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Hobe Sound Beach Shop's Turtle Times

Our History is a Treasure: Chapter Fifteen *By Jan Otten*

Surrounded as we are by parks, ocean, and nature preserves, right in our backyard, we are all very much aware that Hobe Sound is blessed with an extraordinary abundance of natural wonders. Not the least of these amazing, protected areas is our own "Blowing Rocks Preserve" located at the southern end of Jupiter Island encompassing 73 acres, approximately one mile in length, spanning the barrier island from the Indian River Lagoon to the ocean. This environmental preserve contains the largest Anastasia limestone outcropping on the Atlantic coast of the United States.



©TNC/Mike Olliver

Blowing Rocks has been well known since Florida's Spanish era. Originally appearing on early charts as "Black Rocks" or sometimes, "Spouting Rocks." The Anastasia limestone shoreline received its current name for the impressive plumes of saltwater that during high tide accompanied by rough seas break against the rocks forcing the water through naturally formed holes to fly skyward as high as 50 feet. In his book, *A Different Vision*, Nathaniel Reed noted that "since the earliest settlement of Florida it has attracted attention, first as a prominent navigational landmark and later as a unique geological feature. And, by the early 1900s people were making special trips just to view the Blowing Rocks."

The Blowing Rocks Preserve came to be a protected area after a long legal hassle begun in about 1953 and finally culminating in about 1969. Once again, the forward-thinking Reed family and other residents of Jupiter Island stepped up to make sure that this unique and "one of a kind" natural wonders would be preserved forever.

The process to save this distinctive rocky shoreline began when developers petitioned the Town of Jupiter Island to change the land's zoning from single-family dwellings to high density apartment buildings or hotels. The local citizens took an unfavorable view of that plan. Through the persuasive effort of Nathaniel Reed and other Jupiter Island residents, as well as many visits to court, the developers finally agreed to abandon their project and sell the land to the residents. Those residents then donated the land to The Nature Conservancy thus creating the "Blowing Rocks Preserve."

The Nature Conservancy was founded in 1951 through a grassroots effort in the U.S. and has grown to become one of the most effective and wide-reaching environmental organizations in the world. They can boast of more than a million members and a dedicated and diverse staff including over 400 scientists, impacting conservation in 76 countries and territories. Their mission is to "conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends." They strive to boldly address the biodiversity and climate crises, maximizing their ability to affect change between now and 2030, to shape a brighter future for people and our planet. Working in over

Nature's Coastal Developers

If there's one thing, I think everyone can agree on nowadays is that our neighborhoods here in northern Palm Beach and Martin Counties are growing quickly, and a lot has changed over the last few decades. There are a few places, however, that have been set aside as a reminder of what Florida's coastline used to be like, including the Nature Conservancy's Blowing Rocks Preserve on Jupiter Island. The unique configuration of tunnels and grooves in the exposed bedrock produces huge plumes of water when heavy surf hits them just right, and at times it's really something to see!

One of the amazing things about our coastline is how heavily its formation has historically relied on living organisms to create what we see today. The rocks at Blowing Rocks happen to be exposed, but much of the coast from St. John's County south through Palm Beach County sits atop the Anastasia Geological



Blowing Rocks Rock Formation ©TNC/Mike Olliver

Formation, which formed around 2.5 million years ago. This huge rocky formation below us is composed of a mixture of quartz sand and coquina, which itself is made of the fragmented shells of trillions of marine organisms like mollusks and other invertebrates. Once cemented together by geologic forces and moderately hardened by calcite, the resulting coquina is a relatively soft type of rock, and when exposed at the coastline, prone to gradual erosion by the pounding surf. Thus, the beauty of Blowing Rocks!

Although the ground we stand on is literally made from the remains of untold numbers of marine organisms from times long past, we can still see some of these incredible coastal engineers in action today! If you look closely in the surf zone, you'll notice that some of the otherwise smooth rocks instead are capped with a coarse, almost fuzzy porous appearance. Known as 'worm

rock', this relatively soft, light brown material isn't really a type of rock at all, but a colony of reef-building Sabellariid marine worms (*Phragmatopoma caudata*) that create an enormous 'condo' with each individual worm residing in its own tube it created by cementing sand and crushed shells together with mucus. Each worm then remains anchored in its tube and extends its tentacles to filter tiny organic particles from the water. When the tide exposes the rocks, or predators approach, each worm can tightly close its tube with a protective hatch for protection. As the colonies grow, so do the worm rock formations, sometimes to enormous proportions! Do be careful, however, wormrock reefs are pretty fragile, and easily damaged by foot traffic, so please do what you can to avoid them when walking among the tidepools.

Still, however, the most impressive coastal developers of all have been responsible for building structures so large they can even be seen from space. Though perhaps the most famous is in Australia, don't be disappointed, the Southeast Continental Reef Tract is among the longest continuous reef structures in the world, and isn't hard to get to! Stretching all the way to Key West, the northern end of the reef, officially, lies offshore of Palm Beach Island, but similar reef structures continue northward through Jupiter and Martin County. Coral reefs are formed over long periods of time by tiny marine organisms, known as Anthozoans, that secrete a calcium carbonate shell to support and protect their otherwise soft bodies (they're like tiny sea anemones with a shell). As one generation replaces the next, the colonies gradually grow atop their predecessors, creating the basis for one of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet. It's hard to comprehend the sheer magnitude of these structures, especially when we consider the relative size of their builders.

So, I suppose it's true that human developers have recently reshaped our coastline, and in some cases maybe a little too much for some people's taste. But that doesn't mean it hadn't been reshaped by living things before. Without the mollusks to help build the coquina rock, our part of Florida wouldn't have formed at all, and more broadly, much of the limestone that lies below southern Florida is composed of calcium carbonate, which was sourced principally from fossilized marine organisms like coral. On that scale, condo towers aren't all that impressive after all! Nonetheless, it's important to preserve some pieces of our natural heritage, and kudos to the Nature Conservancy and their partners for allowing Blowing Rocks to remain a local treasure for all to enjoy.

Submitted by **Larry Wood, Ph.D.**

Research Coordinator
National Save The Sea Turtle Foundation
www.savetheseaturtle.org



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Red-cockaded Woodpecker Conservation Work at Jonathan Dickinson State Park

As the Jonathan Dickinson State Park (JDSP) Park Biologist, I get asked the following question frequently—what do you do? Many facets of my job are covered in one project, the reintroduction of the Federally Endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) to JDSP. RCWs live high in the tops of South Florida Slash Pines in the central and western parts of the park, the pine flatwoods ecosystem.



Red-cockaded Woodpecker

So, the first answer to the question is that we manage different ecosystems with prescribed fire to mimic natural wildfires that would occur on the landscape before humans were in Florida. Fire promotes new plant growth, which promotes insect populations, which feed RCWs. So that's one answer.



Prescribed fire in JDSP

Another answer to the question of “what do you do” is that humans have brought many different ornamental and agricultural plants to Florida, some of which have escaped into the wild. In the pine flatwoods of JDSP we work very hard, every day, to control infestations of Downy Rose Myrtle (DRM). DRM is a shrub that would dominate pine flatwoods if we didn't burn, chop, and spot treat that plant. Different types of workers treat non-native plants in the park, sometimes contractors, but most of our DRM removal is now done by our 3 Florida Conservation Corps (FLCC) / AmeriCorps members. FLCC members sign up for yearly assignments in various state parks and help us here at JDSP with many different resource management projects.

The last answer to the question—what do you as a Park Biologist—is we help manage imperiled species. Imperiled species are state or federally listed. In addition, there are other species we may not have or not have very many of—for one reason or another and they need our special attention.

RCWs are an example of an imperiled species, they are Federally Endangered, and they disappeared from the park in 1983. A combination of factors led to this local extinction, spearheaded by logging in the early and mid-1900s (right before JDSP became a state park in 1950). In addition, the policy of fire suppression (over prescribed fire) was in place until the early 1970s. A third big issue was the isolation of the JDSP RCW population from the dwindling Corbett WMA population—so no birds were able to disperse to the also dwindling JDSP population. Lastly, the “modern” techniques of installing nest cavity boxes in trees didn't make it to the park before RCWs disappeared.

Almost 40 years later, in October 2020, a team of biologists reintroduced the Federally Endangered Red Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) back to the South Florida Slash Pine



RCW nest box

landscape of the park. The birds forage and nest in mature Slash Pines in the central and western parts of the park in the pine flatwoods ecosystem. The presence of RCWs in JDSP indicates the existence of mature pine trees and that the park is maintained by regular applications of prescribed fire—keeping the understory low and stimulating new plant and insect growth (which RCWs eat). Another

interesting part of RCW biology is that they excavate natural cavities in live trees. A natural cavity may take years to create. RCWs peck “resin wells” around the cavity entrance and because the tree is alive, resin flows from those scars creating a sheet of sticky goo that stops snakes from ascending into the cavity to eat RCW eggs, chicks, or maybe even an adult. Natural cavities are built in older trees with a fungus that softens up the very hard heartwood of South Florida Slash Pines.

Returning RCWs to the park is and has been a big undertaking in many different ways and we had to take a



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Red-cockaded Woodpecker being banded before being transferred to JDSP

leap of faith into the unknown and possibly deal with failure. Park staff and others had to prove we had enough trees for the birds to forage in and then present a reintroduction plan to a cooperative of south-eastern biologists to ask for donations of these birds from larger, stable populations. We started with bringing 10 young of the year RCWs from Osceola National Forest to JDSP in October 2020 and then again in November 2021. In 2021, 2 pairs produced one RCW chick—no small feat because at Osceola these 4 young, inexperienced birds may not have been breeders for at least another year or two. We are now in the second breeding year and we already have 8 eggs compared to last year's two!!! JDSP has a growing population of these birds and in the next 5 to 10 years the park may have as

many as 10 to 15 breeding pairs. In addition, our RCW population will likely have an exchange of birds from Hungryland WEA, Corbett WMA, and DuPuis WMA—creating a connected population across the Martin County and northern Palm Beach County corridor of public lands!

Hopefully, I've answered the question of what we are doing in the park, in terms of natural resource management. There are other examples, but the RCW example is especially exciting because it brings together at least three elements of land management work that we do in the park—prescribed fire, non-native plant removal, and imperiled species management. My career in the Florida Park Service started 20 years ago and very possibly I have more years behind me in my career at JDSP than I do in front of me. My goal and our goal as caretakers of the natural resource treasure that is JDSP is to leave the resources of the park as well kept as humanly possible for the next generation of visitors and park staff. The reintroduction of RCWs to the park is a great example of a conservation success in JDSP. The success of JDSP fits in seamlessly with the greater success of RCW recovery in the region and the larger success of stabilizing RCW populations throughout their range in the south-eastern United States through active land management.

by Rob Rossmanith
Park Biologist
Jonathan Dickinson State Park



Did you know?

Sixteen distinct natural communities create the mosaic that is Jonathan Dickinson, the largest state park in Southeast Florida.

Refresh, Renew and Re-Cycle *By George Kleine*

With today's emphasis on ECO-FRIENDLY and responsible products there is some confusion about the differences between the various ways we can be ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE.

We, at the HOBE SOUND BEACH SHOP, work with our supply sources to find products that are practical, responsible, and FUN. Many of our products are made from recycled materials. We have shirts that are made from recycled water bottles (seven bottles make one luxurious soft tee shirt). We offer bottle and can koozies, tee shirts, sandals all made from recycled materials.

We carry a very special line of decorative carvings created by artisans in Kenya, Africa. Supported by an American 501c(3) charity, the artisans collect cast off flip flops and sandals from the ocean and after forming blocks of materials hand carve clever, multi-color creatures. Tons of sandal materials are removed from the ocean and used to create better lives for the workers and their families.

We feature items made of SUSTAINABLE products like bamboo. Bamboo is durable, fast growing, and sustainable. We have fashion tee shirts as well as very giftable cutting boards made from this amazing and natural product.

Our latest addition to our ECO-FRIENDLY product line is REFRESH GLASS. Through a simple but innovative process empty, and often discarded, wine bottles are re-purposed into beverage tumblers. These are beautifully crafted from sanitized

wine bottles, then cut, buffed, and finished into unique glasses that can be custom etched with initials, logos or even "house labels" that make them distinctly yours.

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Our History is a Treasure: Chapter Fifteen continued from page 1

70 countries and territories they operate more than 100 marine conservation projects and have thus far protected more than 125 million acres of land.

The Nature Conservancy has a profound effect on Florida helping to protect and ensure management of its rare lands. All efforts, by federal, state, local, or private entities are critical to the health of Florida's nature providing many benefits to communities and nature such as aquifer recharge, clean drinking water, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, jobs, and abundant recreational activities. After six decades of protecting Florida's great places, The Nature Conservancy "considers Blowing Rocks Preserve one of our proudest achievements. This peaceful, barrier island sanctuary is a well-known model for large-scale, native coastal habitat restoration."

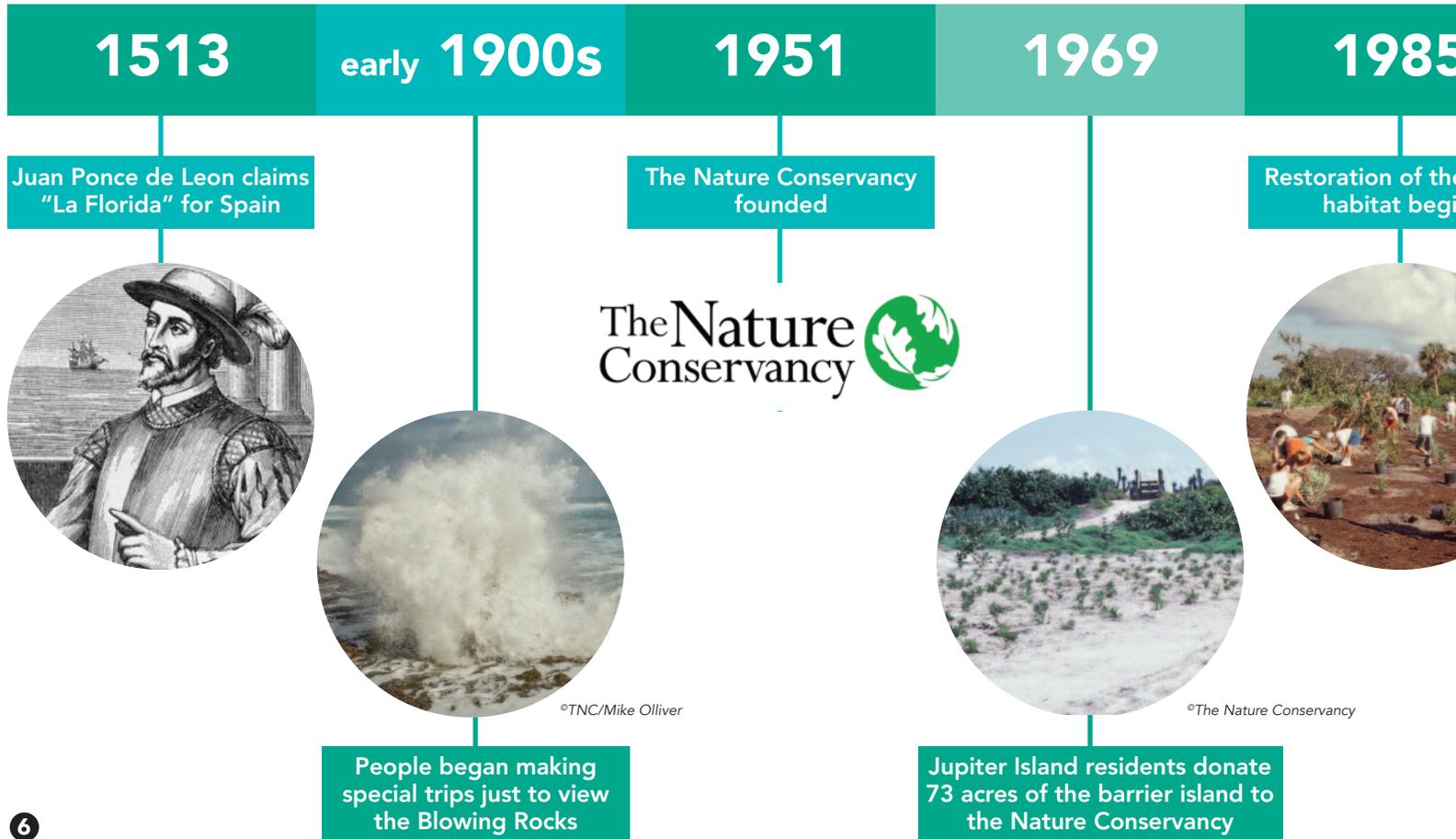
A huge effort went into preserving this stretch of land and creating the current meticulously restored native vegetation. The Nature Conservancy relates that Blowing Rocks Preserve represents "a bridge between our legacy of land preservation and a modern laboratory showcasing the latest innovations in conservation." One of the biggest challenges in the beginning was shifting the frequent, unregulated public use of the area to a managed preserve environment. This process included limiting vehicle traffic and abandoning an old road that ran atop the beach dune. In the 1980s they undertook an enormous project of restoring the native habitat. It first began by removing 500 Australian pines and planting 14 acres of native saltmarsh, mangrove, coastal strand, and tropical hammock on the east side of the preserve.

As this massive habitat restoration progressed The Nature Conservancy invited volunteers and community members to

assist, with the goal being "to build a greater awareness and sense of responsibility for the environment within the local community." This pioneering project began in 1985 and over the next 15 years, more than 3,000 volunteers and community members contributed 78,000 restoration hours. Part of this major work included reconnecting the preserve to the Indian River Lagoon, which sadly, had been altered by past dumping of dredge spoil from the Intracoastal Waterway. The volunteers helped to install and repair 12 tidal culverts, creating $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of tidal creeks, and four small tidal ponds. In addition, overall, about 4,000 Australian pines and thousands of Brazilian peppers and other invasive species were removed making way for installing 15,000 native plants grown from seed in the native plant nursery at Blowing Rocks.

In the 1990s Conservancy staff recognized the opportunity to provide public outreach and share the importance of the fragile native habitats found at the preserve. They placed educational signage along preserve trails and at the beach overlook to highlight native species, including the endangered sea turtles that nest along the ocean shoreline.

Nathaniel Reed documented in his book that his mother, Permelia Reed, invited Mrs. Rosita Hawley Wright, a well-known and respected philanthropist from Palm Beach, to join her family for an evening watching loggerhead turtles on the beach. "They observed the nesting sea turtles slowly clambering from the sea to mount the sandy beach, and with extraordinary agility dig their deep nests and lay more than 100 eggs. Mrs. Wright was overwhelmed by the experience and requested permission to make a major lead donation from the Hawley Family Foundation to construct what is now the Hawley Education Center." Located

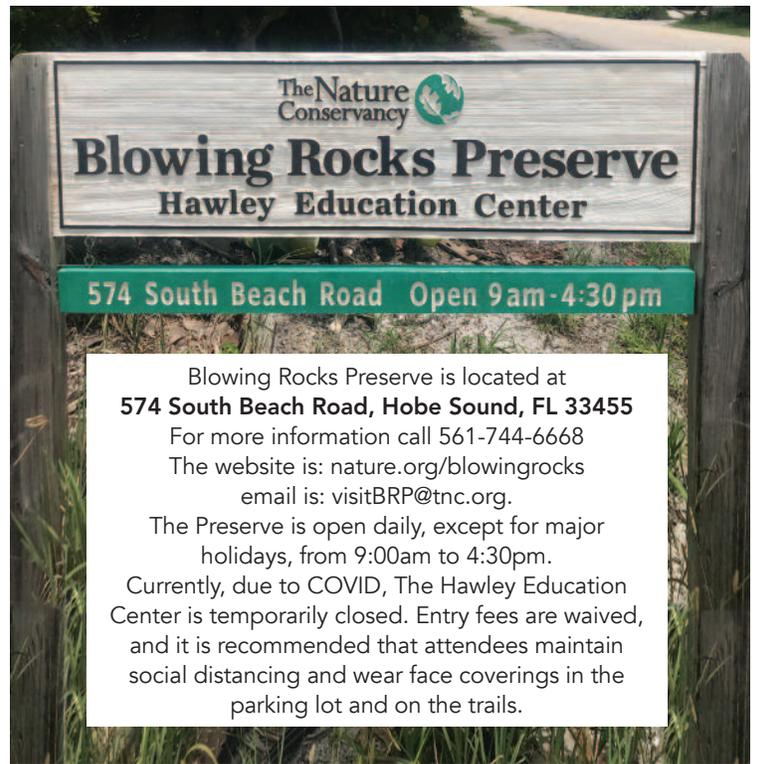


on the west side of the road that facility now houses staff offices, a public exhibit gallery, the Nathaniel Pryor Reed Classroom, and hosts public lectures, workshops and trainings for Conservancy staff members and partner organizations and agencies.

If you have never visited Blowing Rocks Preserve, be sure to put it on your bucket list! If you have visited, hopefully this history chapter will help you to appreciate this phenomenon even more than you already do. Visitors to Blowing Rocks Preserve are permitted to swim and snorkel there, but there is no lifeguard on duty and no food is allowed to be brought to the beach. Pets are not permitted. It is suggested that you wear foot coverings—the sand is hot and the rocks are sharp. Picnicking is recommended at nearby Coral Cove Park, just south of Blowing Rocks Preserve. Besides swimming, there are three hiking trails, offering the opportunity to observe rare birds, plants, and animals. Restrooms and water are available at the education center.



Blowing Rocks Rock Formation ©TNC/Mike Olliver



Some trivia of interest:

- Anastasia limestone is sedimentary rock (formed by the accumulation of sediments)
- Anastasia limestone extends along Florida's coast from St. Augustine to Boca Raton
- Also known as coquina, from the Spanish for cockleshell, Anastasia limestone is composed primarily of shell and coral fragments, fossils, and sand
- Small fossils are clearly visible in the rock faces, most commonly the shells of small clams and oysters or pieces of a large snail called Busycon
- Coquina has been a building material for 400 years; in 1672 the Spanish used it to build Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine
- The exposed rock at the preserve is unusual, not because Anastasia limestone is particularly rare, but because it is commonly found either underground or underwater
- Scientists disagree on exactly how far inland the limestone extends, exactly when it was formed (most likely around 125,000 years ago, in the Pleistocene Age) and whether it was formed by a single event or by multiple changes in sea level
- Why is so much of the limestone above ground at Blowing Rocks? No one knows. The land here might have once been part of an exposed sand ridge or the top of a reef, or for some other reason higher than surrounding areas.
- The state of Florida covers 345 million acres of which only 28% is under conservation and managed by either federal, state, local, or private entities

Some of the sources of information for this article include: *A Different Vision* by Nathaniel P. Reed; Wikipedia; The Nature Conservancy online.



What's Happening in Today's Real Estate market?

"The housing market is starting to feel the impact of sharply rising mortgage rates and higher inflation taking a hit on purchasing power," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "Still, homes are selling rapidly, and home price gains remain in the double-digits."

"Home prices have consistently moved upward as supply remains tight," Yun said. "However, sellers should not expect the easy-profit gains and should look for multiple offers to fade as demand continues to subside."

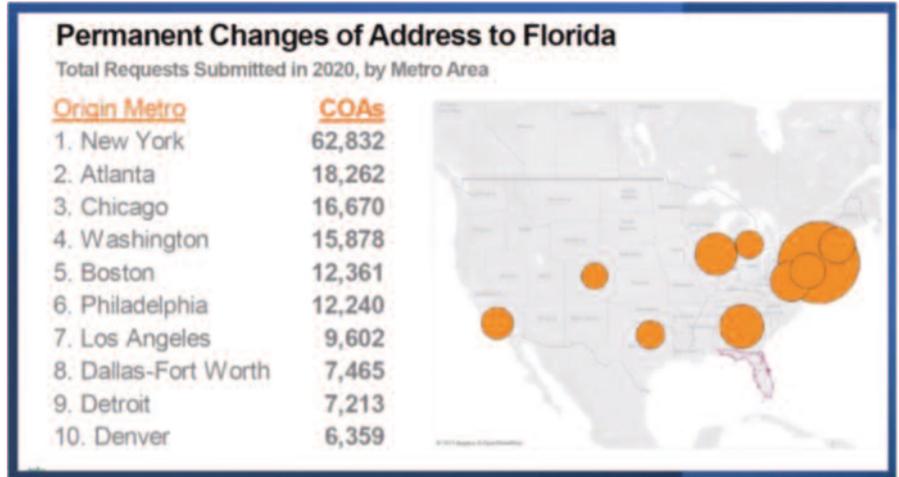
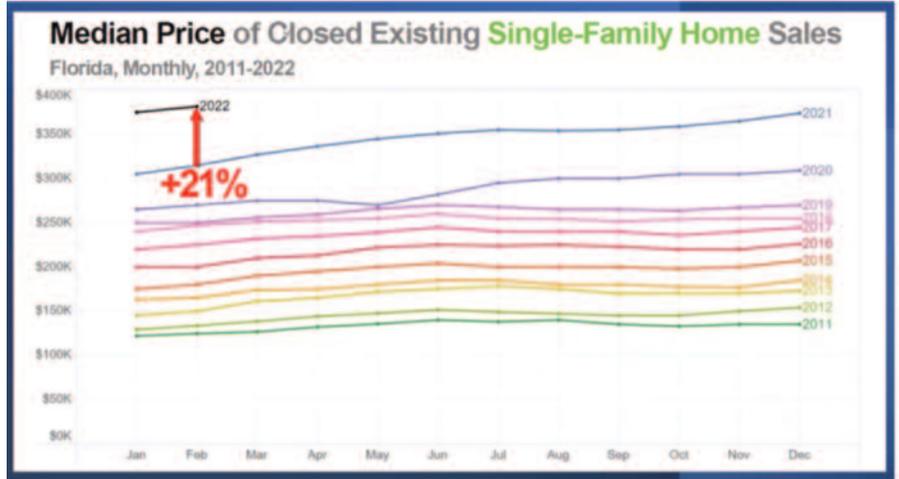
Cash is still King

"With rising mortgage rates, cash sales made up a larger fraction of transactions, climbing to the highest share since 2014," Yun said.

- Demand continues to outpace supply.
- Fifty-seven percent of buyers' price offers were above the list price (48% in the prior month). Half of the buyers had made at least two prior offers and lost before succeeding on the third try.
- The share of first-time buyers slightly increased to 30%, although the share was below the level one year ago (29% in the prior month; 32% one year ago).
- Millennials—5 Million turning 34 each year for the next 3 years
- Cash buyers continued to make up a higher market share, at 28% (25% in the prior month; 23% one year ago).
- Mortgage rates have climbed to %5.35 (mid-April) with good credit and are expected to be higher as Inflation continues to climb!
- Mortgage rates are likely to continue to move higher throughout the balance of 2022, although the pace of rate increases is likely to moderate. Much of the increase in rates in early 2022 is in anticipation of what will

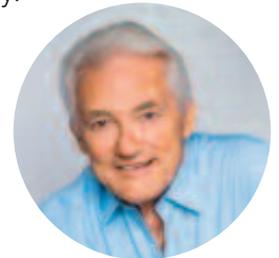
happen later this year, especially with Federal Reserve interest rate policy. According to Len Kiefer, Deputy Chief Economist, Freddie Mac

- Where are our new neighbors coming from, see the chart below courtesy of the Keyes Company.



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Chapter Fifteen Scramble

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2. GWIBLNO _____
3. TUNSPGOI _____
4. AAASNSATI _____
5. LSTINMOEE _____
6. VCCEARYNONS _____
7. ROTPTCE _____
8. TROSIOATREN _____
9. NEERMINTVON _____
10. HABTIAT _____
11. YWALEH _____
12. KSRCO _____
13. ACNUIQO _____
14. ELURDGFAI _____
15. CALOR COVE _____
16. NKIIGH _____
17. NOOGLA _____
18. RIEABRR _____
19. ILDASN _____
20. NTCALTIA _____
21. DRAWKSY _____
22. HLESERONI _____
23. OAILOGLCG _____
24. NGZION _____
25. DAIYEETRNS _____



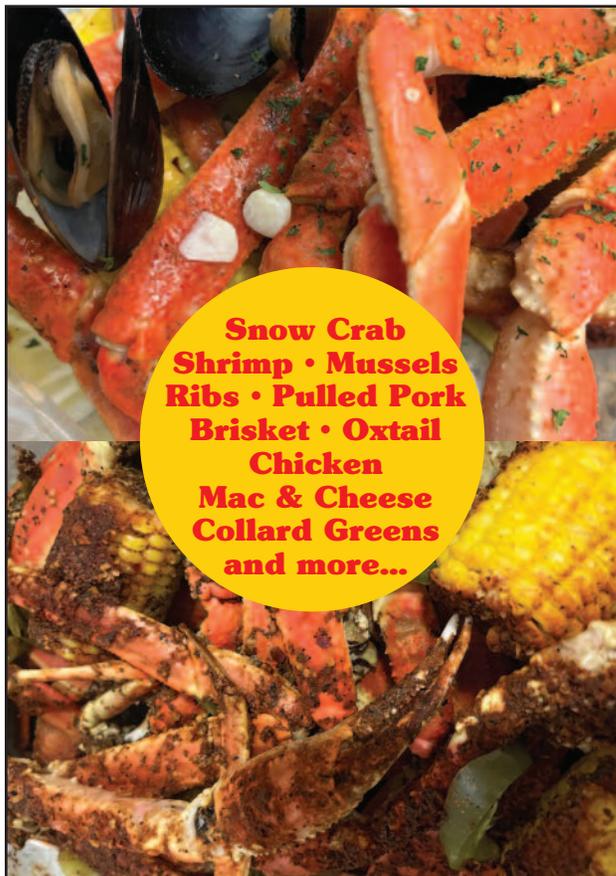
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 (and beverages next door)

Chapter Fifteen Answers

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. REESRVEP Preserve | 7. ROTPTCE Protect | 13. ACNUIQO Coquina | 20. NTCALTIA Atlantic |
| 2. GWIBLNO Blowing | 8. TROSIOATREN
Restoration | 14. ELURDGFAI Lifeguard | 21. DRAWKSY Skyward |
| 3. TUNSPGOI Spouting | 9. NEERMINTVON
Environment | 15. CALOR COVE Coral
Cove | 22. HLESERONI Shoreline |
| 4. AAASNSATI Anastasia | 10. HABTIAT Habitat | 16. NKIIGH Hiking | 23. OAIELOGLCG
Geological |
| 5. LSTINMOEE Limestone | 11. YWALEH Hawley | 17. NOOGLA Lagoon | 24. NGZION Zoning |
| 6. VCCEARYNONS
Conservancy | 12. KSRCO Rocks | 18. RIEABRR Barrier | 25. DAIYEETRNS
Sedimentary |



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