



THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 52132 | Sarasota, FL 34232-0337 | SarasotaAudubon.org

February 2017

MONTHLY MEETING

Monday, February 13th

SARASOTA BAY FROM A DOLPHIN'S PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Randall Wells of Mote Marine will discuss the Bottlenose Dolphins of our bay

Social Hour: 6:30pm

Business Meeting: 7:00pm

Presentation: 7:30pm



Monthly meetings are held at the First Congregational Church Fellowship Hall, 1031 South Euclid Ave., Sarasota

[CLICK: 2016-17 MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE](#)

SAS NATURE CENTER



Open Daily: 9:00am-1:00pm

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Pre-meeting Dinner - New Location!

The pre-monthly meeting dinner is being moved to Gecko's Restaurant, 1900 Hillview Avenue at 5:00pm. All members welcome!

Contact Karen Jensen (karensarasota@yahoo.com) for reservations



SAS ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

2016 - 2017

[CLICK HERE](#)



A Message from Our President

GROUND RULES AT THE CELERY FIELDS

Many Sarasota County residents and out-of-towners think that Sarasota Audubon owns the Celery Fields. It does not. I get a number of phone calls each month asking where the CF are, can they bring their dogs, can they kayak, etc. I try to answer some of them, but others need a higher authority! Here are some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and what to say if you get any of these questions:



Where are the Celery Fields and can I have directions?

Go to sarasotaaudubon.org and click on Nature Center, then Celery Fields and the directions will be at the bottom of the page.

What are the opening times for the Celery Fields?

The Celery Fields are a county facility and are not owned by Sarasota

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & ACTIVITIES

No reservations necessary for field trips unless noted. Suggested donation: \$2 members, \$4 non-members.

Thursday, February 9, 16, 23

Thursdays, February 9, 10, 23

OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK

8:30am. Meets every Thursday from October 20th through April 20th. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/Nature Center. Park opens 8:00am, park entrance fee applies. Alternating leaders Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) and Peter Brown (508-241-5541)

Tuesday, February 7, 14, 21, 28 - March 7, 14

TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS

10:00am. Learn the first part of Yang style Tai Chi in these 6 weekly sessions. \$3 per session or all six for \$15. Pay at first session. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing. Meet at the SAS Nature Center.

Tuesday, February 7th

FT DESOTO BIRDS AND DUCKS

7:30am. Meet Lynn Jakubowicz and Mary Heinlen behind Starbucks (University and I-75). Bring Lunch. Contact Lynn Jakubowicz (lynn234@verizon.net)

Wednesday, February 8th

CELERY FIELDS WALK

8:00am. Leaders Stu Wilson (512-897-8341) and Kathryn Young. Meet in the SAS Nature Center.

Saturday, February 11th

2nd SATURDAY CELERY FIELDS WALK

8:00am. NEW THIS SEASON! Join some of our best birders on the 2nd Saturday of each month from October through April as we explore the great variety of habitats and birds found in the Celery Fields. Meet at the Nature Center

Sunday, February 19th

CRITTER SURVEY AT THE NATURE CENTER

9:00am-11:00am. Join Glynnis Thomas (glynnis65@gmail.com) for a 'bio-blitz' to see what critters, from insects to birds, find a home in the gardens at the SAS Nature Center. Bring your cameras, binoculars and powers of observation as we try to document every living thing. Invited experts too.

Tuesday, February 21st

RED BUG SLOUGH

8:00am. Meet at Red Bug Slough, 5200 Beneva Road. Leaders Lynn Jakubowicz (lynn234@verizon.com) and Martha Straub.

Monday, February 27th

4th MONDAY CELERY FIELDS WALK

9:00am. Join Joyce Leary on the 4th Monday of each month, October through March. Meet at the Nature Center. Contact: Joyce Leary (508-737-8954)

Audubon. They are open from dawn to dusk. Our Nature Center is open from 9 until 1pm daily, October through May.

What are the Celery Fields?

A stormwater collection zone, owned by Sarasota County, not by Audubon. Sarasota Natural Resources manages the hill, the public parking area, the public restrooms and the boardwalks; the rest of the 440-acre facility is managed by the county's stormwater department.

Can I bring my dog?

Since it is a county facility, you can bring your dog as long as it is on a leash and you pick up after it. We discourage dogs in our gardens.

Can I fish at the Celery Fields?

Yes but not from any of the man-made structures: the boardwalks or the concrete stormwater control gates.

Can I kayak at the Celery Fields?

Yes, but there is no launch area. Also, we at Audubon discourage kayakers and small fishing boats during the nesting season.

Can I park at the boardwalks?

YES for Raymond Rd (relatively little traffic); NO at Palmer Blvd (very heavy traffic).

Are drones allowed?

We discourage drone use, especially near the Nature Center, but the County is working on a drone use plan. Call 941-861-5000 if you see drones disturbing birds.

Are big events allowed at the CF?

From time to time, the county allows events at the CF. They are limiting it to 4 per year. On Feb 18, United Way is sponsoring an obstacle course event, so now you know!

What happens if someone reports a bird in distress?

Call Wildlife Center of Venice at 941-484-9657

What do you do if you see any shenanigans that needs law enforcement attention at the Celery Fields?

Call the sheriff's department a 941-861-5800

What do you do if you see something that need tending to, i.e. graffiti, trash etc.?

Call 941-861-5000.

A question that you cannot answer?

Contact the county at 941-861-5000.

Please avoid getting into an antagonistic exchange. Better to call 941-851-6000 with your issue.

With your help, we can keep the Celery Fields a haven for birds and wildlife, and a place of passive recreational use for all.

Jeanne Dubi

You're Invited!



Backyard Beauties: Native Plants of the Celery Fields and Florida

CONSERVATION

**IMPORTANT - Proposed Changes to Sarasota County Development Requirements
CPA No.2015-G - 2050 Village, Open Space and Greenbelt Buffers Public Meetings**



Hello everyone, it has been a busy new year. On January 18, 2017 I attended a public meeting on the proposed changes to current county development requirements. There were only about 40 people in attendance. After attending the meeting and reviewing the proposed changes online I conclude that these changes must have been suggested and designed by developers with very little upfront public input. The proposed changes focus on an optional reduction in required Open Space from 50% to 33% and the removal of some 500 ft. vegetated Green

Opening Reception Wednesday, March 1st 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Exhibition open to the public March 2 - 31
Daily 9am - 1pm
Sarasota Audubon Nature Center

Please join us for a special reception to welcome the Florida Society of Botanical Artists on Wednesday, March 1 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. You will be able to meet the artists and preview "Backyard Beauties: Native Plants of the Celery Fields" that will be open to the public during the month of March.

More than 20 works of botanical art created in graphite, watercolor, oil, colored pencil and other media will be on display, celebrating the native plants of the Celery Fields and Florida. Light bites and refreshments will be served.

Parking will be available at 6893 Palmer Boulevard, Sarasota, Florida and at 999 Center Road.

"While Botanical art and illustration informs and inspires many art forms, the role of botanical art is to blend the scientific study of plants with their artistic presentation," said Susan Benjamin, president of the Botanical Society. "Contemporary environmental interests and love of the natural world are bringing botanical art into the mainstream." The Florida Society of Botanical Artists is a local chapter of the American Society of Botanical Artists.

Mark Your Calendars

March 13th

Special Guest Speaker:
Julie Zickefoose

Author and Artist of *Baby Birds: An Artist Looks Into the Nest*



Please join us for our special guest speaker for the March monthly meeting: Legendary author and artist Julie Zickefoose will talk about her deep connection to nature, birdwatching adventures and especially, her most recent book, "Baby Birds: An Artist Looks Into the Nest." Julie is known for giving presentations that inspire her audiences to enjoy the natural world around them. Julie was a guest on NPR's All Things Considered for six years. She leads birding and natural history excursions around the world when she isn't at home on her 80-acre sanctuary in Ohio.

Monday, March 13, 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

**First Congregational Church Fellowship Hall
1031 South Euclid, Sarasota, FL 34237**

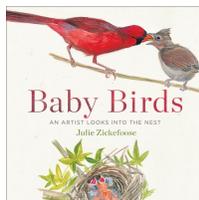
Celery Fields Walk - Wednesday, March 15th

7:30 - 9:30am. Julie will lead a Celery Fields walk. Meet at the Nature Center picnic benches. \$10.00.

Book Signing - Wednesday, March 15th

9:30am. Stay for the book signing, "Baby Birds: An Artist Looks Into the Nest". Julie will hold a second book signing with a 20-minute talk. Free.

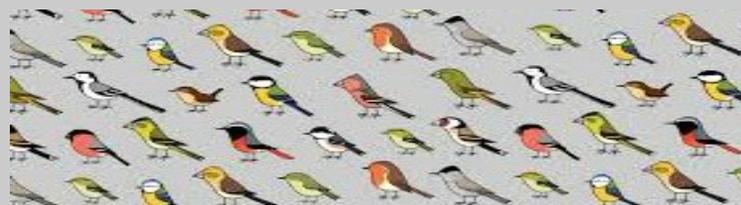
Be inspired! Learn how to look at the natural world around you through the eyes of a natural history artist, author and scientist.



Buffer zones between communities to provide cost savings for developers. However, the changes provide absolutely NO benefit for the future residents of the development or the existing communities abutting or contiguous to the planned new community. Green Buffers and Open Space provide an opportunity for citizens to have a bit of nature to appreciate within their communities, as well as wildlife habitat corridors and sound and site buffers between developments. As development increases in the county these open areas and green belts will become even more necessary and valuable to maintain or even expand. The county should be seeking ways to encourage developers to BUILD WITHIN NATURE, NOT ON TOP OF IT. The era of clear cutting and archaic development designs should be a thing of the past. This can only take place if current and future county regulations promote more naturecentric designs to consider and purchase by newcomers to the area. It is imperative that we the citizens of Sarasota County take an active role in our future land use planning by attending these meetings and taking the time to send our input to our local county government. If you would like more information on how to review and comment on these proposed changes or attend a meeting please contact County Planner - Vivian Roe (vroel@scgov.net or 941-861-5140).

I suggested there be NO CHANGES at the meeting which was one of the options on the comment form. I have also passed this information onto Venice Audubon since much of these new developments are taking place in south county.

Rob Wright, Conservation Chair



NOTES FROM THE BIRD RECORDER

Here are the January sightings:

- **Black Scoter:** R. Kraft, Manasota Beach, M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach
- **Bufflehead:** M. Moerdyk, Longboat Key Golf Course
- **Greater Scaup:** M. Ostrowski et al., Myakka River State Park
- **Short-tailed Hawk:** B. Torvund, Myakka River State Park, Lower Lake
- **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** K. Young, North Siesta Key Bridge mudflats
- **Great Black-backed Gull:** K. Young, T. Jiamchello, M. Moerdyk, N. Lido Beach
- **Glaucous Gull:** J. Gammello, Siesta Beach
- **Common Tern:** C. Herzog, et al., Siesta Beach, T. Ford, Ackerman Lake
- **Gull-billed Tern:** B. Torvund, Myakka River State Park, Lower Lake
- **Cave Swallow:** K. Doddridge et al., Celery Fields
- **Brown-headed Nuthatch:** S. Green, Deer Prairie Creek Preserve
- **Rusty Blackbird:** S. Wilcox, J. Whitehead, R. Blackshaw, Crowley Museum & Nature Center
- **Orange-crowned Warbler:** S. Wilson, N. Lido Park
- **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** N. Edmondson, Ligon-Sleeping Turtles Preserve
- **Black-throated Green Warbler:** K. Young et al., Ligon-Sleeping Turtles Preserve, G. Gonzales, Myakkahatchee Environmental Center
- **American Redstart:** K. Young et al., Ligon-Sleeping Turtles

Contact Harma Nyhof at birdsrg@gmail.com to register for either of these events.



WORKSHOPS

These 2-hour workshops provide a wealth of information on a variety of topics. No reservations required. Meet at the Nature Center 1:30pm (* *Bird Scavenger Hunt starts at 10:00am*).

Adults - \$8.00, Children - \$5.00

FEB 10 - SUMMER WITH A SWALLOW-TAILED KITE

MAR 3 - RAISING MONARCHS

APR 5 - BUTTERFLY I.D. BASICS

APR 22 - PURPLE MARTINS

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

MAR 11 - BIRD BEHAVIOR SCAVENGER HUNT (10am)

[CLICK FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION](#)

Questions? Contact Harma Nyhof, birdsrg@gmail.com

CLASSES

These classes target specific families of birds and includes a photography class. All classes meet at the Nature Center except field trips. Check times and locations for field work.

SPRING WARBLERS - April 19, 20

[CLICK FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION](#)

Questions? Contact Kathryn Young, kathwren4@gmail.com

BIRDING SERIES CLASSES

BASIC BIRDING - 6 sessions

Feb 16, 23 & Mar 2, 9, 16, 23

1:30pm, SAS Nature Center

Cost \$60. Reservations Required

[CLICK FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION](#)

Questions? Contact Kathryn Young, kathwren4@gmail.com

SAS WORKSHOP

***Summer with a Swallow-tailed Kite Roost
Up Close and Personal***



Preserve

- **Dickcissel:** J. Fisher, Celery Fields
- **Vesper Sparrow:** J. Peterson, Celery Fields
- **Bronzed Cowbird:** J. Paisley et al., Celery Fields Nature Center

Please remember to share any eBird checklists with SASbirds. Call 941-780-0545 or email ceherzog@gmail.com with unusual sightings.

Thank you for making the effort eBirders!

Claire Herzog



JANUARY

HAPPENINGS

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - December 31st

The 117th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count season has concluded and the 66th Sarasota CBC, held on Saturday, December 31, 2016, was again successful although some chilly weather early in the day and dry conditions throughout the circle probably contributed to us being a bit off of our recent pace.

Our final tally should be 152 species which lags behind last cycle's 159 and our all-time record of 161 from 2008. The number of individual birds, about 36,000, was down from last cycle's 39,000. A spreadsheet with our raw count totals is attached.

For the Count, we had 117 field observers and feeder watchers covering 21 designated Areas and 3 Feeders. This is on par with last year's participation rate so my worries about Count day falling on New Year's Eve and distracting our volunteers turned out to be largely for naught.

We set (or tied) all-time high counts for 19 different species: Northern Shoveler (120), American White Pelican (690... although a notoriously difficult species to achieve an accurate count on), Great Egret (630), Little Blue Heron (430), Reddish Egret (12), Roseate Spoonbill (80), Turkey Vulture (1700... ditto count accuracy comment), Osprey (190), Red-shouldered Hawk (140), Limpkin (160), Sandhill Crane (380), Greater Yellowlegs (48), Red-bellied Woodpecker (220), Crested Caracara (5), Nanday Parakeet (150), Eastern Phoebe (72), Tufted Titmouse (83), and Pine Warbler (140). Other excellent pick-ups were Bufflehead (2), American Avocet (1, only the 7th time this species has been recorded on the count), American Pipit (56), Ovenbird (3), Northern Parula (1), Bronzed Cowbird (1), and Pine Siskin (1, only the 6th time this species has been recorded). Count Week birds were Least Bittern, Franklin's Gull (1st time ever!), Purple Martin, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Dickcissel.

For Parakeet fans... On the last CBC, Nanday Parakeets outnumbered Monk Parakeets by 3:1. On this CBC the ratio was 5:1. Put another way, Nanday numbers were up 15% on this count compared to last, while Monk numbers were down 30%. Assessing reasons for the respective opposing fortunes of these two species would make for an interesting research project.

If the above paragraph represents Good News/Bad News, then here's the Bad News. We dipped on (anticipated but failed to find) Northern Bobwhite, Magnificent Frigatebird, American Oystercatcher, Wilson's Plover, Red Knot,

Western Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Hermit Thrush, and Chipping Sparrow. We didn't dip, but had woefully small numbers, on: Muscovy Duck (29, lowest count ever but I'm not complaining too loud), Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Purple Gallinule (5), Dunlin (1), Swamp Sparrow (2)



**February 10th
1:30pm
SAS Nature Center**

Margi Haas will share her experiences and photos of 44 Swallow-tailed kites roosting in a local neighborhood tree during July and August 2016 before they migrated south over the Gulf to South America. Most see these beautiful birds as they soar overhead from February through mid-summer but few ever see them perched together, returning to the same tree morning and evening. Small premigratory roosts, especially in a residential area, are rare! Margi has studied this group and coordinated with avian biologists researching this imperiled species. She will share what she has learned and the bigger story as well. Join her for a journey into the fascinating world of Swallow-tailed kites!

This is a 2-hour workshop. 1:30pm-3:30pm. No reservations required. Meet at the Nature Center. Adults - \$5.00, pay at the door.

Contact Harma Nyhof, birdsraq@gmail.com

Birds of the Month

American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*)

I've always had some interest in taxonomy but you can't spend ten days in Colombia with Bruce Anderson (co-author of 'The Bird Life of Florida') without realizing its true value in bird identification. Basically if you know the family and/or genus you have a better chance of narrowing down the bird.



Recent sightings of the American Pipit brought this home to me. Pipits are in the family 'Motacillidae' which includes Pipits and Wagtails. In the UK there are a number of different species of Pipits, the most common being Meadow Pipit, Tree Pipit and Water Pipit. In the Fall and Winter rarer species show up such as Tawny Pipit, Richard's Pipit and Buff-bellied Pipit. This latter bird, the Buff-bellied Pipit, is in fact better known in the US as the American

Pipit. Incidentally in the UK there are also a number of wagtails, the other half of the Motacillidae family. I have to say I miss these birds and find it puzzling that in the US there are no wagtails and only two pipits, namely the American Pipit and the Sprague's Pipit.

Back to taxonomy. The genus name 'anthus' is the latin name for a small bird of grasslands, and the species name 'rubescens' means 'reddish' (from 'ruber' meaning 'ruddy'). So the name means a small reddish bird of grasslands, though it is actually more buffy than reddish.

The genus has more than forty species worldwide, but they are all slender, short-necked birds with long tails, long slender legs with elongated hind claws. The bills are generally long, slender and pointed, and the wing tertials entirely cover the flight feathers when the bird is on the ground. The plumage of pipits is generally drab and brown, buff or faded white, or in the case of the American Pipit includes streaked gray/brown upper parts, diffusely streaked below on the buff breast and flanks. The drab mottled colors provide good camouflage against the soil and stones where they are generally found, making them pretty difficult to pick up at any distance with binoculars. In short, they are undistinguished looking birds.

and Eastern Meadowlark (1).

Takeaways... Clearly many of our large charismatic aquatic species (Roseate Spoonbill, Limpkin, Sandhill Crane, etc) are doing well locally and that calls for rejoicing. The Reddish Egret tally is especially remarkable. On the other hand, lack of shorebird diversity is a major concern... most of the species I'd consider dips were shorebirds. Another great concern is the downward trend amongst several of our upland species once numerous in the county, notably Northern Bobwhite and Eastern Meadowlark. Fifty years ago we recorded 280 Eastern Meadowlarks on the Sarasota CBC. Now we struggle not to dip on the species. The downward plight of Eastern Meadowlark locally is clearly tied to continuing loss of its required prairie habitat. It's haunting to contemplate, but the home where you're now reading this note perhaps occupies the footprint where a long-ago CBC volunteer counted an Eastern Meadowlark...

In parting, I wanted to make a special shout-out to our first-time Area Leaders and uber-contributors Stephanie Green, John Groskopf, and Mike Ostrowski, all members of the Sarasota CBC "Youth Brigade." Finally, my special thanks to Ann Griffin, who took on the difficult assignment of managing Area #6A (Meadows and Benderson) with enthusiasm and resolve.

[CLICK FOR FULL 2016 CBC BIRD LIST](#)

The next Sarasota CBC is Saturday, December 30, 2017... mark your calendars!

Stu Wilson

MORRIS BRIDGE & TROUT CREEK - JANUARY 24th

A beautiful day at two beautiful Hillsborough County Parks: both of these parks feature boardwalks along the Hillsborough River, nature trails, and park amenities. We stopped first at Morris Bridge and could hardly move from the parking lot because of the avian activity. Our target bird for the day - Carolina Chickadee - was heard almost immediately, and located within the first half hour. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were abundant. Most of us were treated to brief glimpses of the ruby crown. Palm warblers and Yellow-rumps were plentiful, as were the Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. A Robin posed nicely with the crowd, along with many vocal Tufted Titmice (Titmouses?). The boardwalk yielded Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Also seen were Black and White Warbler, Eastern Phoebe, American Crow, Bald Eagle, and all the usual local forest and water birds: Limpkins, Herons, Ibis, and Egrets. Trout Creek yielded more of the same, along with a Blue-headed Vireo and Killdeer. These two parks, only an hour away, are a great way to enjoy more of the natural beauty of Florida.

Lynn Jakubowicz

**SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY
AWARDS 2017 SCHOLARSHIP**

The board of directors of Sarasota Audubon has voted unanimously to award Matthew Press a \$1,000 scholarship. Matt has been associated with our chapter for at least 7 years as a trip leader, Bird Naturalist and eBird workshop instructor. It's always a pleasure to see Matt out in the field, learning about birds and their environment.

Matt started early. At age six, he received a Peterson Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America and a pair of binoculars from his grandparents. Since then, it has been all about the birds, which is why his chosen major is Environmental Science and Sustainability.

Matt pursued a rigorous academic curriculum as a homeschooler and was a student at State College of Florida his junior year, and was enrolled as a full-time student his senior year. Matt was elected to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and was a member of the Dean's List.

Matt also participated in clubs and sports in high school. He played the trumpet in the Gulf Coast Homeschool Fine Arts Band, performing in concerts and at various events. He was awarded a First Degree Black Belt from Kukkiwon International (Taekwondo Black Belt Dan Certification) and won 2nd Place two years in a row at the Grand Prix Invitational. Matt was also a Varsity team member of Sarasota Crew, and won 2nd Place at the 2016 American Youth Cup. "I love rowing -- being out on the water is one way to stay in top physical condition and to enjoy the natural beauty of Florida!"

Pipits spend most of their time on the ground, walking or running in low vegetation, but will fly to display during the breeding season and when flushed by danger. In the winter they feed in large flocks. American Pipits are very active birds, making short flights from the ground or boulders to pursue their insect prey, and poking about on the ground when looking for seeds. They constantly wag their tails up and down and from side to side. So when looking for American Pipits it is important to note the habitat, feeding behaviour and habits. It's also handy to have a scope to be able to latch on to some of those features, like long legs, long tail, upright stance etc which are typical of the genus type, and give them a totally different look to, say, sparrows.

Glynnis Thomas



"Robird "

[CLICK TO READ - ASK OTUS®](#)

Otus will answer your questions about our amazing wildlife, but only if you Ask Otus®.

Click to send your questions to: [Ask Otus®](#)

SAS CLASSES & WORKSHOPS - A BIG HIT!



Photograph by Kathryn Young

We have had an outstanding response to our Classes and Workshops this year at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center. Over 200 people have participated and we have received very positive feedback.

All of the instructors volunteer their time and efforts and have provided exceptional presentations, which magically connect to the big screen TV from their computers.

Take a look at our upcoming workshops at our website online, there may be one especially for you.

A big THANK YOU goes out to our instructors and workshop leaders: Barry Rossheim, Sue Guarasci, Matthew Press, Barry Gerber, Bill Dunson and Tom Heitzman

Kathryn Young

PICNIC LUNCH AT SAS NC



Good Luck Matthew!



**COLOMBIA, SOUTH AMERICA
January 14 - 23, 2017**

Eight intrepid SAS members set off from Sarasota airport on Saturday January 14th to bird northern Colombia. That evening we landed at Bogota airport and an amazing ten days were in store for us.

We started and finished our trip at the Dann Norte Hotel in Bogota and from there did local trips and trips further afield before flying up to Minca and Santa Marta on the northern coast, and then on up to the El Dorado Reserve, a bone shaking 20 mile/4 hour drive in 4x4s up a very bumpy, boulder strewn road!



**Whooping Motmot
Photograph by Don Schneider**

Our guide was Hernan Arias, and as time went on we realized just how lucky we were to have such a talented, qualified, experienced and thoroughly nice person to be with us throughout the 10 days we spent in this wonderful country.

It would take too long to detail our very packed itinerary and all the birds we saw, but we were up between 4 and 5 a.m. every morning and birded till dusk. We covered a wide range of habitats including local parks with lake side trails, humid and dry forest, montane and cloud forest, paramo (11,000+ feet), roadside, Hummingbird gardens, hotel grounds, a coffee plantation and even parking lots. Mention must also be made of the old and extremely pretty colonial town of Villa de Leyva, all cobble stoned streets and white houses with terracotta tiled roofs. We stayed at the Duruelo Hotel which had fantastic gardens with many birds, and an impressive view over the town. However, the most exceptional area was the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta on the San Lorenzo Ridge, at 8,300 feet, the highest coastal mountain range in the world (the highest peaks rising to 18,000 feet).



**Masked Trogon
Photograph by Don Schneider**

Despite the high altitude, the sometimes slippery trails, the boulders, and even experiencing a total power cut from 2am till 6am (just as we were packing the last morning), we all stayed safe and well.

We saw a total of 232 bird species, many of them life birds for all of us. We heard 7 more species we couldn't quite get onto. We also saw some mammals including red-tailed squirrel, giant guinea pig, agouti and kinkajou.

Of the birds we saw, 32 of them were endemic or near endemics, including Santa Marta Warbler, Santa Marta Brush-Finch, Santa Marta Mountain-Tanager, Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, Santa Marta Foliage Gleaner, Santa Marta Tapaculo and Santa Marta Antpitta. We were also luck enough to see the extremely rare and endangered Black Inca.



**Long-billed Hermit Hummingbird
Photograph by Don Schneider**

Among other highlights were Bogota Rail, Spot-flanked Gallinule, White-tipped Quetzal, Masked Trogon, Emerald Toucanet, Crimson-crested Woodpecker, Spectacled Parrot, Bar-crested Antshrike, Ash-browed



Photograph by Kathryn Young

Some of the many area school children enjoying a picnic lunch at the SAS Nature Center after learning about the Celery Fields, birds and nature on the Raymond Road Boardwalk

OOPS DID YOU FORGET? DECEMBER WAS THE TIME TO RENEW FOR 2017



[Click Here to Join or Renew Online](#)

Or mail a check - \$25.00 per member

Payable to: Sarasota Audubon Society

Address: SAS, PO BOX 52132, Sarasota, FL 34232

For questions email: membership@sarasotaaudubon.org

SARASOTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS

Help build a path to the future

Purchase a commemorative brick!



Engrave a loved one's name, or a short quote on a brick to commemorate a lasting tribute, or mark a special occasion. Ask us about other naming opportunities. Truly a gift that gives back.

[CLICK HERE TO ORDER ONLINE - BRICK ORDER FORM](#)

Sarasota County Butterfly Club



Sarasota County Butterfly Club Programs, 1131 Blvd of The Arts, are open to the public (\$5.00 fee for non-members) are held most 4th Thursdays of each month Sept-May with topics appealing to all ages and levels of

Spinetail, Venezuelan Tyrannulet, Subtropical Doradito, Golden-breasted Fruiteater, Red-crested Cotinga, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Apolinar's Wren, Plushcap and Rusty-breasted Antpitta, the latter being the bird of the trip for most of us. As an aside, this little bird, came right out in the open directly in front of us, about ten feet away and sang for us for a full few minutes. Karen Schneider even has a video.

In addition, we saw a stunning array of 35 different hummingbirds including the Amethyst-throated Sunangel, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Black and Green-tailed Trainbearer, Shining Sunbeam, and the rare Green-bearded Helmetcrest. We were also lucky enough to have good views, and even second or third looks at a lot of the birds we saw.



White-tipped Quetzal
Photograph by Hernan Arias

As usual these trips are totally overwhelming. Don and Karen Schneider took a load of photographs which we can't wait to see. These will be supplemented by more amateur additions, but it is worth showing the amazing picture of a White-tipped Quetzal in flight taken by our superb guide through his telescope using Marcy's Galaxy phone. Just shows what you can do folks!

Thanks to all participants for an extremely harmonious, good humored and often a hilarious time. It was great birding and great fun. [Click here](#) to see our complete Colombia bird list.

Glynnis Thomas



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Photograph by Rick Greenspun

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