

## Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail, Inc. 2018 Fall Trail Walk



Guided hikes along the many trails in the byway corridor help advance the OSLT corridor management organization's mission to preserve the Loop's scenic and natural resources by educating visitors and locals alike about the Loop's natural environment.

Saturday, November 3rd, turned out to be a beautiful day for our nineteenth semi-annual trail walk. Twenty-three hikers walked with biologist and Certified Master Arborist Dr. Don Spence of Bethune Cookman University for about two hours on the Red Trail. The Red Trail extends south and east from the B12 gate on Walter Boardman Drive and is on Tomoka State Park land. During the walk we saw many plant species native to east central Florida. Among the trees were slash pine, sabal palm, yaupon holly, laurel and live oak, southern magnolia, and hickory.



Shrubs like dog fennel, coontie, and pawpaw were in evidence as were the epiphytes resurrection fern and Spanish moss.

In addition to plant identification Dr. Spence discussed issues relative to environmental conservation and the impact of historical land development in the area. The impact includes the appearance of the woods we now see on the trail since the area was probably clear cut for agriculture within the last century or so. Mosquito ditching and dredging from the 1950s and 1960s have resulted in

upland species growing on now dry and elevated spoil areas that were formerly marshy.

We also learned that as mature large tree species reach the end of their natural lives the thick canopy we treasure over the byway will atrophy unless canopy-producing tree species are deliberately replanted.

*Photos provided by Rob Bird & Luis Villalon*

