

Nathaniel P. Reed
Hobe Sound NWR

Scrub Restoration

Florida scrub is a unique habitat, home to many protected species including Florida scrub jay, gopher tortoise and the endemic Florida mouse. As scrub becomes overgrown, the animals that live there will leave or die off and rare plants will disappear.

A healthy scrub ecosystem is maintained by large periodic disturbances such as wildfire. Wildfires have largely been suppressed and controlled burns are difficult to administer in some heavily populated areas.

In order to mimic a natural disturbance, the refuge is methodically administering mechanical trimming. This will return the scrub to better conditions for plants and animals to thrive.



Gopher tortoise; USFWS



Florida scrub jay; USFWS

What is mechanical trimming?

A large piece of equipment with a mulching head will be used to mulch, shred, or mow overgrown vegetation to reduce height and mass. This will be completed in a pattern leaving some unmowed patches as a shelter and food source for wildlife.

The small mulched debris will deteriorate over time putting nutrients back into the soil. Within weeks after trimming, scrub oaks and other native vegetation will begin to resprout.

Benefits

Aids in preventing catastrophic wildfires by reducing the fuel loads and therefore protecting nearby infrastructure.

Improves habitat for plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species.

Allows for additional habitat management options in the future, including a controlled burn.

Nathaniel P. Reed Hobe Sound
National Wildlife Refuge

13640 SE Federal Hwy.
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
772-546-6141
hobesound@fws.gov

For more information visit:

[fws.gov/refuge/Hobe_Sound/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hobe_Sound/) or
2020

JULY

<https://www.facebook.com/HobeSoundNWR/>