

## Lake Monroe Conservation Area Jay Watch Results and Discussion

2019

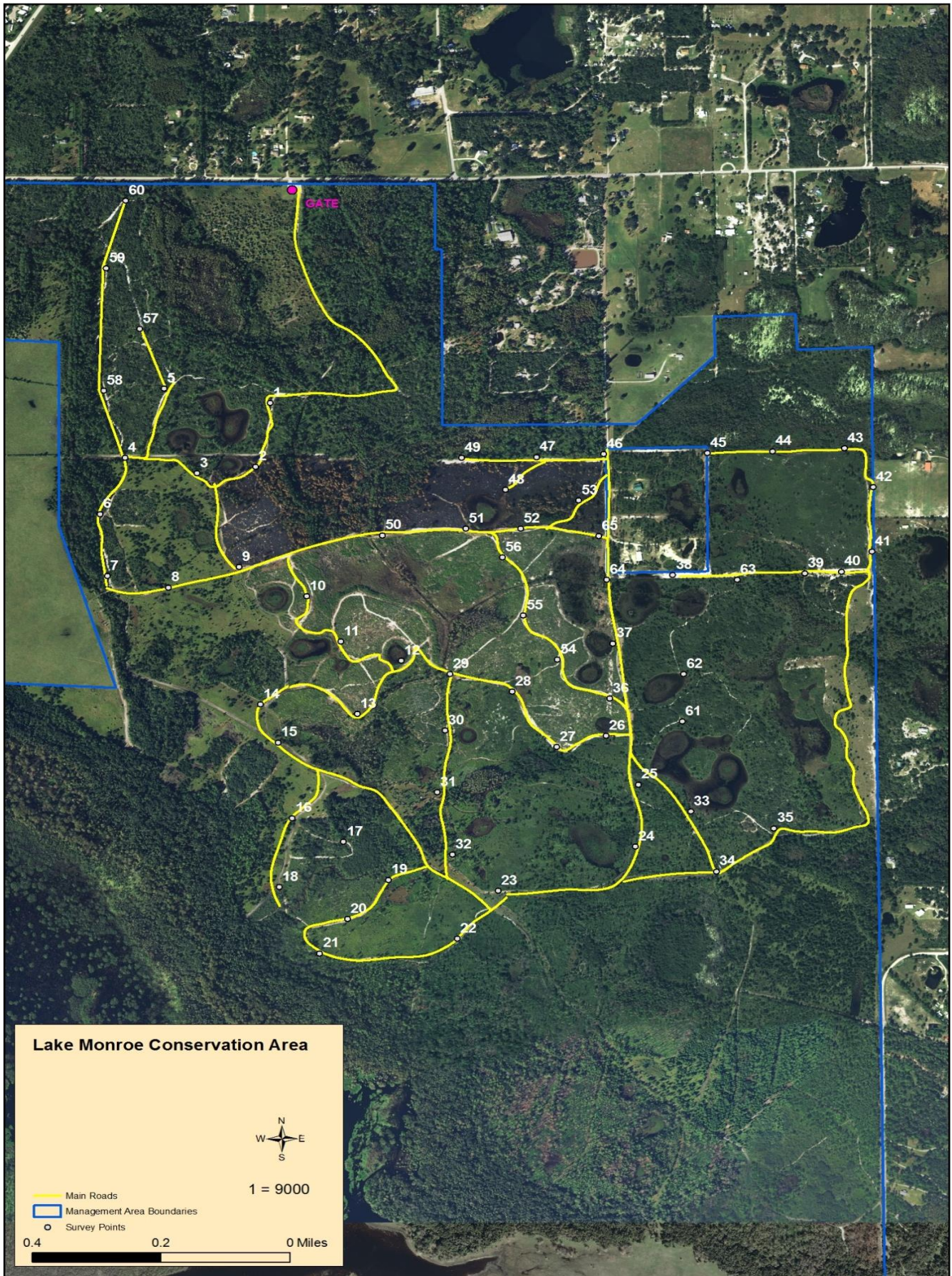
This year's Jay Watch survey was conducted on July 12 – 14, 2019. Over the three days, 15 individuals contributed a combined 136 hours to the Lake Monroe Conservation Area (LMCA) survey. Due to extremely wet conditions causing access constraints, only 50 of the 65 established survey points were visited each day covering approximately 415 acres of the 530 acres of potential Scrub-Jay habitat (Figure 1). The points not surveyed (21, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 61, 62, 63) are all points peripheral to the core scrub habitat area. As additional scrub habitat is restored at Lake Monroe, new survey points may be added to cover the potential habitat. The Jay Watch surveys confirmed eight Florida scrub-jays at Lake Monroe CA. These results are reflected in Table 1.



*Saturday Jay Watch Participants, 2019*



Figure 1 – Lake Monroe Conservation Area (LMCA) 65 Jay Watch Survey Points





**Results**

Volunteers and staff located eight Florida Scrub-Jays, six adults and two juveniles in three different groups (Table 1, all band combinations are noted in left-right leg format). In 2018, surveys confirmed seven adults in three groups with no juvenile sightings during the surveys and numerous follow-up visits. In 2019, the same three groups exist with six adults (two per group) but with two confirmed juvenile jays. Juvenile scrub-jays have not been observed since 2016 (Table 2, Figure 2). Average group size increased from 2.3 to 2.67 birds per group with an average of 0.67 juveniles per group (Table 2, Figure 3). Territory boundaries are mapped in Figure 4. Please see the Discussion section for further information.



*Adult Florida Scrub-Jays: Above: Green/Silver-Orange/Purple; Above right: Green/Silver-Red/Blue; Left: Green/Silver-Red/Blue; photos by Graham Williams.*



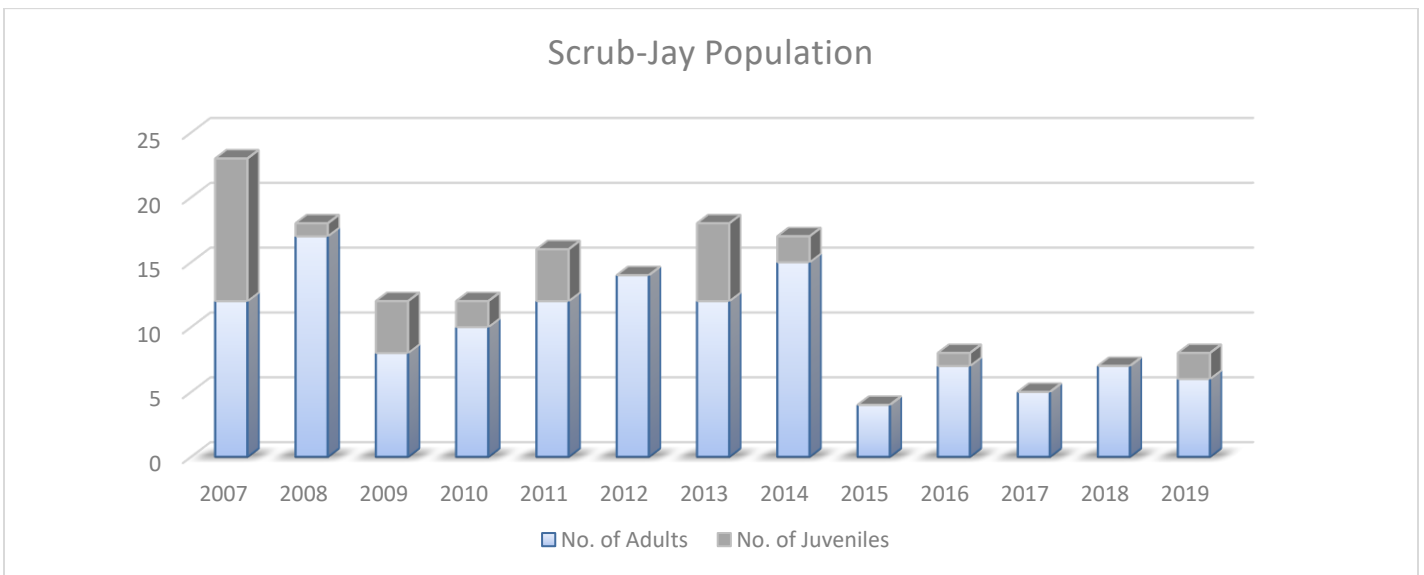
**Table 1 – LMCA Summary of 2019 Results**

2019 SUMMARY - LAKE MONROE CONSERVATION AREA			
Territory #	# of Adults	# of Juveniles	Leg bands (left-right leg colors)
1	2	0	UBA1, GS-YY (male)
2	2	2	UBA2, UBA3, UBJ1, UBJ2
3	2	0	GS-OP, GS-RB
	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>

**Table 2 – LMCA Year-to-Year Comparison 2008 - 2019**

YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISON FOR LAKE MONROE CONSERVATION AREA												
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Survey Dates	6/21-6/23	6/27-6/29	7/9-7/11	7/8-7/10	6/22-6/24	7/12-6/14	7/11-7/13	6/26-6/28	7/8-7/10	7/14-7/16	7/13-7/15	7/12-7/14
Total No. Jays	18	12	12	16	14	18	17	4	8	5	7	8
No. of Adults	17	8	10	12	14	12	15	4	7	5	7	6
No. of Juveniles	1	4	2	4	0	6	2	0	1	0	0	2
No. of Groups	7	4	5	6	6	6	6	3	4	2	3	3
Avg. Group Size	2.6	3	2.4	2.7	2.3	3	2.8	1.33	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.67
Juveniles/Group	0.14	1	0.4	0.7	0	1	0.13	0	0.25	0	0	0.67
Largest Group	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	2	3	3	3	4
Smallest Group	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2

**Figure 2 – LMCA Scrub-Jay Population 2007 – 2019**



**Figure 3 – LMCA Group Dynamics 2007 - 2019**

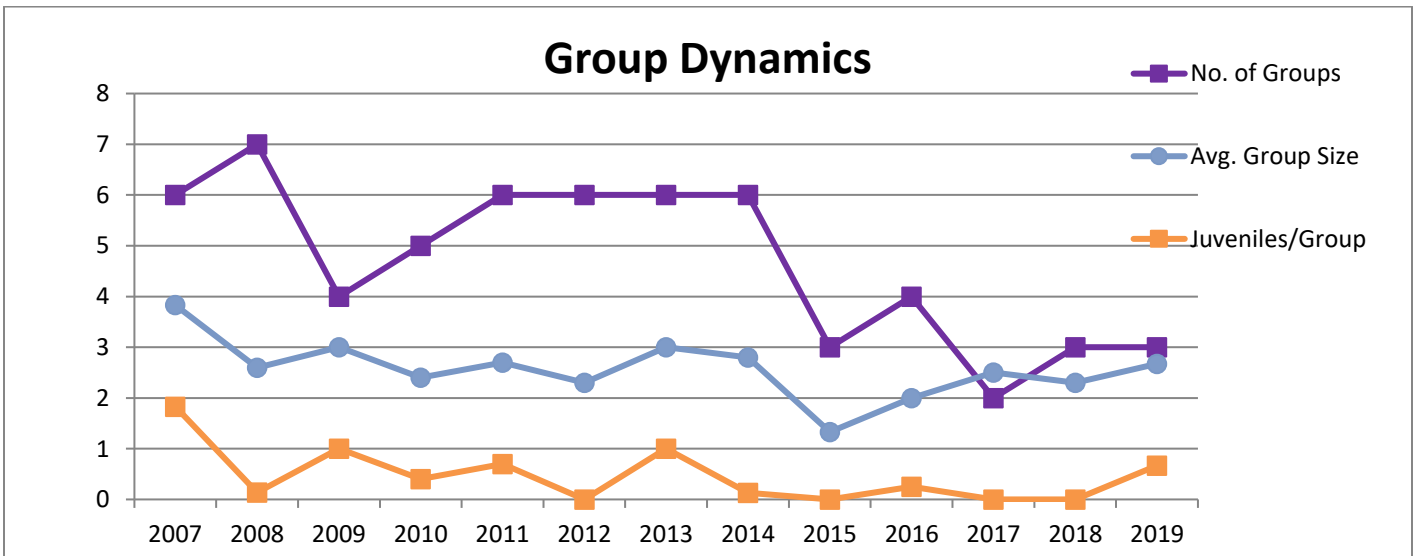
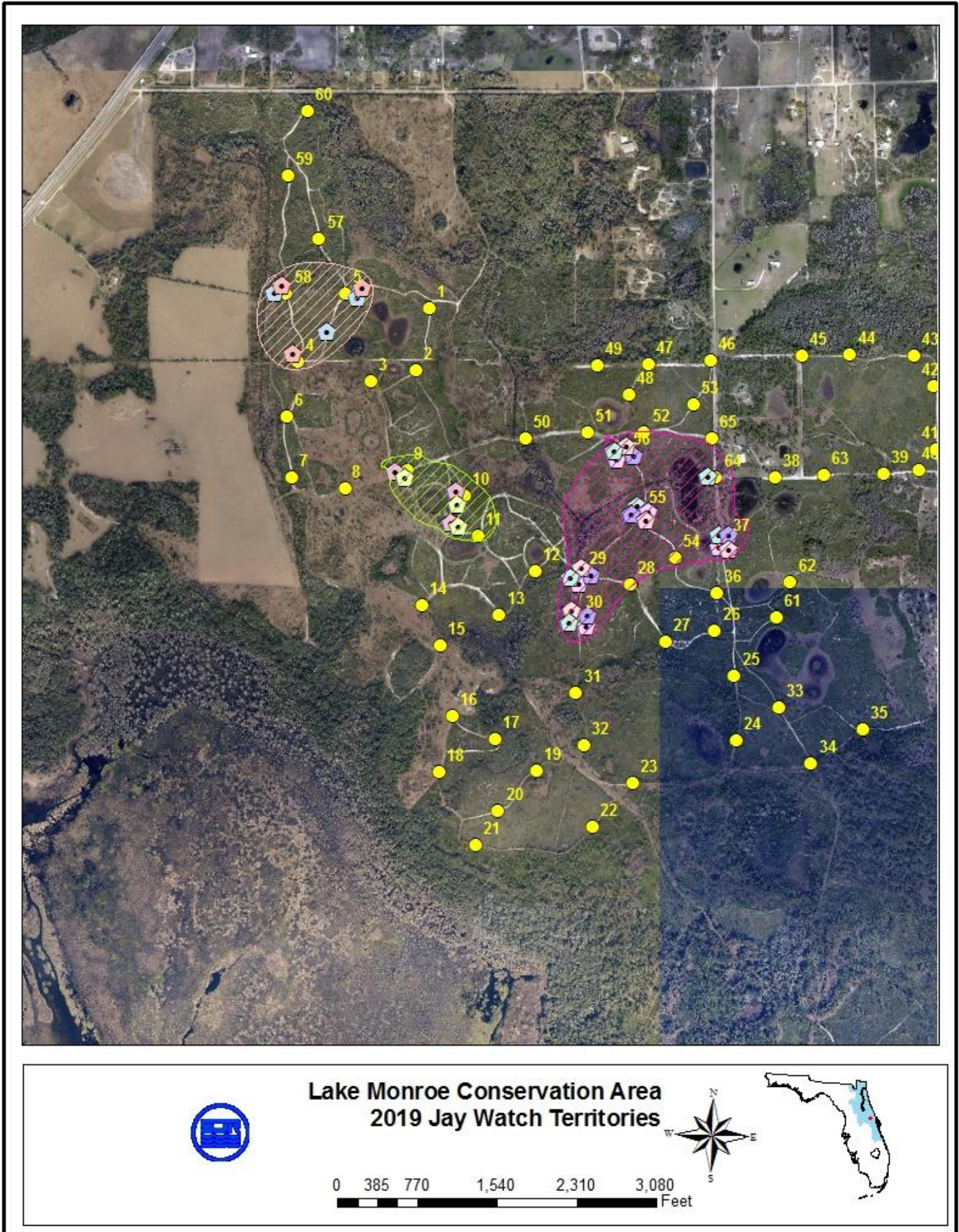




Figure 4 – LMCA Scrub-Jay territories for the summer of 2019





## Discussion

Six adult Florida Scrub-Jays were seen in 2019, compared to seven adults in 2018. Two juveniles were observed during the 2019 survey, making this the first year since 2016 that juvenile jays were observed at Lake Monroe Conservation Area. All three known banded birds (GS-YY, GS-OP, GS-RB), which are confined to two of the three jay groups, were seen during the actual Jay Watch survey. The banded jays were found in two of the three territories. The group with four birds (two adults, two juveniles) are all unbanded birds. Banding should continue as an important management tool used within the population, and conditioning efforts should be continued to increase the chance of banding success. The population is still very low, possibly unsustainable, and any translocation opportunities should be pursued.

The three jay territories are in the core scrub habitat. The core is overgrown, and any open sandy patches are rapidly disappearing. There are several sand pine tree lines needing removal around the edges of the core scrub habitat. The core 99-acres of scrub/scrubby flatwoods were burned in 2013; the flatwoods to the north of the core scrub were winter burned in 2015; and the flatwoods to the east of the scrub were roller-chopped in 2015. No habitat-improving management actions have occurred since 2015. The last vegetation survey conducted in 2017 indicated both a lack of open ground for caching and a lack of oak cover for nesting. Vegetation surveys are no longer included in Jay Watch survey protocol.

## Acknowledgements

A special thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and staff members who contributed their time and enthusiasm to this effort (in no particular order): Shirley Reilly, Kristina and Brett Nininger, Tina Foshee, Lori Paterson, Andrew Boyle, Faith Jones, Cyndi Kay, Pam Daniel, Becky Jobson, Jena Pell, Mia El-Khazen, Graham Williams, Amanda Lee, and Rosi Mulholland.

*Below Left: Green/Silver-Red/Blue at Pt. 10; Below Right UBA1, friend of GS-Yellow/Yellow; photos by Faith Jones*





*Below: GS-Yellow/Yellow; photo by Kristina Nininger*



*Left: Great survey stance, Lori Paterson; photo by R. Mulholland*

*Below: Saturday Jay Watch Survey Volunteers, 2019*

