



THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY 2018



This is our last issue of the Brown Pelican until September. We wish you all a very happy and healthy summer!

SAS NATURE CENTER SUMMER HOURS

May 1 - May 31 ... **Open Daily, 9:00am - 1:00pm**

June - July - August - September ... **CLOSED**

October 1, 2018 - May 31, 2019 ... **Open Daily, 9:00am - 1:00pm**

2018-19 SAS ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Be sure to look out for the 2018-19 SAS Activity Schedule which will be mailed out in September. Sign up early for trips, classes and workshops!



MONTHLY MEETING

Monday, May 14th

SWALLOW-TAILED KITES



The Sarasota Audubon Society Nature Center

Open daily 9:00am-1:00pm

October 1st through May 31st

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COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF SARASOTA COUNTY
PRESENTS



Be The One

to be what bone looks like to a bird!

Margi Haas will share her adventures with the Swallow-tailed Kites she has encountered in our area

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

First Congregational Church Fellowship Hall
2031 S. Euclid, Sarasota

Pre-monthly Meeting Dinner

Gecko's Restaurant, 1900 Hillview Avenue at 5:00pm.
All members welcome!

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



Photo Credit: Mark Resnick

The 2018 Giving Challenge is NEXT WEEK!

MAY 1st - MAY 2nd
Noon - Noon

www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org

Gifts up to \$100 will be matched!

Sarasota Audubon is participating in the 24 HOUR, ONLINE giving event with more than 600 other nonprofits in four counties!

JOIN US!

How You Can Participate:

1. On May 1st thru May 2nd, 12:00pm to 12:00pm
2. Go to: www.GivingPartnerChallenge.org
3. Search for: **SARASOTA AUDUBON**
4. Enter your online gift with a credit or debit card

Your gift between \$25 - \$100 WILL BE DOUBLED!

It's an exciting 24 hours!

Your gift will advance the mission of **Sarasota Audubon**

BE THE ONE to look like hope to a bird!
BE THE ONE to double your impact on May 1 & 2!

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to see a few of the people who look like hope to a bird!

The 2018 Giving Challenge is presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation. Supporting partners are Manatee Community Foundation, William G and Marie Selby Foundation, Herald Tribune, Knight Foundation, Charlotte Community Foundation, Harbor Style, iHeartMEDIA, SNN (Suncoast News Network).

FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

Saturday, May 19: SIDEWALK ASTRONOMY



8:15pm. The Deep-Sky Observers will once again set up their telescopes at the Nature Center parking lot for wonderful star gazing.

TRIP REPORTS



ST. MARK'S WILDLIFE REFUGE - APRIL 13-15, 2018

Overnight to the North....

Sarasota Audubon members set out to new birding sites in North Florida. The first day was to Sweetwater Wetlands Park, as 125 acre Preserve adjacent to Paynes Prairie, in Gainesville. We had a beautiful but very windy day to walk the three miles of unpaved trails and three boardwalks. There we saw 170 Black Bellied Whistling Ducks, and yes they were counted, Carolina Chickadees, Cedar Waxwings, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows. From there we proceeded to Crawfordsville where we thoroughly enjoyed dinner at Myra Jean's, along with ice cream for the finale.

The second day we went to St Marks NRW, where we met with local guide Andy Wraithmell. They still had a variety of ducks and we spotted a Common Loon. We got good views of the Clapper Rail swimming, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatch, along with a Seaside Sparrow. We were joined by Julie Wraithmell, Florida Audubon's Interim Executive Director, and their 10 year old daughter, who out-shined us with her explorations.



Photograph by Chase Bonanno

The day ended in a local Tallahassee park where we had good views of the White-breasted Nuthatch. And then a long drive back. Our planned trip to Tall Timbers had to be postponed as the storms rolled in.

Cathy Davis

FORT DESOTO PARK - APRIL 17, 2018

Under very comfortable, and somewhat breezy, conditions at least nineteen (19) participants joined John Ginaven and me for the Fort DeSoto Park field trip. Per usual practice, we covered the Mulberry Trees, East Beach Picnic Area, East Beach Turnaround, Gulf-side Beach/Pond, and North Beach including the Grove.

Based on previous reports and continuing migrant-grounding north winds, we expected a good day and it did not disappoint, although warblers were in shorter than expected supply. What we lacked in migrant warblers we made up for in tanagers, grosbeaks, buntings, and orioles.

An unusual kingbird on the wire just before noon had all of us scratching our heads given that the bird displayed characteristics of 5-6 tyrannus species. The ID is still being worked out, but it wouldn't surprise me if speculation leads to Tropical x Gray hybrid, i.e. a product of our own annually-breeding Tropical Kingbird, Dot, and her Gray Kingbird gigolo, or a similar pair.

Stu Wilson

[CLICK FOR FULL BIRD LIST](#)



NOTES FROM THE BIRD RECORDER

Here are the April 2018 sightings:

- **Swainson's Warbler:** Pinecraft Park, Leffis Key, Manasota Scrub Preserve
- **Nashville Warbler:** V. Roumi, Pinecraft Park
- **Black-throated Green Warbler:** Red Bug Slough, Leffis Key, Pinecraft
- **Wilson's Warbler:** K. Calvert, Leffis Key
- **Bronzed Cowbird:** Celery Fields
- **Pacific Loon:** M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach, Access 5
- **Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Pinecraft Park
- **Black-billed Cuckoo:** Pinecraft Park
- **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** C. Dickinson, Celery Fields
- **Upland Sandpiper:** Celery Fields
- **Surf Scoter:** M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach, Access 5
- **Bay-breasted Warbler:** Pinecraft Park
- **Kentucky Warbler:** Pinecraft Park, Leffis Key
- **Dickcissel:** Celery Fields, Siesta Beach-Access 5, Scherer Thaxton Preserve, Leffis Key
- **Pomarine Jaeger:** M. Ostrowski, Siesta Beach, Access 5
- **Whimbrel:** C. Herzog, Siesta Beach, Access 5
- **Blackburnian Warbler:** K. Young, at her home
- **Cerulean Warbler:** M. Ostrowski, Red Bug Slough Preserve

Claire Herzog



IN MEMORIAM



AMBASSADOR (R) DONALD LEIDEL

Retired U.S. Ambassador Don Leidel, who with his wife Bev and daughter Katie has been an active member of Sarasota Audubon for many years, passed away at the age of 82 on April 12, 2018 in Sarasota.



YES, OUR BROWN PELICAN NEWSLETTER IS GOING GREEN ALL THE WAY!

BEGINNING WITH OUR SEPTEMBER 2018 ISSUE WE WILL NO LONGER MAIL PAPER COPIES OF THE NEWSLETTER. THE BROWN PELICAN WILL BE AVAILABLE IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT ONLY AND WILL BE SENT DIRECTLY TO YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.

***** THIS ISSUE IS THE LAST PAPER COPY THAT WILL BE SENT *****

IF YOU ARE RECEIVING ONLY THE PAPER VERSION PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS SO YOU WON'T MISS AN ISSUE OF THE BROWN PELICAN. SEND EMAIL TO: editor@sarasotaudubon.org

WHY ARE WE MAKING THIS CHANGE?

The Sarasota Audubon Society strives to be a model conservation organization and a positive steward of the earth. That means that we want to make as small of a footprint on the earth as we can and utilize as little natural resources as possible. At the present time, we mail over 500 paper copies of the newsletter to some of our members. Think of how many trees it takes to make that happen on a yearly basis (10 issues x 500+ copies x 2 pages each plus 500+ envelopes!)

If you have never seen our electronic Brown Pelican Newsletter it is a real step up. Not only does it have significantly more content, it is in glorious color and has direct links to other sites, photos, videos and documents.

Please send us your email address so we can convert you to our electronic newsletter NOW before the September 2018 issue.

Send to: editor@sarasotaudubon.org



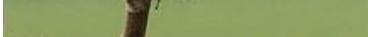
Goodbye Paper, Hello Green!



Birds of the Month

Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*)





CLICK TO LISTEN

Born in Wisconsin, Don earned his undergraduate and law degrees at the University of Wisconsin, and was a member of the Wisconsin bar. After his training, he served in the US and overseas for three years in the Air Force as a First Lieutenant. He subsequently joined the Central Intelligence Agency, where he served in managerial positions in the U.S. and in Europe, following which he transferred to the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer, serving first in Buenos Aires and then in Mexico City. Following a year in the Senior Seminar on Foreign Policy, Don was appointed Executive Director of the State Department's Bureau of European Affairs, then Deputy Director for Management Operations. His final State Department assignment, after confirmation by the U.S. Senate, was as Ambassador to Bahrain, a wealthy sheikdom in the Persian Gulf.

After retiring to Sarasota, Don and his wife Beverly, and later his daughter Katie, pursued their environmental interests and support with Sarasota Audubon, where they also traveled with SAS on at least two of our foreign birding trips. Don also was active locally as a speaker on international affairs and as an officer and board member in local organizations devoted to civic and political causes. He is survived by his wife Beverly, daughter Katie (both mentioned above), as well as two sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren and others living outside the Sarasota area.

Wade Matthews



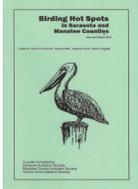
Our very own Darryl Saffer had his film **Black Skimmers of Lido Beach** chosen as an official selection of the 2018 Sarasota Film Festival. The film was shot entirely on Lido Beach and it documents the nesting colony before, during and after tropical storm Colin. Diane Cirksena narrates the film which was screened on April 14th and Earth Day April 22nd.

Congratulations Darryl!

amazon smile 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 \$8.50 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.



I am sure I am not alone when I say that this bird was a nemesis bird for me until I finally saw it, in all its glory, at the Celery Fields, in company with the munias, last spring. Each year one (or two) are seen in Sarasota County. They have come and gone, seen by few. It seemed to me that my US visits were always too early or too late, but in truth, I wasn't the only one to miss the sporadic sightings. Anyway, it showed up again this year, a seemingly solitary bird of its kind, in the same area as last year. And again I saw it, flying from the grassy area into a tree where it sat for a while, sun shining on its glorious yellow chest and black throat, like a miniature meadowlark.

Reflecting on this bird I realized I didn't know anything at all about it - which makes it a pretty good choice as Bird of the Month! Anyway I did find out some cool facts about it. Here are some of them.

The Dickcissel is a sparrow-like bird named for the male song which has been described as a sharp 'dick dick' followed by a buzzed 'cissel'. If you listen to it on this attached recording, or some other app, you may be a little bemused, like me, as to the connection between what you hear and the explanation given. But that might be just me....

The scientific name is 'Spiza americana', the spiza being the Ancient Greek catch-all term for finch-like bird. It used to be called a 'Black-throated Bunting', a name given to it by John James Audubon, but unlike the true buntings (which are part of the Emberizidae family), the Dickcissel is a member of the Cardinalidae family - so not a bunting at all. Eventually the name Dickcissel replaced Black-throated Bunting, an interesting case of a nickname having ousted a name once in frequent use.

How surprising then, the occasional spring sightings in Sarasota, given that this little bird winters in huge flocks of over a million birds on its wintering grounds in the llanos (the seasonally flooded grasslands and savannas) of central Venezuela, and other places where it winters nomadically from West Mexico to northern South America. On its wintering ground up to 10%-30% of the global population may occur in a single roost. So bear in mind if and when you see the little lone bird at the Celery Fields that this bird is into seriously huge flocks.

In Spring the Dickcissel migrates to its breeding grounds on the grasslands of the central USA, where it inhabits hay fields, fallow fields, weedy ditches and grasslands.

It is essentially a wanderer, appearing in large numbers at a breeding ground one year and totally absent the next. In fact the Dickcissel, amazingly, remains one of the most typical and abundant breeding birds of the North American prairie grasslands, where it indulges in polygamous mating procedures, males having up to six mates.

Although the Dickcissel is on the IUCN Red List (International Union for Conservation of Nature) as of least concern it does have some major threats to its existence. On its wintering grounds in Venezuela roosts are regularly poisoned with toxic agrochemicals, and because of the high concentration at these roosts they are particularly susceptible to such threats. However on its breeding ground it is tolerant of agricultural activities and has the ability to move in response to drought.

So may this hardy little bird continue to flourish. And may our Celery Fields bird join a flock and find a mate.

Glynnis Thomas



HOT STUFF AT THE CELERY FIELDS

During the month of May, Sarasota County will be conducting a prescribed burn in one area of the central cell at the Celery Fields. This is done in order to reduce unwanted dry fuel.

No need to call the Fire Department if you see/smell smoke.

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) and are held most 4th Thursdays of each month Sept-May with topics appealing to all ages and levels of knowledge. Visit www.sarasotabutterfly.com to learn more!



SAS is phasing out our Post Office Box address in a few months. Effective immediately, please update your address books:

Sarasota Audubon Society
999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240

NEW ORNITHOLOGY ENGRAVINGS FOR SALE AT THE NATURE CENTER

We have received a very generous donation from John Wurdman (owner of Lazare Gallery in Charles City, VA) of a collection of ornithology engravings done by British artist Prideaux John Selby (no relation to the Sarasota Selbys). Selby was a contemporary of John J. Audubon. These engravings were not made during the artist's lifetime (1788-1867), but Selby's original engraving plates were used in the early to mid-1980s to make new ones. These engravings were all colored by hand. They come in small, medium and large sizes and are suitable for framing in Sarasota's many homes.



SARASOTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS

for framing. Prices on the engravings run from \$140 for a small size up to \$190 for the large. A few engravings have slightly different prices. Please note that Selby first edition engravings sell for hundreds to thousands of dollars in today's market, which can be verified via internet search, so these are quite a bargain. Even if you don't plan to purchase any, they are a delight to see.

Sue Herring



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](#)



We have a wonderful assortment of birding and nature gifts:

- *Bird books* *Folding Bird Guides*
- *Binocular Harnesses* *Tote Bags*
- *Water Bottles* *T-shirts*
- *Hat / Vest Pins* *Charley Harper Puzzles*
- *Earrings* *Note Cards*
- *Educational and Fun Items for Kids*

...and much much more!

Please visit us for all things pertaining to birding and nature at our beloved Celery Fields. All profits benefit our SAS Nature Center

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

Don't Know if You Renewed?

Check with Lynn Jakubowicz, our Membership Chairperson, email: membership@sarasotaaudubon.org



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:

- **SAS Nature Center Docent**
- **Celery Fields Bird Naturalist**
- **Garden Maintenance**

INTERESTED????

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator: Marcy Packer (packmw@aol.com)

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



NAME BADGES

Pin Badge - \$5.25, Magnet Badge - \$7.25
Add \$4.50 for shipping. Send name and address to:
Michael Fox, 2749 Ringling Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237

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Submissions, comments and questions always welcome

Thanks to Peter Rice for providing this service.

welcome

Send to: editor@sarasotaudubon.org



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

[CLICK: Sarasota Audubon Web Site](#)

Marcy Packer, editor
editor@sarasotaudubon.org



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