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## FWC biologist Don Fox honored for work on Lake Okeechobee

by Willie Howard

Don Fox, known to many anglers on Lake Okeechobee as the man who watches over fish and habitat on the big lake, was recently named Fisheries Biologist of the Year by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

“I am deeply honored to be recognized,” Fox said. “There is no greater honor than to be recognized by one’s peers.”

Fox, 55, has worked for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission for nearly 30 years, including 28 years working on Lake Okeechobee.

He’s a biological administrator working in the FWC’s Okeechobee office, where the complexity of the problems are as big as the 730-square-mile lake.

Tim Breault, director of the FWC’s Division of Habitat and Species Conservation, credited Fox for improving the health of the lake for residents and visitors.

The association of fish and wildlife agencies lauded Fox for designing and building several recent habitat-enhancement projects on the big lake, most of them on the grassy northwest side of lake.

He’s currently working on a project to improve water flow through Tin House Slough.

Fox has been watching over the fish stocks and the habitat that supports them for a long time.

When the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005 ripped life-supporting vegetation out of the Lake, Fox and other FWC fisheries biologists detected low numbers of speckled perch in the lake. Their findings led to a 10-inch minimum size on specks in the big lake to protect their numbers.

Fox and his staff also have tracked big-lake bass populations, critical to the economy around the lake, and have worked to educate the public about the connection between quality habitat and healthy fish populations.

You could call him the Fantastic Mr. Fox, but that title has been taken.

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1

*Jeff Ardelean Says:*  
[October 22nd, 2010 at 3:59 pm](#)

One of the most dedicated FWC employees ever and still working. Taxpayers are getting their money's worth plus out of him and his accomplishments.



2

**Brett Fitzgerald** Says:  
[October 22nd, 2010 at 5:39 pm](#)

Never heard anything but good about Mr. Fox. And another great read by Willie Howard – nice to read the “good stuff” now and then.



3

**Bill Ashley** Says:  
[November 7th, 2010 at 7:15 pm](#)

It was my privilege to work with Don for over twenty years. The people of the State of Florida and Lake Okeechobee itself are better for having an individual like Don.



4

**Claretha Heinemann** Says:  
[January 10th, 2011 at 1:23 am](#)

Wonderful blog site engine blog! Keep it up!



5

**clickme** Says:  
[April 6th, 2011 at 6:33 pm](#)

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