

# HEARTWOOD PRESERVE

# THE PINECONE POST

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WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME THREE



## *Dear Heartwood Families and Friends,*

We hope you are as excited as we are about the wrap up of 2020! While the year has no doubt been a doozy, I am deeply grateful...

- For each one of you who has placed your trust and your loved ones in our hands and entrusted them to these beautiful woods;
- For the wildflowers that continue to bloom and flourish, and for the wildlife that call this place home;
- For our Burial Crew – those special individuals who give their time, strength, and compassion to making our burial services meaningful and dignified;
- For the calm of a Florida winter, when we are blessed with days that beckon us safely outdoors, while our Northern friends shovel snow and keep their social distance inside;
- For the balmy evening in early November when we celebrated four years and remembered those dear ones our families have lost;
- For the amazing staff that keep Heartwood going day after day, week after week, I am especially thankful. Learn a bit more in this newsletter about Diana, our Manager. She is the smile and quick wit that keeps our office a joyful place. And to those of you who have given kudos to Samantha, our creative Administrative Assistant who is responsible for these newsletters, I could not agree more with your compliments. Barney continues to maintain our grounds and provide his steady calm presence, smooth trails, and tidy common areas. All the while, J.R. is building a majestic maintenance barn, after completing an informational kiosk sign and a heart pine cart to carry the deceased to the grave.
- And for all the unexpected ways our community, our country and our world learned this year to value human connection, health, humor, medical advances, and nature.

As we peer ahead into a New Year, we hope you will join us – in person or in spirit – as we cautiously revive and build our community. Some things we look forward to are:

- Mindfulness meditation group – please complete our short survey if you are interested
- Friends of Heartwood volunteer brigade – join us to pull invasive weeds or pick-up trash
- Burial crew – we are always looking for additional folks to join this special group
- Memorial plantings – Last March we had to delay our plans but we hope to plant trees along our driveway this Spring.

Please contact us if any of these pique your interest... and stay tuned for a Better Year Ahead!

*-Laura Starkey*

# Day of Remembrance



November 7 gifted us with a beautiful fall afternoon where you found us gathered under the Big Oak. Approximately 30 Heartwood Families sat in a large circle and listened to our guest facilitator, Maria Sgambati, speak all the names of those buried here at Heartwood Preserve Conservation Cemetery.

**"TO SPEAK THE NAME OF THE DEAD  
IS TO MAKE THEM LIVE AGAIN."**

-Ancient Egyptian Belief

The moment of silence that followed was broken by stories being told by loved ones that felt like sharing. Anecdotes surrounded our circle with both laughter and tears.

As our time in the circle came to a close, our families migrated over to the welcome table. There, the families that submitted pictures were given a special handmade craft of their loved one put together by our office assistant, Samantha. She spent a few days collecting fresh pinecones from the Preserve and making unique frames for each individual.

From here, the group dispersed. With wildflower seeds in hand, everyone went their respective ways to visit their loved ones. We had Julie Wert & Richard Stauffer, from the Florida Native Plant Society, on hand to help identify the plants that are blooming on and around the graves.

A big thank you to all the Families that came out and lamented with us in memoriam of all the loved ones lost. And another big thank you to the staff and volunteers that helped set up for our birthday party at the same time. These two events would not have been so successful without you.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



4



NOVEMBER 7, 2020

# Winter IN BLOOM

Pictured: [Groundsel Bush](#) (*Baccharis halimifolia*)

Winter is the time of year when most plant life goes into hibernation; the cold comes and signs of life all but disappear. Walking around the preserve these next couple of months, you will have a hard time spotting very many colorful wildflowers as many have gone to seed, while others are waiting to bloom in the spring. But there is beauty to be found in the left over seed heads.



## [Narrowleaf silkgrass](#)

(*Pityopsis graminifolia*)

The genus name *Pityopsis* is from the Greek *pitys*, or "pine." It is a reference to the nymph *Pitys*, who, in Greek mythology, was changed into a pine tree by the gods. The species epithet *graminifolia* is from the Latin *gramen*, or "grass," and *folius*, or "leaf."

## [Button rattlesnakemaster](#)

(*Eryngium yuccifolium*)

The common name rattlesnakemaster, also known as snakemaster, may have come from its use by Native Americans as an antidote for rattlesnake venom. Timicuan and Creek natives also used the roots to treat neuralgia and the leaves for dysentery.



# Winter IN BLOOM

A plant that is thriving right now is Wiregrass (*Aristida beyrichinia*). Because we had our control burn this summer, these fire-dependent plants have had their seed production stimulated and they are ready to propagate more tufts of grass.

A few weeks following fire, newly re-sprouted blades are edible to cattle, but become unappealing to grazers as the plant matures. Wiregrass is also a favorite food of gopher tortoises and quail. Its tall blades provide valuable cover for many birds, reptiles, and small mammals.



Heartwood Preserve's purpose is to conserve and protect the natural longleaf pine flatwoods that are found here. This habitat is not as common as it once was due to agriculture, pine farms, and development. A prolific member of the understory of longleaf pine forests is the wiregrass plant. There are [two varieties](#) of wiregrass, *Aristida stricta* that is found in the Carolinas and *Aristida beyrichinia* found in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. This portion of land is referred to as the [Wiregrass Region](#), since it developed differently than its adjacent regions about a million years ago. This historic plant is so strong and flexible, that Seminole Native Americans make baskets called "[sweetgrass baskets](#)" out of its fibers.



Up to the 20th century, North Americans would participate in a Christmas tradition known as "[side hunts](#)." This was a competition to see who could kill the most birds, regardless of the bird's species, its rarity, or its beneficial place in the ecosystem; this was a time when birds were considered a limitless resource. It was ornithologist, Frank Chapman who changed the game. He proposed a different format to the competition, simply count the sighted birds without killing them. On Christmas Day 1900, the first bird count commenced.

The results of the past 120 years since that first count have been a vital census for science and especially in conservation biology for the study of long-term health in bird populations. The data collected by this recreation helps identify environmental issues which not only affects birds, but people too. This information helps our community make strategic decisions in protecting our Earth's precious resources.

**To learn more about the West Pasco Audubon or to sign up for next year's count:**

[CLICK HERE](#)



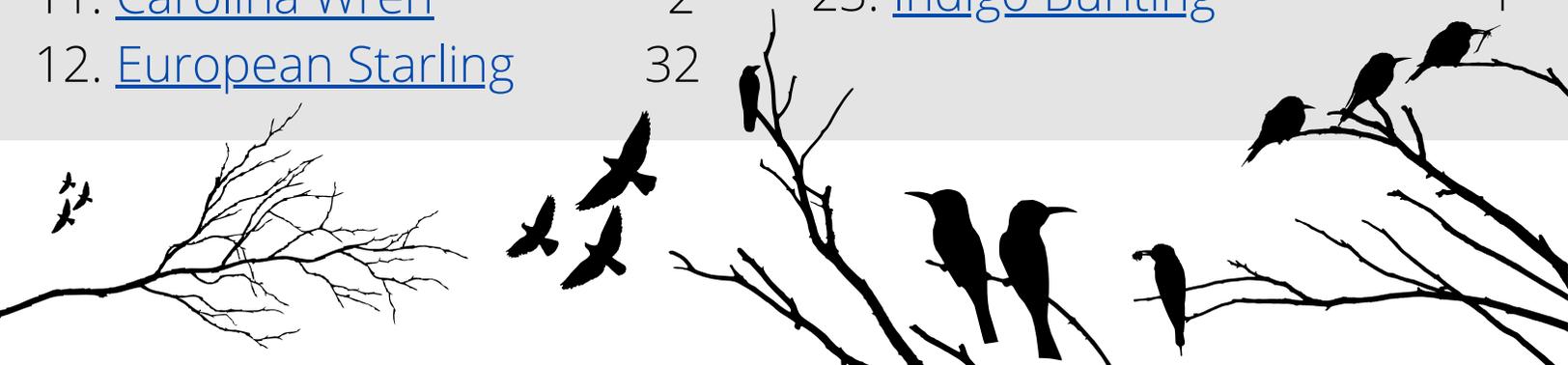


 EASTERN BLUEBIRD  
BY PAT GOLDBERG

Two members from the West Pasco chapter of the Florida Audubon came out to Heartwood on December 16, 2020 to participate in the Christmas Count.

Of the **1,567,240** total birds counted so far this year, Mary Keith and Pat Goldberg counted **296** of them right here.

<u>BIRD</u>	<u>NUMBER OBSERVED</u>	<u>BIRD</u>	<u>NUMBER OBSERVED</u>
1. <a href="#">Blue-winged Teal</a>	2	13. <a href="#">Eastern Bluebird</a>	21
2. <a href="#">Red-bellied Woodpecker</a>	5	14. <a href="#">American Robin</a>	67
3. <a href="#">Downy Woodpecker</a>	4	15. <a href="#">American Goldfinch</a>	8
4. <a href="#">White-eyed Vireo</a>	1	16. <a href="#">Chipping Sparrow</a>	1
5. <a href="#">American Crow</a>	1	17. <a href="#">Common Grackle</a>	44
6. <a href="#">Fish Crow</a>	6	18. <a href="#">Common Yellowthroat</a>	4
7. <a href="#">Carolina Chickadee</a>	5	19. <a href="#">Palm Warbler</a>	5
8. <a href="#">Brown-headed Nuthatch</a>	5	20. <a href="#">Pine Warbler</a>	7
9. <a href="#">Blue-gray Gnatcatcher</a>	3	21. <a href="#">Yellow-rumped Warbler</a>	65
10. <a href="#">House Wren</a>	2	22. <a href="#">Northern Cardinal</a>	5
11. <a href="#">Carolina Wren</a>	2	23. <a href="#">Indigo Bunting</a>	1
12. <a href="#">European Starling</a>	32		



# DO YOU KNOW DIANA?

Test your knowledge of Heartwood Preserve's Manager, Diana Sayegh, soon to be **Diana Brooks**, March 21, 2021!



## BASICS:

**Nickname?:** Mom, Mommy, Di, Lovey, D

**Kids?:** 3 humans and 1 Golden Doodle fur baby

**Zodiac?:** Cancer-Leo cusp, July 22

**Left or right handed?:** Right!

**City you were born?:** Long Island, NY

**City you were raised?:** Coral Springs, FL

**What job did you want as a kid?:**  
Journalist

## FAVORITES:

**Flower?:** Lily in all forms. Named my daughter after them

**Scent?:** Lavender

**TV show?:** Saturday Night Live

**Musical artist?:** Stevie Nicks

**Author?:** poet & activist [Najwa Zebian](#)

**Place to vacation?:** North Carolina mtns.

**Holiday?:** Thanksgiving

**Color?:** Black

**Time of day?:** Sunset

**Drink?:** Iced coffee

**Food?:** Sushi (with no seaweed!)

**What song would you like played at your funeral?**

Landslide by Fleetwood Mac

**People would describe you as?:**

A social butterfly. In high school, I was voted "Most likely to become a talk-show host"



**If you could be any animal for a day, which one?**

a bird

**Is there a word or phrase that you always say?**

"Just Breathe"

## FAQ:

**How long have you worked in the death care industry and at Heartwood?**

I joined the industry in 2006 and have been at Heartwood since 2016

**Are you going to be buried here?**

YES!

**Why do you work in death care?**

After losing my dad at the age of 5, I always felt comfortable dealing with death

**How do you continue to do this?**

The thank yous. When it's all said and done, people have told me, "You made the hardest day of my life easier." That is the most rewarding.

“

THIS IS MY CALLING. THIS IS WHAT I WAS MADE TO DO.

”

# END OF YEAR STATS 2020

NUMBER OF BURIALS IN 2020

- FULL BODY: 19
- CREMATION: 14
- TOTAL: 33

NUMBER OF BURIALS SINCE 2016

- FULL BODY: 38
- CREMATION: 39
- TOTAL: 77

NUMBER OF PREPLAN CONTRACTS

- 2016: 1
- 2017: 15
- 2018: 20
- 2019: 36
- 2020: 50
- TOTAL: 122

NUMBER OF NATURAL BURIAL AREAS OPENED

- THREE
- TOTAL: 7

NUMBER OF CONTROL BURNS SINCE 2016

- FOUR

NUMBER OF ACRES IN USE FOR BURIALS

- FOUR

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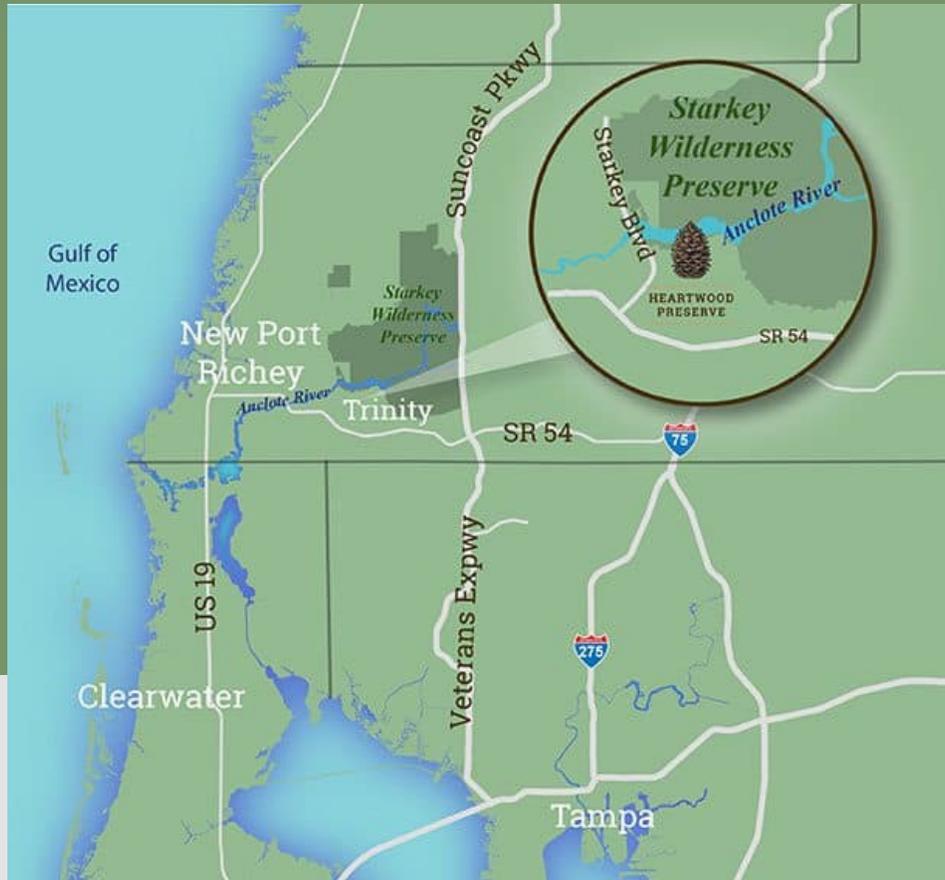
## HEARTWOOD PRESERVE

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### Mindfulness Meditation Survey

Are you interested in joining a meditation group?

[START SURVEY](#)



4100 Starkey Blvd, Trinity, FL 34655  
(727) 376-5111

Welcome Center

Monday – Friday 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Nature Preserve & Cemetery.

Monday - Saturday 9:30AM - 4:30PM

Sunday 11AM - 4:30PM



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**HEARTWOOD PRESERVE**

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