderful tools for getting things done, and since everyone helped create it, they'll be more apt to support it.

Adopt-A-Pond publishes a **Pond Management Plan Workbook** that walks you through the whole process. All of our pond groups get one in the Notebook. It's geared for ponds, but the steps are the same regardless of location. Contact us to request a copy.



## FREE LAKE, POND, & STREAM SEMINAR!

### Coming to an aquarium near you.

In what is fast becoming an annual tradition, we're proud to announce our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Lake, Pond, & Stream Seminar. This year we're bringing you another great evening of education & entertainment for the whole family. There will be plenty of exhibitors showcasing what they do, live music, food & drinks available, door prizes, lots of giveaways, and as always the Aquarium exhibits will be open for you to tour at night. We're also lining up more interesting and informative presentations for you to enjoy. You can tour the Low-Impact Design of the Aquarium parking lot and find out how these principles can work at home. Hear about some of the potential projects in your area. And find out about some new opportunities in our volunteer programs.

The seminar is also a great time to mingle with other Pond Group members and find out what's going on around the County. It's always a great evening, and every year we try to make it better than the last! So bring your friends and family and come on out. This year the event will be on Friday September 19 from 6:00pm-9:00pm. And as always, admission is free! Watch your mail for the invitation coming out soon.



### LAST CHANCE FOR PRESSED PLANT NOTEBOOKS

We're down to our last few pressed plant books, so if you want to get the starter kit, including the binder, the sheets, and one pressed plant, now's the time. It's a great way to start someone on a fun and educational hobby. Perfect for kids & adults. Email [mcgee@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:mcgee@hillsboroughcounty.org) or call 307-1785.



## A LITTLE COMPETITION ANYONE?

### THE POND JUDGING IS COMING SOON

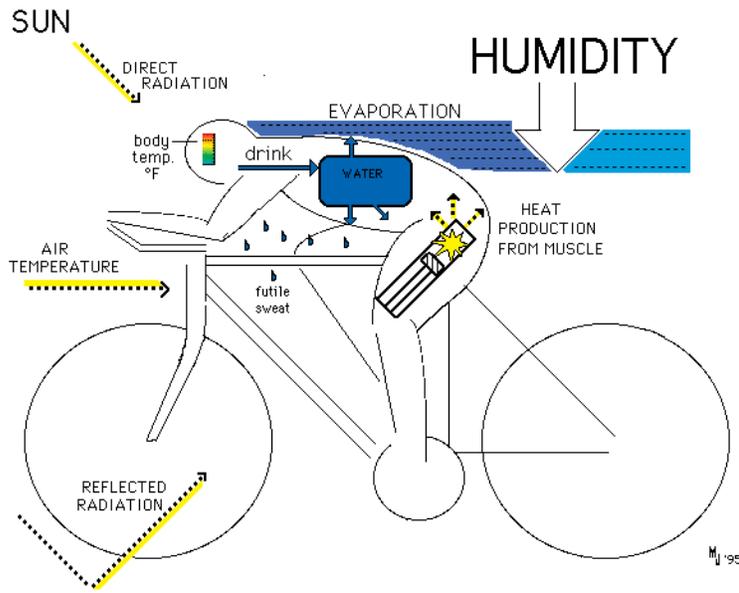
Every year in the fall, along with the seminar, we hold our Best Maintained Pond Competition. This event is really just for fun, but it gives all of our groups a chance to show off their work and see how local environmental experts rank their pond against the other competitors. And just to make it interesting, we always offer some type of prize to the group that comes out on top.

Every group is eligible to compete, but you have to send in the registration form to be considered. So if you want to get in on the fun, tell your Group Rep and when the letter shows up, they'll send it in. We'll send out our team of judges to look at all of the entries and rank them. Then the scores are compiled and the winner is discovered. Every competing pond gets a letter

telling how they fared, including any comments from the judges. The winning group gets the prize, a permanent plaque added to their street sign declaring them the winner of the year, and a feature in the newsletter!

So what are the judges looking for? Here's a brief run-down: **general appearance, pollution control, wildlife usage and habitat, native/xeriscape techniques in surrounding yards, improvements (benches, nest boxes, etc), percentage of shoreline vegetation, percentage of nuisance vegetation, communication with the program (how often/detailed you report), if stormdrains are marked, and if the group participates in water quality sampling.**

Regardless of who wins, the competition is a great way to see how you improve over the years, and it gives us a chance to see how our groups are doing. So you've got some time. Get out there, make it look good, and watch for the registration in October. Even if you don't think you'll win, it's great to see what the judges think about your pond, and you may just be surprised how they rank you!



## Phew, It's Hot! Play it safe in the heat

By Martin Montalvo

As the summer moves along each of us finds ourselves spending more and more time in the Florida heat. Dehydration occurs when a person's body loses too much water. When a person stops drinking water or loses large amounts of fluids because of diarrhea, vomiting, or sweating, the body reabsorbs fluid from the blood and other body tissues. By the time a person becomes severely dehydrated, there is no longer enough fluid in the body to get blood to the vital organs and the person may begin to go into shock, which is life-threatening. Dehydration is especially dangerous for infants, small children, and older adults.

**Early signs of dehydration include:** Increased thirst,

dry mouth and sticky saliva, dark yellow urine.

**Moderate dehydration symptoms include:** Extreme thirst, dry mouth and eyes. Lightheadedness.

**Symptoms that require emergency care (even if only one of them is present) include:** Altered behavior, such as severe anxiety, confusion, or not being able to stay awake. Faintness that is not relieved by lying down, or lightheadedness that continues after standing for 2 minutes. Weak, rapid pulse. Cold, clammy skin or hot, dry skin. Little or no urination. **Severe dehydration is life-threatening.**

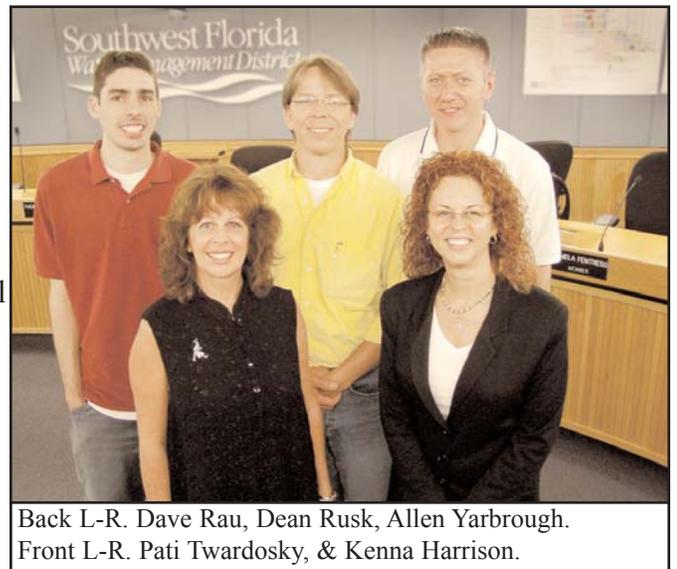
**The following tips may help prevent a heat-related illness:** Drink plenty of water, especially if you sweat a lot or if your urine output decreases. Increase your fluid intake when playing sports. Use caution in the heat if you have health risks. Avoid spending too much time in the sun. Limit strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day (10am- 4pm). And lastly, avoid caffeine and alcohol in extreme heat, because they can cause dehydration.

## HOW WE WORK TOGETHER Southwest Florida Water Mgt. District (SWFWMD) Visual Communications

In this section, we're still looking at how Adopt-A-Pond works with other agencies to protect your quality of life. This quarter we're looking at a branch of the SWFWMD Communications Department called Visual Communications, or VisCom. The Visual Communications Section, is tasked with providing responsive and effective solutions for communicating the District's mission for staff to specific audiences in an array of media. (Whew!) Which means they use software on Macs and PCs (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, PageMaker, After Effects, Acrobat, and Macromedia Flash to name a few) to create technical illustrations, layouts for print, web, displays and presentations.

Each member is a talented designer. Some are artists and photographers. Some are even computer geeks-- just to maintain a right-brain/left-brain balance in the work they generate! Dean Rusk, the manager says, "As manager, I have never worked with as talented, cohesive and good-hearted a group of folks in my 25 years." And I have to agree, having worked with them on several projects in the past. They've designed our brochure, our information booklet, and most recently, our new logo!

We may not think about it when we see their work, but it's these guys who give our programs and agencies the character and voice that catches our attention and sticks in our minds. Without them, everything is just plain text!



Back L-R. Dave Rau, Dean Rusk, Allen Yarbrough.  
Front L-R. Pati Twardosky, & Kenna Harrison.

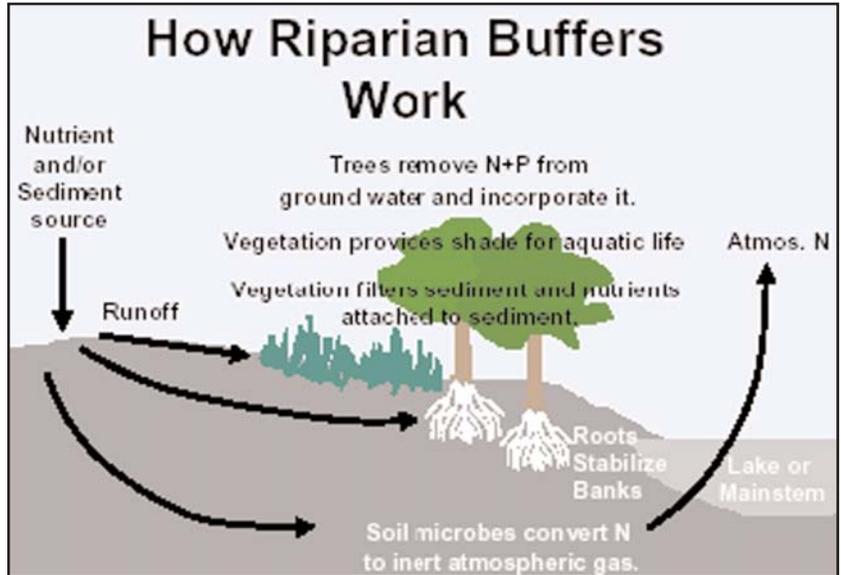
## TALKIN' THE TALK- Riparian Buffers

By Carlos Fernandes, Ph.D.

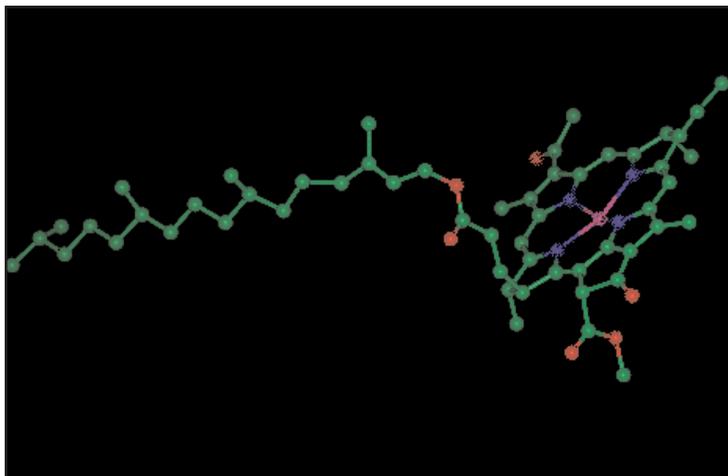
Riparian is a word derived from the Latin *ripárius*, or *rípa* that means bank. Hence, riparian zones are areas located along lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, or other bodies of water, which form the transition between the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Ecologically speaking, transition zones distinguish themselves for their sensitivity (producing quick responses to impacts) and their ecological value. Examples of transition zones are estuaries, or any area that is situated in the boundary of two different mediums (freshwater/salt water; aquatic/terrestrial, etc).

Riparian zones are fundamental for the health of your water body. The presence of a vegetated strip or buffer zone helps protect the riparian environment.

These zones are important to reduce erosion, filter runoff carrying pollutants, provide habitat for animals, reduce flooding, and also serve as a visual and aesthetic reminder of an environment worth protecting. They can vary in width and consists of a variety of different vegetation. When it comes to riparian vegetation, wider is better. Optimally, riparian buffers should be at least 50 feet wide and should consist of different vegetation zones (mature trees, shrubs, and dense grass). The presence of native wildflowers is also important not only for their positive environmental impact, but because they add an aesthetically pleasing view to the buffer, which makes people more inclined to preserve it. The cost of installing a riparian buffer can vary with the width and type of vegetation desired. It is always preferable to maintain or enhance the native riparian vegetation. In case you don't have much/any riparian vegetation to start with, consider surveying the nearby bodies of water and identifying the types of plants that are successfully growing on them to base your choice of plants to be introduced on your pond.



## WATER QUALITY- Chlorophyll



A chlorophyll molecule diagram. If you're looking at this on the internet, green=carbon, red=oxygen, blue=nitrogen, & purple=magnesium

Information taken from: "A Beginner's Guide to Water Mgt.- The ABCs", Florida LAKEWATCH circular #101, Oct 1999.

Last issue we looked at Trophic State as an indicator of the productivity of a waterbody. This quarter we're discussing one of the factors used to determine trophic state, chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is the green pigment that gives plants their color. It's what allows plants to photosynthesize, or grow using light. Since algae are very small plants, they also have chlorophyll. When they get too numerous, water may appear to be green or cloudy. By filtering algae out of water and measuring the amount of chlorophyll, we come up with an indication of how much photosynthesis is going on in the pond. This is useful in determining Trophic State because photosynthesis is the basis of production. Of course this doesn't take into account the chlorophyll in larger plants, so this test can't be used by itself. But it does help us understand how a system might be functioning. For example, in

Florida, extremely high readings of chlorophyll (above 40 parts per billion, [ppb]) can have impacts on other aspects of water quality such as the amount of dissolved oxygen. But remember that we are looking at a very complex and dynamic ecological system. No one factor works independently of others, and to understand what is really going on, requires that we look at many indicators together. That's why we sample for several parameters each month.

Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners  
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## VISIT THESE WEBSITES

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

Extension Service: <http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/>

Hillsborough County Watershed Atlas: <http://www.hillsborough.wateratlas.org>

Adopt-A-Pond Webpages (direct link):

<http://www.hillsborough.wateratlas.org/adopt/geninfo.asp>

Southwest Florida Water Management District: <http://www.WaterMatters.org>

Aquaphyte IFAS Newsletter: <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/aq-w02-1.html>

## POND SAMPLING RESULTS- Temperature

Here's the data on Temperature for 2003. We measure temperature in degrees centigrade (°C). In scientific circles, and the rest of the world, this is standard. You can convert using the following formula: Fahrenheit= (°C x1.8)+32. But for those of you like me, who can't figure that in your head, 30°C is 86°F.

Temperature is obviously important because life in the pond can only thrive during certain temperature ranges. What's more, chemical processes are also affected by temperature. For example, the warmer it is, the less Dissolved Oxygen the water can hold. Dramatic alterations in temperature regimes in waterbodies can be considered thermal pollution when they adversely affect the lifecycles of organisms.

*In order to give you a clearer understanding of water quality we're going to focus on one parameter at a time. Additional water quality data is available from our office if you are interested.*

