



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF AQUATIC BIOLOGISTS
SPRING 2026 TAXONOMIC WORKSHOP
May 5–7, 2026

Biology and Taxonomy of the Aquatic Leeches of Florida



Presented by
Fredric Govedich, Ph.D.

Location:
University of Florida, Department of Entomology and Nematology
1881 Natural Area Drive, Bldg. 970
Gainesville, FL 32611

2026 Spring Taxonomy Workshop – Hirudinida



The 2026 Florida Association of Aquatic Biologists Spring Taxonomic Workshop will be held May 5–7 at the UF Department of Entomology and Nematology (where we have met before). This year's workshop will focus on the Hirudinida of FL and North America and will be led by Dr. Fredric Govedich from Southern Utah University. Dr. Govedich focused on the evolution of parental care of leeches for his doctoral work and has published extensively on leech biology and taxonomy. He served as the lead author for the Clitellata chapter in Thorp and Covich's Freshwater Invertebrates guide. Fred will be giving an overview of the biology and taxonomy of aquatic Hirudinida. There will be ample time for microscope work to look at specimens and get verifications. At least one field collection trip to a local waterbody is also planned. Make plans now to attend this great workshop!

Dates/times: The workshop will begin at 10:00 AM on Tuesday May 5 and conclude before lunchtime on Thursday May 7, 2026.

Location: As with many of our recent freshwater workshops, this one will be held at the excellent teaching laboratory of the University of Florida Department of Entomology and Nematology (Charles Steinmetz Hall) on the UF campus in Gainesville. The address is shown above. To park at the UF Entomology building this year, **a daily parking permit is required**. The permit can be purchased through the Passport Parking app for \$8 (plus a 25-cent transaction fee). Follow the directions at this link: [Visitor Daily Permit – TAPS](#). Park in a designated Orange, Blue, or Green parking space. An alternative is to park at the Harn Art Museum parking lot on Hull Road just northwest of Steinmetz Hall. The walk to Steinmetz Hall is ~0.25 miles. If dropping off microscopes or other heavy equipment, parking at Steinmetz Hall is preferred.

Workshop cost: \$70 for FAB members, \$125 for non-members, and \$45 for students.

Lodging: The Hampton Inn Gainesville at 4225 SW 40th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32608, (352) 371-4171, has a block of rooms reserved until April 20 for \$139 per night at this link: [2026 Leech Workshop](#). The Comfort Inn University at 3440 SW 40th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32608, (352) 559-4974 have been another popular hotel for workshop attendees. Both hotels are moderately priced and well-reviewed. For attendees without a rental vehicle, a carpool can often be arranged for transportation to and from Steinmetz Hall just over two miles away.

Student Travel Grants:

FAB offers travel awards for students attending taxonomy workshops. Awards will be given based on applicant's distance in relation to the event location and responses to questions on the online application. The deadline for submitting applications is Friday March 27, 2026.

Applicants will be notified by April 2, 2026, if they were awarded travel funding. Please click [here](#) for the online application.

Other workshop information:

- Student-quality dissecting microscopes are available at the teaching lab. Participants may bring their own scopes, if desired. Be sure to bring specimens for identification or verification.
- There will be one or more field collection opportunities offered as a part of the workshop, which may involve wading in the Santa Fe River or along the muddy banks of ponds. Be sure to bring any needed field clothes and collection equipment, including nets, sorting trays, tweezers, collection jars, specimen vials, labels, Pigma Micron pens, sunscreen, and insect repellent. No preservatives are available at the lab, but some local attendees may be able to offer a small quantity of 70% EtOH for specimen preservation.
- Recommended Hirudinida identification guides: Klemm, D. J. 1995. [Identification guide to the freshwater leeches \(Annelida: Hirudinea\) of Florida and other southern states](#) and Thorp, J.H., Rogers, D.C. 2015. [Thorp and Covich's Freshwater Invertebrates: Keys to Nearctic Fauna](#), 4th edition.
- Snacks will be provided during the workshop and at breaks.
- Restaurants are abundant in the vicinity of Archer Road. A social at a local venue will be organized for one or two nights and announced at the workshop.



Questions???

Please feel free to contact Matt Scriptor, FAB President at president@floridaaquaticbiologists.org or matts@ecological-associates.com

Registration:

Please register online at: <https://www.floridaaquaticbiologists.org/events.html>

FAB Members: \$70.00

Non-Members: \$125.00

Students: \$45.00

Due to limited space, registrations are limited to 30. Please register online early to reserve your spot and so we can get an accurate head count.

Payments can be made online ahead of time with a credit card when you register. Payments by credit card or check are also accepted at the door.