Welcome to the second issue of 
Green Flash!

Thank you for subscribing.

We’re coming off a month of Earth Day events -- a time when many do good work to uplift the beauty of our planet and the urgency of our rapidly changing environment. We here at Green Flash celebrate the Earth every day, and we encourage you to acknowledge our shared planet too, by taking a moment to sit with nature, every day.

We know it can be overwhelming sometimes, to know what to do to foster positive changes and environmental health in our own communities. What we do now will be unique to each circumstance and place. Let’s acknowledge that, and support each other as we all take action. The important part is that we do take action. If you need some ideas or encouragement, in addition to the monthly Green Flash, watch for our weekly Environmental Roundup, usually hitting our website and social media Fridays or Saturdays. It includes numerous things to do and ways to learn and engage, both in the wild and in the digital realm.

But it all starts in nature.

Thank you.
P.S. Last month we reported that use of the systemic pesticide aldicarb was being considered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The permit for the known neurotoxin was denied. Check our website for this story and more at news.wgcu.org/tags/environment.

Thank you.

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**Is Right to Farm really about the right to farm?**

Sugar cane burning in a field

PHOTO COURTESY SIERRA CLUB FLORIDA

Gov. Ron DeSantis has signed a bill that will expand legal protections for agricultural operations. Passed by both the Florida House and Senate, the bill (SB 88) expands the state’s 1979 “Right to Farm” law and will shield the agriculture industry from what it considers nuisance lawsuits.

The bill prohibits so-called nuisance lawsuits filed by people who do not own property within one-half mile of alleged violations. Critics argue that the bill will limit lawsuits over the potential negative health impacts of things like burning sugar cane.
WGCU’s Mike Kiniry spoke with Deborah Foote, acting chapter director for Sierra Club Florida, who opposes the legislation, and Gene Lollis, president of the Florida Cattlemen’s Association, who supports it.

LISTEN NOW.

More WGCU environmental coverage of note

PHOTO BY ELLEN LEVY FINCH, CREATIVE COMMONS

- The Florida Department of Agriculture has denied AgLogic's permits for aldicarb.

PHOTO BY CARLTON WARD JR., NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC IMAGE COLLECTION

- WGCU’s Mike Kiniry interviewed National Geographic Explorer & Conservation Photographer Carlton Ward, Jr. on an episode of Gulf Coast Life.

- Red tide continues to plague Southwest Florida.

- And the Southwest Florida Regional Resiliency Compact is moving forward, with a first meeting of all 14 municipalities planned for the end of May. This compact is an agreement between Southwest Florida county and municipal governments to work together to prepare for, adapt to, and mitigate climate change impacts.

- GCL hosted a preview of the May 6th Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership - 2021 Southwest Florida Climate Summit.

- Manatee County Commissioners approved construction of a deep injection well to dispose of the remaining wastewater at the Piney Point site, but that’s raising concerns among nearby residents who rely on well water, as WUSF reports.

Read these stories and more online!

Read more Green Flash

More environmental reporting from WGCU
Manatees
Manatees can give birth year-round, but they are especially active giving birth this time of year. If you’ve never seen it happen in the wild, you can watch multiple videos of a recent manatee birth near Siesta Harbor on our [WEBSITE].

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOTE MARINE LABORATORY

Consumer alert and solution: 'Biodegradable' straws?

Perhaps you’ve shifted to using biodegradable straws, especially after seeing any number of horrifying videos of the danger of plastic straws on the environment. Environmental Health News reports that, unfortunately, toxic PFAS a.k.a. ‘forever chemicals,’ coat the outer layers of biodegradable straws. According to a new University of Florida study, harmful PFAS chemicals are increasingly being used in "green" and "compostable" products. PFASs (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), are resistant to liquids. The

Effects of exposure to PFASs on human health

GRAPHIC FROM EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, CREATIVE COMMONS
UF study, published in Chemosphere, “showed that some companies who market their straws as 'biodegradable' may be misleading the public.”

You might want to start skipping the straw entirely.

Author Interview

The Monsanto Papers,
by Carey Gillam

Valerie Vande Panne speaks with author, investigative journalist, and research director of US Right to Know, Carey Gillam, about her new book, about capitalism, greed, the prioritization of profits over public health, and the long-term, multi-generational impacts of chemicals and pesticides -- and what you can do.

LISTEN NOW.

Calendar of Events

FORT MYERS FILM FESTIVAL

WATCH: The Fort Myers Film Festival, May 12-16 has an environmental track, with multiple environment-related films and shorts. LEARN MORE

LEARN: The Von Arx Wildlife Hospital is hosting a virtual Wildlife Hospital Baby Shower on Saturday, June 5, to help raise awareness and support for its youngest patients. The hospital has seen a 27% increase in patients this year. LEARN MORE

ACT: The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will meet virtually May 12-13 beginning at 9 a.m. each day. LEARN MORE

Above: Python-detector
A ‘twilight zone’ resident, the sea snake PHOTO BY KATE L. SANDERS, TINA SCHROEDER, MICHAEL L. GUINEA AND ARNE R. RASMUSSEN, CREATIVE COMMONS

Ending on a good note ...

A sea snake thought to be extinct seems to have simply retreated into the ocean’s “twilight zone.” (The twilight zone, also called the mesophotic zone, refers to ocean depths between about 30 and 150 meters, where some sunlight still penetrates.)
READ MORE

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