FRIENDS celebrates 25 years of conservation and education in Abaco.

As part of our strategic plan, FRIENDS aims to work with the community to help remove invasive plants and plant native in order to help preserve the native floral biodiversity in Abaco. Environments that host a variety of native plants are more stable than those with only one or two types of plants (as happens in the case of invasive Hawaiian Seagrape and Casuarina). Having a diversity of plants means the environment in question is less susceptible to disease or pests, and having native plants means that the land is more sustainable, requiring less to no added water and fertilizer. Native plants also support a variety of local fauna including birds, lizards, butterflies and other insects.

FRIENDS would like to invite Abaco businesses and homeowners to participate in the program by removing Hawaiian seagrape from your yards and replacing them with native plants. FRIENDS will give you some plants to get started and a sign to indicate your participation! To learn more about the program, please attend one of our meetings or contact us!

Field trip opportunities will be available for Abaco schools in the Spring Term. Students will have the opportunity to visit a nature trail and a green house to learn all about native plants!

Upcoming Events:
January 29th - Presentation on Coastal Dune Systems by Neil Sealey, Abaco Inn, Elbow Cay

To support this project, FRIENDS has received a grant from the United Nations Development Program Global Environmental Fund - Small Grants Program.
Discovery Club

This term, the Discovery Club at FRIENDS completed the Flora badge where clubbers learned a lot about native plants and plant biology. They were able to see a variety of native plants first hand on a visit to FRIENDS’ nature trail (next door to the office) and a special field trip to Broad Creek near Camp Abaco. In the Spring we will be teaching “Shells” and “Caves and Blue Holes”. Please contact FRIENDS for info on registration!

Help Protect Abaco’s Habitats!

Visit our website to learn more about current campaigns to create protected areas in Abaco. You can help by spreading the word and writing a letter of support! Have questions? Email olivia@friendsoftheenvironment.org www.friendsoftheenvironment.org

Protect the SPAGs!

Fishing is closed for Nassau Groupers from December 1st through February 28th. This is the time when groupers are gathering together in spawning aggregations (SPAGs). No reproduction is known to occur outside these SPAGs so it is very important that we protect them! Please support the season by purchasing and eating an alternative fish or protein while the season is closed.

Visit The Abaco Scientist Blog - http://absci.fiu.edu

Save the Date
Jan. 15th - FRIENDS Env. Film Fest, Hope Town Lodge
Jan. 22nd - Film Fest, Green Turtle Club
Jan. 30th - Film Fest, Treasure Cay Community Center
February 9th - Reef Ball - Hope Town
February 29th - Community Presentation, Abaco Inn
March 2nd - Reef Ball - Marsh Harbour

FRIENDS is a registered 501 (c) 3 organization; that means gifts to FRIENDS are tax deductible in The United States.

Thank You, d’Shan

We are very sad to say “good-bye” to d’Shan Maycock, our Education officer (2007-2012), who is moving to another island to be with her family. We would like to say a heartfelt THANK YOU for all of your efforts in educating the Abaco community and your dedication to reducing the illegal harvest of juvenile Spiny Lobsters through the Size Matters Pride Campaign. We can see the impact of your efforts and know that we will still be seeing results for years to come! We hope you come back to visit often!

Sincerely,
The Board and Staff of FRIENDS

FRIENDS Thanks Friends

International Coastal Cleanup, St. Francis de Sales, Abaco Central High, Long Bay School, Horizon’s Academy, Man-O-War Primary, Mary E. Albury School, Royal Bahamas Defense Force
Kayak Challenge, Abaco Family Medicine, Abaco Groceries, Abaco Petroleum, Marsh Harbour Exporters and Importers, Master Marine, Treasure Cay Ltd., Pete’s Pub and Gallery, Adam Lawrence, Chris Higgs
Turtle Trot, Hope Town Lodge, Wildside Online, Inc., Sunny and Don Meinhold
Size Matters, The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP), World Wildlife Fund - US, Bahamas Marine Exporters Association, The Nature Conservancy, Bahamas National Trust, Department of Marine Resources, Roosevelt Curry, Grand Cay All Age School, New Hope Baptist Church
Native Plant Biodiversity Project, AJ McIntosh, Ossie Hall, Danny McIntosh, Mike Lighbourn