

SPRING 2026

Conservation Newsletter

UWF CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Opportunities

We're becoming increasingly active in the UWF community and need YOUR help. Here are a couple of ways to get involved (further details later in this newsletter):

- Volunteer at the inaugural **West Florida Fire and Nature Festival** on March 7
- Participate in the **Popcorn Hunt**, organized by AC2, SGA, and SEAS
- Attend the **Nature Heals** event on April 20
- **Donate** to the UWF Conservation Program to support our programming

The UWF Conservation Program, founded in Summer 2024, is dedicated to managing and protecting the UWF Conservation areas while engaging and educating our community. It envisions a future where UWF is a local leader in conservation efforts and education.

Read further in this newsletter to find out what the UWF Conservation Program has been getting up to and ways you can get involved!



[Explore Trips on the Edward Ball Nature Trail](#)

UPCOMING EVENT ALERT

COME LEARN ABOUT PRESCRIBED FIRE & LOCAL WILDLIFE

WEST FLORIDA FIRE & NATURE FESTIVAL

**MARCH 7,
2026
9AM-3PM
AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF WEST FLORIDA**

Rain date March 21, 2026

**LIVE BURN
DEMOS
10am, 12pm,
and 2pm**

**FOOD TRUCKS.
FUN, ANIMALS.
PLANT VENDORS
& MORE!**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

Inaugural West Florida Fire and Nature Festival

The inaugural West Florida Fire & Nature Festival will be a family-friendly, environmental & educational outdoor event sharing the importance of prescribed fire for ecosystem health, wildlife biodiversity, and wildfire mitigation. With a variety of interactive games and exhibits by environmental organizations, live entertainment, food trucks, and exciting activities, there's lots of fun for the whole family! Join us on March 7, 2026 at the Edward Ball Nature Trail Entrance, 9am-3pm.

We will need volunteers! Please sign up at this link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScHUEgiueB2tv0E1kKLadXaXboJr3QN0U_aFZ7OCemrxpIRiA/viewform

The Great Invasive Popcorn Hunt

This inaugural Argos Conservation Corps effort will be take place on the UWF Trails on March 28, 2026. We will be collaborating with campus groups and local environmental organizations to hunt down the invasive popcorn tree in our beautiful trails. And of course, there will be popcorn! Watch for more details in the near future on ArgoPulse and the SGA Instagram page.

Nature Heals: An Immersive Experience

Please join us Monday, April 20, 9:00am - 3:00 pm in the UWF Commons Auditorium. This Usha Kundu, MD College of Health event will feature a presentation of nature's health benefits, ways to incorporate nature as a health strategy, and an interactive virtual nature experience.

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UWF Living Lab Projects

This year, we have four ongoing Living Lab projects connecting students at UWF and beyond to our campus conservation areas. Check them out below!

UWF Explore Trips

The UWF Forest is being transformed into an educational destination for local elementary students to do science in a way that is not otherwise possible.

Multimedia Art Conservation Program

Collaboration

Art students are acting as design consultants and creating creative assets for the UWF Conservation Program.

Using Nature Immersion to Improve Students' Health

Nursing students became more connected to mental health curriculum through experiencing the UWF Forest Bathing Trail and participating in a holistic mental health care campus event.

Interprofessional Education Promoting Mental Well-Being and Environmental Health

Peer interactions, informal mentoring, and sensory mindfulness exploration were used to raise students' awareness of environmental health impacts of discarded wastes on land and campus waterways.

Nursing students practice mindfulness on the Forest Bathing Trail.



Fifth graders learn about photosynthesis through a game during Explore Trips.



Nursing students hike the Forest Bathing Trail.



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Stay Involved

Donate to UWF Conservation

Donate to the UWF Conservation Program to support more programming like those found in this newsletter! Our donation page is found here: <https://uwf.edu/university-advancement/departments/development/give-now/donate/alphabetical-index-of-funds/?BBFund=149>

Staying Up to Date

If you haven't already subscribed to our biannual newsletter, you can do so by completing this form: <https://forms.gle/HLbeJVeLZk2w2wox8>

Check Out Our New Website

As of the end of Fall 2025, we have a brand new shiny webpage on the UWF website. Check it out here: <https://uwf.edu/hmcse/departments/earth-and-environmental-sciences/conservation-program/>