



## School of Forest, Fisheries, & Geomatics Sciences

**JULY 2025**



Florida urban forestry professionals gather to honor the legacy of Dr. David Fox by planting a live oak in his memory on August 1. The event was organized by the Florida Urban Forestry Council.

## News & Awards

The Silva Lab has had two papers published in the journal Nature and one in Remote Sensing this July, which cover the lab's research on using lidar and other emerging technologies to monitor hurricane damage to forests. We spoke with one of Dr. Silva's doctoral students, Jinyi Xia (pictured at right, on left), about how using terrestrial lidar can lead to better ways of monitoring forest health and recovery. Dr. Inacio Bueno, a postdoctoral researcher in Dr. Silva's lab, also led the development of a web-based mapping tool that lets stakeholders map forest damage from Hurricane Ian. In the future, this type of tool can guide landowners' and forest managers' decisions about post-hurricane management and restoration.



July was Lake Appreciation Month in Florida, and to that end we want to highlight our fantastic LAKEWATCH crew – including our staff (pictured at left) and hundreds of volunteers – who make this program such a success. In 2024 alone, they helped Florida save an estimated \$5 million in water quality monitoring costs.



Researchers in Dr. Denis Valle's lab conducted a study on using drones to more accurately monitor animal populations, which in turn led to the discovery of the world's largest nesting population of a threatened turtle species in the Amazon. The study was published in Applied Ecology and was also covered in the news outlet Popular Science.

Congratulations to our July Staff Member of the Month, HR's Les Popplewell. Les's extensive knowledge of immigration processes—particularly F-1, J-1, and H-1B visas—and his team-oriented mindset makes him an invaluable resource for our international students and our department as a whole.

An event hosted by our Geomatics Extension team to help Scouts earn their Surveying Merit Badge was featured on WCJB TV20 in July (in the photo to the right, a young Scout is interviewed). The goal of the event was to introduce more youth to surveying as a career.

Our Geomatics program also organized an educational expedition in July to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Aircraft Operations Center in Lakeland, which supplies aircraft for scientific research missions (including NOAA's famous Hurricane Hunters). Students learned about careers at NOAA and elsewhere that involve remote sensing and geospatial analysis.

**Levy County scout's surveying merit badge sparks career interest**



SFFGS hosted the Southeastern AmeriFlux Workshop at Austin Cary Forest on July 22-23. AmeriFlux is a network of more than 500 sites where researchers work to identify and quantify terrestrial ecosystems' roles as carbon sinks and sources. The workshop included a visit to the Austin Cary Forest eddy covariance tower (pictured at left) and the NEON site at the Ordway-Swisher Biological Station. Austin Cary is the longest-running AmeriFlux site in the southeastern U.S., providing critical data on how climatic variability as well as land management practices can affect carbon storage.

**Recently-Started Grants**

“Evaluating the Efficacy of AQUI-S@20E for Live Hauling Marine and Freshwater Foodfish” - \$12,405.24 awarded to Matt DiMaggio from the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services



## Photo Recap



Photos clockwise from top left: Staff conduct a prescribed burn at Austin Cary Forest on July 29 (top two photos); a student in Dr. Silva's Forest Biometrics and Remote Sensing Lab conducts research using a terrestrial laser scanner; students in the Ecohydrology Lab conclude a field experiment on rainfall partitioning at the Ordway-Swisher Biological Station; a researcher with the AmeriFlux network gestures to the eddy covariance tower at Austin Cary Forest, which measures gas exchange and the carbon sequestration potential of the forest and similar ecosystems.

