



THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY 2024



Roseate Spoonbills in Roberts Bay

Hello Everyone:

Here we are again – another year coming to a close, and what a year it has been. We had record-breaking numbers all round: Visitors to the Nature Center and gardens, visitors to both boardwalks, kids' programs, group visits galore. All our marvelous docents and board members can take a well-earned rest after we close for the season on May 31; we look forward to seeing you in October.

And, on October 15, 2024, we will be going into our 10th year at the Nature Center. During that time, birding has taken off big time. As a result of COVID, when folks got outside in droves, and the advent of eBird.org, the worldwide database of bird sightings, many people took up bird and nature watching as a pastime. How wonderful to see so many enjoying and appreciating what nature has to offer. And not just birding: backyard enhancement with native plantings, installation of owl, woodpecker, bluebird, and purple martin houses. All of these activities brought people closer to nature and its wonders. That appreciation leads to conservation -- the sometimes difficult but necessary next step. Thank you to all for your support through donations, your time and efforts, and your

dedication to Sarasota Audubon and all it stands for.

Sarasota Audubon Board of Directors

Sarasota Audubon Election Results

Here is the approved slate of officers for the 2024-2025 Season:

- 1st Vice President - Kathryn Young
- 2nd Vice President - Lynn Jakubowicz
- Secretary - Mary Heinlen
- Treasurer - Andy Schneider

Unfortunately, no one has expressed interest in being President. We encourage anyone willing to consider this post to contact us as soon as possible. Jeanne's term ends May 31.

[Email Your Interest](#)

MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION

May 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

General Meeting
Monday,
May 13
7:00 p.m. on ZOOM

Protecting and Sharing
Myakka's Magic
with Miri Hardy



Miri Hardy, Executive Director

Learn about the fragile ecosystems of Myakka River State Park through evocative photographs and fascinating stories from the leader of the Friends of Myakka River group -- Miri Hardy.

Myakka River State Park is the oldest in the State Park system, established in the 1930s. It is also Florida's first state-designated "Wild and Scenic River."

[Register](#)

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!

Notes from the Nature Center



Above: "Lighthouse Vision Loss" Visitors at the Nature Center

Notes from the Nature Center, May 2024

by Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

Visitors from Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center of Sarasota came out to the Celery Fields on April 23 to practice “birding by ear.” President Jeanne Dubi and Vice President Lynn Jakubowicz showed the visitors around our grounds and introduced them to the Merlin Bird ID app. Merlin is a free app from Cornell Lab of Ornithology which identifies birds in the field by song. The participants from Lighthouse were impressed by the variety of species that can be found at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center.

Summer Break begins June 1: Every summer from June 1 through September 30, the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center goes on hiatus. Closing down during the hot summer months gives us a chance to clean, organize, and re-stock in preparation for next season. And even though the Nature Center building is closed, the trails and gazebos at the Celery Fields will remain open from dawn to dusk for your birding pleasure.

Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

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

Earth Day Every Day!



Native Pollinator Plant Sale



Purple Martin Hatchlings!

More than 250 people attended the Sarasota Audubon Earth Day event at the Nature Center. Native pollinator plants provided by Sweet Bay Nursery were sold by our board members; all plants were gone at the end of the day. The Purple Martin chicks were a huge hit! The Florida Young Birder's Club gained some attention, and young families created art.



Florida Young Birder's Club



Young Families Create Art

Young Birders in the News



Above: Young Birders in Sarasota

Below: Maryland young birder Evan Powers starts a campus chapter at the University of Maryland

Young birders both here and abroad are emerging as leaders in conservation. In Sarasota, led by Sophia Haakman, the fledgling Sarasota Audubon chapter of the Florida Young Birder's Club (FYBC) has accomplished so much:

- Expanding membership within the Florida Young Birder's Club (FYBC)
- Guiding youth birding tours at the Nature Center/Celery Fields and Oscar Scherer Preserve
- Leading bird surveys and helping remove exotics, at Neville Preserve



In College Park, Maryland, another young Sarasota Audubon member, Evan Powers, succeeded in establishing an official Audubon Chapter on the University of Maryland campus.

Evan and his colleague, Julia Wells, led a collaboration with other local organizations to rejuvenate a bird-attracting native wildflower garden on campus. The garden was prepared, planted, and mulched by more than 70 volunteers, with 300 plants installed that day. The garden work attracted lots of attention from [Local news media](#), as well as student and faculty leaders.

Evan Powers is the grandson of proud Sarasota Audubon members Don and Karen Schneider and grand-nephew of Treasurer Andy Schneider.



ART at the Nature Center



Budding Artists at the Nature Center

Kids Art in Nature

Our first ever Kids Art in Nature event held jointly with the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast was held on Friday afternoon, April 26th, at the SAS Nature Center at the Celery Fields, and it went very well. Birds were drawn and colored, butterflies were cut out of colored paper and decorated, rocks were painted, and leaf prints were made in vivid colors.



The success of the event was due to lots of planning by Sue Herring and Tianna Boswell-Porter, a few last-minute tweaks and, especially, our wonderful volunteers Jeanne Dubi, Jan Schmidt, Sara King, Kathleen Clark, Mary Alice Curtiss and Bill Herring -- many thanks to them all.

[Full Story Here](#)

Special Shared Art Exhibit in May

Jenny Cherry, April Barnwell, and Diane Wallace are the stars of our May shared art exhibit. They work in painting, multi-media, collage and some photography.



April Barnwell is a Sarasota freelance artist, writer, and author. She is working towards becoming an apprentice in realistic art and

hopes to eventually depict the world in its current state as a testimony for future generations to see the 21st century through the eyes of art.



Jenny Cherry is a native Floridian who was always drawing and painting from an early age. She attended Ringling

School of the Arts, where she refined her craft, especially in watercolor. Jenny has come to recognize and appreciate the various birds in the area, especially observing birds and nests on the beaches in summer.





Diane Wallace has retired from the “business” of art. Her current work is now free from any restraints so she can pursue her

new passion, “Restless Artist Syndrome”. This is defined by trying, learning and exploring anything crossing her path that sparks a fascination. Diane’s toolbox now includes watercolor, acrylics, mixed media, and collage. Her subjects will always be in keeping with her mission statement for her life: Beauty, fun, and a love of nature.



Wingspan, The Game



It’s time to play Wingspan: Whether you like birds or games or just having fun with terrific people, you should be coming to the Nature Center to play Wingspan. No experience is necessary. No birding knowledge is required. It’s free, and we supply the games. We only ask that players be SAS members and at least 18 years old.

May Game Dates

- Wednesday, May 1

- Wednesday, May 15
- Beginning in June -- weekly on Wednesdays!

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!



The Garden Gate

Purple Martin Volunteers Needed!



WE NEED YOU: A portion of our volunteer team is migrating north!

**Purple Martin Nest
Checks Ongoing**



Thursdays and Sundays

10:00 a.m.

This dynamic team is great to work with. You will learn about the life cycle and maintenance of this essential nesting habitat on the birds' migration route north for the summer.

Part of our team is leaving in May -- please consider training with the remaining caring partners.

[Contact me! "Keep 'em Flying!"](#)

Terry Suchma

Data collection times are open to the public Thursdays and Sundays, weather permitting. Each session includes information for viewers on the Purple Martin life cycle and current trends.

How to Design Your Own Native Garden Will Return Next January!



Over the course of four months, scores of participants benefitted from the

teachings of **Pamela Callender**. Her course is based on the premise that EVERYONE is an artist and "no straight lines are needed".

Eco-art and basic landscape design principles were introduced in week one, followed by plants to use for specific environments, invasive plants, and how to install and maintain your chosen native plants. The series finished with a "myth-buster" session showing how old-school landscape design with exotic plants does not work in providing a sustainable, ecologically lush and lively natural space in your yard.

Keep an eye out next year for the return of this educational landscape design course sponsored by Sarasota Audubon and based on Eco-art.

If you are looking for a brief review, you may be interested in Pamela Callender's condensed class in Home Landscape Design with Native Plants at the Conservation Foundation in Osprey on May 18. Please visit the [Conservation Foundation website](#) for more details and registration.

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

[Email Kylie](#)

**Conservation: Bird Stewards Needed --
Lido and Longboat**



Left: Black Skimmers Right: Least Tern

Our new Sarasota Shorebird Steward Coordinator Emily Briner reports that there are plenty of bird steward shifts available now that there are two sites to monitor: North Longboat Key and Lido Beach.

Longboat:

There have been no changes from last week. We are still keeping an eye on the Skimmers to the North end of the island.

Lido:

Lots of exciting changes here! Our Skimmers have arrived on Lido! They have chosen to make the Public Beach in front of the under-construction Holiday Inn their nesting spot. A large area was posted last Thursday morning behind the northern-most lifeguard stand. Although we do not have any nests yet, we have seen lots of pairing up and scraping, and we could start seeing eggs any day! There are some fake crow effigies in the area with informational signs to discourage any predation from crows. More signage will be posted in the coming days, and our stewards will be out there, ready and eager to educate!

The Least Terns also have yet to nest but are loving the South Lido space. Several have been seen scoping it out, and we are expecting eggs any day here as well! Have you seen the sign entering South Lido Beach Park? It's impossible to miss: "Do Not Disturb Nesting Birds No Dogs". Thank you, Sarasota County and Sarasota PD, for your consistent help and concern for these imperiled beach-nesting birds!

If you are interested, contact Emily via email at the button below.

TRAVELOGUE: Birds of Buenos Aires by Glynnis Thomas



Above: The Estuary at Punta Rasa near Buenos Aires, Argentina

We -- Marcy and Glynnis -- just returned from three weeks in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a break from our usual custom, this was not really a birding trip. However, we did book two overnight birding trips with a company called Birding Buenos Aires, which, incidentally, we highly recommend. A few highlights:

- **Ceibas:** The habitat is scrubland (Espinal forest), Parana Delta marshes and patches of Pampas grassland. The birding was terrific. In two days, we saw over a 100 species, with 40 or more of them "lifers".
- **Punta Rasa:** At the southern end of the La Plata estuary is a coastal area with intertidal plains. Inland is mainly Pampas grassland, Espinal forest, and marshland with a lot of cattle. The nearest town, where we stayed the night, was General Lavalle. The streets of the town are dirt with no drainage, and as it was pouring rain the first day, we got very muddy! At the Estuary there were a lot of waders, including two-banded Plover, Turnstone, Oystercatcher, Black Skimmer and Chilean Flamingo. But we also managed to see the elusive Olrog's Gull, as well as Grey-hooded Gull, Kelp Gull and Snowy-crowned Tern.
- **Reserva Ecologia Costanera Sur** is an enormous reserve within the city of Buenos Aires itself, on the edge of the Rio de la Plata. This area consists of marshes, lagoons, riverside forest, trails and boardwalks. It

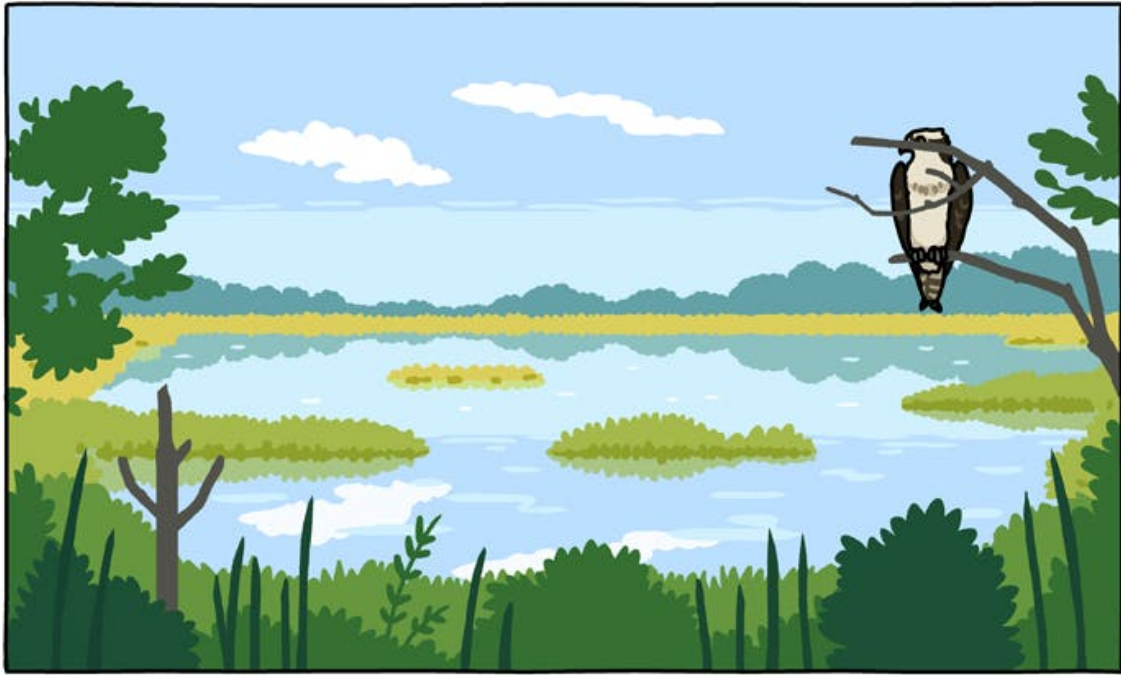
is an amazing place where "los Portenos" (people who live in Buenos Aires) go for recreation and birding. There is a birding walk there every Saturday morning, and we were lucky enough to go with a local birder. The Chimango Caracara does seem to own the place, as well as Harris's Hawks, Chalk-browed Mockingbird, Rufous-bellied and Creamy-bellied Thrush, Gilded Hummingbird and both Monk and Nanday parakeets which are common all over the city. We were also lucky enough to see a Green Kingfisher.

[Full Article - With Photos!](#)

The Last Word Is Graphic: Camera

Bird and Moon, by Rosemary Mosco

when you remember to bring your camera



when you forget to bring your camera



birdandmoon.com



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