



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

December 2017



*Wishing all our members a happy and healthy holiday season!*  
SAS Board of Directors

## MONTHLY MEETING

**Monday, December 11th**

## **BIRDS OF PANAMA**



*Clyde Stephens will tell us of his experiences during decades living, working and birding in Panama*

**Social Hour: 6:30pm**  
**Business Meeting: 7:00pm**  
**Presentation: 7:30pm**



**The Sarasota Audubon Society Nature Center**

**Open daily 9:00am-1:00pm**

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**DECEMBER IS THE TIME TO  
RENEW  
YOUR SAS MEMBERSHIP!**



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

[CLICK FOR SCHEDULE OF MONTHLY MEETINGS](#)

## Pre-monthly Meeting Dinner

Gecko's Restaurant, 1900 Hillview Avenue at 5:00pm.

All members welcome!

Contact Karen Jensen ([karensarasota@yahoo.com](mailto:karensarasota@yahoo.com)) for reservations

## SAS ACTIVITY SCHEDULE 2017-2018



[CLICK HERE](#)

## FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

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

### Tuesday, Dec 5: MYAKKA STATE PARK

8:15am. Meet in the first parking lot on the right just inside the park (FEE) entrance (park opens at 8:00am). Leaders: Stu Wilson (512-897-8341) and John Ginaven.

### Thursday, Dec 7: OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK

8:30am. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/ Nature Center (park opens at 8am - park fee). This activity will meet every Thursday from October 19th through April 12th. Alternating leaders Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) and Peter Brown (508-241-5541).

### Saturday, Dec 9: 2nd SATURDAY CF WALK

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

### Wednesday, Dec 13: HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

3:00pm - 5:00pm. Come join fellow SAS members and guests at the Nature Center to celebrate the holiday season! Bring a snack and beverage of your choice - both to share. No reservations necessary. Call Martha Straub (207-595-6699) for more information.

### Thursday, Dec 14: OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK

8:30am. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/ Nature Center (park opens at 8am - park fee). This activity will meet every Thursday from October 19th through April 12th. Alternating leaders Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) and Peter Brown (508-241-5541).

### Saturday, Dec 16: VOLUNTEER DAY

10:00am - 1:00pm. Interested in volunteering with the Sarasota Audubon Society? Come on down to the Nature Center to see what opportunities are available. All are welcome.

### Sunday, Dec 17: VENICE/ENGLEWOOD CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Contact: Bob Clark [rlwclark@gmail.com](mailto:rlwclark@gmail.com)

### Monday, Dec 18: MYAKKA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Contact: Belinda Perry [bperry51@verizon.net](mailto:bperry51@verizon.net) / 941-924-9585)

### Thursday, Dec 21: OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK



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

**Or mail a check - \$30.00 per member / family**

**Payable to: Sarasota Audubon Society**

**Address: SAS, 999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240**

For questions email: [membership@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:membership@sarasotaudubon.org)



## SAS ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION FOR MEMBERS

### DECEMBER 13th

### 3:00pm

## SAS Nature Center

*( 999 Center Road )*

*\*\*This replaces our usual Holiday Luncheon\*\**

## HERE IS THE SCOOP:

No Cost

No Sign-up or Reservation required  
Just show up at the NC on 12/13 at  
3:00pm with a snack or dessert and  
beverage of your choice to share.

## WHAT TO BRING?

8:30am. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/ Nature Center (park opens at 8am - park fee). This activity will meet every Thursday from October 19th through April 12th. Alternating leaders Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) and Peter Brown (508-241-5541).

### Thursday, Dec 28: N LIDO BEACH AND WOODS

8:00am. Meet Stu Wilson (512-897-8341) and John Ginaven in the small parking lot at the end of Ringling Blvd on Lido to scout out birds for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). SAS / VAAS combined trip.

### Thursday, Dec 28: OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK

8:30am. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/ Nature Center (park opens at 8am - park fee). This activity will meet every Thursday from October 19th through April 12th. Alternating leaders Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) and Peter Brown (508-241-5541).

### Saturday, Dec 30" SARASOTA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Contact: Stu Wilson (512-897-8341)

## TRIP REPORT



### Longboat Key Shorebirds Walk

November 12, 2017

Seventeen (17) aficionados joined John Ginaven and me for a morning Longboat Key Shorebirds walk (Manatee Co). Under occasionally-spitting skies but comfortable temperatures, we spent 2.5 hours entirely within 1/4-mile of the Broadway Beach access (i.e. Whitney Beach) and had a right good showing with scope views of six (6) tern species, four (4) gull species, a pair of Snowy Plover, and an American Oystercatcher. The only no-shows were "open water" birds, e.g. Northern Gannet, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, and Horned Grebe.

Stu Wilson

[CLICK ---> FULL BIRD LIST](#)

## SAS CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS



We are pleased to offer another season of educational and inspiring classes and workshops.

WORKSHOPS

A snack or dessert (finger foods only)

A bottle or pitcher of a beverage of your choice

*\*\*Both the snack and the beverage will be for SHARING!\*\**

### MORE INFO:

- o We will have tables for snacks and desserts, a table for non-alcoholic drinks and a table for alcoholic drinks
- o Disposable plates, cups, forks, toothpicks & napkins will be provided
- o Please plan to take your plates, bottles & pitchers home with you
- o We will have chairs available both inside and outside but this will not be a sit-down meal

### SUGGESTED FINGER FOODS:

Cheese and Crackers

Chips and Salsa / Dips

Brownies

Cookies

Any other yummys you can think of!

Join us for this new and fun holiday get-together for our wonderful SAS members!!

### QUESTIONS?

Contact Martha Straub: 207-595-6699

## 67th ANNUAL SARASOTA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



Saturday, December 30, 2017

Keen birders are encouraged to join us as we count all the birds within our circle. New volunteers will be assigned to an experienced team. Previous volunteers should make contact with their Area Leaders. Expect to spend at least a half-day in the field. Alternately, spend a couple hours monitoring your backyard feeder and report your results.

Contact Stu Wilson, compiler, at [stuwilson@comcast.net](mailto:stuwilson@comcast.net) or 512-897-8341.



## WORKSHOPS

These 2-hour workshops provide a wealth of information on a variety of topics. Meet at the Nature Center at 1:30pm. \$5.00 Donation. No reservations required; Pay at the door.

QUESTIONS? [kathwren4@gmail.com](mailto:kathwren4@gmail.com)

### Saturday, Jan 6: HOW TO ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS TO YOUR YARD

- John Groskopf will give us information on resident and migrant hummingbirds in Sarasota and which nectar plants will attract them.

### Saturday, Feb 3: SNAKE TALES

- Lynda Becherelli, a Parks Naturalist, will explain the benefits of snakes to us, our environment, and other species. Learn about Florida's snakes, how to identify them and how to live with them. Children welcome! Be prepared to see live snakes!

### Saturday, Apr 7: THE VALUE OF INSECTS

- Karen Finch will educate us on the vast and engrossing world of insects, followed by a walk in our gardens to find and watch different insects at work.

### Saturday, April 21: PURPLE MARTINS

- Sue Guarasci will provide a fascinating look at the largest American swallow. Opportunity to observe active nests, eggs and hatchlings from our Nature Center PM houses.

## CLASSES

Reservations required for all classes. Online preferred at [www.sarasotaaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaaudubon.org), or with sign-up forms available at the Nature Center.

### EBIRD

#### January 15, 16, 17 & 18

Join Kathryn Young and Tom Jiamachello on 3 field trips to 3 different habitats, where you will learn how to enter a bird checklist in the ebird phone application. The last date will be in the classroom where we will explore the vast ebird database. This database will help you find birds and birding hot spots anywhere in the world. NO SMART PHONE REQUIRED. **COST \$25**

### WARBLER IDENTIFICATION

**Thursday, April 26 - 1:30pm SAS Nature Center**  
**Friday, April 27 - 8:00am Field Trip (location tbd)**

Join John Ginaven as he target teaches warblers and helps you make id's of breeding spring vs. confusing fall warblers. **COST \$20**

### BASIC BIRDING

This course is designed to make ID'ing birds easy and fun for beginning to advanced beginning birders. We will teach you how to find birds in different habitats, how to ID them and how to further advance your birding skills using the internet, field guide and various apps on your smart phone. **COST \$50 - RESERVATION REQUIRED.** Online reservations preferred [www.sarasotaaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaaudubon.org). Sign-up forms available at the Nature Center.

#### SESSION I - Instructor Peter Brown

Introductory class: Feb 14 at 1:30pm Nature Center  
Field Trips Feb 21, Feb 28, Mar 7 at 8am, locations TBA  
Classroom: Mar 14 1:30pm Nature Center

#### SESSION II - Instructor Kathryn Young

Introductory Class: Feb 14 at 1:30pm Nature Center  
Field Trips: Mar 26, Mar 27 Mar 28 at 8am locations TBA  
Classroom: Mar 29 at 1:30pm Nature Center

Kathryn Young [kathwren4@gmail.com](mailto:kathwren4@gmail.com)



On November 1st three 'Critter Experts', Jean Evoy, Karen Finch and John Lampkin did a bi-annual survey of the SAS Nature Center gardens and found some cool stuff. Below you can click to see the list of critters that were seen as well as the beautiful photos by John Lampkin. Enjoy!

Click -> [Critter List](#)  
Click -> [Critter Photos](#)



## NOTES FROM THE BIRD RECORDER

Here are the November 2017 sightings:

- **White-faced Ibis**: L. Gammello, Myakka River State Park
- **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: K. Doddridge, Leffis Key
- **Great Black-backed Gull**: K. Wilson, S. Lido Park
- **Golden-crowned Kinglet**: I. Stokes, Leffis Key
- **Bufflehead**: I. Stokes, Maxine Barritt Park, Venice
- **Sandwich Tern (Cayenne)**: M. James, Siesta Beach
- **Elegant Tern**: M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach
- **Bronzed Cowbird**: M. Ostrowski, Celery Fields
- **Summer Tanager**: M. Ostrowski, Pinecraft Park

Claire Herzog



SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
PRESENTS:

WILD ABOUT ART SHOW

FEBRUARY 1 - 28, 2018

OPENING RECEPTION

[CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

## SAS OVERNIGHT TRIPS



### ST. MARK'S WILDLIFE REFUGE / TALL TIMBERS - APRIL 13-15, 2018

Join SAS as we explore St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge the morning of Saturday, April 14, 2018, with an experienced local guide. Lunch will be at a cafe nearby, after which we join our guide to Apalachicola NF to look for Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow and migrating Warblers. You are free to return to St. Marks instead if you like.

At the end of the day, we will drive to Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy (about an hour drive from St Marks) where we will spend the night at their facilities (basic amenities). Limited availability, so please let us know right away if you want to stay there. It is \$35.00/per person, 2 single beds per room. There are hotels within a 20-30 minute drive.

After a continental breakfast at Tall Timbers, prepared by the trip leaders, we will go on a guided birding tour of the grounds via open wagon. There will be a banding demonstration as part of the tour. The tour will end around 1 pm.

Included in the \$40 registration fee are both guides and Sunday breakfast.

Please sign up online at <http://www.sarasotaudubon.org/two-night-florida-overnight-trips/>

For more information contact:

Cathy - [cathydavis11@hotmail.com](mailto:cathydavis11@hotmail.com)

Harma - [birdsrg@gmail.com](mailto:birdsrg@gmail.com)

## JUVENILE BALD EAGLE RELEASED AT THE CELERY FIELDS



Photograph by Glynnis Thomas

There was a lot of excitement at the SAS Nature Center on the morning of November 11th when the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey released a juvenile Bald Eagle at the Celery Fields.

This bird had been rescued in the vicinity of the Celery Fields after falling, as a fledgling from its nest last May and breaking a leg

Friday, February 2nd

4:00 - 6:00 pm

SAS Nature Center

\*\* Raffles

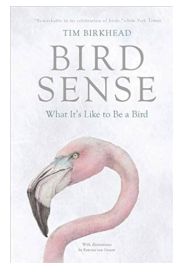
\*\* Vote for People's Choice Award

\*\* Light Refreshments

Please join us as we celebrate the fine art talents of members in our First Annual Art Event during the month of February

The event is free and open to the public during normal hours

**CLICK --> FOR EVENT FLYER**



### Bird Sense by Tim Birkhead

I was hooked on this book the moment I saw the beautiful water color illustration of a Flamingo on the front cover! Yes, I am shamelessly attracted to books by their cover. And no, it doesn't always work. But I have to say this is my new best book ever, with its wonderful blend of science and fascinating readability. The author, Tim Birkhead, teaches animal behavior and the history of science at the University of Sheffield, England. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of London and the author of several books, including *The Wisdom of Birds* and *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Ornithology*. He is a lifelong, passionate birder who started watching birds at the age of five and was lucky enough to be able to turn his passion for birds into a career as a scientist. For over forty years he has studied Common Murre colonies, spending many summers on Skomer island, off the western tip of Wales, where 40% of the world's birds breed, watching and noting this species' breeding behavior and ecology.

Birkhead describes himself as a behavioral ecologist, and his book is about how birds perceive the world. It is based on a lifetime of ornithological research and a conviction that we have consistently underestimated what goes on in a bird's head. The chapters cover each of the five senses - seeing, hearing, touch, taste, smell and a further two covering magnetic sense and emotions.



This release was essentially its first time in the wild and first time flying a distance greater than about 100 feet.



Photograph by Glynnis Thomas

An enthusiastic group accompanied the bird and its handlers to the top of 'Mount Celery', where it was duly released. Concern followed when the young eagle flew west across the large lake visibly losing height until it finally landed in the water. It struggled several times to get airborne without success until it managed to lift itself off the water only to go down again as it flew south parallel to the bank. At that point some members of the anxiously watching group took to their cars and drove down Palmer Blvd. to the bridge, only to find the bird perched on one of the berms, west of the lake, looking none the worse for its ordeal, to the great relief of all concerned.

Let's hope that this brave soul makes it to adulthood.



Photograph by Glynnis Thomas

Glynnis Thomas

Some of the fascinating things he discusses, explains and illustrates are as follows: He describes how on one occasion while observing Common Murres he noticed a murre that was incubating suddenly stand up and start to give a greeting call - even though its partner was absent. He was puzzled by this behavior until he looked out at sea and visible, as little more than a dark blob, was a murre flying towards the colony. As he watched, the bird on the cliff continued to call and then, to his utter amazement, with a whirl of stalling wings, the incoming bird alighted beside it. The two birds proceeded to greet each other with evident enthusiasm. He could hardly believe that the incubating bird had apparently seen, and recognized, its partner several hundred meters away at sea.

One of the most fascinating discoveries about bird vision in recent years is how birds use their right and left eyes for different tasks. Birds, like humans, are either left or right handed or footed (parrots). Further, those birds whose eyes are placed laterally, on the side of their heads, like ducks, typically use their right eye for close-up activities like feeding, and their left eye for more distant activities, such as scanning for predators. This has huge implications for a range of bird behaviours. For example, when peregrine falcons are hunting, they home in on their prey in a wide arc, rather than a straight line, and mainly use their right eye. Male black-winged stilts are more likely to direct courtship displays towards females seen with their left eye than with their right. Parrots consistently prefer to use one foot to grasp food or other objects.

One of the most intriguing features of owls is their extremely quiet flight; their wing beats are almost imperceptible. This means that when flying the owl does not interfere with its ability to hear its prey, which can detect a rodent moving under a foot of snow. Added to this is the owl's incredibly acute hearing and their ability to pinpoint the source of sound very accurately in both the horizontal and vertical plane. They do this through a remarkable suite of auditory adaptations which include the facial disc which funnels sound toward the ear openings. These ear openings, which are huge, are asymmetrical, to such a degree that in the Great Grey Owl, looking at the bird face on, the right ear is below the level of the eye in the seven o'clock position and the left is at two o'clock. In Barn Owls, as well as the asymmetry, one ear opening is farther forward on the head than the other. Some owls, such as the Tengmalm's has an asymmetrical skull as

well. These features help the owl to locate their prey in three dimensional space with great precision.

I have just chosen three examples, not necessarily the best, from Birkhead's fascinating book on the senses of birds, but the whole book is packed with extraordinary facts and details, and is a delightful read. In fact I was so enthralled by the book that as soon as I finished it I started to read it again from the beginning. I really can't recommend it enough. You can get it on Kindle or paperback from Amazon.

Glynnis Thomas

 **Help support our Sarasota Audubon Society when you shop at Amazon:**  
[CLICK FOR DETAILS](#)

**Birding Hot Spots in Sarasota and Manatee Counties**

Can be purchased for just \$6.00 at the Nature Center, monthly meetings and field trips or \$7.75 by mail. Send a check to: SAS, PO Box 52132, Sarasota, FL 34232-0337. Hot Spots is also available at Environeers, Book Store 1, Selby Gardens, Historic Spanish Point, Oscar Scherer State Park and Myakka River State Park.



SAS continues to be a volunteer run organization. Every position and task is done by one of our dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers.

Do you have a special talent and some extra time? We are always looking to increase our volunteer team.

Here are a few areas where we need some help:

**FACEBOOK/SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR -**  
**Are you familiar with Facebook/ Twitter? We are looking for someone to keep our social media pages current and respond to inquiries that come in through these communication sources.**

**Save SAS some GREEN \$\$\$**  
We mail **600+** paper copies to some of our members. The cost of printing



of our members. The cost of printing and postage could be put toward our new nature center and other Sarasota Audubon projects. Plus our e-Brown Pelican Newsletter (which can be

emailed right to your in-box) has direct links to other sites, videos and color photos.

If you currently receive a paper copy in the mail please consider a switch to the e-Brown Pelican.

Contact: [editor@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:editor@sarasotaudubon.org)

### 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 knowledge. Visit [www.sarasotabutterfly.com](http://www.sarasotabutterfly.com) to learn more!

### SAS Name Badges

Pin Badge - \$5.25, Magnet Badge - \$7.25

Add \$2.50 for shipping. Send name and address to:

**Michael Fox, 2749 Ringling Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237**

### BECOME A SPOONBILL CLUB MEMBER



*If you have named Sarasota Audubon in your will or beneficiary in any way, you are eligible to become a member of our legacy group,*

*The Spoonbill Club*

[CLICK TO FIND OUT MORE](#)

*Photograph by Rick Greenspun*



999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240  
941-312-6533

[CLICK: Sarasota Audubon Web Site](#)



**Submissions, comments and questions  
always welcome**

Send to: [editor@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:editor@sarasotaudubon.org)

Marcy Packer, editor

[editor@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:editor@sarasotaudubon.org)

**WORKSHOP MANAGER** - lead the Workshop team coordinating 4-5 workshops per year held at the SAS Nature Center. Email Kathryn Young for more information:

[kathwren4@gmail.com](mailto:kathwren4@gmail.com)

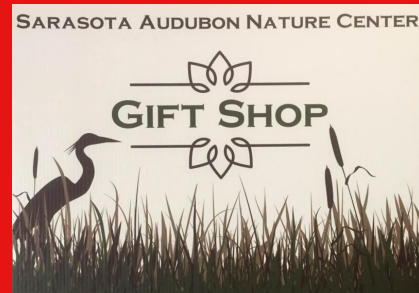
**Other areas that can always use more volunteers:**

- SAS Nature Center Docent
- Celery Fields Bird Naturalist

## INTERESTED????

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator:

[CLICK HERE TO SEND AN EMAIL](#)



**We have some lovely gift ideas for the holidays at the SAS Gift Shop:**

- \* Holiday Ornaments \*
- \* Hummingbird Sun Catchers \*
- \* Olive the Owl Computer Mouses \*
- \* Owl Shelf Sitters \*
- \* Bird Wind Chimes \*
- \* Camper Bird Houses \*
- \* Bird Screen Door Decorations \*

**Please visit us for all things pertaining to birding and nature at our beloved Celery Fields**

### Subscribe to SRQ Bird Alerts!

Need the latest birding info for our area?

To subscribe: [Click here to send an email.](#)

Thanks to Peter Rice for providing this service.

**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.

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