



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

## February 2025



Above: Groundbreaking at the SE Quad at the Celery Fields with Sarasota Audubon, Big Waters Land Trust and Sarasota County

Dear Members,

January has been a month to remember. We, in partnership with Big Waters Land Trust (formerly the Conservation Foundation), are finally breaking ground on the Quad Parcels. On a very cold and rainy day, we ushered in the next era with rewilded woodlands. This new habitat will attract many new species of birds and give us all new opportunities to interact with this amazing place. Sarasota County Commissioners Joe Neunder and Teresa Mast were present, with Commissioner Neunder speaking at the event. This project will cost more than \$5 million to complete, with only \$1.5 million raised so far. Every donation to this mission is critically important. If you are interested in

supporting the Quad Parcels transformation, please visit  
<https://www.sarasotaudubon.org/quad/>

February is also shaping up to be another historic month in our chapter's history. On Feb. 12th we will go before the County Commission to present our case opposing the rezone of the Smith Farm (RZ23-30). There is a one-click link that will generate an email for you and allow you to personalize it and send to the County Commissioners. If you could all take a moment to please do that, your emails will make a huge impact. If anyone is willing to stand up in front of the commission and speak about why Celery Fields is important to you and why this development will affect your enjoyment of Celery Fields, please click link below for guidance.

Please plan to attend on Feb. 12th. The meeting is currently scheduled at the downtown commission chambers:

**Sarasota County Administration Center,  
County Commission Chamber,  
1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, Florida,  
at 9 a.m.**

Your voices make a difference, and we saw that at the Planning Commission public hearing in November. Let's do it again and make it count this time!

Thank you all so much for your continued support!

**Sara Reisinger**  
Sarasota Audubon President  
On Behalf of the Board of Directors



# Action Alert!

*Celery Fields Needs your help!*

**Feb. 12 Sarasota County Commission  
Meeting in Sarasota at 9:00 AM  
1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, Florida 34236**

**One-Click email to County  
Commissioners**

**Email Template with Detailed Info**

**Working Toward a New  
Membership Platform**



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

**Membership**

# Please Wait to Renew for 2025

The Sarasota Audubon Society Board continues to work behind the scenes to upload and update our membership lists. We are almost online with a new membership platform.

When the system is fully uploaded, hopefully in the next few days, we will send an email for you to renew and update the information you would like us to have in order to serve you better. This is just the first step in helping us to provide our members with enhanced benefits, more members- only events and other opportunities.

Thank you for your patience! Look for an email to join our member platform in your inbox as early as next week.

## MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION Monday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m. on Zoom



Dr. Jamie Rotenberg, Ecologist



Above: Harpy Eagle *Harpia harpyja* through a spotting

### The Discovery of “Extinct” Harpy Eagles in Belize with Jamie Rotenberg Monday, Feb. 10

Dr. Jamie Rotenberg, Ecology Professor at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, is a member of the original scientific team that re-discovered Harpy Eagles in Belize. Since then, he has led several avian-related research projects focusing on the eagles, the bird community and, most recently, forest restoration using cacao agroforestry (think chocolate!).

Now retired to Sarasota, Rotenberg describes his story as "The Adventure of a Lifetime," detailing the discovery of the northernmost documentation of Harpy Eagles.

## Notes from the Nature Center



Above: Volunteers at the Patio Sale at the Nature Center in January

It's been a chilly winter at the Sarasota Audubon Society's Nature Center, but hundreds of friendly faces passing through our doors have helped keep us warm. This year, we have plenty of fun, exciting events planned, and we hope you'll join us. First, check out the [activity calendar on our website](#), and make sure you sign up for events that require pre-registration. There's something for everyone on tap at Sarasota Audubon in 2025.

**Three cheers for the Quad Groundbreaking:** It was a cold, rainy morning on Jan. 23 when board members of the Sarasota Audubon Society gathered on the Nature Center patio with representatives of Big Waters Land Trust (formerly Conservation Foundation) and Sarasota County government for a groundbreaking ceremony. The celebration marked a milestone in what's known as the "Quad Project," where acres of land will be returned to their wild state (re-wilded). This is a large-scale project that demands cooperation among various groups and generosity from many donors.

**Patio Sale update Jan. 18 & 19:** Thanks to those who shopped, and double thanks to everyone who donated items that we sold to help support our wildlife protection mission, not to mention the terrific volunteers who served as cashiers that day. Everyone's generosity was greatly appreciated, and we were thrilled that most of the items were sold before the rain started late Sunday afternoon.

**Gift Shop Update:** We received a big new shipment of the popular Modgy products, including luminary lanterns, collapsible vases, packable dog bowls, aprons and tea towels. So if you're looking for the perfect Valentine's Day gift, we've got you covered. Coming soon: New jigsaw puzzles!

**Sarasota Audubon Day Feb. 22:** Mark your calendars for this exciting event to enjoy a day at the Nature Center. There will be nature-themed events, classes and walks geared to adults and children. It's essentially an opportunity for Sarasota Audubon to celebrate Sarasota Audubon and the terrific people who make what we do so meaningful. Please join us Feb. 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Wingspan Evening Sessions:** For you night owls or holders of day jobs, Stacy Perry will be hosting Wingspan games on Thursday evenings in February at 6 pm. Experienced players only at these sessions, please. We welcome first-timers to the afternoon games. If you've played four or five times and still need some practice, that's okay. For the evening sessions, please email [stacy.perry@hotmail.com](mailto:stacy.perry@hotmail.com) to let her know you'll be there.

See you outdoors!

**Kim Sullivan, Building Manager**

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

**Sarasota Audubon Day Feb. 22  
at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center**

# Sarasota Audubon Day 2025

**Saturday**

**Feb. 22**

**9:30am**

**2:00pm**



- **Guided Walks**
- **Kids Activities**
- **Garden Tours**
- **Adult Fun!**



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

Sarasota Audubon Nature Center at the Celery Fields  
999 Center Road, Sarasota, FL 34240

Art Update: The Wildlife Art of  
Judy Goldman



Above: "Ravens" by Jody Goldman, on exhibit at the Nature Center

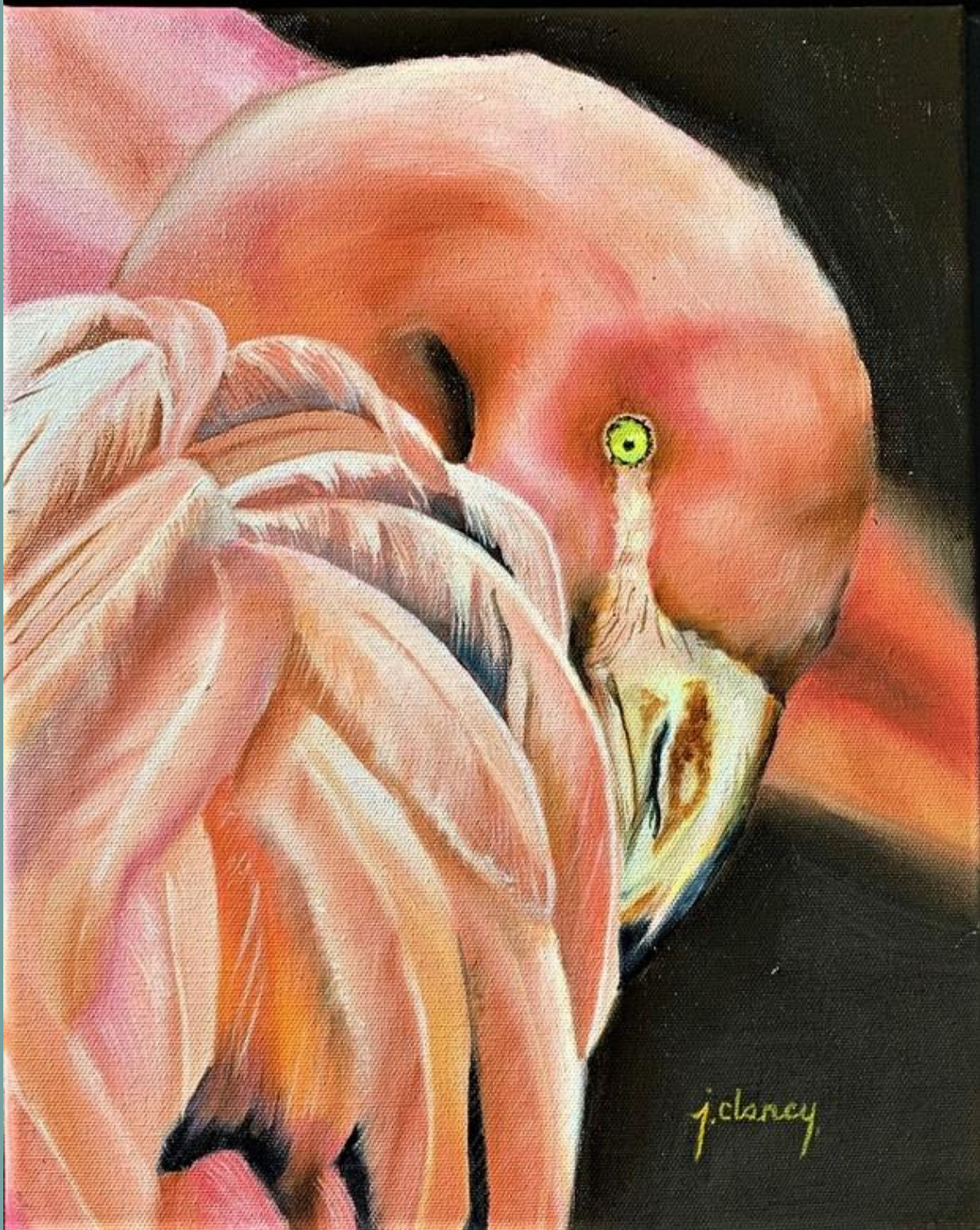


We are excited to present the beautiful wildlife art of Jody Goldman on exhibition during the month of February.

Jody developed a love for wildlife at an early age, often bringing home injured and orphaned animals in her pocket. A career in the airlines gave Jody the opportunity to travel the world, enjoying new cultures and their diversity, including the local wildlife.

Jody's artwork can be found in private shops and personal collections throughout the U.S. and Europe. She has won many awards for her artwork and has contributed to the Center for Great Apes. Please stop in the SAS Nature Center to view her amazing artwork.





Above: "Flamingo" by Jody Goldman



## The Garden Gate: Native Landscape Talks Patio Sale



Above: Pam Callender teaching her popular Native Landscaping Class, 2024

**Pamela Callender returns with her Landscape Design with Natives class!**

**2nd Saturday, Feb. 8: 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

**Each month builds on the previous class. February class will focus on**

- **Plants to Rebuild**
- **Plants to Survive Hurricanes**

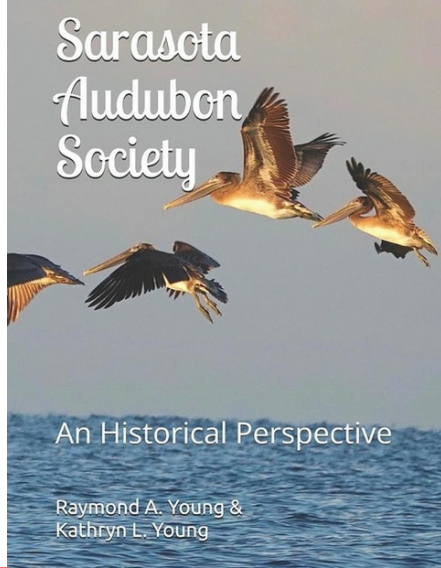
**Donations accepted.**

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## **Sarasota Audubon Society: An Historical Perspective**

The book is now available in our Gift Shop or on [Amazon!](#)

Purchase at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center Gift Shop so that more of the proceeds benefit our Society!



## Volunteer Spotlight: All Call!



## Volunteers Needed!

As always, we're looking for volunteers to help us in our important work on behalf of the birds. We have opportunities for:

- Docents in the [Nature Center](#)
- Gardeners in our [Native Plant Gardens](#)
- Bird Naturalists on our [Boardwalks](#)
- Bluebird Team for the [Bluebird Data](#)
- Purple Martin Team for [Nest Monitoring](#)

### [More information on Purple Martin Team](#)

Click the blue link to email team lead for more information.

Volunteers receive a volunteer t-shirt along with the satisfaction of being an integral part of our Celery Fields team.

--> If you're a brand new volunteer, please start by filling out the application on the [Volunteer Portal](#) page of our website. If you have questions, email our Volunteer Coordinator at the button below.

[Volunteer Portal](#)

[Contact the Volunteer Coordinator](#)

## Celery Fields Cleanup – Feb. 10, 9 a.m.



The next cleanup opportunity is Monday, Feb. 10, 2025, at 9 a.m. at the Nature Center

You can find the county release form at the link below. Please fill it out and submit before coming to the cleanup.

**Information for the form:**

Affiliation: Sarasota Audubon Society

Location: Palmer Road between Bell Road and Tatum School

Please let us know if you are planning to volunteer. Thanks!

[RSVP to Shelley](#)

[County Release Form](#)

## Boat Tours in March, April

# Carefree Learner Boat Tour

Join us as we explore the wonders of the Venice Bird Rookery and create lasting memories.

**MARCH 25**

**APRIL 7**

Glide into the shallows to see herons, pelicans, roseate spoonbills, ibis, egrets and more.

Register now - limited seats remain!

"It is a raucous site in the spring when mating is peaking."

Meet at the Marina Jack Yacht Basin at 10:45 a.m.  
Tours begin promptly at 11:15 a.m. and finish at 1:15 p.m.

Be on time, the boat does not wait.

Register now -- these tours always fill up!

**March 25 Tickets**

**April 7 Tickets**

**Calling All Potential Wingspan Players!**  
Thursday Evenings Added for Experienced Players



Come join us for the popular board game that has everyone rolling dice and hoping for a rat. Or grain. Or maybe fruit. If you've never played, you might not understand what that means, but show up for one game and we'll teach you the ropes.

Wingspan is free to play, and we have plenty of copies of the game for everyone to participate. All Sarasota Audubon members age 18+ are welcome. If you're not a member yet, you can join at the Nature Center when we're open, or [join online at this link](#).

If you'd like to participate, please [email Lynn](#) before the next game to let us know you're going to be there.

### **Daytime Schedule for February (newbies welcome):**

- Wednesday, Feb. 5
- Wednesday, Feb. 19

All games start at 12:30 in the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center at the Celery Fields: 999 Center Road, Sarasota

**Wingspan Evening Sessions:** For you night owls or holders of day jobs, Stacy Perry will be hosting Wingspan games on Thursday evenings in February at 6 pm. Experienced players only at these sessions, please.

### **Evening Schedule for February (experienced only):**

- Thursday, Feb. 6
- Thursday, Feb. 13
- Thursday, Feb. 20
- Thursday, Feb. 27

All games start at 6:00 in the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center.

If you'd like to participate, please [email Stacy](#) before the next game to let us know you're going to be there.

## Sad News: Peter Rice Passing

**April 5, 1947 – Jan. 17, 2025**

Peter Rice, long-time SAS member and manager of SRQ Bird Alerts (SRQBA), died on Jan 17th. Peter facilitated SRQBA, which connects alerts to the national eBird database, for over 20 years, providing his 800+ subscribers with up-to-date sightings and locations of unusual and rare birds across several counties: Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, DeSoto, and Hardee.

We are grateful to Peter for giving all area birders the information to "go find that bird." Many of us would have missed the bird if it weren't for his notices.

Sincere condolences go to Frances, Peter's wife and partner of 54 years.



### Funeral Program



## The Last Word Is Graphic: by Rosemary Mosco

# snow roosting

*verb*

Tunneling into snow to keep warm and avoid predators; done by grouse and ptarmigan species.



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SARASOTA  
AUDUBON SOCIETY

999 Center Road  
Sarasota, FL 34240  
941-312-6533

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