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Father's Day Tortoise



A gopher tortoise makes its way westbound on Levy County Road 347 to the east of the unrecorded subdivision known as Jemlands on Fathers Day (June 17). As noted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 'Gopher tortoises are long-lived reptiles that occupy upland habitat throughout Florida including forests, pastures, and yards. They dig deep burrows for shelter and forage on low-growing plants. Gopher tortoises share these burrows with more than 350 other species, and are therefore referred to as a keystone species. Conservation of gopher tortoises depends not only on the efforts of FWC and other conservation groups, but also on Florida's citizens. There are many ways to co-exist with these gentle land tortoises.' For more information on gopher tortoises please visit the [Education corner](http://myfwc.com/education/wildlife/gopher-tortoise/). <http://myfwc.com/education/wildlife/gopher-tortoise/> In Florida, the gopher tortoise is listed as Threatened. Both the tortoise and its burrow are protected under state law, the FWC notes.

Photo by Jeff M. Hardison © June 18, 2018 at 8:28 a.m.