

Conch Characters



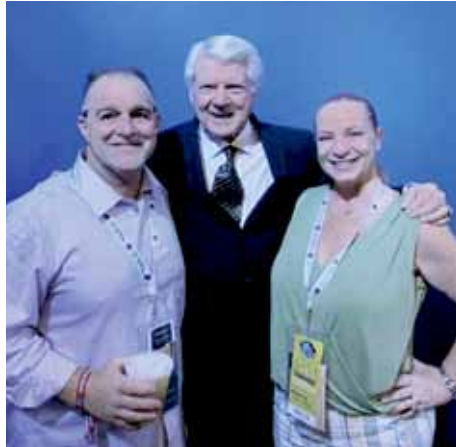
Sweetwater at the Moose.



Amy Nissen, bartender at the Legion.



Mike & Tiffany - Karaoke at the Legion on Tuesdays.



Congrats to Football Hall of Famer Jimmy Johnson, here with Big Chill partners, Larry & Jamie Calvano



Brothers Of Others is a great Miami band playing this month at the Lorelei.



Spotted in line at the Drive-Thru at Arby's.

Back to School - Stories About the Kids

SCHOOL

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. 'I'm just wasting my time,' she said to her mother. 'I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!'

OPINIONS

On the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, 'The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents.'

KETCHUP

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone. 'Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle.'

MORE NUILITY

A little boy got lost at the YMCA and found himself in the women's locker room. When he was spotted, the room burst into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover. The little boy watched in amazement and then asked, 'What's the matter, haven't you ever seen a little boy before?'

POLICE

While taking a routine vandalism report at an elementary school, I was interrupted by a little girl about 6 years old. Looking up at my uniform, she asked, 'Are you a cop?' I said yes and continued writing the report. 'My mother said if I ever needed help I should ask the police. Is that right?' 'That's right,' I told her. 'Well, then,' she said as she pushed her foot toward me, 'would you please tie my shoe?'

MORE POLICE

It was the end of the day when I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my K-9 partner, Jake, was barking, and I saw a little boy staring in at me. 'Is that a dog you got back there?' he asked. 'It sure is,' I replied. Puzzled, the boy looked at me and then towards the back of the van. Finally he said, 'What'd he do?'

7) ELDERLY

While working for an organization that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins, I used to take my 4-year-old daughter along. She was always intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the bar-

rage of questions, she turned and whispered, 'The tooth fairy will never believe this!'

8) DRESS-UP

A little girl was watching her parents dress for a party. When she saw her dad donning his tuxedo, she warned, 'Daddy, you shouldn't wear that suit.' 'And why not, darling?' 'It always gives you a headache the next morning.'

BIBLE

A little boy opened the big family Bible. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it, an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages. 'Mama, look what I found,' the boy called out. 'What have you got there, dear?' With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered, 'I think it's Adam's underwear!'

Yes, Virginia, Florida has scorpions. However, according to University of Florida Extension Entomologists, none of them are able to produce a fatal sting. Most folks would view these occasional invaders as a nuisance, and want to know how to control them.

In Florida, encounters with life-threatening non-native scorpions are possible only in the movies or as a result of stowaways or released exotic pets. Of 90 US scorpion species, only four occur east of the Mississippi River. And, only one of the 90 domestic scorpions, which usually live in the southwest, can kill people. There are about 1,300 species of scorpions worldwide.



Guiana striped scorpion. Photo by Dr. Rolando Teruel: courtesy of The Scorpion Files

Scorpions vary in size from one to four inches long. These crab-like animals are dark brown, have a broad flattened body, and are compete with ten legs. The front pair of legs is modified into claw-like pincers which are used to hold their prey.

Their most noticeable feature is their curled fleshy tail. It is usually held over their body. It ends in an enlarged upturned tip that ends in a stinger. The sting is used for defense as well as for capturing prey.

Scorpion venom is a nerve poison, but the dose injected usually is not enough to kill adults. While no Florida scorpions are capable of inflicting a lethal sting, those that have had scorpion stings report that it is very painful, probably more so than a wasp sting. Scorpions rarely sting humans except when pinned against the skin, such as under clothes or when trapped in bed sheets. The site of the sting may be sore and swollen for some time. An antivenom is available for severe reac-

Scorpions Among Us!

tions to scorpion stings, so medical attention is a good idea.

According to UF Entomologist Lyle Buss, our office visitor was a Florida bark scorpion, sometimes called the slender brown scorpion (*Centruroides gracilis*). It is the largest of Florida's three scorpion species. The smallest and most common Florida scorpion is the Hentz striped scorpion (*C. hentzi*), which is found statewide except the southernmost Keys. The third Florida species is not found in south central Florida: the Guiana striped scorpion (*C. guianensis*) is intermediate in size between the other Florida Scorpions and crawls only around Collier, Miami-Dade, and Monroe-Dade counties.

Scorpions like to hide outside under boards, rubbish, or other areas that provide shelter and protection. They are a nuisance especially in recently built homes. These predators are active at night, and do their share to reduce pests in and around the home. Another interesting feature about scorpions is that they glow under ultraviolet lights - so get out the black lights to help track them down.



Scorpion UV fluorescence is well known, but we haven't seen many pictures that show this unique quality. Photo by Kenton Elliott. Courtesy of Desert USA/Digital West Media Inc.

In the home, scorpions are most likely to be found where they find their food sources: insects, spiders, or similar small animal life. Termites are suggested as the best food source for captive Florida Bark Scorpions. Be cautious when crawling under a house or up in the attic. And taking care of these other pests will often eliminate scorpions as well.

Scorpions have a long life cycle, lasting three to five years. Males and females go through a courtship ritual prior to mating. Scorpions do not lay eggs and the young are born alive. After

birth the young scorpions climb on the back of the mother and remain there until after their first molt. Scorpions will readily eat their own species and females will often eat their own young.

Here are a few other ideas to make your Florida home less attractive to scorpions and their prey:

- Prune branches so they do not overhand the home, and keep shrubs from touching the outside walls.
- Place trash piles and trash cans on blocks or logs to keep them off the ground.
- Keep firewood outside until it is ready to be used, and use gloves when moving it.
- Maintain screens, and use caulk to seal cracks, and seal door openings with weather-stripping.
- In case of a heavy infestation, perimeter residual pesticide sprays can be used as a last resort.

If you encounter a scorpion, the natural reaction is to kill it. Physical force will do the trick, but be prepared with a quick carefully aimed stomp with a heavy boot. Glue boards may also be helpful in capturing both scorpions and their food sources without pesticides.

However, pesticides may sometimes be needed for scorpion control. Pesticides must come in contact with the animal to work. After applications are made, keep track of how effective the application was. If necessary, reapply according to label directions

Some products effective against scorpions can only be used outside, while others are labeled for indoor use. Many of these materials may only be used by professionals. Be sure to use a pesticide only as instructed on the label.



Hentz striped scorpion. Photo by Kari McWestl. Courtesy of The Scorpion Files