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So, we *do* have fireflies here in Sarasota County. However, they may not be as common here as in other parts of the state. Although it's a limited dataset, you can view sightings on iNaturalist: https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?place_id=21&subview=map&taxon_id=47731.

In Florida, there are an estimated 56 species. Fireflies are associated with their bioluminescent flashing behavior, used to attract potential mates. Light pollution has been reported to disrupt this behavior, which is strongly correlated with human development. This means that natural areas are more likely to successfully host fireflies. In fact, Blue Springs State Park hosts annual "Firefly Nights" events from March through April every year.

I attached a very helpful infographic from UF/IFAS that addresses how homeowners can help attract fireflies to their home landscapes. I would also like to share that there is a Naturally Florida podcast episode that dives deeper into fireflies in Florida: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/polk/natural-resources-and-conservation/naturally-florida-podcast/s1/s1-e3---fireflies-transcript/>.

One species that is very interesting and rare, the Florida intertidal firefly (*Micronaspis floridana*) has a range that

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One species that is very interesting and rare, the Florida intertidal firefly (*Micronaspis floridana*) has a range that historically includes our area. It is endangered due to threats of light pollution and habitat loss, among other anthropogenic activities.

The Firefly Atlas is a citizen science project that allows people to record observations of fireflies for use in tracking and possible conservation efforts: <https://www.fireflyatlas.org/>. Besides practicing the conservation tips listed in the attached infographic, having more eyes on our fireflies is a great way to help support them!

I will also mention that we have some glow-in-the-dark stickers of the Florida intertidal firefly that are currently in the works, which we will be using to promote firefly awareness and conservation in our area. If you're interested, I can let you know when those are available! They will likely be tied to a short webinar on fireflies in Florida (also in development).

If you have any further questions or want to dig into any specific points, please feel free to reach out. Thank you and take care for now!

Jackie Leboutz
Extension Agent, Chemicals in
the Environment

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