CREW
Land & Water Trust

July-November 2026
CREW News



July-November 2026 CREW News

Executive Director Update



Greetings, Friends of CREW!

We've been excited to get this new issue of CREW News into your hands because there is so much to share! In the pages that follow, Robin, Piper and Trish will provide updates on CREW Trust's trail operations, environmental education programs and community outreach; however, before we get to those, I wanted to share several important developments.

First, I want to acknowledge that we recently celebrated Piper's 3-year anniversary and Trish's 2-year anniversary with CREW Trust! Robin's 3-year anniversary is coming up on December 7th. I can't overstate what a privilege it is for me to work alongside such creative, collaborative and dedicated teammates. CREW Trust is a small organization and few people know as well as I do how hard these three professionals work to ensure we are delivering the best trail experiences and programs to you. We're blessed to have Piper, Trish and Robin as the core of the CREW Trust team; so, if you see them out on the trails or at a program, please let them know how much you also appreciate them!

Candid Seal of Transparency

I'm also proud to announce that CREW Trust recently received our Platinum Seal of Transparency. About 1% of U.S. non-profit charitable organizations receive this seal. This is the third straight year we've received this highest level of recognition from Candid, an organization that works to improve donor confidence by promoting nonprofit transparency and accountability about programs, financials, and program impact.



Bonita Historical Society

I was grateful for a recent invitation from the Bonita Springs Historical Society to visit the historic McSwain house on Old 41 to deliver a talk about the history of the CREW Project and CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails. We are looking forward to welcoming their members for a guided walk and talk about the history of CREW Flint Pen Strand in February.



Executive Director Update, Cont'd

Sign Project Update

In the last issue of CREW News, I mentioned our ongoing collaboration with the Naples Zoo to design and install additional educational signage along CREW's trail systems. We worked with Lorenzo Walker Technical College last spring to design and fabricate sign pedestal stands, an effort funded by a Naples Zoo grant. This semester, we are working with FGCU students enrolled in Interpreting the Environment and Digital Media Design classes to design signs highlighting Snakes of CREW, Spiders of CREW, Butterflies of CREW, and CREW's Wading Birds. The Naples Zoo has offered to fabricate these signs once the final designs are approved. This project is a terrific example of multi-partner collaboration to enhance the visitor experience at CREW.

SEED Collier

CREW Trust was recently invited to participate as a host organization for the inaugural cohort of the Sustainable Environmental Education for Decisionmakers (SEED) Collier program. This is new program co-run by The Conservancy of SWFL, Friends of Rookery Bay and Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is a competitive fellowship program in Collier County intended to equip leaders and professionals across various industries with environmental science knowledge that can help guide responsible growth and community resilience. CREW Trust hosted session #2 for the inaugural cohort on November 6th at CREW Cypress Dome Trails. Our program focused on CREW, with a particular focus on water-related ecosystem services, including groundwater recharge, stormwater retention, and water-quality regulation, followed by a guided ecosystem exploration.

Fund-a-Need

The team also wants to thank the donors who recently contributed to our fund-a-need for desktop education models for our adult and youth programs. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to procure what we needed to aquire desktop models to demonstrate the structure of the aquifer system in SWFL and how sheetflow travels across the CREW landscape and interacts with wetlands.









2026-2027 CREW Trails Sponsorship

If you've visited any of CREW Trails in the last month, you'll have noticed that the 2026-2027 CREW Trails Sponsorship have all been installed. We are grateful to all our sponsors for helping us raise funds to support our trail maintenance work for the upcoming year, ensuring CREW's 45+ miles of mixed-use trails are in the best possible condition for the nearly 100,000 visitors CREW welcomes each year. If you missed the opportunity to become a CREW Trails Sponsor this year, we'll be kicking off our 2027-2028 CREW Trails Sponsors in March. We'd love to offer you the opportunity to show your support! Reach out to Bob at rlucius@crewtrust.org to learn more.





CREW Cypress Dome Trails



CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails



CREW Marsh Trails

16th Stanley Hole Golf Tournament

Despite getting cut short by inclement weather, 31 teams hit the beautiful Bonita Bay Naples course on October 16th to make this year's Stanley Hole golf tournament fundraiser another fantastic success! It was great to return Bonita Bay, where CREW Trust's annual tournament first began many years ago. We are grateful for all the players and sponsors who came together to raise funds for CREW Trust's education programs in the coming year!

We are especially grateful to Bonita Bay for hosting this year's tournament and to the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association (EGCSA) for their invaluable support as a tournament partner again this year!



















Trail Operations

New Mower for CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail

CREW Trust added a new tow-behind mower to the fleet this summer with the assistance of a generous contribution from the **Bergauer Family**. This large 60" finish cut mower will be stored on-site and used to support the Trail Work Tuesday teams in their maintenance of the CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail when it re-opens this winter.



Fire Season at CREW

CREW Trail Operations Coordinator Robin Serne has helped SFWMD staff with three prescribed fires at CREW, as well as two wildfires this season. Two 80-acre prescribed fires in northern CREW Flint Pen Strand, and a 110-acre burn of Corkscrew Marsh at the CREW Marsh Trails have been conducted so far this season for ecological restoration. Additionally, a 70-acre wildfire west of the trail system at CREW Flint Pen Strand, and a 8-acre wildfire inside the yellow trail at CREW Cypress Dome Trails occurred back to back on August 26 and 27; both fires were ignited by lightning strikes.



NEW Kiosk and Signage at CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail

CREW Trust volunteers recently installed an additional visitor kiosk at CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail to provide more space for program and educational information. The team also installed a newly designed trail map poster in anticipation of the re-opening of the trail next month.



CREW Trust Volunteer Program Statistics

From July thru November 2026, CREW Trust volunteers logged over 1800 volunteer hours. This includes 679 hours of research for the herpetofauna study, 529 hours of trail maintenance, 206 hours of trail stewardship, 116 hours in support of special events and outreach, and 83 hours assisting our education programs and more. CREW Trust volunteers carried out 20 Trail Work Tuesdays, collected over 30 bags of trash from the trails, and mowed more than thirty miles of trails. According to the Independent Sector and the University of Maryland's Do Good Institute, 1,800 volunteer hours is worth $62,784in free labor!



How to Use a Chronolog

There are now Chronolog photo stations installed at every trail system in CREW! Now, it's your turn to be a citizen scientist! You can participate in this community science project by simply taking a photo with your phone. Line up your phone on the stand as shown in the instructional sign, take a photo, and then send it in by scanning the QR code on the sign. Your photo will be added to the time-lapse video from that location. We've added new instructional signs at each location to guide you and help you participate in this project!

So far, 681 visitors have submitted more than 1,329 photos across all ten CREW Chronologs! To see all the time-lapse videos, visit **https://www.chronolog.io/project/CRW**








Photo Submissions from CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails Lakes Chronolog






Photo Submissions from CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail Ida's Pond Chronolog



Education Programming

Summer In-Town Lectures

Our summer in-town lecture series was a smash this year! We hosted lectures on *Edible & Medicinal Plants of CREW*, *Prescribed Fire for Land Management*, *Alligator Ecology*, *Watershed Ecology & Restoration*, *Mycology*, and *CREW History*, as well as a panel discussion about *Mental Health & Nature*, and a hands-on class on *Owl Pellet Dissection*. If you've got any ideas about what you'd like to see next summer, reach out to Piper at **education@crewtrust.org**



Summer Camps

This summer Piper visited many summer camps and also welcomed some out to the trails. She visited Alligator Creek Preserve and facilitated her Life Cycle of a Frog program. Traveling all the way up to Weeki Wachee Preserve, Piper conducted a dip-netting activity for the Palmetto and Pine Nature Based Preschool, introducting then to the basic concepts of water quality. Estero Recreation Center invited her back to their annual summer camp where she presented on animal skulls and signs of wildlife. Finally, youth from the Golden Gate Summer Camp visited CREW Cypress Dome Trails to learn about animal habitats and discover wildlife along the trails.





Frog & Toad Survey

Piper also assisted the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission with the 2026 Frog and Toad Survey this summer. She collected data from June-September across 10 different stops along Corkscrew Road. Amphibians are indicator species, meaning they can showcase the quality of water ecosystems due to their sensitivity to pollution and habitat loss. Collecting this data every year is crucial to studying water quality across CREW. The Frog and Toad Survey data, combined with the ongoing Herpetofauna Survey data, will serve as an important record for better understanding the state of CREW's biodiversity .



Education Programming, Cont'd



Adult Programs

All the adult Strolling Science Seminars and Specialty Topic Treks, as well as our Strolling Science for Kids programs for the 2026-2027 year, have been posted on Eventbrite. We're offereing a fantastic diversity of subject-matter experts and program topics. Some new topics that will be covered this year include stargazing at CREW Flint Pen Strand using smart telephone technology, along with a stargazing event geared towards high school students. We will also be offering a photography workshop for beginners and experts alike, and two hikes focused on fern ecology and identification. The usual menu of guided hikes and guided birding hikes will be available, as well, including Hike the Loop at CREW Bird Rookery Swamp Trail once the boardwalk opens back up Make sure to check **crewtrust.eventbrite.com** for all the events we have coming up this season!



Walk through a Watershed

As the 2026-2027 school year begins, Piper has welcoming 3rd grade field trippers for our Walk Through a Watershed program. During these trips to CREW Marsh Trails, students learn about water quality, the differences between vertebrates and invertebrates, and flowering vs. non-flowering plants. For this season, we'll host 22 3rd-grade classes for this program. Piper is assisted in these eduction programs by Iris Brown, the Fall 2026 CREW Environmental Education Intern , as well as CREW volunteers, Leonard and Batya.



Day in the Life of an Ecologist

We also recently introduced a new program specifically for high school students. In "A Day in the Life of an Ecologist," students learn about the interconnectivity of natural resources within Florida's habitats. Students compare soil types between multiple habitats, search for macroinvertebrates to determine water quality, and develop vegetation monitoring techniques and identification skills. This year, we hosted nine classes from Aubrey Rogers High School for this exciting program.



Engagement & Outreach



CREW Trust Outreach & Education Continue!

Despite the raindy season, the CREW Trust team was busy spreading the word about CREW! From July - November, the team tabled and spoke at 5 **events** in the community, reaching 600**+ individuals!** Venues included F**lorida Gulf Coast University**, **Special Populations of Cape Coral, Gulf Coast High School, Pathways to Opportunity, Wild About Wildlife (Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife), PantherFest,** and more! E-mail Trish at **EE@crewtrust.org** if you'd like to invite us to speak.



CREW Trust in the News

CREW was featured in the News-Press this summer after prolific SWFL photographer, **Andrew West,** joined the research team for a morning of herpetofauna surveys. West's photos spotlighted the often unseen reptiles and amphibians that the project is surveying, and a 3 minute video segment about the project was also produced and showcased on the website as a result!

To watch the video, head to the News-Press website or our Facebook/Instagram for a link to the article!



Member Social at Riptide Brewery

We hosted a member/volunteer social at Riptide Brewery on November 12th. It was great to see many long-time CREW Trust supporters and many new faces, as well! With close to thirty attendees, this may have been the most well-attended social in years. If you missed this one, there will be another on February 11th. We'd love to see you there!



CREW Trust on a Mission to Increase Membership!

A longstanding goal of the CREW Trust team has been to reach **400 CREW Trust members**, and we're on a mission to reach that goal by the end of 2026! In addition to discounted pricing on all of our programming, CREW Trust members also receive exclusive access to seven Members-Only programs this season - completely free of charge! **To become a member,** visit **crewtrust.org** and click the **"Membership"** tab. It also makes a great gift!

Engagement & Outreach, Cont'd

Corkscrew Road Clean-Up!

In November, CREW Trust's Trail Work Tuesday volunteers filled 52 trash bags in just 2.5 hours while picking up litter along Corkscrew Road! This 2-mile section of Corkscrew includes the entrance to CREW Marsh Trails. The CREW Trust team has been stewarding this stretch of road for the past twelve years after officially adopting it in 2014. In addition to removing bottles, cans, snack wrappers, and even a couple of tires, the team also spotted tons of butterflies along the route! Phaon crescents and white peacocks were the most numerous. Seeing them reminded us of how important it is to keep our roadways clean!







Exciting Things Behind the Scenes!

This summer, the team began work on several exciting back-of-house projects to help CREW Trust run even smoother, including creating a digital archive of historical CREW News publications, self-guided trail hikes for solo hikers, membership program improvements, and the big one, an entire overhaul of the CREW Trust website!

If you have suggestions for how CREW Trust could improve, please email your suggestions to **ee@crewtrust.org**

CREW Chatter: What are folks saying about CREW?

"Love hiking at CREW Bird Rookery, looking forward to the new boardwalk opening!" -**Paulette W**
"I really enjoyed both lectures & can't wait for more!" - **Susan D**
"The CREW land is the best" - **John C**
"Excited to see the final improvements for the trail" -**Brian**
"Great lecture always learn something at all of the different lectures. Thanks great job" - **Leonard S**
"*One of my favorite places to hike. CREW volunteers work very hard to keep everything walkable. Theres so much wildlife and natural beauty"* **- Aleta B.**

Stay Connected with CREW

It's never been easier to stay up-to-date and get involved with all things CREW Trust!
Enjoy newsletters? Email rlucius@crewtrust.org to join the 900+ receiving our monthly e-newsletters!
Looking for weekly updates? Follow us on Instagram (@crewtrust), Facebook (CREW Land & Water Trust), and LinkedIn (CREW Land & Water Trust)

How to Use AllTrails at CREW

AllTrails

1. Download and Install the AllTrails App from the Apple or Google App Store. Then, create a free account.

2. Use the EXPLORE function to search for all the CREW trails prior to leaving home or scan the QR code on the AllTrails sign at the kiosk upon arriving at the trailhead.



3. The app provides a general description about the trail and the extent of cell phone coverage you can expect to have while hiking. The App also provides reviews from previous hikers, allowing you to get a sense of the experience that awaits you.

4. Once you're ready to begin your hike, click NAVIGATE and then START. The AllTrails App will begin showing your navigation relative to the trail, using whichever map overlay you've selected. This is a useful feature if there are confusing service roads or places where the trail may not be clearly visible.

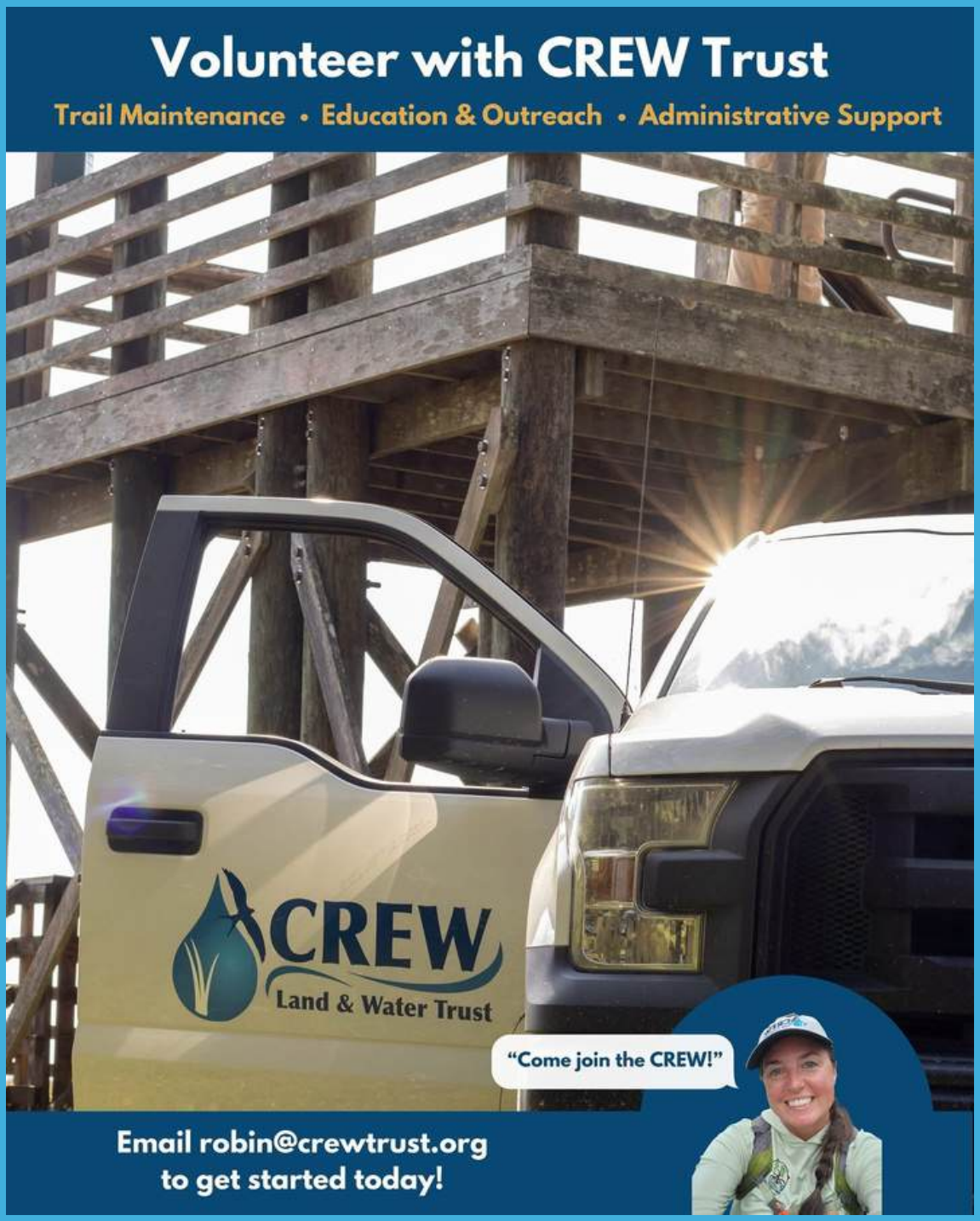


5. If you've upgraded from a free account to an AllTrails Pro account ($35.99 per year), you'll be able to download trail maps to your phone and continue to have access to them even when cell service isn't available.

6. You can put your phone away to enjoy the hike and save your battery, only referring to the App as needed to verify your location.

7. When you've completed your hike, just hold down the PAUSE button until the FINISH button appears. Once you've hit FINISH, the App will give you the option to upload photos and provide a rating for the hike, and then the hike will be added to your library of completed adventures. You can also review your past hikes on the App or on the AllTrails website.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!









You can become a CREW Trust Member or renew online by visiting www.crewtrust.org and navigating to membership registration - or just print and mail the membership application.

CREW Land & Water Trust



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

Your Membership Includes

- Discounted tickets to events & programs
- Free Admission to Members-Only events
- Exclusive subscription to CREW News
- Satisfaction of knowing that you are contributing to the CREW Trust mission!

Join the CREW Trust NOW & Make A Difference Today!

CREWTrust.org



CREW Trust is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization that helps to protect our 60,000-acre Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed. We rely on memberships and donations from generous people like you to fund our programs.

CREW Land & Water Trust



Membership Application

Join/renew at CREWtrust.org

Name _____

Company/Organization _____

Mailing Address_____

_____

City, ST, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

How did you hear about CREW?

_____

I am a NEW or RENEWING member (Circle one)

(We do NOT share member information, including email, with other organizations.)

- Preserver ($5000 +)
- Panther ($3500)
- Woodstork ($2000)
- Southern Bald Eagle ($1000)
- Swallow-Tailed Kite ($500)
- Cypress ($250)
- Ghost Orchid ($100)
- Bobcat ($50)
- Family ($35)
- Individual ($25)

Thank you!

Make checks payable to CREW Land & Water Trust
23998 Corkscrew Road, Estero, FL 33928
(239) 657-2253 CREWTrust.org

CREW
Land & Water Trust

Member Programs

As a thank-you for being a CREW Trust member, join us for our monthly Members-Only programs!

~~Oct 8~~	**Sunrise Stroll** ~~8:00 AM - 10:00 AM~~ CREW Cypress Dome Trails
~~Nov 12~~	**Member Social** ~~6:30 PM - 8:30 PM~~ Riptide Brewing Company
Dec 10	**New Moon Hike** 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM CREW Marsh Trails
Jan 14	**Painting in Nature** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CREW Marsh Trails
Feb 11	**Member Social** 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Riptide Brewing Company
Mar 18	**Sunset Stroll** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
Apr 8	**Watercolors at Sunset** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails

Always free, only for the CREW!





Not a member? Join today at crewtrust.org!

To register, visit crewtrust.eventbrite.com

CREW TRUST 2026-2027 KIDS PROGRAMS



Stargazing for High School Students

Fri. Dec. 4, 2026

5:30pm at CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails



Herpetology for Kids

Sat. Mar. 6, 2027

9:00am at CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails

Birding for Kids

Sat. Mar.13, 2027

9:00am at CREW Marsh Trails



BOOK NOW

CREW TRUST 2026-2027 SPECIALTY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

CREW Land & Water Trust

Join us for local expert-led, specialty programs out on the CREW Trails!

FRI. OCT. 23 5 PM – 7 PM	[illegible]	CREW Marsh Trails
SAT. NOV. 14 8 AM – 10:30 AM	[illegible]	CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
SAT. NOV. 21 9 AM – 11 AM	[illegible]	CREW Marsh Trails
SAT. DEC. 5 9 AM – 1 PM	*Geocaching at CREW Marsh Trails*	CREW Marsh Trails
SAT. JAN. 16 9 AM – 12 PM	*Edible & Medicinal Plants*	CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
FRI. FEB. 5 9 AM – 11 AM	*Ferns of the Forest*	CREW Marsh Trails
FRI. FEB. 12 5 PM – 8 PM	*Stargazing*	CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
SAT. FEB. 27 9 AM – 11 AM	*The Power of Place*	CREW Marsh Trails
FRI. MAR. 19 9:30 AM – 12 PM	*Beyond Butterflies*	CREW Flint Pen Strand Trails
SAT. MAR. 20 9 AM – 11 AM	*Exploring Reptile & Amphibian Diversity*	CREW Marsh Trails
SUN. MAR. 21 9 AM – 1 PM	*Geocaching at CREW Cypress Domes*	CREW Cypress Dome Trails
SAT. APR. 10 6 PM – 8 PM	*Spring Blooms at Sunset*	CREW Cypress Dome Trails

Interested in discounted pricing?
Become a CREW Trust Member at **crewtrust.org** today!

For registration and more information, please visit **crewtrust.eventbrite.com**

CREW Land & Water Trust

GUIDED WALKS

CREW CYPRESS DOME TRAILS

First Wednesdays
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

December 2: White Trail
January 6: Yellow/Green Trails
February 3: White Trail
March 3: Yellow/Green Trails
April 7: White Trail

CREW FLINT PEN STRAND TRAILS

Second Wednesdays
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

December 9: Yellow South Trail
January 13: White Trail
February 10: Orange Trail
March 10: Yellow North Trail
April 14: Purple Trail

REGISTER ON
CREWTRUST.EVENTBRITE.COM

GUIDED WALKS

CREW Land & Water Trust

CREW MARSH TRAILS

Third Wednesdays
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

November 18: Red Trail
December 16: Green Trail
January 20: Orange Trail
February 17: Red Trail
March 17: Green Trail
April 21: Orange Trail

HIKE THE LOOP

CREW BIRD ROOKERY SWAMP TRAIL

Select Saturdays
7:30 AM - 12:30 PM

February 20
March 27

CREW BIRD ROOKERY SWAMP TRAIL

Select First Saturdays, Select Wednesdays
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

~~December 2~~
~~December 5~~
December 16
December 30
January 2
January 13
January 27
February 6
February 10
February 24
March 6
March 10
March 24
April 3
April 7
April 21

REGISTER ON CREWTRUST.EVENTBRITE.COM



CREW Land & Water Trust

Instagram: @crewtrust

CREW Land & Water Trust

crewtrust.eventbrite.com

Main Office Phone: 239-637-2253

Extension 0: Trail Conditions
Extension 1: Executive Director
Extension 2: Education Coordinator
Extension 3: Trail Operations Coordinator
Extension 4: Engagement Coordinator

or E-mail us at CREWTrust@CREWTrust.org

23998 Corkscrew Field Road, Estero, FL 33928