

The BROWN PELICAN



**SARASOTA
AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many of you are unaware of the conservation and education projects with which SAS is engaged. We can all be extremely proud of the following impressive list:

CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

1 – CONSERVATION ALERT Through Wade Matthews, Conservation Chair, monitor and attend county and local government meetings in order to keep the board and the membership informed on all issues of environmental and conservation concern to SAS. In addition, represent SAS by sitting as committee or board member on like-minded organizations within the community with a view to cooperation and support of the common goals of conservation in Sarasota County.

2 – EAGLE WATCH Through Eagle Watch Chair Dale Nauman and volunteers, monitor and record observations of nesting Bald Eagles within the county. Represent the views of SAS and Audubon of Florida at public meetings and hearings with regard to possible violations at Bald Eagle nesting sites.

3 – ROBERTS BAY MONITORING Through a grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota, provide financial support to Sarasota High School in monitoring Roberts Bay nesting colonies as part of the Tampa Bay Coastal Island Sanctuaries program, a conservation project of Audubon of Florida.

4 – COASTAL BIRD MONITORING Partner with Sarasota County in monitoring coastal bird populations in both breeding and non-breeding seasons. Particular emphasis is on endangered and threatened species, such as Piping and Snowy Plovers, Black Skimmers, Wilson's Plovers, Least Terns and Red Knots. An adjunct to this program is monitoring of roofs for Least Terns and Black Skimmers during breeding season.

5 – CELERY FIELDS Work in partnership with Sarasota County in maintaining the Celery Fields as a prime bird watching site. Pro-

vide consultation to the county as it restores 80 acres of the Celery Fields into a more traditional wetland with expanded breeding habitat for birds.

6 – ROAD CLEAN UP Under the Keep Sarasota Beautiful program, maintain a 2-mile stretch of Palmer Boulevard through the Celery Fields. Four or five days per year are scheduled for road clean ups.

7 – PINECRAFT PARK Work with Sarasota County and other local organizations to maintain Pinecraft Park, keeping it free of litter and removing exotic plants.

8 – AUDUBON OF FLORIDA Through SAS board member Julie Byrne, who also sits on the board of Audubon of Florida, actively participate in regional and statewide issues..

9 – CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS In cooperation with the National Audubon Society, conduct Christmas Bird Count surveys each year in both northern Sarasota County and Myakka River State Park. The cost of \$5 per participant is borne by SAS—approximately 90 individuals, \$450 per year.

10 – BIRD SURVEYS Upon request, assist local property owners to conduct bird surveys on their properties. Educate property owners about birds and bird habitat with a view to improving their sites in order to attract more birds and wildlife. Current surveys under way: Misty Creek Country Club and Girl Scouts properties.

11 – ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS AWARD Research and solicit applications from local businesses that conduct their operations in an environmentally friendly way. Review applications and select a recipient for Sarasota Audubon's annual award. This award was established to encourage local businesses to become more environmentally aware and to adopt sound environmental practices.

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.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES

1 – CROWLEY MUSEUM & NATURE CENTER Partially fund the position of Program Director at Crowley Museum & Nature Center so that Crowley can expand its educational programs, especially to school children and youth groups throughout Sarasota County.

Volunteer at Crowley Museum & Nature Center for a variety of activities, including bird and nature walks aimed at both children and adults.

2 – SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS Provide speakers and give bird slide presentations and talks to schools and community groups within Sarasota County with the goal of educating the general public on birdlife and conservation issues related to birds.

3 – CELERY FIELDS Conduct monthly guided bird walks through the Celery Fields. These walks are aimed at the general public, as well as members, in order to familiarize local citizens with the Fields and the work that SAS is doing in cooperation with Sarasota County to maintain the site as a prime bird habitat.

4 – DAY TRIPS With experienced birders lead bird walks and day trips throughout Sarasota County and adjacent counties; these walks and trips are open to the general public and are aimed at identifying birds, their habitats and migration patterns, and to learn about the human impact on the natural world and how to minimize it.

5 – OVERSEAS/OVERNIGHT TRIPS With experienced leaders, conduct extended trips to discover birds of other regions of Florida and of different countries and ecosystems.

6 – MONTHLY MEETINGS Slide shows and lectures on birds and related topics (nature, environmental awareness, conservation projects) are presented at monthly meetings. The meetings are open to the general public.

As is the case with most volunteer organizations, much of the work is done by a few. But we can all help in a multitude of ways: Volunteering in any way you can, from field work to computer work; donating gifts for kids' prizes; becoming a local member as well as a national member; signing up for a day or overnight trip; considering a bequest to SAS in your will; helping with an annual donation. Any way you help will be greatly appreciated. *Jeanne Dubi, President*

MONTHLY PROGRAM

February 13. Russ Hoffmann will describe how to create wildlife-friendly ponds in your neighborhood. Special presentation by Girl Scouts demonstrating wetland and watershed principles

REMEMBRANCE



Joan Staley, a long-time member of SAS passed away December 30. Despite battling serious illnesses, and later being confined to a wheel chair, she was always willing to serve if needed. Over the years she and Hal traveled with SAS on day trips, overnight trips, boat trips and to

far-away places like Trinidad and Venezuela. SAS has lost a great member and she will always be remembered in our hearts and prayers. Her family has requested that memorial donations be sent to Sarasota Audubon Society, P.O. Box 15423, Sarasota, FL 34277.

TRIPS 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. NO RESERVATIONS ARE NECESSARY UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED. For more information, contact each individual Trip Leader.

Tuesday, Feb 7: Venice Rookery & Shamrock Park *Coordinator: Mark Leggett, 925-7220*, will lead us to the rookery and then on to Shamrock Park. Leave McDonald's at 8 a.m. BRING LUNCH.

Saturday, Feb 11: 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. *Coordinator: Mark Leggett, 925-7220*.

Friday, Feb 17: Le Barge Cruise Join us on this 2-hour cruise aboard a large chartered boat to view the egret, heron, pelican, and other water bird breeding colonies. Reservations **NOT** required. Just come to the Le Barge moored near Marina Jack's at the Bayfront Marina, by 9:15 a.m. for a 9:30 a.m. departure. Fare is \$18. No organized lunch. *Coordinator: Rick Greenspun, 346-8535*.

Saturday, Feb 25-Monday Feb 27: The Hatchees (See Getaway Trips for more details)

Saturday, Feb 25: Ponce de Leon Park & Aquí Esta Ponds, Punta Gorda Look for Burrowing Owls, as well as wintering ducks and waders. Stop in for a visit to the bird rehab center and walk through the mangroves. Leave McDonald's at 8 a.m. *Leader: David Williamson, 925-3830*. Optional lunch at local restaurant.

Tuesday, Feb 28: Emerson Point Park This wonderful park has woodlands, shoreline, and mangroves. Depart McDonald's at 7:30

BIRDING HOTSPOTS

The new revised *Birding Hot Spots of Sarasota and Manatee Counties* is available! It includes an updated checklist of area birds and provides explicit descriptions of, and directions to, good local birding spots. Several new spots have been added. *Hot Spots* is available at meetings, on day trips, and by mail. Cost \$6 (add \$1.75 for mail.)

Send to Sarasota Audubon Society, P.O. Box 15423 Sarasota, FL 34277-1423. *Please mark your envelope "Hot Spots"*

a.m. Optional lunch at Crab Trap II restaurant. *Leaders: John Ginaven, 798-9829, and Stuart Hills, 922-5261.*

Tuesday, Mar 7: Ft DeSoto Join leader *Rick Greenspun, 346-8535* on a quest for migrants at this marvelous park and premier birding hotspot. Leave the first rest area just after the tollbooths on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge (I-275) at 8 a.m. BRING LUNCH.

CONSERVATION NOTES

PETITION GATHERERS WANTED: Last month's Brown Pelican described two anti-sprawl and wildlife-protecting amendments to the Sarasota County Charter that SAS and a growing number of environmental, neighborhood, and other organizations have endorsed. To get them on the November ballot for voter approval, we need over 12,000 valid voter signatures by summer. We appreciate those who have already signed petitions at our SAS meetings or elsewhere, and if you haven't yet, sign some up at our next Audubon meeting and take others to give your neighbors. But SAS and our allied organizations alone don't have enough members to get us on the ballot. For that we need volunteers to man a table or circulate with clipboards at places where voters gather such as street fairs, markets, outside post offices, and at precincts in March at the County special election on the school tax. If you can help, either go to www.Sarasotacitizens.org or call Wade Matthews at 923-0671 and he will put you in touch with our volunteer coordinator to arrange places and times. If you can't volunteer but can help our campaign financially (with enough contributions we might even hire a professional petition-gatherer), either go to the website or call Wade.

GOLDEN APPLE DINNER THEATER TICKETS

Paid tickets for the Feb. 24 performance of "*Urinetown*" can be picked up at the Monday, Feb. 13 Audubon program meeting or otherwise they will be mailed out Feb. 14. The theater is located on Pineapple Ave. near the downtown Selby library. Complimentary valet parking is available. Doors open at 6p.m. followed by a buffet dinner. "*Urinetown*" begins at 8 p.m.

REMINDERS

Don't forget the Pine Craft Park Potato Fest, Feb. 18 9-Noon, and Michael Good: *Birds of Cuba*, Feb. 22 Selby Library, 2 pm., For information on any of these events call Jeanne Dubi at 355-1709.

WILDLIFE GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, Mar 18: Tour of Wildlife-friendly Gardens. Visit local gardens from modest to grand to see how some people attract birds and wildlife to their gardens. There will be plants for sale, a raffle, free professional help, and home baked cookies at one of the locations. Call Edith Miller at 366-5853 for route map. Cost \$10 per person.

SAS MEMBERSHIPS — LAST CHANCE!

If you haven't renewed your Sarasota Audubon Society membership for 2006, please do so now! Remember that your \$15.00 local membership helps underwrite our newsletter costs and supports our local conservation projects.

SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY PRESENTS \$5,000 GRANT TO CROWLEY MUSEUM & NATURE CENTER

In January, the Sarasota Audubon Society presented a \$5,000 grant to Crowley Museum & Nature Center to partially fund educational programs at the nonprofit nature and pioneer history center.

The annual grant to the Center supports regularly scheduled programs for adults and children including guided nature and bird walks, creative environmental projects for children, and informative lectures exploring wildlife, history and native Florida.

Sarasota Audubon has coordinated activities with Crowley Museum & Nature Center since the Center's beginning in 1974. Crowley is located on a 190 acre site adjacent to the Myakka River in east Sarasota County. The Center includes nature trails through five native Florida habitats and pioneer history buildings and artifacts from the late 1800's.

For more information about Crowley Museum & Nature Center and its educational programs, visit www.crowleymuseumnaturectr.org or call (941) 322-1000.

MONTHLY RAFFLES

We have collected \$125 for raffles so far towards the goal of \$250 for digitizing our bird slides. Items raffled off were a \$25 certificate to Applebee's and a \$10 gift card for Starbucks. Thanks to all for helping us to meet our goal.

BAHAMAS CRUISE

Sixty people from Sarasota, Manatee and Sun City Audubons signed up for the Bahamas Cruise & Birding trip, Jan 8 – 12. In Freeport our guides searched out Bahama specialty birds such as *Cuban Emerald hummingbird*, *La Sagra's* and *Crescent-eyed Flycatchers*, *Thick-billed Vireo*, *Red-legged Thrush*, *Loggerhead Kingbird*, *Bananaquit* and *Greater Antillean Bullfinch*.

On Nassau, four guides showed us *Caribbean Dove*, *Western Spindalis (Stripe-headed Tanager)*, *Cuban Grassquit*, *White-cheeked Pintail*, *Black-faced Grassquit* and a *Bahama Woodstar hummingbird* sitting on a tiny nest. Altogether our group saw 88 birds on the two Bahama islands and 106 from door to door.

The ship was very nice--lots of fun, good food. Next time you see one of the cruisers, ask for a demonstration of the Macarena!

SARASOTA, FL 34277-1423

P.O. BOX 15423

SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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★ Welcome to the following new members: ★

★ Donald Abrams	★ John and Ginny Hoenig	★ Rachel Porter	★ Lora Warner
★ Julia Atlas	★ Thomas Jalovec	★ Samantha Reilly	★ Thomas Watkins
★ Rachell Avril	★ Wilson Kerr	★ Fred Rohel	★ William Watrous
★ Ronald Bernice	★ Hazel Klauck	★ Anne Savage	★ Irene Wilkinson
★ Ethan Best	★ Keith Loring	★ Joan Schillinger	★ Jeannine Williams
★ Dr. Carolyn Bloomer	★ Dr. Robert Luckner	★ Terry Sculla	★ Tamara Williams
★ Sue Brongel	★ Sandra McCall	★ Carrie Smith	★ John Winter
★ Fred and Joanna Chuchro	★ Teresa McCoy	★ Mildred Stensler	★ Hugh Yaeger
★ Diana Drake Cleland	★ Mr. and Mrs. DE Meritt	★ Toni Borman	★ Donald Young
★ Laura and Bernard Cohen	★ Alex Mott	★ Peter Sullivan	★ Norine Zapata
★ Phyllis Coleman	★ Norma Mueller	★ Douglas Terry	★ Mitchell Zavon
★ Leroy Davis	★ Lyle Murray	★ Bill and Pamela Toth	★ Melinda Leeson
★ Milton Demos	★ Dorothy Noel	★ Sharelle Turner	★ Margaret Kaminski
★ Donna Erickson	★ Edwin Peters	★ Grace Ward	★ Martha Straub
★ N.R. Hagen	★ Polidero Marketing		

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

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.