



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

## JANUARY 2021

### ***Message From the SAS Board of Directors***

Looking Forward to a Sunnier 2021!

As 2020 winds down and 2021 is upon us, the SAS board still doesn't feel that the time is right to open the Nature Center or resume full activities. We review the COVID situation each month. We'll let you know if there are any changes.

Looking back at 2020, we are proud that so many of you came through in so many ways:

- A big volunteer effort has been under way in the gardens, and they look splendid
- The Palmer Boulevard road clean-ups continue – thanks to Joanna Bear for managing that worthy project
- The Giving Tuesday/Giving Season we launched on November 30 yielded more than \$56,000 for the QUAD project bringing the total raised so far to nearly \$150,000. We are on our way!
- We Zoomed our monthly meetings via webinars. Thanks to Karen Willey for getting us up and running with that technology.

In these uncertain times, one thing is certain: WE NEED YOU to further our goals of protecting birds and the environment. If you have not renewed your membership, please do so now. Every dollar is crucial to our continued health.

The Sarasota Christmas Bird Count will be conducted on 2 January. Keep an eye on your backyard and your neighborhood and send any sightings for that day to [stuwilson@comcast.net](mailto:stuwilson@comcast.net) For a closer look at how CBC's came about and how they work, look for a link elsewhere in this newsletter.

As always, stay safe. We look forward to seeing you sometime in 2021.

Sarasota Audubon Board of Directors

# Monthly General Zoom Meetings

## DECEMBER MEETING

**MONDAY**  
**11 JANUARY**  
**7:00pm**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Until further notice our monthly meetings will be conducted online via ZOOM. Specific access details and directions will be provided by email and the SAS web site prior to the first meeting. They will also be repeated for each monthly general meeting.

Each meeting will allow for a 10-15-minute Q&A at the end of the presentation. You will be able to type in your question during the presentation.

## Climate Change: Local Science and Solutions

The speakers will be Tim Ramage, PhD, Environmental Ethicist, Ringling College of Art & Design and Karen Willey, Climate Change Communications.

## 2020-21 MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE

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## SLIDE PRESENTATIONS

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### SLIDE PRESENTATIONS FOR YOU TO ACCESS, LEARN FROM, AND ENJOY!

**“Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count is the research gift that keeps on giving” – Patty Wetli, WTTW, *Science & Nature*, December 15, 2020**

At Sarasota Audubon, we have been working on slide presentations on a variety of topics. The first one is on the **Christmas Bird Count**—history, methods, citizen science involvement, and results. We hope you enjoy these presentations which we plan to issue monthly via ***The Brown Pelican***.

Click the link below to view the **Christmas Bird Count** file OR cut and paste the link into your browser.

NOTE: the file is a .pdf, **DO NOT** click on the “open with google docs” option as it is not equipped to view a pdf.

Simply scroll and enjoy!

## 120th Audubon Christmas Bird Count Results

National Audubon just released the results of the 120th Christmas Bird Count, the one held a year ago. Our count fell on 4 January 2020.

Once again, the Sarasota CBC acquitted itself admirably! Although our species total of 164 was nine below our record-shattering total from the cycle before, it still placed us as the 37th count in the United States out of 1,992 counts total, i.e. the top two percentile. Only one other Florida count topped us, and that was Gainesville with 170 species. Only three other states produced counts which topped us: Texas, California, and one count in South Carolina.

In terms of participation, we were the 48th-ranked count with 136 volunteers, i.e. the top three percentile.

Sarasota CBC volunteers have much to be proud of... let's see what we can do on 2 January 2021!

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## 2020 Big Sit! Results

A bit overshadowed by the 120th CBC results just sent out by Audubon, the New Haven Bird Club just released full results of the 2020 Big Sit!

There were a total of 98 circles in the USA (no doubt down due to the pandemic) and our Big Sit! team at Celery Fields (Palmer Blvd Boardwalk) finished in a tie for 21st with our tally of 60 species. We were the top of the five circles reporting from Florida.

Perhaps even more interesting... We were the ONLY circle to report Least Bittern, Limpkin, and Nanday Parakeet.

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## SAS Membership Renewal



## **It's Time to Renew!**

Our Sarasota Audubon memberships normally run on the calendar year, so it's time to renew for 2021.

Only \$30/year for either individuals or families.  
The easiest way to renew is online on our Website:

**CLICK TO RENEW**

If you have a question about your membership, please email

**CLICK - MEMBERSHIP**

*Thanks for supporting your local Audubon Society!*

## **NATURE CENTER HAPPENINGS**



The Nature Center remains closed as we



monitor COVID. Nature is Open is our new slogan. A big shout out to our dedicated volunteers: Monday Marti Ramos and Marie Brooks-Demaud, Tuesday the multi-talented Rick Greenspun can be found with his hoe. And, of course, Andy Schneider on Monday, Wednesday and Friday keeping everything running. Janet Schmidt, Heather Kerl, Paula Griffin, and Pam Callender can be found on random days, and our young weekend Warriors Grace Milton and Kyle McCrea do great work. Kyle and his dad Don are out almost every Sunday doing some heavy-duty weeding/mulching.

If you see them, stop and say thanks. Wishing everyone a healthy 2021 – hope to see you in the garden.

***Karen Willey***  
***SAS Nature Center Manager***

## Upcoming Events

### SAS Activities



Please visit our website [www.sarasotaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaudubon.org) for the most up-to-date information. Also check the Brown Pelican monthly newsletter and eBlasts to alert you to any scheduled upcoming activities.

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## Bird of the Month -- Black-Chinned Hummingbird



Photo on left: Pam Koepf. Photo on right: John Groskopf.

This vagrant hummingbird was first seen on 14 December in Heritage Park in Venice. It has been continuing, and it remains to be seen how long it will stick around. It has often been found feeding in Hong Kong Orchid trees and resting in a Parkinsonia tree, all on the western side of the park.

The Black-chinned Hummingbirds' normal range is in the western parts of the U.S. and Mexico. These birds are migratory and normally winter along the west coast of Mexico. A few will winter on the southern Texas Gulf Coast, but they are a rarity here in Sarasota County.

It's a beautiful bird that looks similar to our native Ruby-throated Hummingbird. The ranges of these two species normally do not overlap; however, when they do, here are some ID tips to help differentiate them. The bill on the Black-chinned is curved compared to the straight bill of the Ruby-throated. A Black-chinned will pump its tail while hovering. Wings that extend past the tail are indicative of a Black-chinned; while a tail that is longer than the wingtips will point to a Ruby-throated.

A hummingbird's often brilliant throat feathers are called its "gorget". The term comes from days of old, when a knight-in-armor wore a metallic collar—or gorget—to protect his throat. And one of the most obvious differences between the Black-chinned Hummingbird and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is the color of their gorgets. Of course, you have to be lucky enough to view them in the proper light! The aptly named Ruby-throated Hummingbird's gorget is ruby red. The gorget on the Black-chinned Hummingbird is mostly black but has a thin stripe of iridescent purple beneath the black. It is not always easy to capture that flash of brilliance of the gorget in a photo, but a couple Sarasota County birders have been lucky enough to capture the purple gorget in photos, which helped lead to the positive identification of the Venice hummingbird.

Just in case you were thinking of trying to attract this Black-chinned Hummingbird by wearing a red hat, this bird is not specifically attracted to the color red but instead is attracted to the color of its latest food source. It is good to know that the Black-chinned Hummingbird is highly adaptable to different environments, including both urban and natural areas, so maybe our local visitor will stay for the winter. If you get a chance, go take a look for him in this small and pretty park in Venice.

## Slide Presentation

Margi Haas will be doing a Zoom presentation on swallow-tailed kites, including videos of baby birds, for Venice Audubon. This is an updated version of the one delivered for SAS in December 2019. For further info, contact mhaas@pipeline.com or call 917-951-2417



## IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened to report the passing of Scott Dingman from cancer on 10 December. He was a talented and devoted Sarasota birder, SAS birdwalk volunteer, and long-time bookseller. A memorial will be planned; date to be announced.



## CONSERVATION IN THE NEWS

Here is a link to an article about the possible reason behind a recent large die-off of birds out west:

<https://apple.news/AXIrY3iVTSxSWa4nS0FMdYA>



## WORKSHOP MANAGER(S) NEEDED

We need Workshop Manager(s). This flexible volunteer position allows you to create a schedule of 3 -5 workshops per year. Workshops are designed to give a hands on experience about nature or our environment and are presented at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center. Ideas for workshops come from our members, the county and other sources.

*NOTE: There will be no workshops at the Nature Center until SAS officially opens.*

## Additions to the SAS Website

It is now easier to make memorial or honorary donations on the SAS website. If you want to donate to Sarasota Audubon either in memory of or in honor of someone, follow any of the Donate links on the Home Page



([www.sarasotaaudubon.org](http://www.sarasotaaudubon.org)), look for this logo, and fill out the form. You may choose to donate to any one of the following funds: the Endowment Fund, SAS Quad Fund, Celery Fields Nature Center, or Celery Fields Explorers Program.

You may also give a year of SAS Membership as a gift. Look for the Gift Membership button at the bottom of the Membership page ([www.sarasotaaudubon.org/membership](http://www.sarasotaaudubon.org/membership)).

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

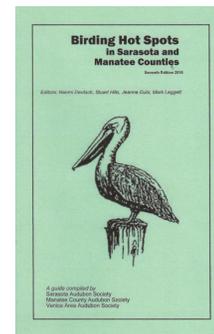


Engrave a loved one's name, or a short quote on a brick to commemorate a lasting tribute, or mark a special occasion. Ask us about other naming opportunities. Truly a gift that gives back.

[DOWNLOAD MAIL-IN FORM](#)

### BIRDING HOT SPOTS OF SARASOTA AND MANATEE COUNTIES

Can be purchased for \$8.50 by mail.  
Send a check to:  
SAS, 999 Center Road  
Sarasota, FL 34240



## Our Favorite Local Hot Spots

## It's Here!

**Sarasota Audubon Society's Online Guide: Our Favorite Local Birding Hotspots**, has been updated for 2020-2021, and is now live on the SAS website!

This revised edition, in addition to enhancing last year's sites with new information and web links for use on your computer, tablet or cell phone, adds seven new Favorites, for a total of 25 nearby, exceptional birding locations! Use it at home or in the field!

To view the updated Online Guide, go to the SAS website, click on the *Birding* drop-down menu and select the *Online Guide*, or click

the link below and add it to your Favorites:

**CLICK TO VIEW**



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