



## Fairchild Challenge September E-news

### In This Issue

Important Information & Due Dates  
 Challenge Resources  
 Professional Development & Opportunities  
 At The Garden

### Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)  
[More About Us](#)  
[Grant Opportunities](#)

### Student Spotlight



"Any plant, any where!" said Nicolas Espinoza Fairchild Challenge's Alumnus about what he wants to study in botany after his summer internship at [Montgomery Botanical Center](#) and [Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden](#).

Nicolas, a current FIU undergrad student, had a chance to work with various field biologists and conservation scientists thanks to an NSF grant. His responsibilities included planting *Zamia*, a plant in the Cycad family, and collected

Dear Educator,

The Fairchild Challenge's tenth year is in full swing! Thank you to all the educators that attended our Launch Brunch. We welcomed over 250 middle and high school teachers to our kick-off event and received a lot of positive feedback about this year's challenges. In the first week of the program, we already have a record breaking number of [registered schools](#)! If you haven't registered your school for The Fairchild Challenge, [register today](#)! Make sure to check our [Flickr website](#) next week for photos from the event.

We look forward to working with you and your students throughout the year to make it a memorable and engaging program year of The Fairchild Challenge.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION & DUE DATES

### Challenge 1 Performance: The Last of My Species

#### Entry Submission: Wednesday, October 5

Students create and perform an original family-friendly skit or song that integrates research on one imperiled plant or animal species. For specific entry requirements, entry forms, tables, evaluation criteria, and additional information on this challenge visit our [Challenges-In-Depth](#) webpage. Performance dates for schools participating in this challenge are Wednesday, October 19 (skits) and Thursday, October 20 (songs).



Limited need-based assistance will be available for transportation associated with participation in this challenge. Under-resourced schools may submit a [reimbursement application](#) for approval.

### Membership Discount for Teachers

Eight days remain for teachers in Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe and Palm Beach Counties to receive a 25% discount on a [Fairchild](#)

samples out in the field.

He made an herbarium voucher and learned about preserving specimens for future research. He also catalogued various leaves and learned how to use various optical microscopy techniques for systematics.

"The lab work was very frustrating at first, but enjoyable because when I did get a chance to get a good sample I was able to say 'I got that!' and it was a great feeling," he exclaimed.

Nicolas participated in various challenges throughout his high school career at South Plantation Sr. High. He enjoyed working on the research projects and writing the opinion papers when he was a Fairchild Challenge participant.

"In high school I got to manage the herbarium in the school" he says, and that's what led him to be interested in botany.

Although he still has no preference as to what aspect of botany he would like to focus on in the future, he wants to eventually go for his PhD and become a professor. "This is an under appreciated field, but important and interesting," he explained.

**We are Social!**



Join Our Mailing List!

Forward to a Friend

### Additional Resources for Schools

Connect to Protect Network Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden invites you to join the [Connect to Protect Network](#) (CTPN). The network is designed to ensure the health and sustainability of the globally endangered pine rocklands in Miami-Dade County - an ecosystem with great biodiversity, including nearly 400 rare and common plant species. Members of CTPN will receive some of these uncommon pine rockland species and will help gather much needed information about the growth of pine

[Membership](#). Please call 305.667.1651, ext. 3301 or 3362 for further details. This offer is valid until September 15, 2011.

## CHALLENGE RESOURCES

### South Florida Ecosystem Workshop for Students

**Saturday, October 15, 9 am - 12:30 pm**

Interested in having your students learn about unique South Florida ecosystems and their biodiversity? Fairchild will host a one-day workshop for a maximum of 150 middle and high school students interested in participating in this year's design, writing, and research challenges. Teachers can register of up to eight students and two teachers or chaperones per school from Sept. 14 - Oct. 4 only. **For more information, check out our [flyer](#).**

### School Garden Mini-Grants

Interested in establishing, expanding, maintaining and/or restoring a garden? Apply now to receive up to \$250 for your school garden. These limited need-based mini-grants will help you and your students participate in Challenge 8: School Garden/Habitat Restoration. For more information on requirements and the [application form](#), please visit [Challenges-In-Depth](#).

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & OPPORTUNITIES

### WET in the City Curriculum Guide Workshop

**Saturday, September 24, 9 am - 3:30 pm @ Sunrise Civic Center**

This hands-on urban [water education curriculum](#) promotes development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills while engaging K-12 students in explorations of the science of water and complex issues surrounding its management and stewardship. Thanks to sponsorship by the City of Sunrise and MWH, this training is available to Florida educators at no cost however, registration is required at 713.520.1936. Participants will receive the guide and are eligible to receive 8 inservice points.

### Environmental Action Workshop

**Saturday, October 1**

This one-day workshop specifically addresses the Environmental Action challenge. Limited to Fairchild Challenge teachers, this workshop will cover the topics of energy usage, water quality and conservation, biodiversity and rain barrels, providing hands-on activities and ideas that can be implemented at school, home, and in the community.

To register, please visit <http://calendar.dadeschools.net>. For more information, contact Kiki Mutis at 305.667.1651 x 3330 or [kmutis@fairchildgarden.org](mailto:kmutis@fairchildgarden.org).

### Raised Bed Gardening Mini-Workshop

**Saturday, October 8, 9 am - noon and Saturday, January 14, 1 - 4 pm  
Special opportunity for Fairchild Challenge teachers!**

Instructor Dylan Terry of [Ready-to-Grow Gardens](#) will give you information and a hands-on demonstration of how to construct, prepare, plant and maintain a raised bed garden in South Florida. Space is limited and registration is required. For more information or to register, email [challengepk-5@fairchildgarden.org](mailto:challengepk-5@fairchildgarden.org)

rockland plants on their properties.

Volunteers are needed to join Fairchild's South Florida Conservation team in [workdays](#) to remove invasive species and help protect native habitats. This is a great opportunity for students to receive community service hours and reach out to help their local community.

For more information on the Connect to Protect Network and Volunteer workdays for the 2011-2012 school year, contact Devon Powell, 305-667-1651, ext. 3429, [dpowell@fairchildgarden.org](mailto:dpowell@fairchildgarden.org).

If you have any current or past student(s) that you would like to highlight, please [send us](#) a picture of the student(s) and a 250-word article to be featured in our monthly E-Newsletter. Staff will select featured articles.

For more classes offered to teachers in Miami-Dade County by the Education Department at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, please visit our [Teacher Professional Development Courses](#) page.

## AT THE GARDEN



### 8th Annual Butterfly Days

**Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 24 - 25**

Fairchild is proud to host this two day event that includes lectures, educational activities, and a marketplace with a butterfly theme. Come and learn about South Florida's native butterfly population and

explore their colorful and fantastic world. Take home the best butterfly plants to make your own butterfly garden. [Click here](#) to view a list of activities planned for both days.

**For more information on events happening throughout the month of September, please visit Fairchild's [Events website](#).**

Sincerely,

Juan Rivera Jr. and Barbara Martinez-Guerrero

Education Outreach Coordinators  
Fairchild Challenge Middle School Coordinators  
[www.fairchildchallenge.org](http://www.fairchildchallenge.org)

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

10901 Old Cutler Road  
Coral Gables, Florida 33156  
305.663.8073 and 305.663.8081  
305.400.0265 (fax)