FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Don’t pick palmetto berries on Flagler County property

August 21, 2020 – Palmetto berries on Flagler County land might be tempting to pick, but county ordinance forbids it.

“It’s palmetto berry season, which means it is the time of year when we see people on the side of roadways and in our parks to pick the berries,” said Flagler County Environmental Projects Supervisor Mike Lagasse. “While some private property owners allow the harvesting of the berries with permission, picking palmetto berries is not allowed on Flagler County owned or managed preserves and parks.”

Flagler County ordinance also prohibits the removal of soil, rock, sand, stones, trees, shrubs, plants or wood materials. Violators can expect to pay a penalty of up to $500.

“It can make park users feel unsafe to have people coming out of the woods with machetes,” Lagasse said. “Also, palmetto berry harvesting activities reduce the amount of food available for wildlife and can create unwanted trails and debris on our public lands.”

In the past, palmetto berry harvesting has been problematic at Mala Compra Park, River-to-Sea Preserve and Varn Park in northeastern Flagler County. Other areas of concern include Haw Creek Preserve, Princess Place Preserve, Shell Bluff and Betty Steflik Preserve.

“People might say they have permission to pick the berries, but this is absolutely untrue of Flagler County public lands,” Lagasse said. “There are no licenses in effect for individuals to harvest palmetto berries from county-owned properties.”

If you see someone you suspect of harvesting palmetto berries on county-owned property, please report it to Lagasse at 386-313-4064.

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