

FLORIDA LAND STEWARD



A Quarterly Newsletter for Florida Landowners and Resource Professionals

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Hurricane Recovery Resources

Hurricane Idalia brought significant impacts to north Florida and into Georgia. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) estimated that the storm damaged 289,096 acres of timber at a value of \$64,751,255. Following are some program updates and resources that may be of assistance to those recovering from the storm.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is coordinating with federal, state, and local partners to provide critical supplies and help communities and individuals. FEMA has a website dedicated to Hurricane Idalia recovery assistance: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricane-idalia>

USDA Disaster Assistance

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) **Emergency Conservation Program and Emergency Forest Restoration Program** are authorized to assist

landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests. See these abbreviated links for details:

Emergency Conservation Program: <https://tinyurl.com/2wzmx472>

Emergency Forest Restoration Program: <https://tinyurl.com/8w4777zy>

USDA offers a variety of programs to help farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, communities, and businesses that have been hard hit by natural disaster events. Visit <https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery> for all USDA programs that can help forestry and agricultural producers recover.

Farm loans: USDA FSA offers a variety of loans available including emergency loans that are triggered by disaster declarations and operating loans that can assist producers with credit needs. You can use

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Hurricane Idalia hit north Florida in late August, resulting in widespread impacts to forest and agricultural operations in Levy, Taylor, Lafayette, Suwannee, Madison, and Hamilton Counties. Photo by Camila Guillen.

these loans to replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, or refinance farm-related debts, and other needs.

Documentation: It's critical to keep accurate records to document all losses following a weather event. Producers are advised to document by taking time and date-stamped video or pictures **prior to and after** the loss. Other common documentation options include purchase

records, production records, vaccination records, bank or other loan documents, and third-party certification.

UF/IFAS Extension Resources

See the **Assessment and Management of Hurricane Damaged Timberland** fact sheet for guidance on assessing and triaging response to storm damaged timber, handling salvage operations and timber

sales, and more. Access the fact sheet at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR154>

See **Prepare Your Forest Property for Hurricane Season** for some strategies to make your property more resilient and steps you can take to recover from a storm more quickly. Access this one at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR436>

Strategies for Living with Wildlife and Preventing Conflicts

By Pete Diamond and Ginger Feagle, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

Among the greatest benefits of living in Florida are the many opportunities to visit natural areas and see wildlife in their native habitats. Often when wildlife visit our properties, they are appreciated and considered a good thing. But sometimes conflicts arise when wildlife outstay their welcome, tangle with trash, raid gardens, or take up residence in an attic. Interactions with wildlife are not surprising, particularly as residential areas expand outward and the lines between the urban and wildland communities become more fractured.

Nuisance wildlife, according to the FWC, is “wildlife that causes, or is about to cause, property damage, presents a threat to public safety, or causes an annoyance within, under, or upon a building.” It is important to remember that no single native species qualifies as a nuisance, and it is the behavior of an individual animal that classifies it as such. To gain a further understanding of these definitions, the Wildlife Code of the State of Florida, Florida Administrative Code, Division Number 68A (<https://tinyurl.com/mujxk3n8>) serves as the

governing resource for all wildlife matters in Florida. In addition, the FWC has many educational resources designed to help Florida residents learn to live with wildlife and prevent wildlife conflicts (<https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-serve/wildlife>).

Preventing conflicts

When looking for solutions to any type of wildlife trouble, it's worth remembering that animals have four basic survival

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Foxes, while beneficial for their control of rodents and other pest problems, can become a nuisance if pet food and other food sources are available on residential property. By Tyler Jones.

needs: food, water, shelter and space. Important first steps to solve the problem are to identify the type of visiting critter and what is attracting it to your property, such as open trash, available pet food, or a cozy home. The best way to discourage wildlife is to make the area less appealing which will encourage it to move to a more favorable location.

Food

To find the attractant, you may need to evaluate and remove potential food sources, including fallen fruit and produce discarded in compost piles. It is helpful to store trash in containers with tight-fitting lids or in special wildlife-resistant containers. Trash bins should be kept in a secure place until morning on the day of collection, instead of set out the evening before.

Pet food left outside can also attract wildlife. If pets must be fed outdoors, do it during daylight hours and then immediately remove uneaten food and food dishes. Store bird seed and livestock feed indoors or in sealed containers. Conflicts may also be minimized by keeping and securing pets indoors or in fenced areas, and penning livestock overnight.

Feeding wildlife, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can create problems for both people and the wildlife. For this reason, feeding alligators, bears, raccoons, foxes, coyotes and sandhill cranes is illegal in Florida. Wildlife that is fed may lose their innate fear of humans over time. These animals are still wild and once habituated can be potentially dangerous to pets, children, and even adults. Also, feeding wildlife encourages them to congregate together which can lead to aggression, increased competition, spread of infectious diseases, and degradation of habitat.

Placing bird feeders around your home is an enjoyable way to view wildlife. Because bird feeders may attract visitors other than birds, consider filling feeders

less frequently, relocating feeders to another part of the yard or positioning feeders in such a way that only birds have access. Any spilled seed should be cleaned up to discourage mice and other small mammals that could attract larger predators. Some feeders are designed to deter other visitors like squirrels.

Water

Providing a birdbath or alternative water source for wildlife may encourage them to stay away from swimming pools or fountains; however, installing these water resources may also increase other unexpected wildlife visitors. Remember to empty rainwater that has been collected in upturned containers, plant saucers, or old tires to reduce breeding sites for pesky mosquitoes.

Vegetation and Cover

It's also possible to modify your yard's landscaping to reduce conflicts with wildlife. Options include planting vegetation away from structures, maintaining your lawn and hedges, and ensuring that the native plant species selected are not attracting unwanted wildlife.

Another preventative measure to critter-proof homes, garages, and other out-buildings is to seal potential entry points and secure window screening. Before starting, it is important to make certain that wildlife or their young are not trapped within.

Deterrents and trapping

Installing physical barriers, such as netting, wire, or electrified fencing may also be useful for restricting or discouraging



Select a bird feeder designed to deter unwanted visitors like squirrels. IFAS file photo.

wildlife movement. See a video about installing electrified fencing at <https://tinyurl.com/3z88hyfb>.

A different approach to deter nuisance wildlife is the use of mechanical devices, such as motion-activated lights and sprinklers. These deterrents may startle wildlife or create an environment where they realize they are not welcome.

If wildlife continues to be a nuisance, it may need to be physically removed and/or relocated. Trapping is efficient to remove an animal from inside a building; whereas trapping is less efficient outdoors because it is probable that other animals from neighboring areas will simply come in to fill the void. Relocating a trapped animal can cause additional problems for it (e.g., unfamiliarity of the area for food and shelter, higher risk of predation) and for the receiving population (e.g., spreading disease,

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Most native birds, including their nests and eggs, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. By Tyler Jones.

causing overpopulation, increasing competition). The Wildlife Code of the State of Florida requires that native wildlife be: released elsewhere on the same property; released on private property with writ-

ten landowner permission on 40 contiguous acres within the same county; or humanely euthanized. For experienced trapping assistance, FWC maintains a searchable on-line database of nuisance wildlife control operators: <https://tinyurl.com/42une93s>.

Protected wildlife

It's important to remember that some of Florida's wildlife species are imperiled and are protected by state and/or federal laws. Some species are protected seasonally, such as bats during their maternity season.

Most native birds, including their nests and eggs, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (<https://tinyurl.com/uv6xmauf>).

Wild birds are protective of active nests with chicks or eggs and may dive at

people to discourage them from approaching their nest. The best approach is to leave nesting birds alone: young

birds typically leave the nest within a month or so. FWC has on-line information relating to nuisance waterfowl including problem ducks and geese at <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/waterfowl/nuisance>. Find information about defensive raptors at <http://myfwc.com/license/wildlife/protected-wildlife/raptors>.

Policies regarding regulations can be found for specific species and times of year can be found on FWC's nuisance wildlife website <https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/faqs>, including opportunities to apply for required permits to remove the species.

Get assistance

Managing wildlife that have worn out their welcome can be frustrating. Remember, often the most effective and least expensive strategy for managing these conflicts is managing their surroundings and redirecting their behavior. For additional assistance with wildlife conflicts, contact an FWC Wildlife Assistance Biologist in your region. Find assistance at <https://myfwc.com/contact/fwc-staff/regional-offices>.

Don't miss out on news and events!

A LOT happens between quarterly issues of this newsletter!

Sign up for the regular Florida Land Steward email updates so you don't miss out on assistance and educational opportunities. Send an email to cdemers@ufl.edu to be added to the listserv. Email updates are sent once a week or every other week and include the latest calendar of workshops, tours, webinars, and other events; a link to the current issue of this quarterly newsletter; updates on cost-share and other assistance programs, opportunities, and resources; and other stewardship related news and information.

All the latest news and events are online at the new UF/IFAS Florida Land Steward Program web site: <https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward/>.

Emergency Order Issued to Protect against Possible Spread of Chronic Wasting Disease Detected in White-tailed Deer in North Florida

Following confirmation of a positive test sample for chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Holmes County, Florida this year, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) have implemented management actions and an executive

order to protect against the possible spread of CWD.

The FWC and its agency partners take CWD very seriously and have implemented a comprehensive response plan. As part of the plan, the FWC will collect samples from specific established zones

to further assess the spread of the disease. The results from this initial sampling effort will inform resource managers so they can respond with appropriate management strategies. Read more details about this issue at the FWC's website. <https://myfwc.com/news/all-news/cwd-2-623>.



Photo by Cat Wofford.

Need to Learn about Forest Management? Enroll in the online Forest Landowner Academy

Are you new to forestry and land management? Have you recently purchased or inherited land and wondering what to do next? Hard to fit travel for tours and workshops in your busy schedule? Need a course in a self-paced format that you can take on your own time? The Forest Landowner Academy is for you!

Seven course modules cover a variety of topics on **understanding your forest resources, developing your management plan, timber management, marketing forest products, other forest enterprises such as pine straw and hunting leases, wildlife management, and planning for the future.**

The course is self-paced. Each module includes pre-recorded content from the field or virtual classroom, supplemental reading material, and an assessment where you can apply what you've learned to your land or situation. The cost of the

course is \$150. Those completing the course will earn a University of Florida Certificate.

For more information and to enroll in the Forest Landowner Academy visit the course page at <https://ifas-sfrc-for.catalog.instructure.com/courses/for-fla>



For more information, contact:

Chris Demers at cdemers@ufl.edu, (352) 846-2375 or Dr. Michael Andreu, mandreu@ufl.edu

TIMBER PRICE UPDATE

The timber price information below is useful for observing trends over time, but does not reflect current conditions at a particular location. Landowners considering a timber sale are advised to solicit the services of a consulting forester to obtain current local market conditions.

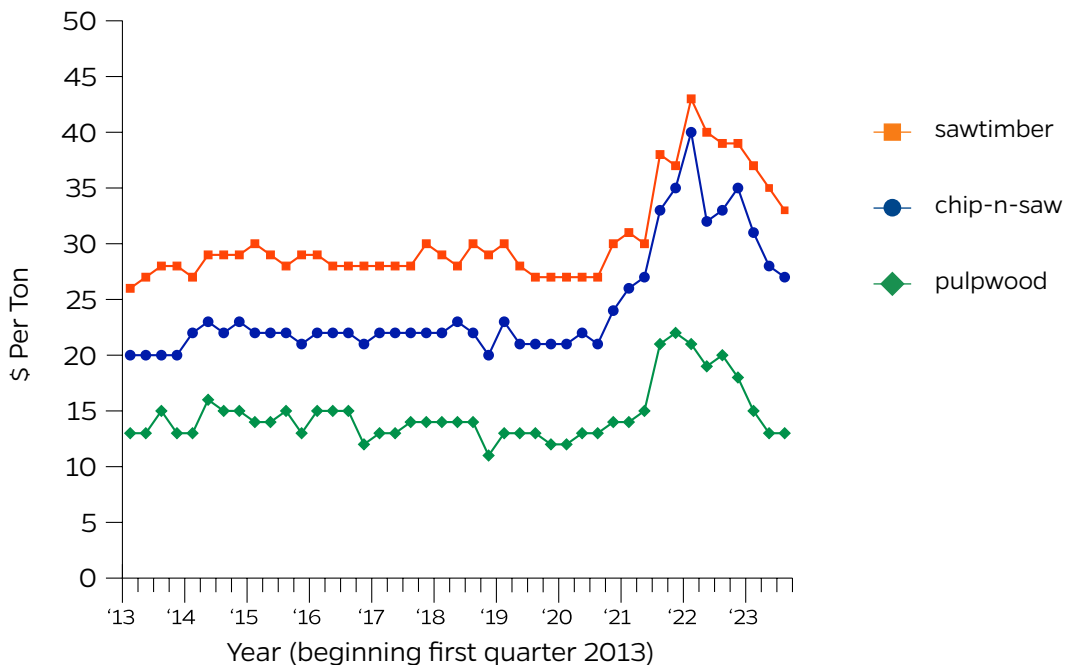
Average stumpage prices for the three major products in Florida, as reported in the **3rd Quarter 2023** Timber Mart-South report were:

Florida Stumpage Prices	
Pine pulpwood:	\$13/ton, same as 2 nd Qtr. 2023
Pine C-N-S:	\$27/ton, ↓ slightly
Pine sawtimber:	\$33/ton, ↓

Trend Report

Average stumpage prices for all major timber products in the third quarter of 2023 remained steady or decreased from the last quarter. Despite improved market indicators for most wood product markets, overall drier conditions across the region alleviated supply constraints in most areas, putting a damper on stumpage prices. The big and sobering industry news in Florida this quarter is the permanent closure of Georgia-Pacific's Foley Cellulose mill in Perry. The company notes that this was a strategic decision and one made prior to Hurricane Idalia. Nonetheless, this closure is a huge hit to the north Florida timber industry and the forest landowners in this region who for a long time enjoyed a steady market for pulpwood size material. This closing directly impacts over 500 mill employees and their communities.

Average Pine Stumpage Prices for Florida (\$/Ton)
1st Qtr 2013 through 3rd Qtr 2023



Timber Mart-South is compiled and produced at the Center for Forest Business, Warnell School of Forest Resources, University of Georgia, under contract with the Frank W. Norris Foundation, a non-profit corporation serving the forest products industry. See <http://www.tmart-south.com/> for information on subscriptions.

CONGRATULATIONS CERTIFIED LANDOWNERS

More information about certification in these programs is available at:

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/For-Landowners/Programs-for-Landowners/Forest-Stewardship-Program>

<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/florida>

<https://myfwc.com/lap>

These landowners have achieved certification in the Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship, and/or Wildlife Habitat Recognition Programs and demonstrate excellent stewardship of their land resources.



Calvin Horton, Jr. (right) with County Forester Richard Larsen, Manatee County



Cory Young, Putnam County



Jake English with FWC Biologist Parra Romero, Pasco County



John Herbert with FWC Biologist Lanie Carter, Alachua County



Lisa and Mike Murphy, Escambia County

Upcoming Events

Date	Event, Location, Contact
Nov 30	Forestry Webinar: Timber Tax: Landowner Issues and Considerations. 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. ET. This webinar will provide an overview of various timber tax topics: timber basis; IRS distinctions between a business, investment or a hobby; what is a back cruise and when is it helpful in determining taxes; when to use form T; and a host of other helpful topics for a landowner considering harvesting timber and curious about the tax implications and best strategies. See https://tinyurl.com/2tyrem7p for more details and to join.
Dec 8	Florida Land Steward Tour at Stephen and Danna Matheny Property, 2023 Florida Land Stewards of the Year. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET. Provided by UF/IFAS Florida Land Steward Program. Join us for a tour, meet these exemplary land stewards and network with landowners, foresters, and natural resource professionals. Topics include upland pine habitat restoration, wildlife management, longleaf pine regeneration, prescribed burning, connecting to assistance, and more. \$15 fee covers lunch and materials. <i>Details and registration at https://fls-tour120823.eventbrite.com. Contact Chris Demers for more information, cdemers@ufl.edu, (352) 846-2375.</i>
Jan 13	Florida Women Landowners Association (FWLA) Meeting: Wild Things! (Wild Birds, Wild Flowers, Wild Invasive Plants), Okaloosa County. 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. CT, UF/IFAS Extension Okaloosa County, 3098 Airport Rd, Crestview, FL 32539. Join us to connect with women landowners and learn how to manage native fauna and flora. This quarterly meeting will feature presentations by the Florida Wildflower Foundation, UF/IFAS extension, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. <i>More details and registration link to be posted in the FL Land Steward email updates. Fee will be \$20. For more information about FWLA events, email FWLA.contact@gmail.com.</i>
Jan 24-25	Wildlife & Invasive Species Education (WISE) Workshop, Sumter County. UF/IFAS Extension Sumter County, 7620 SR 471, Ste 2, Bushnell, FL 33513. Workshop and field tours on a variety of wildlife and invasive species topics. <i>Details and registration link to be posted in FL Land Steward email updates. For more information contact UF/IFAS Extension Sumter County at (352) 569-6862.</i>
Jan 26	Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year tour at Property of Terry Putnal, Madison County. Join us to meet this exemplary land steward, network with fellow landowners, and explore a diversified timber and pine straw operation. Topics include timber management, pine straw management, longleaf pine, wildlife habitat management, and conservation. \$15 fee covers lunch and materials. <i>Details and registration link to be posted in FL Land Steward email updates. Contact Chris Demers, cdemers@ufl.edu, 352-846-2375 for more information.</i>

More events, webinars, webinar recordings, news, and information can be found at programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward

The Florida Land Steward Newsletter is joint project of the UF/IFAS Extension, Florida Forest Service, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Florida Tree Farm Program:

<p>Chris Demers (editor) UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences (352) 846-2375 • cdemers@ufl.edu</p>	<p>Dr. Michael Andreu (co-editor) UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences (352) 846-0355 • mandreu@ufl.edu</p>	<p>Will Liner (co-editor) Florida Forest Service (850) 545-6194 • William.Liner@FDACS.gov</p>
<p>Chad Allison (co-editor) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (352) 749-2447 • chad_allison@fws.gov</p>	<p>Tony Grossman (co-editor) Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (850) 410-5268 • Anthony.Grossman@myfwc.com</p>	<p>John Nash (co-editor) Florida Tree Farmer osceolapines@gmail.com</p>