



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY 2019



**The Sarasota Audubon Society Nature Center**

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

**Through May 31st**

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This is our last issue of the Brown Pelican Newsletter 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**

### 2019-20 SAS ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Be sure to look out for the 2018-19 SAS Activity Schedule which will be available in September. Remember to register online early for trips, classes and workshops!

### MONTHLY MEETING

Monday, May 13th

### CHALLENGES AND WONDERS OF MANAGING CARLTON RESERVE



### VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION





Debbie Blanco, Sarasota County Environmental Specialist and Carlton Reserve Site Manager, will explain some of the challenges and wonders of managing Carlton Reserve's 24,565 acres

**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](mailto:karensarasota@yahoo.com))**

**HOW TO ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS TO YOUR YARD**  
**John Groskopf, Presenter**



*Photograph by Marilyn Schmal*

John Groskopf brought his immense knowledge of hummingbirds to the Nature Center for the workshop on Saturday, March 23, 2019

While the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is here all year round, winter is the most favorable time to spot one. Although John says he has seen the most Hummers in his yard August through October he reports that occasionally other hummingbirds might be sighted, the top three being the Rufous, the Buff-bellied, and the Black-chinned.

Interesting tidbit: the color of the Hummingbird does not come from pigment, like the Cardinal's red. Rather the color comes from refracted light. Therefore, the color one sees is dependent on the light, the time of day, etc. A hummingbird might even appear black, which of course makes them hard to identify.

**Attracting Hummingbirds:**

Food and the shelter of plants are necessary to interest the birds, and because



*Photograph by Glynnis Thomas*

On April 27th over forty five of our SAS volunteers gathered at the Nature Center to enjoy an evening of food, drink and heartfelt thanks!

It was a celebration of our wonderful, successful organization and all the great people who have made it so.

Some interesting facts were shared about our volunteer efforts:

- SAS has over 100 active volunteers
- Volunteers participate in more than 45 different activities that keep SAS / Nature Center running
- Since we began using Volgistics three years ago over 16,000 volunteer hours have been logged
- 7,000+ volunteer hours have been recorded this season
- We increased our volunteer team by 10% adding 13 new volunteers this season
- More than 11,000 have visited the Nature Center and Celery Fields boardwalks.
  - 1,400 per month / 45 per day
- Nature Center donation box raised over \$2,500
- CFBN donation boxes raised over \$800

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE RECOGNITION**

This year at the Volunteer Appreciation Celebration we recognized Sarasota Audubon Society volunteers by presenting Volunteer Recognition Pins based on service hours performed during the 2018-19 season.

**Three Categories:**



- GREEN:** 10-49 hours of volunteer service
- SILVER:** 50 - 99 hours of volunteer service
- GOLD:** over 100 hours of volunteer service

The link below reflects SAS volunteers that have achieved service hours in those categories recorded in Volgistics (as of 4/27/19).

[CLICK---> THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED VOLUNTEERS](#)

We know that many of you have put in the time that would put you in one of the three categories. However, if you did not record it in Volgistics then we have no way of knowing what your volunteer hours are.

**It is not too late!**

If you record your volunteer hours in Volgistics by May 31, 2019

ood and the shelter of plants are necessary to interest the birds, and because hummingbirds are territorial, it is a good idea to arrange plants in different sections of the garden so each hummingbird can own his own territory.

Hummingbird feeders are fine but not necessary, and they require a lot of cleaning. John showed us photos of good plants to attract the birds: Turk's Cap shrub, Fire Spike, and shrimp plants, among others.

He also recommended several nurseries that have good varieties of plants for hummers: Troy's Tropics, Farm and Garden, Florida Native Plant Nursery, Crowley Nursery & Gardens, Sweetbay (where Sarasota Audubon gets our native plants, although John has not shopped there).

To cap off his presentation, John then took the group on a tour of our garden and pointed out plants that attract hummingbirds.

*Marilyn Schmal*

## TRIP REPORTS



### FORT DESOTO WALK - April 16, 2019

On a clear, breezy, chilly (59 degrees) turning warm (86 degrees) day, eleven participants joined John Ginaven and me for the spring Fort De Soto Guided Walk. We gathered at the Mulberry Tree area shortly after 8:30am then made stops at East Beach, East Beach Picnic Area, North Beach Lagoon, North Beach Oak Grove, then a final stop at the Mulberry Tree area before disbursing for the day shortly before 2:30pm.

As Fort De Soto spring migration days go, it was probably only an average day at best. Finding only eight species of warbler was a mild disappointment, but shorebirds showed well (12 species) and in the end we had a decent bird list of about 70 species. Some of the best finds were unexpected routine birds, like a single Black Vulture (rare on the coast) and a single Yellow-rumped Warbler (late migrant).

*Stu Wilson*

[CLICK FOR FULL BIRD LIST](#)



### NOTES FROM THE BIRD RECORDER

#### APRIL 2019 Rarities / Highlights

##### Celery Fields:

- Bobolink
- Bronzed Cowbird
- Cinnamon Teal
- Dickcissel
- Solitary Sandpiper
- Snail Kite

##### Leffis Key:

- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Cerulean Warbler

you could be a candidate to receive a service recognition pin in one of the three categories. In the beginning of June we will check Volgistics again to ensure we include all applicable hours and distribute additional pins as needed.

It is now up to you. Here is the link to your account:

[CLICK ---> SAS VOLUNTEER VOLGISTICS ACCOUNT](#)

## CONSERVATION



### Please Plan to Attend Important Public Meeting on May 14 2019 Affecting the Celery Fields

The Sarasota County Planning Department seeks public input on rezoning the public lands immediately west of the Celery Fields on May 14 at the Church of Hope, at 6 pm. The community is being offered this one chance to offer public opinion. The church is located at 1560 Wendell Kent Road Sarasota, Florida, 34240.

The future of the Quads or four corners of public lands at Apex and Palmer will be among those issues discussed. (Please see attached map.) This issue is of vital concern to the many people who live east in this area and to the many people who value Celery Fields for conservation, eco-tourism, birding and recreation. Of special concern is what should happen to the two south now vacant quads especially the one (1) is directly next to critical Celery Fields birding nesting areas. And the other south quad (2) across Apex Road is next to Mr. Jim Gabbert's just approved waste transfer facility at Palmer and Porter. The northwest parcel (3) has a temporary fire station. The northeast parcel has a retention pond.



How these parcels are rezoned will ultimately depend on what is considered most relevant to the Sarasota Commissioners. Expanding industry or protecting conservation, eco-Tourism, and the well-being of the local residential neighborhoods and roads? Come let the Planners know what you think!

Sarasota Audubon will participate in the May 14 meeting with a proposal to enhance the entire area of the Celery Fields. Details forthcoming at monthly meeting and via:

[SRQbirdAlerts@yahoo.com](mailto:SRQbirdAlerts@yahoo.com)

For the latest overall updates, check out:

<https://freshstartsarasota.blogspot.com>

- Dickcissel
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Magnolia Warbler

**Location Unknown:**

- Whooping Crane

**Locklear Park:**

- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler

**Manasota Scrub Park:**

- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Cerulean Warbler

**Myakka River State Park:**

- White-faced Ibis

**Nokomis Beach:**

- American Avocet
- Elegant Tern

**North Lido Beach Park:**

- American Avocet
- Cerulean Warbler
- Crested Caracara
- Dickcissel
- Gull-billed Tern
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Kentucky Warbler
- Western Kingbird
- Whimbrel

**Pinecraft Park:**

- Bay-breasted Warbler
- Bank Swallow
- Blue-winged Warbler
- Baltimore Oriole
- Black-throated Green
- Broad-winged Hawk
- Cerulean Warbler
- Cliff Swallow
- Grasshopper Sparrow
- Kentucky Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Short-tailed Hawk
- Swainson's Warbler
- Townsend's Warbler
- Veery
- Western Tanager
- Wood, Gray-cheeked, Hermit & Swainson's Thrush

**Palmer Lake:**

- Grasshopper Sparrow
- Solitary Sandpiper

**Private Residence:**

- Shiny Cowbird

**Quick Point Nature Preserve:**

- Dickcissel
- Western Kingbird

**Red Bug Slough Park:**

- Black-billed Cuckoo
- Connecticut Warbler
- Kentucky Warbler

**Roberts Bay:**

- Bonaparte's Gull

**Siesta Beach: Access 5-7:**

- American Avocet
- Dickcissel
- Golden-winged Warbler
- Surf Scoter
- Whimbrel

**Margi Haas**

**Conservation Education, Sarasota Audubon Society**



**Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottis*)**



For the last hurrah of The Brown Pelican for this season I thought it might be nice to write something about our state bird, the Northern Mockingbird. After all it's a bird we all know, from the humblest birding beginner to the most avid lister. It's also an interesting bird in United States culture, being the state bird of five states (including our own), appearing in book titles, songs and lullabies, and making other appearances in popular culture. We are all probably familiar with the line from 'To Kill a Mocking Bird' when Atticus tells Finch, 'Remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird'. Here, the mockingbird is a symbol of innocence and an easy target for ruthless people.

The mockingbird's latin name - *Mimus polyglottis*, literally meaning 'many-tongued mimic' - is its signature feature, because it learns and incorporates the songs of a range of other birds into its own vocal repertoire, which it sings incessantly, particularly in the breeding season.

Along with thrashers and catbirds, mockingbirds are sometimes known as mimid thrushes and all belong in the family Mimidae. They all tend to be thrush-like in appearance and have subdued plumage in earthy tones, a heavyish beak, slender body, short-rounded wings, a long tail and long legs.

All these birds mimic the songs of other birds, and while several birds could make the claim to be the world's best mimic, in North America the Northern Mockingbird, the Brown Thrasher and the Gray Catbird are undoubtedly the master mimics, with arguably the mockingbird being top of the mimid list.

To put this in perspective, an individual mockingbird can learn up to 200 different songs in its life. In addition to bird songs it can also copy dog barks, frogs, musical instruments, sirens and other environmental sounds. The song is a long series of phrases repeated 2-6 times before shifting to a new phrase, and its famous song, with its varied repetitions and artful imitations is heard all day long during nesting season (and often at night as well).

Both males and females sing, but males are louder and sing for longer periods and have two separate seasonal sets of songs, one for spring and one for fall. And because the mockingbird frequents suburban settings, is the State bird of several states and sings for long periods from high vantage points, there are a lot of anecdotal accounts of this popular and well-known bird.

One woman reported that a mockingbird imitated her phone so well that she kept on getting up to answer the phone until she realized it was the bird not the phone. Another told the story of a bird that used to hang around the main post office of his town. It had a

**St. Armands Circle Area :**

- Tropical Kingbird

**Sarasota National:**

- Eastern Whip-poor-will

**South Venice Lemon Bay Park:**

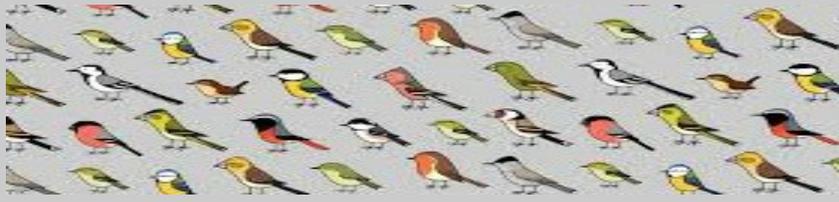
- Connecticut Warbler

**Ted Sperling Park at South Lido:**

- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Kentucky Warbler

Several other migrants were seen in multiple locations including: Scarlet & Summer Tanagers, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Yellow, Orange-crowned & Blackpoll Warblers, Baltimore & Orchard Orioles and Blue & Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

**Claire Herzog**



used to hang around the main post office of his town. It had a flagpole, and the chain made a distinctive clanging sound when the wind blew. One night he heard the sound and wondered why no-one had taken the flag down. When he looked out, there was no flag, but a mockingbird repeatedly making the same sound as the flag chain. Another report was of a mockingbird mimicking not just one crow but a whole flock of crows.

Perhaps more interestingly from a scientific point of view is evidence that the Northern Mockingbird will include in its earliest spring songs the vocalizations of species which occur far south of the locale of the singer, an indication that the singer has recently returned to a more northern breeding ground. For example, in Austin Texas in April 1962, a mockingbird repeated the song of Plain Chachalaca, Groove-billed Ani, Couch's Kingbird, Great Kiskadee and Green Jay, all species which live 275 miles south of Austin.

Apart from its amazing song, this beloved bird is also well known for its absolutely fearless and aggressive defense of its territory, particularly its nest and surrounding areas, against birds and animals. When a predator is persistent, mockingbirds from neighboring territories may be summoned by distinct calls to join the defense. The birds are unafraid and will attack much larger birds including jays, crows, ravens and hawks. In addition, they may harass local dogs and cats they consider a threat and will even at times target humans.

Mockingbirds were often captured for sale as caged birds from the late 1700s to the early 1900s and became scarce along much of the northern edge of their range. In fact, Thomas Jefferson in November 1772 acquired a pet mockingbird for 5 shillings from one of the slaves of his father-in-law and he kept mockingbirds in his office and sleeping quarters while president in the early 1800s. After the caged bird trade was stopped, the Northern Mockingbird again became common in many areas and has thankfully now expanded its northern range. It is a particularly common bird in urban and suburban areas where it seeks insects on open lawns. In fact, it is a natural pest controller consuming large quantities of beetles, ants, wasps and grasshoppers.

Since researching this article there are many more things I've discovered about the mockingbird which space doesn't allow me to include. But it has awakened in me a new interest and respect for this familiar bird and I recommend it to you.

**Glynnis Thomas**



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October 17-20, 2019

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**Sarasota Audubon Society Jeanne Dubi Scholarship**

The scholarship committee consisting of members Marcy Klein, Karen Willey and Mike Dubi assessed six applications and awarded three scholarships of \$1,000 each to: Logan Clapp of Sarasota Military Academy, Chloe Schwab of Sarasota HS and Allison Poole of Venice HS. The scholarship program is 100% funded by Sarasota Audubon members. We are all delighted to help these students as they embark upon their environmental college studies. Congratulations Logan, Chloe and Allison -- and many thanks to the fine scholarship committee.

**Jeanne Dubi**



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**SARASOTA CBC UPDATE....**

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### 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 and Myakka River State Parks.



Here's an update on the 68th Sarasota Christmas Bird Count (part of an Audubon series in its 119th year) held on January 5, 2019:

With rare species review (22 records comprising 17 species) essentially complete, it looks like we will only lose a net one (1) species from our previously-announced record-shattering total of 173.

Here are the details:

\* The reported Common Nighthawk will go down as "Chordeiles sp," meaning that our submitted documentation was insufficient to pinpoint the species to Common, Lesser, or Antillean Nighthawk (i.e. still counts as a species)

\* The reported Gray-cheeked Thrush will go down as "non-Hermit Catharus sp" meaning that our submitted documentation only sufficiently excluded Hermit Thrush from among the Catharus thrushes (i.e. still counts as a species)

\* The reported Broad-winged Hawk was not accepted (i.e. we lose one species)

\* All remaining records were accepted

The 172 species puts us on the map not only state-wide but nationally. Again, the previous high count on the 68-years-running Sarasota CBC was 161 species on January 5, 2008.

I'll follow up again if/when rankings are made available. Until then, everyone who participated deserves a pat on the back and should make sure their calendar shows Saturday, January 4, 2020 as the date for the next Sarasota CBC.

Stu Wilson

## 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  
999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240

Don't Know if You Renewed?

Email: [membership@sarasotaudubon.org](mailto:membership@sarasotaudubon.org)

### SARASOTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS

Help build a path to the future  
Purchase a commemorative brick!



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

### 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](#)

### Subscribe to SRQ Bird Alerts!

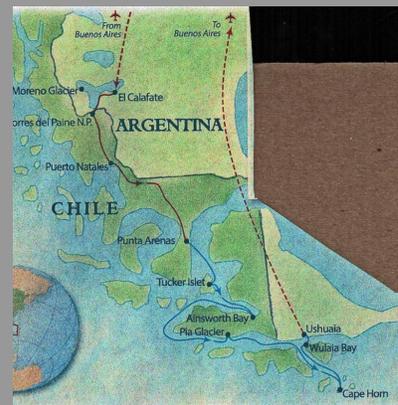
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Thanks to Peter Rice for providing this service.

Sarasota County Butterfly Club

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### PHOTOGRAPHS OF CHILE

By Lenee and Conrad Owens



On Display May 1 - 31

Sarasota Audubon Society - Nature Center  
999 Center Road, Sarasota 34240

### SARASOTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER





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**Submissions, comments and questions  
always welcome**

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



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