

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Mark your calendar for Calusa Blueway Gatherings speaker series**

Fort Myers, FL Nov. 24, 2015 - Sharks of Southwest Florida will be presented by Joy Hazell of UF/IFAS Lee County Extension Florida Sea Grant as the first talk in a series of free Calusa Blueway-related programs that will take place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month from December through March at the Wa-Ke Hatchee Recreation Center, 16760 Bass Road, Fort Myers, FL 33908.

Sharks are a vital and often misunderstood asset of the Southwest Florida marine ecosystem, Hazell said. She'll discuss the species and lifecycles of Southwest Florida sharks as well as conservation efforts.

"Joy's program should dispel some negative myths about sharks and also and share why sharks are so valuable to our ecosystem," Lee County Blueway Coordinator Mike Hammond said. "Our paddling speaker series this winter promises to bring exciting topics to canoeists, kayakers and SUP'ers."

For more information and directions to the program, contact Wa-Ke Hatchee Recreation Center at 239-432-2154. Trail information is at [www.calusablueway.com](http://www.calusablueway.com) or [www.leeparks.org/blueway](http://www.leeparks.org/blueway). Stay tuned for more events and further details. Find Calusa Blueway on Facebook or CalusaPaddle on Twitter. Visit the iTunes store or Google Play to download the free smart-phone app. Visitors can find information at [www.fortmyers-sanibel.com](http://www.fortmyers-sanibel.com).

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*Note to media: Images available upon request. Contact Mike Hammond or Kristie Valone at Lee County Parks & Recreation, 239-533-7275.*