

35 Years Service Recognition

Robert Hill – Structure Maintenance Tech (Field)

Miami Field Station, Operations & Maintenance

Bob was hired “way back” on March 13, 1973, as a Fieldman I, and spent most of his early years operating a tow boat. Along the way he received his electrical degree from International Correspondence School and in 1981 became the electrician’s helper. While working at the District, Bob also completed training at the Police Academy and was an auxiliary police officer from 1978 to 1984. He then began working for the spray crew and has been with the structure maintenance program since 1986.

In 1996, he received an Instant Cash Award for his observation of the highly invasive Tropical Soda Apple that was growing in Dade County. He has also been directly involved with data management collection at the Miami and Homestead Field stations.

In the summer of 2004, the first python was spotted and was estimated to be at least 12 feet in length. He drove the entire levee and discovered 9 other pythons with the longest at least 18 feet long. What Bob soon realized was that no Florida agency had clear authority to handle this emerging threat. Bob joined up with an Everglades National Park herpetologist who was already collecting these large invaders within the Park boundaries, and was interested in collecting the snakes Bob found. The Park herpetologist was impressed with Bob’s keen ability to find these stealthy camouflaged interlopers. The Operations and Maintenance Resource Area devoted a portion of Bob’s time to python detection and control. Bob is the first to hold a permit from the State of Florida to collect and remove pythons from the wilds. Bob has been a dedicated and resourceful employee and we appreciate his many years of service.