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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 9, 2016

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**FGCU “Moonlight on the Marsh” Lecture Explores Everglades’ Unique Ecology and Importance of Its Restoration**  
*Popular science series continues Feb. 11 in Naples*

FORT MYERS, Fla. – The Florida Everglades’ distinctive ecological features and the importance of restoring the “River of Grass” will be the focus of the next event in the 2016 Bernard and Susan Master “Moonlight on the Marsh” Distinguished Lecture Series presented by FGCU’s Everglades Wetland Research Park.

Evelyn E. Gaiser, Ph.D., the lead principal investigator for the Florida Coastal Everglades Long-Term Ecological Research Program at Florida International University, will speak at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11 at FGCU’s Harvey Kapnick Education and Research Center at the Naples Botanical Garden, 4940 Bayshore Drive, Naples.

Gaiser is a biological sciences professor and executive director of FIU’s School of Environment, Arts and Society and Southeast Environmental Research Center. Her presentation is titled “Expecting the Unexpected: Pandora’s Box of Paradox in an Upside-Down Estuary.”

In addition to explaining “upside-down” estuaries, Gaiser will discuss other features unique to the Everglades, including its diverse food web and habitat types that occur in few other places on the planet.

“I’ll also talk about how important the Everglades is in removing excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and how important Everglades restoration is to preserving these features in the presence of climate change,” she said.

The annual “Moonlight on the Marsh” lecture series explores timely issues of local, regional and global interest. The programs have grown more popular each year.

“Attendance at the first two lectures this year has exceeded anything we have seen in the previous three years,” said FGCU Professor William J. Mitsch, director of the research park and Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management. “Because our relationship with freshwater and coastal water environments is so vital in Southwest Florida, these lectures offer valuable insight and solutions to problems we see around us.”

Lectures remaining in the series are:

--**Thursday, March 3:** “When Nature Bites Back: Solving the Budget-Busting Invasive Species Epidemic” by David M. Lodge, Ph.D., Ludmilla F., Stephen J., and Robert T. Galla Professor of Biological Sciences, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind.

--**Thursday, March 10:** “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to Global Water Issues” by Philippe Van Cappellen, Ph.D., Canada Excellence Research Chair in Ecohydrology, Water Institute, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences and Department of Biology, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

All lectures are at 7 p.m. in the Kapnick Center auditorium. Admission is free, but seats can be reserved by calling (239) 325-1365.

The Everglades Wetland Research Park is dedicated to research on the wise management of freshwater and coastal ecosystems of Southwest Florida and the Florida Everglades and to the protection and enhancement of wetlands and water resources worldwide. More details are available on the park’s website, [www.fgcu.edu/swamp](http://www.fgcu.edu/swamp).

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