



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

**FEBRUARY 2018**

## **MONTHLY MEETING**

**Monday, February 12th**

## **DARLINGS AND DUCK STAMPS**



**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Supervisory Refuge Ranger, Toni Westland will explain the importance of Federal Duck Stamps, how they save land, wildlife and more!**

**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 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](#)**



**The Sarasota Audubon Society Nature Center**

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



SAS will be phasing out its Post Office Box address later this year. Effective immediately, please update your address books with our permanent address:

**Sarasota Audubon Society  
999 Center Road  
Sarasota, FL 34240**

### **Click Through This Issue!**

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## SAVE THE DATE!

David Yarnold, CEO of National Audubon, will be speaking on sea level rise at the monthly meeting of the Sarasota Audubon Society  
**Monday, March 12 at 7:00pm.**

Space will be limited, so get there early.

National Audubon consists of close to 500 chapters throughout the US. The National office deals with nationwide conservation issues through legislation at the state and federal levels.

First Congregational Church Fellowship Hall, 1031 S. Euclid, Sarasota

## FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

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

### Thursday, February 1: OSCAR SCHERER 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).

### Friday, February 2: SAS ART EXHIBIT OPENING

4:00pm. 'WILD ABOUT ART'. Join us at a reception as we open a month-long exhibit of our members' spectacular artwork. SAS Nature Center.

### Tuesdays, February 6 - March 13: TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS

10:00am - 11:00am. Learn beginner Tai Chi (Yang style) with Marcy Packer at the SAS Nature Center. 6 sessions, every Tuesday February 6th through March 13th. \$4 donation per session or \$20 donation for all 6 sessions. Pay at first session.

### Wednesday, February 7: CELERY FIELDS WALK

8:00am. Leaders: Stu Wilson and Kathryn Young. Meet at the Nature Center.

### Thursday, February 8: OSCAR SCHERER 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, February 10: 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.

### Tuesday, February 13: TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS

10:00am - 11:00am. Learn beginner Tai Chi (Yang style) with Marcy Packer at the SAS Nature Center. 6 sessions, every Tuesday, February 6th - March 13th. \$4 donation per session.

### Tuesday, February 13: SOUTH LIDO COUNTY PARK

8:30am. Meet at 2201 Ben Franklin Drive on Lido Key in the parking lot. Leader: Peter Brown (508-241-5541).

### Thursday, February 15: OSCAR SCHERER PARK

8:30am. Meet inside the park at Lake Osprey/ Nature Center (park opens at 8am - park fee). This activity will meet every Thursday



OPENING  
RECEPTION

Friday  
February 2nd  
4:00 - 6:00 pm

Raffles

Vote for People's  
Choice Award

Light  
Refreshments

## \* FEBRUARY 1-28, 2018 SARASOTA AUDUBON PRESENTS WILD ABOUT ART SHOW

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.



SARASOTA AUDUBON  
NATURE CENTER

at The Celery Fields  
999 Center Road  
Sarasota, FL 34240

941-312-6533  
www.SarasotaAudubon.org  
Open Daily 9am - 1pm

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, February 17: CELERY FIELDS MANAGEMENT WALK**

8:30am. Lisa Wedlin and Tom Medel, Environmental Specialists with Public Utilities of Sarasota County, will lead a Celery Fields walk and will discuss the many and varied ways they help manage the Celery Fields for plants and wildlife while balancing its function as a stormwater collection zone. Meet at the nature center. Leader: Jeanne Dubi ([dubi@comcast.net](mailto:dubi@comcast.net))

### **Tuesday, February 20: TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS**

10:00am - 11:00am. Learn beginner Tai Chi (Yang style) with Marcy Packer at the SAS Nature Center. 6 sessions, every Tuesday, February 6th - March 13th. \$4 donation per session.

### **Wednesday, February 21: RED BUG SLOUGH**

8:00am. Meet at 5200 Beneva Road. Leaders: Lynn Jakubowicz ([lynn234@verizon.net](mailto:lynn234@verizon.net)) and Martha Straub.

### **Thursday, February 22: OSCAR SCHERER 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, February 24: SIDEWALK ASTRONOMY**

6:30pm. The Deep-Sky Observers ([www.lgdso.com](http://www.lgdso.com)) will set up their telescopes at the Nature Center for some fab star gazing. Come and see the planets and stars.

### **Monday, February 26: 4th MONDAY CF WALK**

9:00am. Meet at the SAS Nature Center picnic tables. Leader: Joyce Leary (508-737-8954) .

### **Tuesday, February 27: TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS**

10:00am - 11:00am. Learn beginner Tai Chi (Yang style) with Marcy Packer at the SAS Nature Center. 6 sessions, every Tuesday, February 6th - March 13th. \$4 donation per session.

### **Tuesday, February 27: AFTERNOON BIRDING**

3:30pm. New this year! Don't love those early morning bird walks? Margi Haas likes afternoon birding and will be happy to show you her favorite spots in the Celery Fields. Meet at the Nature Center. ([mhaas@pipeline.com](mailto:mhaas@pipeline.com))

## **CELERY FIELDS CLEANUP**



**Tuesday, March 13th - 8:00am**  
Meet in the SAS Nature Center parking lot

*Join our Coordinator, Joanna Bear and help keep our Celery Fields beautiful. Come be part of this team of dedicated volunteers who participate in our Celery Fields Cleanup*

For questions email: [jbear0822@aol.com](mailto:jbear0822@aol.com)

## **SAS CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS**



## **RENEW**

### **YOUR ANNUAL SAS MEMBERSHIP!**



[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)



## **NOTES FROM THE BIRD RECORDER**

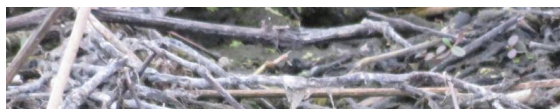
Here are the January 2018 sightings:

- **Bronzed Cowbird:** SAS Nature Center bird feeders
- **Purple Martin:** E. Miller, FOS, Celery Fields, Raymond Road Gazebo
- **Magnolia Warbler:** Crowley Nature Center bird walk with S. Wilcox
- **Black-throated Green Warbler:** Crowley Nature Ctr walk with S. Wilcox
- **Parasitic Jaeger:** M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach, Access 5
- **Lark Sparrow:** S. Wilcox, Oscar Scherer State Park
- **Blue Grosbeak:** J. Groskopf, Oscar Scherer Sate Park
- **Brown-headed Nuthatch:** Carlton Reserve bird walk with N. Edmondson
- **Greater Scaup:** T. Jiamachello, Celery Fields
- **Barn Swallow:** C. Olson, Celery Fields
- **White-crowned Sparrow:** SAS eBird Class walk with T. Jiamachello & K. Young, Oscar Scherer State Park

**Claire Herzog**



## **Birds of the Month**





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

## 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)

### SNAKE TALES

**Saturday, February 3** - 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!

### THE VALUE OF INSECTS

**Saturday, April 7** - 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.

### PURPLE MARTINS

**Saturday, April 21** - 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.sarasotaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaudubon.org), or with sign-up forms available at the Nature Center.

### 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.sarasotaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaudubon.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)

Peter Brown [pbrown5541@gmail.com](mailto:pbrown5541@gmail.com)

**CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION**



### Wilson's Snipe ( *Gallinago delicata* )

I was lucky enough to be on one of the berms at the Celery Fields at dusk the other day when a Wilson's Snipe flew in and fed out in the open just below me. I'm not a photographer but I carry a camera for moments such as these and when I later looked at the photos I was impressed by two things. One was, once again, the remarkable camouflage of this bird. From a distance I wouldn't have been able to see it because of its entirely cryptic coloring against the mass of broken, dead and battered reeds. It is of course typical of our encounters with this bird to see it when flushed zig-zagging swiftly up into the air because it is so difficult to see on the ground.

The other thing to impress, and intrigue, me was the position of its eyes. In the photograph the bird appeared to be looking straight ahead but at first I wasn't quite sure whether it was facing towards me or away from me and it struck me that this bird has just about 360 degree vision. But given that its eyes are located high up on the sides of the head, does it see one or two images?

Tim Birkhead in 'Bird Sense' (reviewed last month) describes the three broad categories of visual field in birds. Type 1, he says, is what typical birds, such as blackbirds, robins and warblers, see: some forward view, excellent lateral vision, but (like us) no rear vision. Incidentally these birds are not able to see the end of their beak and any photographer will note that when taking a picture of a bird looking directly at the camera, they look slightly 'cross-eyed'.



Type 2 includes birds like ducks, woodcocks and snipe. They don't have a great forward view but they do have panoramic vision, above and behind - helping them detect potential predators, even when their bill, as in snipe and woodcock, is fully buried in mud. He points out that as the view from each eye barely overlap, they probably see two separate images.

Type 3 birds are those, such as owls, with forward-facing eyes like our, which have no vision behind. Obviously they compensate for this by their flexible necks whereby they are able to move their heads around to almost 180 degrees.

But back to the Wilson's Snipe (type 2 vision) for a moment. If this bird doesn't have great forward vision how on earth does it manage to manipulate that improbably long bill to locate and seize its prey? Well, if you're a long-billed shorebird such as a godwit,

curlew, snipe, knot or dunlin, vision has little to do with feeding other than glancing sideways to check if other birds near you have found a productive spot. These waders have high set eyes perfect for spotting predators, rather than looking down their beaks. Instead they use a key feeding adaptation, used by all wading birds, a tiny sensor called a Herbst corpuscle. The snipe's bill tip is pocked with pits to accommodate masses of these miniature sensors. This enables them to detect the movements of prey without actually touching them because they can feel the tiny waves of pressure caused by worms and grubs as they move in soil, wet mud or sand. When feeding, waders steadily move forward, probing the mud with a stitching action as they feel for the next pressure wave. It's a bit like echo locating, only in soft ooze rather than air.



"I'm Jazzed" was the statement on Day 3 by Jean Brewer a member of the recent four day Ebird class taught by Kathryn Young and Tom Jiamachello. The class provided instruction on how to use the Ebird mobile application (app) and the Ebird website as a birding tool and resource.



Photograph by Tom Jiamachello

The class of 15 participated in three days of field trips and an afternoon of classroom presentation. Each member of the class successfully entered their checklist for each field trip. On classroom day, we explored the vast resource that is ebird.org focusing on how to plan for future birding trips as well as how to edit and share checklists, add photos and explore data.

We hope to offer the class again next year (January 2019).

**Tom Jiamachello and Kathryn Young**



They also make use of a remarkable adaptation known as '*distal rhynchokinesis*' which means that the final section of the upper part of their bill can flex upwards independently of the rest of the bill. This action allows the bird to open and close the tip of the bill wide enough to seize prey even when buried in deep mud or sand. Smaller prey items are swallowed with the bill still probed, larger prey items are removed from the soil for easier manipulating and swallowing.

Once again, birds never cease to amaze us, do they?

**Glynnis Thomas**

## TRIP REPORTS



### URFER PARK - JANUARY 23, 2018

Despite a light rain for the first 30 minutes, 15 birders walked Urfer Park and were pleasantly surprised with some nice birds. The small pond harbored at least three Wood Ducks, who climbed up into the trees in the rain. The usual residents were around, but a nice mixed flock was feeding at the edge of the parking lot. Included in the flock were the usual Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers and Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers.

However, we were also treated to Prairie and Yellow-throated Warbler, and a Blue-headed Vireo. Nearby, a Downy Woodpecker, Gray Catbird, and Red-bellied Woodpecker worked the trees. An Eastern Phoebe sat on the parking lot fence, while a flock of American Robins passed overhead. A Roseate Spoonbill perched in a nearby tree as we were winding down. A nice birding morning in spite of the weather!

**Lynn Jakubowicz and Martha Straub**

### FT. DESOTO PARK - JANUARY 30, 2018

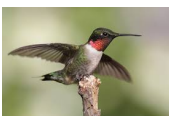
Eleven hardy birders braved the cold and wind this morning for our trip to Fort DeSoto, led by Lynn Jakubowicz and Mary Heinlen. At our first stop we were greeted by over a thousand (maybe two thousand!) Redheads at the Terra Ceia "duck ponds" on the way to the park. What a sight! There were also some nice looking Northern Shovelers and some other more common birds. Next stop was the East Beach turnaround at low, low tide. There were large flocks of shorebirds, most of them pretty far out on the sand - viewable only by scope. We saw numerous Dowitchers (sp.), Dunlin, Least Sandpipers, and Semi-palmated Plovers, along with White Pelicans and Red-breasted Mergansers. Our next highlight (after sighting a Yellow-throated Warbler near the restrooms at East Beach) was a great view of the Eagle pair at North Beach, and their eaglets in the nest. We followed this up with a Reddish Egret, followed by a chilly but sunny picnic lunch.

**Mary Heinlen and Lynn Jakubowicz**

### ATTRACTING HUMINGBIRDS WORKSHOP

A large group turned out on January 6, 2018 to hear John Grosskopf share his enormous knowledge on hummingbirds and how to attract them to our gardens.

John brought along a number of plants that hummers love, such as red firespike, "ugly" red Shrimp Plant, and Firebush. He also recommended



## HAPPENINGS AT THE CF

### CELERY FIELDS CLEAN-UP

On January 9th, Joanna Bear, Celery Fields Clean-Up Coordinator, provided bags and pick-up tools (as well as a chocolate treat) for each of the eight volunteers who took part in the quarterly Palmer road trash pick-up. Within two hours, the whole of Palmer Blvd. had been cleaned. We ended up with eight black bags of rubbish and three of recyclables.



### GARDEN MULCHING PARTY

More than 20 folks showed up for a Nature Center mulching/weeding party on January 28th. The event was organized and supervised by Barry Gerber who led a team of eager kids and parents from Temple Emanu-El of Sarasota. What a difference it made. The gardens and paths now look spruced up and tidy, ready for spring! Thanks to all who helped.



Photographs by Sara King

### Jeanne Dubi To Be Honored



area garden centers that have these plants on hand. John even brought along various hummingbird feeders and gave us his opinion of his success or lack thereof with them. John's slides showed many examples of beautiful hummingbird species and his own garden with hummingbird visitors.

For more information, he suggests going to the Facebook sites Hummingbirds in Florida or South Florida Hummingbird Gardening.

We thank John for his fascinating and enlightening workshop.

**Marilyn Schmal**

## PURPLE MARTINS RETURN!



The Purple Martin houses were raised on January 29th by Terry and Ed Suchma, Andy Schneider and me.

The first Martins have been seen at the Celery Fields over the past week. Two of them flew over us today singing (beautiful to hear) as we worked on their houses, and one perched on the bat house observing our hard work.

Their schedule consists of:

- Breeding behavior where the male defines and advertises his territory by repeatedly going in and out of compartments and singing. When the mate has been selected the female chooses her compartment
- Nest building can take up to 2 weeks
- Male picks up and drops nesting material repeatedly
- Female makes the nest
- Egg laying - 1 per day
- Incubation of eggs ~ 15 days (weather dependent)
- Brooding of babies ~ 30 days
- Fledging of young

Breeding behavior takes place all around the Nature Center.

Last year was an early year for us. Our first eggs were found March 10th. There were 5 in one nest, much to our surprise. That was 3 weeks earlier than 2016.

Our first fledglings were in the beginning of May.

We are looking forward to another successful year.

Keep 'em flying!

**Sue Guarasci**



What challenges does sea level rise pose for managing and restoring Sarasota Bay? Local experts discuss needs for research, adaptation, and citizen action. Watch a very interesting and informative video by the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program:

**"Restoring Our Bays: Preparing Sarasota Bay for Sea Level Rise"**



**Our very own, Jeanne Dubi will be honored with a Community Service award by the Sarasota Caledonian Society at their 32nd Annual Thistle Ball to be held March 24, 2018 at the Palm Aire Country Club in Sarasota.**



**If you wish to attend contact: Roberta Hamilton (941-371-1760) for reservations. Deadline is March 14.**

## SARASOTA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - FINAL REPORT



The 118th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count season has concluded and the 67th Sarasota CBC, held on Saturday, December 30, 2017, was quite successful. It was bit overcast and nippy (55F) early but gradually warmed and gave way to a sunny and comfortable (69F) afternoon with no precipitation to contend with.

Our final tally should be 157 species which lags our all-time high of 161 achieved in 2007/2008 but ahead of last cycle's (December 31, 2016) 152 species. A measure of the success of our current Count is the impressive number of rarities (5) requiring documentation: Short-tailed Hawk, Common Tern, American Redstart, Magnolia Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. Note that we could lose a species or two should the state reviewer deem any of the documentation submitted inadequate. The number of individual birds, about 34,400, was down from about 35,600 a year ago.

For the Count, we had 109 field observers and feeder watchers covering 21 designated Areas and 6 Feeders. This represents a 7% participation drop-off from last cycle, a trend that hopefully will not continue.

We set (or tied) all-time high counts for 12 different species: Red-shouldered Hawk (150), Limpkin (173), Lesser Black-backed Gull (6), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (8), Downy Woodpecker (82), Nanday Parakeet (172), House Wren (48), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (410), Gray Catbird (212), Black-and-white Warbler (55), Pine Warbler (146), and Prairie Warbler (15). It was the second consecutive Count for which an all-time high was posted for Red-shouldered Hawk, Limpkin, Nanday Parakeet, and Pine Warbler... a pretty good indicator of the local health of those species. Near high counts were achieved for Osprey, Bald Eagle, Eastern Phoebe, Blue-headed Vireo, Palm Warbler, and Yellow-throated Warbler.

Other excellent pick-ups (besides the rarities listed) were Redhead (3), King Rail, Virginia Rail (1, 5th ever), Piping Plover (1), Red Knot (1), Nightjar sp (1, would be the 6th occurrence of Chuck-will's-widow or the 7th occurrence of Eastern Whip-poor-will), Red-headed Woodpecker (1, just the 2nd in the last 15-20 years), American Pipit (6), Orange-crowned Warbler (2), Northern Parula (1), Chipping Sparrow (4), Lark Sparrow (1), Indigo Bunting (4), Painted Bunting (5), and Baltimore Oriole (1).

Dips (anticipated but not found) were American Wigeon, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Horned Grebe, Least Bittern, American Oystercatcher, Semipalmated Plover, Western Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Elegant Tern, Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Merlin, Sedge Wren, Cedar Waxwing, Eastern Towhee, and Bronzed Cowbird. The most

notorious of these were Least Bittern (we know they're at Celery Fields- they just won't allow themselves to be easily detected), Semipalmated Plover (never been missed prior to this Count), Great Horned Owl (found on 90% of previous counts), and Bronzed Cowbird (seen at Nature Center feeders every day leading up to the count, and nearly every day since). Wilson's Plover used to be regular on the Count, but no longer. Elegant Tern wouldn't normally be considered a dip, but "our bird" had been seen at Siesta Beach in the months leading up to the Count.

## SAS OVERNIGHT TRIPS



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

Included in the \$40 registration fee are both guides and Sunday breakfast. Please sign up online:

<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)

**Sarasota Audubon would like to thank:**

### **Total Landscape Supply Company**

for their donation of garden rocks that are used to identify all the Florida friendly plants in our beautiful gardens

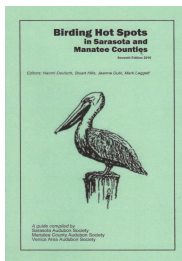
**Total Landscape Supply Company**  
2165 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34234  
941-955-4737



**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.



### **Save SAS some GREEN \$\$\$**

We mail **600+ paper copies** to some 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

Count Week birds were Least Bittern, Semipalmated Plover, Western Sandpiper, Parasitic Jaeger (1st time ever!), Great Horned Owl, Sedge Wren, and Bronzed Cowbird.

**Parakeet Update...** On the last CBC, Nanday Parakeets outnumbered Monk Parakeets by 5:1. On the Count prior, the ratio was 3:1. On this CBC the ratio was 14:1. Further, Monk Parakeets were found in only one location on the current Count (the powerline easement southwest of Benderson Park). Should something happen with that small population (e.g. utility decides to clear nests from the towers), we're looking at local extirpation of Monk Parakeet.

**Takeaways...** There are several headlines for me for the 30Dec2017 Count:

- 1) We recorded an impressive five (5) species requiring documentation;
- 2) We recorded a robust thirteen (13) species of warbler;
- 3) Our count of Black-and-white Warbler (55) more than doubled from the previous high of 25 (and Gray Catbird nearly doubled); and
- 4) We missed Semipalmated Plover for the first time ever.

Otherwise, trends evident after the last couple of counts continued. Namely, many of our large, charismatic species (e.g. Osprey, Bald Eagle, Limpkin) are doing well. However, many of our shorebirds and prairie/brushland species are not. It was nice to find a handful of Northern Bobwhite and Eastern Meadowlark this Count after dipping (or nearly so) on the last, but it's discouraging that we failed to turn up a single Eastern Towhee. This species can still be found at Oscar Scherer and Myakka River SPs, but its preferred scrub/flatwood habitat has now largely disappeared from the Sarasota CBC circle.

**Food for Thought...** During the 66 (or so) previous Sarasota CBCs, the highest count for Black-and-white Warbler was 25 and that for Gray Catbird was 115. On this Count, we recorded an astounding 55 BAWW and 212 GRCA. Both species winter locally in small numbers but to have previous high counts for each species essentially get doubled on the current Count makes one wonder what's going on... If each of our local BAWW and GRCA (and Eastern Phoebe and Blue-headed Vireo and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Pine Warbler...) is saying to itself "it's pretty comfortable here, no need to migrate any further south for the winter" then can there be much doubt that climate change is afoot?

I thank all who participated and helped continue to make ours a premier CBC (last Count we tied for 70th place nationally on the basis of number of species recorded... we should improve on that mark with this Count). I'd also like to give special shout-outs to volunteers who (at my urging) took on new, special, or challenging tasks: Peter Brown, Tony Ford, Jeanne Dubi, Betty Holcomb, Jean Brewer, and Belinda Perry.

The next Sarasota CBC is... up in the air! We have a choice of scheduling it on Saturday, December 29, 2018 or Saturday, January 5, 2019. I'll make a decision in the coming months but, until then, would encourage Area Leaders and regular participants to contact me with thoughts on why we should go with one date over the other.

**Stu Wilson**

**Florida Field Naturalist**  
Published by the Florida Ornithological Society, Inc. (FFN)  
Vol. 45, No. 1 ... Winter 2018 ... Pages 1-20



### **Birding Scholars in Our Midst.... Valerie Ponzio and Stu Wilson**

Sarasota Audubon Society member Valeri Ponzio has been published yet again in the latest edition of *Florida Field Naturalist*. FFN is the peer-reviewed journal of the Florida Ornithological Society.

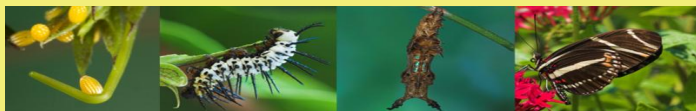
In the November 2017 edition of FFN, Valeri teamed up with Bill Pranty on an article entitled *Eleven Recent Additions to the Exotic Avifauna of Florida* (Vol. 45: 103-109). In fact, Ponzio and Pranty seek out exotics in the state in order to document their distribution and breeding status. In September 2014, *Status and Distribution of Egyptian Geese* (Vol. 42: 91-107) appeared.

Not confined to documenting exotics, in May 2012, Ponzio and Pranty published *First*

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

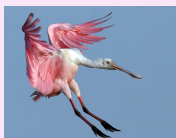
Contact: [editor@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:editor@sarasotaudubon.org)

## 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!

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Write An Article!



Winter Records in Florida of Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*), Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonata*), Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), and Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), and First Winter Record of Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (Vol. 40: 41).

And again in September 2013, Ponzo and Pranty published *First Winter Records in Florida of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher* (*Empidonax flaviventris*) and *Scarlet Tanager* (*Piranga olivacea*) (Vol. 41: 83-85).

In September 2016, Ponzo and Pranty collaborated with Andrew W. Kratter of the Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville by publishing *Status and Distribution in Florida of Tropical Kingbird* (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) and *Couch's Kingbird* (*Tyrannus couchii*) (Vol. 44: 83-105).

The article immediately above referenced the first Florida occurrence of a breeding Tropical Kingbird discovered by John Ginaven on St. Armands Key, Sarasota and written up in a March 2015 article, *Nesting and Hybridization of a Tropical Kingbird* (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) and *Gray Kingbird* (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) in *Sarasota, Florida* (Vol. 43: 1-11), by Stu Wilson, Ruth-Ellen Peipert, John Ginaven and Barry Rossheim.

A subsequent article by Stu Wilson, *Recent Occurrences of Unusually Plumaged Kingbirds* (*Tyrannus*) in *Florida: Hybrids or Little-noticed Natural Variants?* (Vol. 45: 79-86), was published in September 2017. The article discusses this famous Tropical Kingbird (dubbed Dot) and her likely offspring found in other parts of Florida.

The Florida Ornithological Society holds semi-annual meetings at different locations around the state which includes ornithologist-led workshops and field trips. All are welcome. Membership in FOS is \$25 per year.

You can subscribe at <http://www.fosbirds.org/join.html>.

To read the past issues of the *Florida Field Naturalist*, log onto:

<https://archive.org/stream/floridafieldnat41flora#page/74/mode/2up>

Past issues can also be found in the library at the Sarasota Audubon Society Nature Center, 999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240.

Jeanne Dubi



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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



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:

**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
- Garden Maintenance

## INTERESTED????

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator:

**[CLICK HERE TO SEND AN EMAIL](#)**



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