

The BROWN PELICAN



**SARASOTA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

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November 2005

FIRST ANNUAL AUDUBON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GIVEN

The first Sarasota Audubon Society meeting of the 2005-2006 turned out to be a very special evening. Old friends and new gathered to view a brilliant presentation of Marjorie Sokol's travels and photography. Marjorie and her late husband Bob, longstanding members of the Sarasota Audubon Society, have led endless trips and shared their wealth of knowledge with many SAS members.

The night's program consisted of personal images from Antarctica and New Guinea highlighting several species of penguins, the Wandering Albatross and the elusive Bird of Paradise not to mention the colorful warriors of Papua New Guinea. Jim Edmundson narrated the presentation and did a marvelous job of conveying Marge's passion and humor.

Marge has generously donated her photos to Audubon for continued use in educational presentations.

As a result of Marjorie and Bob's endless contributions to the Sarasota Audubon Society, Marge was presented with the First Annual Audubon Lifetime Achievement Award by Jeanne Dubi, Audubon President.

According to Marge, the evening was simply "overwhelming" and I think everyone in attendance would agree. Her images were truly an inspiration and Audubon will forever be grateful for her sharing them with us.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS & MEETINGS

November 14: David Anderson the President of Audubon of Florida discusses his vision of conservation in the Sunshine State.

December 12, 7:00 pm: Potluck Supper with presentation by Julie Byrne: *What is Audubon?* Call Ann Friedman at 349-6713 to sign up and tell us what you are bringing.

TRIPS 2005-2006

All day trips meet at McDonald's (Bee Ridge/Cattlemen) unless otherwise noted. Field trips are open to anyone interested in birding, wildlife watching or exploring Florida's natural areas. **Donation of \$2 for members, \$4 for non-members will be accepted.**

Oct 26; Nov 9; Dec 8 & 9; Jan 18; Feb 15; Mar 15; Apr 26; May 10: Roberts Bay on the *Carefree Learner* with Sarasota High School students to monitor breeding populations.
Leader: Rick Greenspun, ph: 346-8535

Tuesday, Oct 18: Laurel Landfill/Carlton Reserve: Bird Laurel Landfill for gulls, eagles, bluebirds and more. Then to Carlton for Red-headed Woodpeckers and more bluebirds. Meet at McDonald's (Bee Ridge/Cattlemen) at 7:30 a.m. **BRING LUNCH.**
Leader: Mark Leggett, ph: 925-7220

Oct 20-22: Audubon Assembly in Cocoa Beach: Florida's largest gathering of conservation-minded citizens. Join chapter members and leaders, wildlife professionals, advocates and scientists to network and learn about the environment. Log onto www.audubon.org for details.

Thursday, Oct 27: Manasota Scrub/Lemon Bay Preserve: This 135-acre sanctuary is one of the county's newest birding treasures. Walk the boardwalk, nature trail and observation tower in the pine flatwoods and hardwood swamp. Then on to Lemon Bay for birding and lunch. Leave McDonald's (Bee Ridge/Cattlemen) at 7:30 a.m. **BRING LUNCH.**
Leader: Rick Greenspun, ph: 346-8535

Wednesday, Nov 2: Myakka River S.P.: This wildlife preserve always provides great birding. Meet at 8 a.m. in parking lot inside park (park fee.) SR 72, 9 miles east of I-75. **BRING LUNCH.**
Leader: Owen Comora, ph: 378-5166

Second Monday • October-May • 7 PM social period, followed by meeting and presentation.

Our Meeting Place—Fellowship Hall, First Congregational Church, 1031 South Euclid, Sarasota
Directions: US 41 to Bahia Vista. If coming from the south, turn right on Bahia Vista; if coming from the north, turn left. Take Bahia Vista to Euclid, then north on Euclid to the church.

Saturday, Nov 12: Celery Fields Walk: Join a different leader each month while exploring one of Sarasota's best birding spots. Meet at the gazebo (Raymond & Palmer Blvd) at 8 a.m.
Leader: Owen Comora, ph: 378-5166

Wednesday, Nov 16: Celery Fields Clean Up: Meet at the gazebo (Raymond & Palmer Blvd) at 8 a.m. and help us keep our adopted road sparkling for all.
Leader: Jeanne Dubi, ph: 355-1709

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE TOUR

Gardening for Wildlife Homescape Tour, November 19, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Take a tour of 8 Sarasota County backyards designed to attract wildlife. The tour will create awareness about the need to plant native plants and where to buy them in our area. Each home is sponsored by a local environmental group. SAS is sponsoring the home of Commissioner Jon Thaxton. Participants can start anywhere and will pick up a map at any starting point. Donation of \$10 per car. For info, email Laurel Schiller at scrubisme@comcast.net or call Florida Native Plants, 322-1915.

DEDICATION OF MYAKKA TRAIL

Tuesday, Nov 1; Dedication of the Myakka Island Trail at the Carlton Reserve, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Educational displays, hayrides and nature walks. Formal dedication by County Commissioners.



CELERY FIELDS SUCCESS

The first Celery Fields walk was a huge success with more than 33 birders showing up. Although the walk was billed as free in some publications, Veronica Tarnowski and June Mades collected \$60 from participants. People seemed willing to donate. Sara King brought water and ice for a refreshing finish to the walk, which lasted about 2 hours.

Thanks to Veronica, June and Sara who volunteered and assigned themselves tasks, all on their own initiative, and thanks to Mark for coming up with a great idea.

Thanks also to Joanna Bear, Jane Brandhorst, Janet Carlock, Ken Pearlman and Wanda Strickland for helping with the Palmer Blvd Celery Fields clean up. We collected about 60 lbs of garbage, one tire and several large pieces of wood and plastic.—Jeanne Dubi

BIRD REPORT FOR JUNE – SEPT. 2005

June 1st a late Red-Eyed Vireo sang. June 7th a rare Masked Duck (male) was spotted in the Stoneybrook area. One White Pelican was seen on Robert's Bay June 13th.

One hundred plus Least Tern nests were successful on North Lido early this summer but the Black Skimmers lost all their nests due to tropical storm "Dennis".

Four Swallow-tailed Kites were observed June 23rd. Among the migrating gulls and terns July 17-19th were a Bonapart's Gull, Common Tern and a Black Tern.

August 5th, a signing Yellow-Throated Vireo, two American Redstarts, and one White-Eyed Vireo were seen at Pinecraft Park.

September 2nd, two Red-Eyed Vireos, one Black Tern, and three species of Sandpipers were seen on Lido Beach. On September 12th a small fallout of migrating birds came through.

At Pinecraft Park two Baltimore Orioles, one Swainson's Thrush and one Chestnut-sided Warbler were seen. Also one Ovenbird and one male Yellow Warbler was seen at Crowley Nature Center on the same day.

A rare Bobwhite was seen in Northeast Sarasota near the Desoto Road area on September 18th also two Ruby-Throated hummingbirds were feeding on porter weed flowers. — Edith V. Miller.

SUPER BIRD SLEUTHS

On June 1, Meg (7 years old) and Mom, Michelle Van De Venter, found and identified Florida's first recorded Varied Bunting after it hit a window on Siesta Key and died instantly. Knowing that they had discovered something special, the Van De Venters contacted Sarasota Audubon for verification of the ID. The find caused a sensation for birders around the state. It was also mentioned in *Winging It*, the newsletter of the American Birding Association, and will be the subject of an upcoming paper in *Florida Field Naturalist*, the journal of the Florida Ornithological Society. Well done Meg and Michelle!

VOTE FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT NOV. 8

If you are a registered voter in Sarasota County, the most important thing you can do locally for birds and other wildlife this year is vote YES on the referenda for Environmentally Sensitive Lands and Neighborhood Parklands on Tuesday, November 8. SAS has formally endorsed these referenda, joining the other major environmental organizations and many neighborhood associations in urging its members and friends to help pass them. Unless you live in Venice, where there is also a city

council race, this will be the only thing on the ballot. That means a small turnout, and it multiplies the importance of your vote.

THESE REFERENDA ITEMS WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR TAX RATE. One of them merely extends the existing twenty five cents for every thousand dollars real property valuation for acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands that was approved by two thirds of Sarasota County voters in 1999 for ten more years after it currently expires in 2019 and adds a program for acquiring neighborhood parklands. The other increases the bonding authority to equal anticipated income from that tax extension.

We need the bonding authority so we can acquire land over the next several years that would otherwise probably either be developed or, if still not paved over, will almost certainly cost much more then. An anticipated forty percent of the funds will be used to acquire neighborhood parklands, little pieces of natural green space or restorable degraded land in our urban and urbanizing areas that could become new Arlington or Phillippi Estates Parks but that don't qualify as Environmentally Sensitive Lands. Some of those we have had to reject during the last three or four years are already under commercial development, depriving their neighborhoods of green space and trees that could have been preserved with natural trails to relax, bird or walk a dog.

Thus far, our existing Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program (which is about to run out of money) during its six years has acquired 44 properties totaling over 16,000 acres, about half fee simple and half in perpetual conservation easement, at an average price of \$4,000 an acre. About ten percent of acquisition costs are reserved for management, including natural paths, possible fencing, removal of exotics, controlled burns where suitable, etc., but the land will be kept in a natural state without tennis courts, ball diamonds and the like. All acquisitions must be at or below appraised value, from willing sellers, recommended by our nine-member citizen committee (ESLOC – which includes two SAS members), and approved by the County Commission.

So go out on November 8 and vote for our natural environment, or if you'll be out of town, request an absentee ballot now. And if you'd like to help the Sarasota County Forever Committee working to get it passed, call me at 923-0671 and I'll send you a form.—
Wade Matthews



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE IN DECEMBER

Local membership renewals are due in December. No renewal notices will be sent so please send a check for \$15 to P.O. Box 15423, Sarasota, FL 34277 or bring your check/cash to the December meeting. Remember that the Sarasota Audubon Chapter benefits 100% when you join locally.

CLIPPERS REQUESTED

Historian, Betty Matthews (923-0671) needs assistance. There are several publications, including the various weeklies (on Siesta Key, Longboat, East County, Planet, etc.), magazines such as *Natural Awakenings* and Sarasota newspapers such as *Herald Tribune* and *Venice Gondolier*, which sometimes publish information about SAS or our members. It is impossible for one person to always see every issue so if you normally read one of these publications on a regular basis, would you please volunteer to clip the article for the SAS scrapbook. The article should also include the name of the publication and date published. Please call Betty at the above number to volunteer your services and indicate which publication you can monitor. The articles should be given to Betty at each monthly meeting or mailed to her. Also, if you take photographs on any SAS outings, overnight trips, etc., please contribute a few (with all identifications) for the scrapbook.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Sign up for the 106th annual Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, Dec 17. We need drivers, spotters, photographers and recorders. You don't have to be an expert birder to participate. It's a great day out and an important event. Last year, our bird species count was in the top 100 out of more than 2000 in the US and 8th in the state out of 63. Let's do even better this year. Call Edith Miller at 366-5853 or email Jeanne Dubi at jeanne@sarasotaaudubon.org.

FUNDRAISING

License Plates: Sarasota Audubon is now offering license plates promoting preservation, conservation, education and restoration. Get yours for \$10 at the meetings or \$12.50 via mail.

Swan Lake: Saturday Nov. 26 (2 pm & 8 pm), Sarasota Opera House. Tickets \$30, \$50, and \$60. Call Julie Byrne at 379-3882 for info or send your check to her at 5060 Marshfield Rd., Sarasota, FL 34235.

Holiday Ornaments: Ornaments crafted by Stu Hills and made of painted wood will be available at the November program meeting. The Ivory-billed Woodpecker and the Snowy Owl will be featured. Help support SAS in this fund-raiser.

Audubon Print Cards: High quality cards for your use, to collect, or to give away. Now in boxes! \$8 FOR 5. Contact Carolyn Primus at 753-9737, or cprimus@sarasotaaudubon.org. Support your local chapter!

SARASOTA, FL 34277-1423

P.O. BOX 15423

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Welcome to the following new members:

For Membership information, email lynn@sarasotaaudubon.org or leave a message at 364-9212

- List of new members including Jos C. McAndrew, Brandy McDonald, Vera Meserole, Suzy Nolan, Ellen O'Brien, Paul Perrot, Steve Petruniak, Eve Prang Plews, Lawrence Schitea, Ann Smith, Marian Swinford, Harry Tobler, Jerry Ulrikson, Evelyn Winans, Larry Wells, Martin Adler, Tom Arns, M.C. Blaha, Robert Blekicki, Joni Bos, Andrea Burgman, Mary Cloud, Doris Cook, Ruby Dailey, Ginger Daniel, Jerome Dimercurio, David Frederickson, Harriet Frink, Carole Scutt, Renate Schubert, Anita Robinson, Barry Gerber, Sonya Gerson, Rita Goldstein, William Gruber, Josefina Hole, Michael Huff, Jeanne Jacobson, Michael Jones, Dorothy Joseph, Jeffery Karr, R.D. Kelly, Shelia Tuck-Colby, James Taylor, William Koczko, Richard Kolchakian, Harold Kollmeier, Bill Kowal, Ester Mertz, Janet Mills, Beth Moore, Reko Mosely, Linda Quarles, Mary Randolph, Claudia Reynolds

SAS NAME TAG

If you are a new member or do not have an official SAS NAME TAG, you can get one delivered right to your door. Send your name, full address and telephone number, along with your check for \$4.50 made out to: Michael Fox, 2749 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34237. For an extra \$2 (total of \$6.50) you can get a badge that attaches by magnet—no pinholes!

Be sure to identify yourself as a member of Sarasota Audubon Society.