



THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 2023



A big Thank You to Sarasota Audubon Spruce-up Day Volunteers!

Hello Sarasota Auduboners,

On Sunday, October 1, we will begin our 9th year at the Nature Center. Back 10+ years ago, the Nature Center was a dream. With a big gulp, we forged ahead and built what we have today – an amazing resource for all to share: members, out-of-town and overseas visitors, families, and the general public. Every year we gather data on who visits the Nature Center, the boardwalks, who attends our programs, field trips, events, workdays, volunteer hours, and more. Last year, we had contact with more than 31,000 visitors!!! Even though the board of directors knew that we were establishing an eco-visitor hub, its success has far outstripped our expectations.

The Quads are our next big gulp. This week, we finally received

county approval for our basic design. When the engineers provide more detail, we will share it with you, but it's all systems go for our next great adventure. Once complete, we can all be proud of providing additional habitat for birds and wildlife, while buffering the existing Celery Fields and improving water quality. Another big win for the environment.

Check out our [Activity Schedule](#), which is packed with walks, talks, events, and much more. We look forward to seeing you all again soon and sharing another successful year.

Jeanne Dubi, President
and the Sarasota Audubon Board of Directors

MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION



General Meeting
Monday, October 9th
7:00 pm on ZOOM

Sarasota Bay
Update with Megan
Barry, Public Outreach
Manager

Discover how the Sarasota
Bay Estuary Program
works with community
partners to improve the
science of bay



management, restore wildlife habitats, and increase community engagement in bay restoration efforts.

[Register](#)

Megan Barry, Public Outreach Manager, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Notes from the Nature Center



Above: Bird Feeders are filled and ready for migrants!

The Nature Center is opening for the season! Our volunteers have been working hard to get the building tidied up to welcome guests, and they've been scoping out the latest wildlife at the boardwalks so they can help visitors identify our local birds and animals. We hope you'll come see for yourself how beautiful autumn is at the Celery Fields. Starting October 1, the Nature Center will be open every day from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. through the end of May.

Bird feeder news: Perhaps the most popular spot at the Celery Fields is the gazebo. Scores of different bird species have been spotted here over the years, so we have a collection of feeders filled with seeds to accommodate the birds' varied tastes.

Speaking of bird feeders: We're in search of volunteers who will come out to fill our feeders in the mornings. The birds are voracious eaters,

and they clean out the seed in a remarkably short time every day. If you can give an hour just one day a week, please email our volunteer coordinator at volunteer@sarasotaudubon.com. We supply the seed and the feeders.

Volunteers needed: We have many opportunities for volunteers

- Docents in the Nature Center
- Docents in the Native Plant Gardens
- Gardeners in the Native Plant Gardens
- Naturalists on the Boardwalks
- NEW! Feeder Team for the Gardens Gazebo Feeders

If you are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities, please visit the [Sarasota Audubon volunteer page](#) and fill out an application.

Gift Shop: We have a number of new gift shop items this year that we're really excited about: T-shirts in new colors, silver manatee earrings, and star guides to the night sky to name just a few. Visit soon for best selection!

Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

[Activity
Schedule](#)

[There's more: Read Full Text of Kim's
NOTES](#)



**Volunteer Spotlight: Thank
you, Cleanup Volunteers!**



Thank you, Cleanup Volunteers!

A little help: This summer we were pleased to get help with some of our projects from the **Sarasota County Operations Department**. One group of eager volunteers cleaned the interior of the Nature Center, while other volunteers headed to the gardens to tackle projects out there. The teams did a fantastic job on some challenging tasks, and we here at Sarasota Audubon appreciated the opportunity to get to know Sarasota County employees better. Too often they're just figures working in the distance or voices on a telephone, but we learned that they're folks just like us who love Sarasota County. Many thanks!

A little more help: Many thanks to our **Sarasota Audubon Society** volunteers who turned out at the Nature Center on September 23 for a work day. They scrubbed and polished and weeded and mulched until the Nature Center and gardens were in tip-top shape for our October 1 opening. They also pitched in to dust, organize, and restock the gift shop.

Celery Fields **Bird Naturalists** Expand Offerings

Bird Naturalist Volunteers will now be available starting October 1, 2023, coinciding with the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center opening. We are not only looking for Palmer Blvd. and Raymond Rd. Naturalists, but also in the Gardens and Gazebo. Now is the time to volunteer for the season, which will run from October through May.

If you are interested in being a Celery Fields Bird Naturalist at any of these locations, please register through our [Volunteer Portal](#).



Our next Palmer Blvd cleanup is coming up:

Monday, October 9, at 8:00 AM

Live life cleaner, make the Earth greener!

Volunteers are required to fill out and submit a county release form **BEFORE** arriving at the Nature Center.

Hope to see you there!

Please complete the form before attending.

[County Release
Form](#)

[RSVP to our cleanup coordinator, Stacy
Perry](#)



The GARDEN Gate

Feeder Team Volunteers Needed!

Help us attract more birds!



DUTIES: Fill bird feeders at the Gardens gazebo

Sign up now at: Volunteer@SarasotaAudubon.org



Nature Center Native Garden Day



Second Saturday of each Month 9 - 11 am

Join us for Native Garden Inspiration with
Pamela Callender, Eco Artist

Learn how to
create habitat for
birds and pollinators



Calling All Wingspan Players!



The first and third Wednesday afternoons of the month at 12:30 are reserved for the bird-themed board game Wingspan. Don't know how to play? No problem! We have experienced players who are eager to teach you.

Please [email Lynn](#) to let her know when you will join them.

Current Schedule 1st & 3rd Wednesday

- Wednesday, October 4
- Wednesday, October 18

All games start at 12:30 p.m. in the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center at the Celery Fields: 999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240. If you'd like to join the fun, please [email Lynn](#) so we know how many tables to set up!

'Eat Local' Week at the Nature Center Friday, October 20th, 3:00 PM

Join Sunshine Community Compost for a presentation and discussion centered on

- The interconnected benefits of composting
- The vast array of composting initiatives happening in



Sarasota and around Florida

- How to get started today.

All participants will be entered into a raffle drawing to receive an Earth Machine home compost bin for household or community use!

[Register Here](#)

Upcoming Birding Events



Florida Birding & Nature Festival

October 12–15, 2023
6650 Dickman Rd,
Apollo Beach, FL

Four days of field and boat trips, expert seminars, keynote speakers, and a great free nature expo!



Audubon Assembly: Conservation in a Changing Landscape

October 26–28, 2023
Sheraton Tampa–
Brandon, FL

Learning sessions, a keynote presentation, awards, and field trips to some of the birdiest hotspots in the region

CONSERVATION: The Wetlands at Bobby Jones Park



By START: Solutions to Avoid Red Tide

Over the last few months, many of you who have driven by Bobby Jones Park (formerly Bobby Jones Golf Course) have noticed the rapid development of the new golf course as the turf grows in on the greens and fairways and the sand traps take shape. What you can't see from the road at this point is the creation of the park's new landmark 20-acre wetlands shown above that has been planted with over 44,000 native aquatic plants. The wetlands will be a major focal point at the park as its aquatic plants grow and filter stormwater runoff and provide new habitat for birds and wildlife.

[Full Wetland Report](#)

CONSERVATION: Eastern Bluebird Report for Period Ending August 2023

I lovingly refer to this past season as the Bluebird season that would not end. I say this because I just now closed up the last nest box on August 26th, due to a first-year pair nesting a late second clutch.

I would like to put out a great big thank you out to Reenie Ram and Lauren

Pipcorn for their help and their efforts to help me conserve a great species. Also, I have to thank Andy Schneider and Kim Sullivan for keeping a close eye on the nest boxes when we could not be there.



It has been a successful season; our numbers show that we have four more young than last year that have fledged. Each year we do seem to have a few more fledglings. Below you will see the statistics for 2023 season:

6 Nest Sites 7 Nest Attempts 27 Total Eggs

20 Young 20 Fledglings

Evelyn MacQueen
Sarasota Audubon Society
Bluebird Program

Bird Blog: Brown Pelican

Brown Pelican by Owen Deutsch
Photography, owendeutsch.com



Brown Pelican: Sarasota Audubon Mascot

By American Bird Conservancy

"A wonderful bird is the pelican; his bill can hold more than his belly can," begins the limerick by Dixon Lanier Merritt.

And it's true — a pelican's pouch can hold up to three times more than its stomach. This multi-purpose structure serves as a scoop, cooling mechanism in hot weather, and as a trough for young pelicans, which retrieve food from their

parents' pouches.

Although the Brown Pelican is the smallest of the world's eight pelican species, it's still a big bird at about four feet long (including the bill), with a six and a half-foot wingspan.

[Read Entire Article Here](#)

Addendum: Entanglement study out of Tampa Bay

Audubon Florida has initiated a research project to investigate how hooking and entanglement are impacting Brown Pelican populations in southwest Florida, including Tampa Bay. They are banding a portion of the pelicans that are rescued and healthy for release. The goal of this project is to understand how pelicans are interacting with recreational fisheries, what impact that is having on their population, and what steps we can take to reduce the negative impacts on Brown Pelicans.

[Pelican Entanglement Research](#)

CLIMATE CORNER
Birds are Changing Shape and Size
National Audubon



The outstretched wing of a Rufous-capped Antthrush, one of many Amazonian bird species that has apparently become lighter and grown longer wings since the 1980s. Photo: Vitek Jirinec

Lauren Leffer, Audubon Magazine

A host of scientific studies shows that birds are gradually shape-shifting — their bodies are miniaturizing at the same time as their wings grow longer.

Since the 1980s Amazonian birds' bodies have decreased in size and their wings have lengthened, according to a study published in **Science Advances**. After accounting for other factors, the researchers found that the birds' bodily changes were closely linked to the rising temperatures and shifts in precipitation caused by climate change.

While several analyses, which each included many dozens of species and thousands of individuals, suggest birds are shrinking due to climate change, there are other studies that show **seemingly opposite results**.

In certain places birds appear to be getting heavier or developing shorter wings. In **one study** of California birds, researchers found that body mass increased (albeit by small amounts) over 40 years — though the birds' wing lengths also increased during the same time period.

[Read Full
ARTICLE](#)

The Last Word Is Graphic: A Guide to Bird Photos (and what you end up with...)

A Guide to Bird Photography

The photo you want:

The photo you'll get:



• a well-framed shot



• an action shot



• a bird in sharp focus



• exquisite leaf detail



• a striking portrait



• why



• pure elegance



• maybe I can fix this in post

birdandmoon.com



SARASOTA
AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Activity Schedule



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