



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

**MARCH 2024**



Plein Air Artists of Sarasota in our Native Gardens

## **HOO HOO HOO – YOU YOU YOU!**

**Dear Sarasota Auduboners,**

**It's that time of year when we must think about the ELECTION OF OFFICERS** for our chapter. All members present at the April 8 General Meeting are allowed to vote. A link will be sent right after that meeting, and you will have 24 hours to submit your votes. Nominations can also be made at that time. Each term is one year,

beginning on June 1st. Yes, we would like **YOU** to be part of our dynamic management team. Here are the positions that are open:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

We are looking for people to fill these roles. We have extremely experienced board members who can shepherd you along in any of these roles, so you can rest assured that you will not be thrown into the deep end. Being part of the guidance team of this award-winning chapter is a wonderful experience, one that you will cherish for a lifetime. Learn how we got where we are, from a sleepy bird club to a powerhouse of environmental conservation in Sarasota.

Our fiscal year starts on June 1. We have monthly board meetings from October through May and, if needed, another during the summer. Some of these are Zoomed, others are at the Nature Center. Our Center closes for June, July, August, and September, so a nice break in the hot summer.

If you think you would like the experience of helping to run a thriving chapter, please send in **your name** and the **position you are interested** in to our Nominating Committee members: [Don and Karen Schneider](#).

You can also contact any of our board members to find out more about each position: <https://www.sarasotaudubon.org/about-us/board-of-directors/>

**Please join us!**

**Jeanne Dubi and the SAS Board of Directors**



# Time to Renew Local Membership



**New!**  
Student  
Membership  
Only \$10



— S A R A S O T A —  
**A U D U B O N S O C I E T Y**

Thank you to our local members who have made a  
commitment to the birds and our community!

## MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION March 11, 2024, 7:00 PM on Zoom

**General Meeting**  
**Monday,**  
**March 11**  
**7:00 pm on ZOOM**



David and Tammy McQuade

**Speed Birding Costa Rica:**  
**An Attempt to Set a**  
**Big Year Record**  
**David & Tammy McQuade**

Always engaging, David & Tammy will recount their frantic attempt to finish off their 2022 Big Year with only 6 days left in the year to accomplish it. Along the way they will be sharing the places they visited and talking about the amazing birds they saw.

Costa Rica is a birdwatcher's paradise, offering an incredible



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diversity of bird species in a compact geographic area. Don't miss this talk with our favorite traveling birders!

[Register](#)

## Notes from the Nature Center



Above: Birders are lining up to enter the Gazebo to view the Painted Buntings at the Nature Center

### **Notes from the Nature Center, March 2024**

by Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

The fun continues at the Nature Center as we head out of winter and into March. Record numbers of visitors from all over the world have made their way to Celery Fields for birding, hiking, picnicking, and learning.

**Extended Hours:** The Nature Center is now open extended hours through April to accommodate a large number of visitors. In addition to being open from 9 a.m. to noon every day, we also stay open until 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. That means you can sleep late on weekends, and still come visit us.



**Members Meet & Greet:** Our third and final Members Meet & Greet of the year is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 20, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.** Come to the Nature Center to enjoy snacks, conversation, and a presentation from an environmental expert on



Painted Buntings. **James ("Jamie") Rotenberg** is an Environmental Ecologist recently retired from the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. He uses birds as environmental indicators of habitat change and condition. Jamie's talk will focus on his work as a member of the "Eastern Painted Bunting Working Group," where **Jamie and his team banded about 5,000 Painted Buntings between 2006-2012** – all with the help of hundreds of Citizen Scientists. His presentation will summarize his findings and show how Citizen Science can confirm important trends in habitat use as well as arrival and departure dates for Painted Buntings.

**Beach-nesting Monitoring Workshop:** On March 26 at 1:30, Audubon Florida's Holley Short will be at the Nature Center to discuss the beach-nesting monitoring program. Members of the public are encouraged to volunteer on the beaches to help protect Black Skimmers, Least Terns, and more. Come and learn how to do your part in this vital endeavor.

# Beach-nesting Birds Workshop



Snowy Plover with chick



Black Skimmer with chick



Least Tern chicks

**Tuesday March 26<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30 PM**

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

Holley Short of Audubon Florida will lead a presentation about the nesting shorebirds and seabirds of Sarasota County. She will also discuss the Bird Stewardship volunteer program and how you can get involved to protect our threatened beach-nesting species, such as Snowy Plovers, Black Skimmers and Least Terns.



**Gift Shop Update:** Record numbers of visitors translate into record numbers of shoppers in the Gift Shop. Fortunately, we've got a wide variety of items for them to choose from, and our volunteers are kept busy



restocking the most popular items. In February we received a new shipment of jigsaw puzzles with themes that center on Florida and local wildlife – including shorebirds and manatees, of course. The colorful puzzles range from 550 to 1,000 pieces, and all are suitable for framing.

If you haven't visited the Nature Center yet this year, time is running out. Every summer we shut down from June through September because many of our volunteers go back up north and many visitors flee Florida's heat and humidity. Through the end of April we will be open from 9 a.m. until noon every day, plus until 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. In May, we're only open from 9 to noon, without extended weekend hours. Right now, the weather is its most beautiful, so plan a trip to Celery Fields today!

Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

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

## Wingspan, The Game



**Wingspan, The Game:** Wingspan, anyone? If you like birds, or if you like games, or if you like having fun with terrific people, then you should be joining us at the Nature Center to play Wingspan. It's a bird-themed board game that you're sure to enjoy. No experience is necessary. No birding knowledge is required. Come alone or bring a friend. It's free, and we supply

the games. What could be better? We only ask that players be SAS members and at least 18 years old. **March Game Dates**

- Wednesday, March 6
- Friday, March 22

All games start at 12:30 pm 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!



## The Garden Gate



### Purple Martin Nest Checks Begin

On Thursday, February 22nd at 11:00 a.m. the volunteer Purple Martin team began their twice weekly chick checks.

Data collection times are open to the public and will continue

on Thursdays and Sundays at 11:00 a.m., weather permitting, until April 1.

On April 1 the time will change to 10:00 a.m. The time change is confusing, but necessary. We start later in the cooler months to wait for the bugs to fly and parents to catch them to feed the babies. As seasonal temperatures rise, we start earlier to avoid the volunteers swooning in the heat.

## How to Design your Own Native Garden Saturday, March 9, 9:00 AM Register Below

**Presented by** our Garden Doctor, Eco-Artist Pamela Callender

**Sponsored by** Sarasota Audubon and Serenoa Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society





Pamela Callender, Eco-Artist and Landscape Designer



Audubon provides seating; however, registration is overflowing, so it is advisable to pre-register for each class. Email Pam below.

**RSVP to Attend**

**Class #3** begins with a summary of the previous information about Landscape Design Strategies and Plant Communities. Examples of Home Landscapes with Native Plants will be presented in the form of a slide show. This third class will then focus on a demonstration of the “how to” install and maintain the plants you choose to complete your design, and adding suggestions on educating your existing maintenance crew.

**Native Plant Landscape Design** course running 2nd Saturdays through April from 9 am to 11 am at the Audubon’s Nature Center building at 999 Center Road in Celery Fields on Palmer Blvd. **Classes are free** and open to the public. Please register by email to Pamela. Click registration button below.

**Landscape Design Class #3 Syllabus**

## Our Website is now ADA Accessible!



We have just upgraded our website to be ADA compliant. We are thrilled that we

were able to do this thanks to Barb Males and Betty Neupert, our webmaster gurus.

Look for the green image at the bottom of each page. Click on it to see what features we now have.

- Contrast
- Color Saturation
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- Bigger Text Options
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- Animation Pausing
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Simply click on the button at the bottom left of each page.



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Accessibility by UserWay.org

**Save the Date!**

**Earth Day at the Audubon Nature Center  
Saturday April 20, 2024**





Sarasota Audubon is hosting a day of programming to celebrate our beautiful, fragile planet. We are planning walks, presentations, activities for kids and adults, and so much more! We will have extended hours on April 20, so you can celebrate this special day at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center and Native Gardens. Make plans to join us on Earth Day this year!

Join Us in 2025 on a  
Birding Trip to Peru!

travel to

# PERU

Sarasota Audubon Society trip  
with Holbrook Travel to PERU  
May 8th - 20th, 2025



**Limited space available!  
Full itinerary coming soon!**

Destinations on this active 13 day birding excursion, led by local guides, include Lima, Tambopata, Yucay, Machu Picchu, and the Ballestas Islands.

#### Highlights

- Spot some of the 400-plus species found in Machu Picchu & surrounding areas.
- Explore the Amazonian lowlands by boat and on foot to look for colorful macaws, tanagers, and the enigmatic Hoatzin.
- Discover the mist-fed ecosystem of Lomas de Lachay, home to an oasis of dwarf forest in the Peruvian desert.
- Visit Pantanos de Villa, a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance that provides critical habitat for waterfowl and migratory shorebirds.
- Travel by boat to witness the seabirds of Ballestas Islands, including the Humboldt Penguin, Peruvian Booby, Inca Tern, and the near-threatened Peruvian Diving-Petrel.

Interested? Email Trip Leader, Kylie Wilson, to add your name to the update list!  
[khwilson1994@gmail.com](mailto:khwilson1994@gmail.com)

[Email Kylie](#)

## February Featured Artist Photographer Janice Noto

Janice Noto has always loved photography, but decided to start taking it seriously as she was getting closer to planning her first overseas trip to Italy in 2015, which is just about



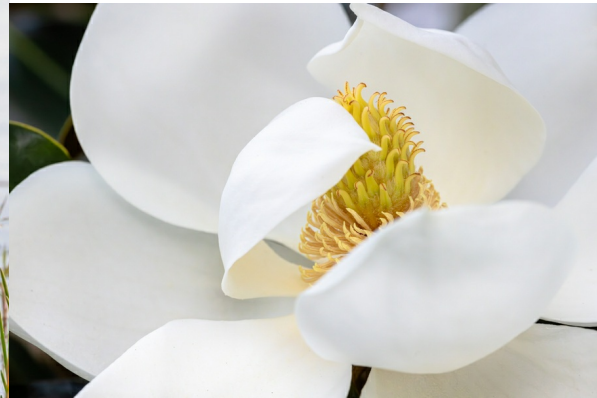


the time she started her first website - [1worldphotography.com](http://1worldphotography.com).

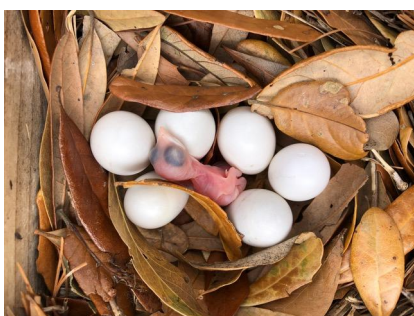
After that trip, Janice continued to learn as much as she could about this art form, including editing. She spent hours educating herself via online courses and putting in time in the field. Janice has done travel, floral, landscape, wildlife and portrait/family photography. Many of her portraits of local models were published in online magazines. Janice finds that each click

of the camera brings a moment that is special, unique, and irreplaceable.

Janice's recent move to Florida has brought her in a different direction. She decided to start capturing the beauty of the state along with its wonderful birds and wildlife. Birds, especially, have been her focus. She loves taking bird photos and learning about them. Janice also loves capturing sunsets and beaches, as well as local flowers. She has taken photos at the Celery Fields, Myakka River State Park, and other local areas. Janice is very passionate about photography and loves creating Photo Art she hopes others will enjoy for years to come.



**Purple Martin Volunteers Needed!**



## Join our Team!

This fun group manages the Purple Martins from January to mid July. You can join for a few weeks or for the duration.

Terry says: "We need strong bodies! The Martin Houses have been erected, and we are monitoring twice a week. Every hand helps!"

Joining the group, you will learn about the management of the Purple Martin, America's beloved bird and the Nature Center's avian ambassadors.

**Contact me! "Keep 'em Flying!"**

Terry Suchma

**Volunteer with Purple Martin  
Team!**

**Auction Items to  
Benefit Sarasota Audubon**





Two Sherry Russell lithographs were gifted to Sarasota Audubon Society this past year. They will be auctioned at the **Sarasota Estate Auction upcoming online sale on March 23-24, 2024.**

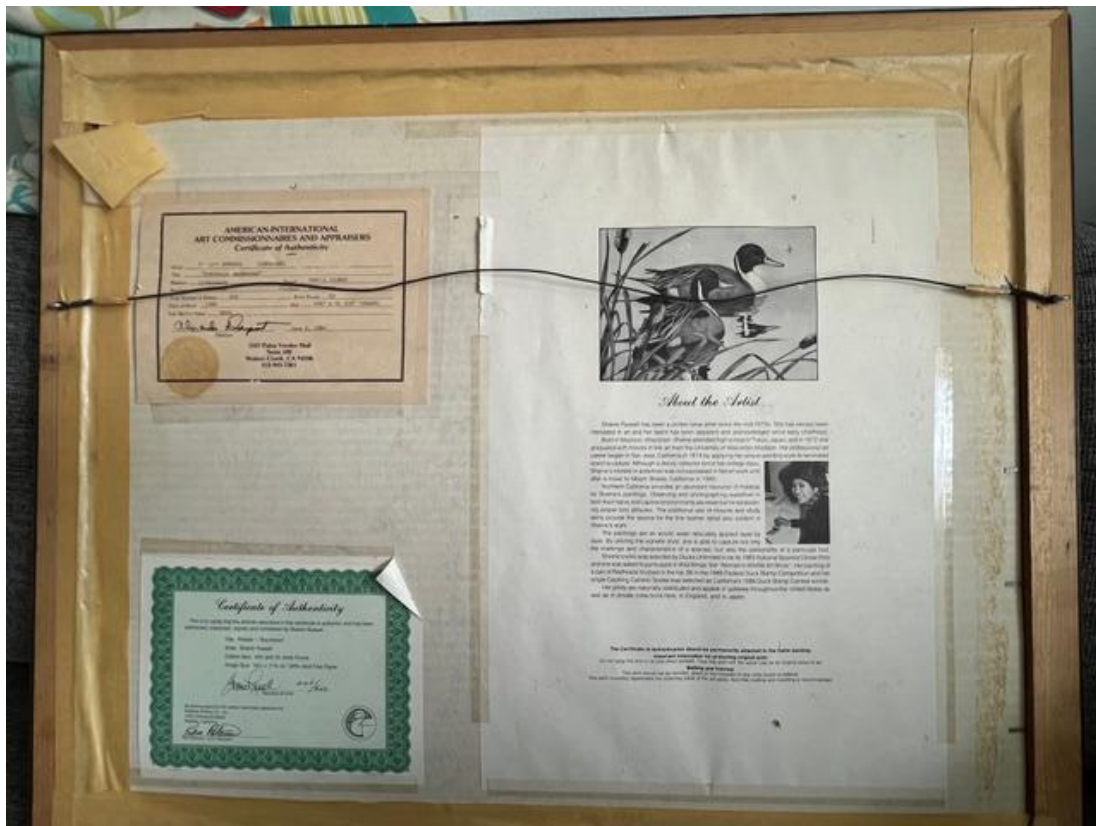
If you are interested in purchasing them, you must register for this auction

<https://sarasotaestateauction.com>

If you wish to view the lithographs, Sarasota Estate Auction is located in downtown Sarasota at 522 S Pineapple Ave.

Call first to be sure they are open, (941) 359-8700.

Proceeds from this sale will benefit the Sarasota Audubon Society.



## BIRD BLOG: White Morph Great Blue Heron by Lou Newman



*Text and Images Lou Newman, Sarasota, Florida, February 2024*

**I have had the unique opportunity to observe and photograph a White Morph Great Blue Heron from both ground level and high above. Unfortunately, this bird is on private property not open to the public.**

**I like to say, “*The most predictable thing about birds is their unpredictability.*” That is true in spades when it comes to this White Morph Great Blue Heron. Behavior-wise I would swear it is a female and the Dark Morph mate is the male. However, the White Morph has been seen copulating twice in the top position, once last year and once this year. Last year this pair fledged two Dark Morph (regular or “normal” looking) Great Blue Heron chicks.**

**Since GBHEs do not mate for life, I cannot be sure but would suspect this is the same pair that nested in this location last year. If so, it seems unlikely that the product of this mixed pairing of Dark Morph and White Morph will result in intermediate morph Wurdemann’s Heron chicks. Time will tell.**

**(Editor's note from All About Birds: The “Wurdemann’s” Heron of the Florida Keys is the product of mixed pairings between Great Blue and Great White herons. It is intermediate in size and plumage, showing a Great Blue–like body but usually with a variably whitish head and**



neck).

I believe current thinking is that this is a color morph and not a subspecies of Great Blue Heron. White Morphs are not uncommon in the Florida Keys, rare elsewhere.

Click button below for many more photos with descriptions.

[Full Blog with Photos](#)

## The Last Word Is Graphic: Romance

Bird and Moon, by Rosemary Mosco

They lived at opposite ends of the pond. From afar, she admired his long plumes and excellent fishing technique.



One day he came flying toward her. Watching him approach, she wondered: What did he want? And was he... carrying something in his beak?



Her heart skipped a beat as he landed beside her. Fluffing his neck feathers, he said those three special words:



"Here's a stick."



birdandmoon.com



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