



# CONSERVANCY Of Southwest Florida



## Who We Are

[About Us](#) | [News & Publications](#)

## What We Do

[Our Work](#) | [Nature Center](#) | [Offsite Programs](#) | [Learn](#)

## Get Involved

[Events](#) | [Take Action](#) | [Support Us](#)

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## Conservancy of Southwest Florida opens Dalton Discovery Center

NAPLES, Fla. (Nov. 15, 2012) – Conservancy of Southwest Florida announces the opening of the new Susan and William Dalton Discovery Center. Located at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida Nature Center in Naples, the Dalton Discovery Center showcases southwest Florida's diverse ecosystems, the creatures that live within and an overview of the work conducted by Conservancy of Southwest Florida. A unique, state-of-the-art, interpretive and multi-sensory experience, the Dalton Discovery Center houses six immersive eco-system exhibits under one roof: Introduction Gallery, Uplands, Everglades, Mangroves, Sandy Beaches, and the Ocean gallery.



Sue Dalton after receiving proclamations from the City of Naples, Collier County and the state of Florida declaring November 14 as "Conservancy of Florida Susan and William Dalton Discovery Center Day."

Guests can enjoy more than 100 animals in life-like enclosures and aquaria to better understand the unique habitats of southwest Florida, why they are important, how the Conservancy of Southwest Florida works to protect them and how they can take action. This world-class experience was made possible through a generous leadership gift from Sue and Bill Dalton with the support of more than 40 additional donors.



Sue Dalton begins the ribbon cutting and Dalton Discovery Center sign unveiling while Andrew McElwaine, Conservancy of Southwest Florida president observes.



Sue Dalton and Andrew McElwaine after unveiling of Dalton Discovery Center sign.

"It is our pleasure to introduce the Dalton Discovery Center so visitors and members can experience hands-on, technology-rich learning," said Susan Dalton. "The new Dalton Discovery Center brings the outdoors indoors, providing guests an indoor field trip to visit uplands, the Everglades, mangroves, beaches, the ocean and the Everglades, all under one roof. The Dalton Discovery Center serves to teach and involve newcomers to Naples in the Conservancy mission and help develop the next generation of Conservancy supporters and environmental leaders."



Andrew McElwaine, David Webb, Kathleen Peck, Sue Dalton, Georgia Hiller, Jack Wert and Tim Nance celebrate the opening of the Dalton Discovery Center.

The Conservancy worked with renowned interpretive designers Cambridge Seven Associates, Kubik Maltbie, and Living Color to design the Dalton Discovery Center, its exhibits and aquariums. These companies have worked on some of the most sophisticated interpretive plans in place including Disney and Sea World by Living Color; the National Aquarium by Cambridge Seven and Associates; and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History by Kubik Maltbie.

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"We gathered the most talented designers in the interpretive industry to help us create an environment that would provide the best guest experience and globally enhance our mission," said David Webb, Conservancy of Southwest Florida education manager. "The exhibits, sounds, lighting and aquariums work in harmony inside the Dalton Discovery Center, providing guests of all abilities a multi-sensory journey that is both educational and empowering. In addition, our volunteer docents are trained in an interpretive approach to further enhance the visitor experience."



Conservancy of Southwest Florida Naturalists Whitney Swain and Rachel Miner measure the resident juvenile loggerhead sea turtle in the Dalton Discovery Center.

"The Susan and William Dalton Discovery Center is a significant enhancement to the Conservancy Nature Center that allows us to both educate and entertain our guests with live animals and interactive programs that inspire support for the mission," said Andrew McElwaine, Conservancy of Southwest Florida president. "We are grateful to the Daltons for their generous leadership gift and to all of our donors, members, volunteers and the community for their ongoing support and dedication to making the Conservancy of Southwest Florida the premiere Nature Center in the entire southeastern United States."

For hours of operation and more information on the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, visit [www.conservancy.org/nature-center](http://www.conservancy.org/nature-center) or call 239-262-0304.

### About the Conservancy of Southwest Florida

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida began in 1964 when community leaders came together to defeat a proposed "Road to Nowhere" and spearheaded the acquisition and protection of Rookery Bay. The Conservancy is a not-for-profit grassroots organization focused on the critical environmental issues of the Southwest Florida region with a mission to protect the region's water, land and wildlife. This is accomplished through the combined efforts of environmental education, science, h, policy, and wildlife rehabilitation. The von Arx Wildlife Hospital treats in excess of 3,200 injured, sick and orphaned animals each year and releases about half of them back into their native habitats. Conservancy of Southwest Florida and Nature Center is located in Naples, Fla. at 1450 Merrihue Dr., off Goodlette-Frank Road at 14th Avenue North. The new Nature Center entrance, Smith Preserve Way, is now open and is located just south of Naples Zoo off Goodlette-Frank Road. For information about the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, call 239-262-0304 or visit [www.conservancy.org](http://www.conservancy.org).

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