



## **Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy 2012-2013 Annual Report**

**S**tetson University College of Law continues its commitment to environmental education, scholarship, and service from the local to the global scale. Stetson's environmental programs are coordinated through its Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy. Activities for 2012-2013 are described below.

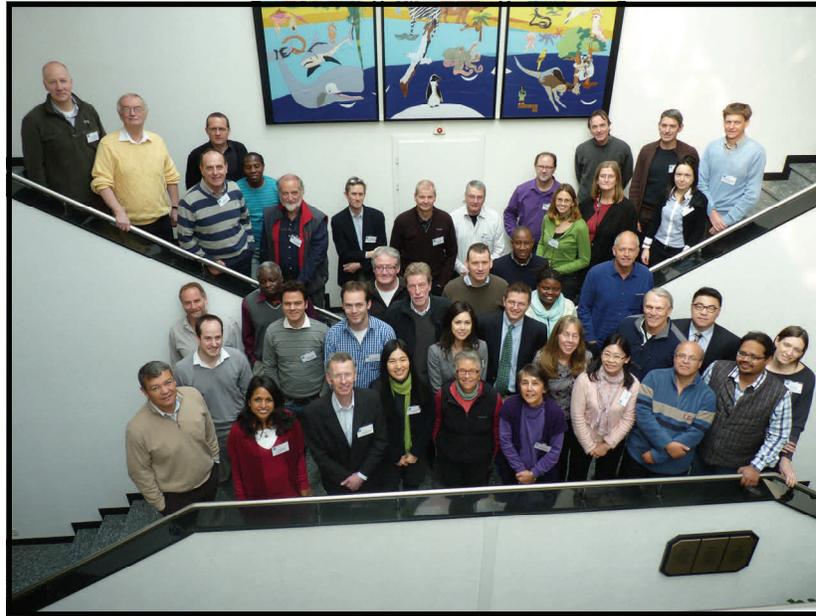
### **Contributing to National and International Conservation Efforts**

In December 2012, the Biodiversity Institute collaborated with the National Wildlife Federation to file an **amicus brief in a wetland mitigation case before the U.S. Supreme Court**. The brief was filed on behalf of former members of the National Research Council Committee on Mitigating Wetland Losses. Biodiversity Fellows Erin Okuno and Marc Shumaker assisted in the preparation of the brief.



(L-R): Professor Royal Gardner, Bill Mitsch, Jan Goldman-Carter and student Marc Shumaker traveled to the Supreme Court on January 15 to hear oral arguments in an important wetlands case.

Marcela Bonells, a May 2012 graduate, was selected to serve as the **scientific and technical support officer at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat** in Gland, Switzerland. She will be working closely with Professor Gardner, who was appointed **Chair of the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)** for 2013-2015. The STRP provides advice on wetland conservation to the Secretariat and the 167 countries that are Contracting Parties to the Convention.



February 2013 STRP meeting in Gland, Switzerland

In Fall 2012, Professor Fitzgerald served as a **Visiting Academic Advisor to the Law Commission of England & Wales to assist with its Wildlife Law Reform Project**. This is the first time an American academic lawyer has ever been privileged to work in this capacity with the Law Commission—an independent body within the British Government that is supported by the Ministry of Justice and directly advises Parliament—and which functions as England’s principal law reform organization. The Wildlife Law Reform project not only involves direct participation in a substantial revision of existing UK law, but is also a rare attempt by a common law country to fundamentally and comprehensively modernize a host of legal measures affecting diverse interests in wildlife.

In February 2013, Stetson hosted Veronica Caceres, Secretary pro tempore of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, as part of our Foreman Biodiversity Lecture Series. We are currently discussing a number of ways in which the Biodiversity Institute can support the IAC’s mission.



IAC Secretary Veronica Caceres and Professor Gardner

## Employing Innovative Methods to Teach Environmental Law



During academic year 2012-2013, the Biodiversity Institute conducted an **Ecosystem Banking Workshop**, a voluntary enrichment program for students. Over the course of the year, the students learned about



market-based approaches to restoring wetlands, conserving endangered species habitat, improving water quality, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The workshop concluded with students presenting case studies. One of the goals of the workshop is to serve as a feeder program for internships with regulatory agencies and environmental groups.



In the fall Professor Gardner and Dr. Kirsten Work, chair of Stetson's Biology Department, taught an **interdisciplinary Wetland Law and Policy Seminar**. A highlight was a field trip to the Disney Wilderness Preserve, a wetland mitigation site that is now owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy.

Inspecting dip-netting results at the Disney Wilderness Preserve with Dr. Kirsten Work

This spring Professors Long and Gardner taught **Research and Writing II—Environmental Law**. The course covered the same skills as other sections of Research and Writing II, but all the problems had an environmental focus. In addition to the traditional appellate brief (which involved whether discharges from a poultry operation required a Clean Water Act permit), the students drafted—and submitted—comment letters to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on whether to re-classify the Endangered Species Act status of the wood stork from endangered to threatened. The director of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Naples gave a presentation on the wood stork via Skype, and students made a site visit to the Sanctuary to observe wood stork habitat.



Research & Writing II—Environmental Law class trip to Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary on World Wetlands Day



Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary at dawn



Environmental Advocacy class-sponsored bike rally

This spring Professor Long taught Environmental Advocacy. **Environmental Advocacy** is a skills-based class where the students learn about and implement alternative forms of advocacy that are particularly useful in the environmental law area. These skills included information gathering, regulatory advocacy, media advocacy, and collaboration with public and private entities. The students applied these skills to an actual self-selected environmental law issue. Students made FOIA requests, created media releases and webpages,

and worked with governmental and private entities to address issues such as minimizing sunscreen chemical pollution in Florida waters, reducing single-use plastic bag and bottle usage, utilizing bicycle commuting, and addressing environmental risks from Florida’s phosphate mining industry.

With our new environmental law concentration program, we added **two new environmental law adjunct professors**: Mara Levy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration taught Ocean and Coastal Law and Policy and Jacki Lopez of the Center for Biological Diversity taught a section of Interviewing and Counseling that focused on environmental issues.

### Creating a Dialogue About Environmental Challenges



Planting the College of Law’s organic vegetable garden

A dialogue about sustainable food and farming practices was implemented with the introduction of the **Stetson University College of Law organic vegetable garden**. The College of Law’s student-run Go Green Committee, the Environmental Law Society, Facilities Management Director Randy Wagner, Facilities Manager Dale Stubblefield, and Professor Long worked together to create a productive and beautiful vegetable garden in the Crummer Courtyard on the Gulfport campus.

The greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and herbs were plentiful and were put to good use by faculty, students, staff, and Professor Long’s Environmental Advocacy class, which prepared a lunch using all local and organic food.



Environmental Advocacy class enjoying the harvest



Professor Long and students in Crummer Courtyard

Next year, the garden will be expanded and will also provide local organic vegetables to those with limited incomes.



Carlton Ward Jr. and Joe Guthrie, Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition  
Photo courtesy Carlton Ward Jr., CarltonWard.com

Each semester, the Biodiversity Institute offers the **Edward and Bonnie Foreman Biodiversity Lecture Series**, which is free and open to the public. The Fall 2012 lecturers were: Carlton Ward with the Florida Wildlife Corridor Initiative; Craig Pittman, environmental author and Tampa Bay Times reporter; and Jan Goldman-Carter of the National Wildlife Federation. The Spring 2013 lecturers were: Peggy Strand, a partner with Venable in Washington, DC; Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention; and Veronica Caceres, Secretary pro tempore of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles.



Nick Davidson of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat



Jan Goldman-Carter discusses conservation efforts to save critical wood stork habitat in the Western Everglades

In December 2012, we sponsored the **14th International Wildlife Law Conference** in Buea, Cameroon. More than 20 speakers from 7 countries participated. A highlight was the presentation on innovative approaches to enforcement



Participating organizations at IWLC-14

of wildlife laws by Alain Ononino, an attorney with The Last Great Ape Organiza-



Post-conference field trip up Mount Cameroon

tion—Cameroon, which recently received The Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Medal. Plans are underway for the 15th International Wildlife Law Conference, which will be held at Stetson's Gulfport campus in April 2014.



Judges and students in inaugural West African Rounds of the Stetson International Environmental Moot Court Competition

Stetson also continues to serve as the host school for the *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy*, a peer-reviewed journal which is published quarterly. Students with a demonstrated interest in wildlife issues edit articles submitted by academics, policy makers, and scientists. An upcoming special issue will include the papers presented in Cameroon and Stetson student articles.

And, of course, we also organized the **17th Annual Stetson International Environmental Moot Court Competition**. Teams competed in regionals in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. The final round judges included Ramsar Deputy Secretary General Nick Davidson, *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy* editor-in-chief Wil Burns, and Stetson law professor Luz Nagle. Pepperdine University defeated the Law Society of Ireland, Dublin, in the final round. China University of Political Science and Law, which received the best memorial award, was a semi-finalist, along with National Law



Professor Gardner with the team from the University of Zimbabwe

University, Lucknow, India. The team from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil, received the Spirit of Stetson Award, a peer-nominated honor that recognizes civility, collegiality, and fair play. We had a fantastic moot, thanks to the organization of Professor Brooke Bowman and the support of the entire Stetson community: students, staff, and faculty. Our visitors continue to rave about your hospitality and warmth.

Thanks again for your support this year!