

## 2024 Poster Contest for North Port High School students

Last year we were delighted to have had North Port High School students participate in a student poster/essay contest and this next year we've created a poster contest.

The mission of North Port Friends of Wildlife is to raise awareness about our native wildlife while stressing the importance of protecting its habitat and in general, our natural world. We think with the help of various esteemed teachers of North Port High and supporting help, this contest will help in that objective.

We realize that reaching the youth of today is critical for they are indeed tomorrow's future. We think the timing of this is appropriate with National Endangered Species Day right around the corner, which is set for May 17th, 2024.

A rubric will be used to provide key points of focus along with some general guidelines; you will find the details attached herein. We will award nine prizes in total to the students who come in First, Second, and Third place. Dr Katherine Clements, IFAS affiliate, will be the judge of the contestants' posters and will use the criteria noted in the rubric for that purpose. Please find brief bio of Dr Clements below:

*University of Florida/IFAS Extension Sarasota County is a county, state and federal partnership, we translate research into community initiatives, classes, and volunteer opportunities related to 4-H youth development; agriculture; gardening and landscaping; natural resources; nutrition and healthy living; and sustainability. The UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County's Ecology and Natural Resources Program educates and empowers citizens by promoting awareness of our diverse natural resources and fostering connections with and conservation of our unique and vulnerable ecosystems by providing environmental education, outdoor recreation, and wellness opportunities.*

*Dr. Katherine Clements is the Ecology and Natural Resources Educator and program lead. Dr. Katherine serves the Sarasota community by providing educational programs about Sarasota County's natural areas, wildlife, invasive species, minimizing human: wildlife conflicts, and promoting the balance of our natural areas' ecosystems. Programs include LIFE, an environmental education program on conservation lands for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students; the Florida Master Naturalist Program, an adult education program about Florida's ecosystems; EcoWalks, guided interpretive trail hikes on our County Preserves; Natural Areas Story Maps, a virtual interpretive tour of our most unique County parks, preserves, and trails; Eco-Explorer backpack kits, backpack kits for free checkout at our Sarasota County Libraries designed to inspire eco-friendly living inside and out; and*

*public presentations. Dr. Katherine lived with her Park Ranger husband, 2 children, and many animals in a Florida State Park for over 20 years. She is passionate about making a difference in our world through educating about our natural environment. As a former physician, she believes the health of the environment is intricately linked with our own health and well-being. Dr. Katherine brings the love of all things natural to her position at UF/IFAS Extension!*

Please feel free to reach out to us should you have any questions: 941 876 3720 or [northportfowl@gmail.com](mailto:northportfowl@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Edie Driest NPFOWL chair