



## DEC. 4, 2010, SLAS FIELD TRIP REPORT "SCRUB WALK," WALTON SCRUB PRESERVE

Twelve St Lucie Audubon members were treated to an educational two-hour walk at the Walton Scrub Preserve this past Saturday. The cool, sunny weather made it all the more enjoyable!

Patricia Norris, a naturalist who works for the County Environmental Resources Department, led the walk. Along the trail she pointed out close to 20 types of unique plants that live in the scrub. Besides the varieties of Oaks, we came across the aromatic Red Bay tree, the very pretty Prostrate Scrub Spurge, and the Large Flowered Rosemary (which is a threatened species that grows only in the southeastern part of Florida).

Patricia also taught us about the Gopher Tortoise and we got to see a large burrow they had built.

The focus of this trip was not on birding, but learning about the scrub habitat. Scrub habitat in this state is now only 10% of the size it was 100 years ago, so we can understand the problem the native Florida Scrub Jay is facing as its habitat is disappearing. We did not see a Florida Scrub Jay that morning (though they are in that area), and not too many birds were along the trail, but we came away with a wealth of knowledge about the scrub lands and the plants and animals that live there ! It was a great way to spend a beautiful Florida morning here in St Lucie County.

If you are interested in going on another guided walk that the St Lucie County Environmental Resources Dept sponsors, go their website for info. They have some great programs ! Their website is [http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/environmental\\_lands.htm](http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/environmental_lands.htm)

**Submitted by Dorothy Schultz**

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[stlucieaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:stlucieaudubon@gmail.com)

[webmaster@stlucieaudubon.org](mailto:webmaster@stlucieaudubon.org)

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