



# THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

## April 2025



Above: Families enjoying Sarasota Audubon Day on Feb. 22. You can do the same on Earth Day with Audubon April 26.

Dear Members,

March was the busiest and loveliest month weather-wise this year. We have all enjoyed seeing the new babies enter the world, especially those adorably fluffy sandhill crane colts toddling around behind their parents or occasionally riding on their backs.

April should prove to be equally enjoyable! We have the Earth Day Festival and Native Plant Sale on April 26 with lots of fun booths, experiences and food. If you would like to volunteer or participate, please reach out.

As a reminder, all of the wonderful activities and education that

Audubon provides are largely funded by membership fees. If you have not paid your annual membership fee of just \$35, please do. You can sign up online, in person or mail in a check. We have even added some great benefits for becoming a member this year.

Thank you!

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

## MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION

Monday, April 14, 7 p.m. on Zoom  
David & Tammy McQuade in Panama



David & Tammy McQuade  
Champion Birders

### Birding in Panama with David & Tammy McQuade Monday, April 14

David & Tammy McQuade, the renowned Florida-based national champion birders, take us on their latest birding adventure -- Panama and its Rich Bird Diversity: A journey through Canopy Tower, Canopy Lodge and Canopy Camp.

The McQuades have once again finished #1 in both the American Ornithological Union (AOU) region and North America as top birders on eBird! Their 2024 totals were outstanding, with 1,136 species recorded in the AOU region and 1,082 in North America.



Rufous-crested Coquette (*Tammy McQuade*)

**Register April 14 Zoom**



Ocellated Antbird (*Tammy McQuade*)



Keel-billed Toucan (*Tammy McQuade*)



SARASOTA  
AUDUBON  
SOCIETY



# Birding Panama 2026

With  
Aaron Virgin  
and  
Holbrook Travel



**Barú Volcano**  
Photo by Fran Whitlock

**26**  
**APRIL**

**9:30 A.M. -**  
**2:00 P.M.**

# **EARTH** **DAY**



**WITH**

— SARASOTA —  
**AUDUBON SOCIETY**



**April 26, 2025**

**Native Plant Sale!**

**Sarasota Audubon Nature Center**

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

**Food Trucks!**

## **Notes from the Nature Center**



Above: Nature Journaling with Jenny Cherry at the Nature Center in March

**The pins are in:** A number of our visitors requested Sarasota Audubon pins that could be affixed to hats, bags, jackets, etc. Collecting pins from favorite birding locations is a popular hobby among birders, but our challenge was finding the right design to use for the pin. One of our volunteers solved that problem when she pointed out the colorful, vintage design that had been created for SAS by the late Gladys Ely.

**Sarasota Audubon Society History Book:** The image used for our SAS pin was found in a book of Sarasota history published last year by Raymond and Kathryn Young. *Sarasota Audubon Society: An Historical Perspective* examines the history of Sarasota Audubon and the Celery Fields.

**Shore Nesting Birds Workshop April 5, 9 a.m.:** It's important for people to understand how to protect these vulnerable species that return to Sarasota beaches every summer to mate, lay eggs and raise chicks. From black skimmers to piping plovers to a variety of gulls, they need help from humans, so part of this event includes encouraging workshop participants to sign up for shifts on the beach to spread awareness about the birds. A \$5 donation is requested for this workshop.

**Native Plants Workshop Date Change – April 19:** Landscape designer and ecoartist Pam Callender is back for the final time this year with more native plant wisdom that you can apply to your own gardens. Join us at the Nature Center at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 19, for this informative workshop. Please note the date change from the printed activity schedule.

**Celebrate Earth on Saturday, April 26:** Everyone is invited to join us for the Earth Day Festival and Native Plant Sale at the Nature Center for special walks, talks, and activities geared to adults and children. Food trucks will be onsite. The fun starts at 9 a.m. and continues until 2 o'clock. Don't miss it!

**New in the Gift Shop:** We just reordered another supply of our wildly popular Mount Celery t-shirts. We've also just received a shipment of plush toys – including parakeets, alligators and, of course, painted buntings. And have you seen all the new varieties of Jabebo nature-themed earrings made from recycled materials? This is another item that we can't keep on the shelves. We also introduced a new line of jewelry called Divine Iguana from Detroit, Michigan. These vintage-look earrings, necklaces and bookmarks are a funky combination of

delicate meets gothic. Come check them out!

See you outdoors!

Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

There's more: Read Full Text of Kim's  
NOTES

## Volunteer Appreciation Day at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center



Volunteers being appreciated, names left to right in list below.



Above: Stacy Perry, Gardens  
& Evening Wingspan Leader  
(left), with President Sara  
Reisinger

The Nature Center hosted dozens of volunteers in March for our annual volunteer appreciation party. Bird Trivia prizes, a taco bar and mini bundt cakes were among the highlights.

Special recognition was given to:

- Scheduling Overachievers -- Cathy Paris and Stu Wilson
- Swiss Army Knife of Volunteers -- Harma Nyhof
- Most Likely to Save the Day -- Kim Himmelfarb



- The Rock -- John Michel
- Tiny Titan -- Wyatt Preissner (standing in front)
- Post-Hurricane Tree Whisperer -- Christian Dillon (not pictured)

## Art Update: Jean Blackburn and Steven Schaefer Exhibit Extended through April; Report on the Watercolor Class March 23



Above: Nature journaling watercolor class at the Nature Center

Serendipity played a part in the recent watercolor and nature journaling class at the Sarasota Audubon Nature Center. The class coincided with the Sunday morning Purple Martin Nest Check, and a nest with eggs became the subject of the class work.

We are already looking forward to the next class in 2026 with Jenny Cherry!



## The Garden Gate:



## Connect with Our New HaikuBox



© J.B. Churchill

Cedar Waxwing (JB Churchill)

We have a new Haikubox in our garden! This is a device that records bird songs in the garden and sends the data to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

Overheard by the SAS Board:

**I have recently heard Cedar Waxwings calling at the Celery Fields, and downtown, but they are very hard to detect as their calls are HIGH pitched even more than the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. ~Kathryn Young**

This morning I saw it





Black-bellied Whistling Duck

recorded a Black-bellied whistling duck, which is good confirmation that it can capture birds that are flying by overhead. ~Christian Dillon

Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Clapper Rail are likely erroneous. Like Merlin, HaikuBox is not going to be accurate 100% of the time. ~Stu Wilson

Agreed Stu! It's still fun. ~ Sara Reisinger  
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The best part about the Haikubox? You can connect to it and see what is present at any time in the Sarasota Audubon Gardens! Click below and enjoy!



Nanday Parakeets (*A Schneider*)

[Connect to Sarasota Audubon Haikubox](#)

## Native Landscape Talks - Date Change to April 19



Above: Pam Callender teaching her native landscaping Class in February

**NOTE DATE CHANGE:** Pamela Callender returns with her Landscape Design with Natives class **April 19**

**Saturday, April 19: 9 a.m.-11 a.m.**

Each month builds on the previous class. April class will focus on

- Home landscape design with Native Plants
- Attracting birds and butterflies
- "Right plant, Right place"

Donations accepted.

## Celery Fields Announces New Land Manager



### **WELCOME Kylie Wilson as Celery Fields Land Manager for Sarasota County**

You may know Kylie from her days as the local Shorebird Stewardship and Monitoring Coordinator for Audubon Florida. We are thrilled to announce she is now our liaison with Sarasota County.

Kylie is now the contact for Sarasota County Parks including: Urfer, Rothenbach, Hopewell, Celery Fields, Ackerman and Pinecraft.

Kylie is a native Sarasotan with a love of ornithology and a passion for conservation of wildlife and wild spaces. She graduated with her bachelor's degree in biology from Florida State University and has spent much of her professional career focused on coastal sites and shorebird conservation. In her free time, Kylie enjoys birding, fishing, paddle boarding -- pretty much anything that involves spending time outside. She is also a new chicken mom and is working to restore her yard with Florida native plants.

## Purple Martin Nest Checks Continue 10 a.m Thursday and Sunday Mornings

**10 a.m. Sunday and Thursday**

**Note the earlier start time**, as the weather warms up, we protect ourselves!

Join us at the Nature Center at 10 a.m. on Sunday or Thursday mornings to learn about the fascinating life cycle of the Purple Martin. Soon there will be babies to count!

Also, if you are interested in becoming a part of the Nest Check Team, click below to let Terry know you can help!

[Nest Check Volunteer](#)



## Young Birders in the News!



Sarasota Audubon's young birders were featured across the nation on NPR as well as CBS newscasts across the nation! [Click above](#) for the NPR story and be sure to click on the "listen" button, as the content is slightly different and you can hear the kids as well as the owls.

[Click below](#) for the CBS version with Sophia Haakman, Roland Bendever and friends learning to spot birds at the Celery Fields. With a cameo from Sarasota Audubon President Sara Reisinger!



## 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](#)
- Sarasota Audubon [Historian](#)

[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](#)

## Carefree Learner Boat Tour Roberts Bay Rookery

© Mary Alice Curtiss



Above: Roseate Spoonbill (a protected species) and the rock buffer zone around Roberts Bay Rookery, built by Army Corps of Engineers around 2001 (*Mary Alice Curtiss*)

The Carefree Learner boat tour sponsored by Sarasota Audubon on March 25, 2025, was quite the success, if you asked the bird enthusiasts aboard. A perfect day to be out in Sarasota Bay leaving cares behind and just enjoying the sun, calm waters and the birds nesting in the mangroves of Roberts Bay Rookery.

Sarasota Audubon Society Vice President Kathryn Young was the trip's narrator and imparted interesting facts about the breeding behaviors of several species of herons and egrets as well as information about migratory waterfowl floating on Sarasota Bay.

Below left: Green Heron, Carefree Learner passengers  
Below right: Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Mary Alice Curtiss*)



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



Come join us for Wingspan, the Game. Show up for the afternoon session and we'll teach you the ropes. Evenings for experienced players only.

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 March (newbies welcome):

- Wednesday, April 2
- Wednesday, April 16

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 at 6 p.m. Experienced players only at these sessions, please.

### Evening Schedule for March (experienced only):

- Thursday, April 3
- Thursday, April 10
- Thursday, April 17
- Thursday, April 24

All games start at 6 p.m. 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.

## Beach Nesting Workshop Learn All About It Saturday, April 5, 9 a.m.

Beach Nesting Stewards play a vital role in protecting beach-nesting birds at Siesta Key, Lido Key and Longboat Key. Educating the public through outreach at these nesting sites will bring awareness of the importance of sharing the beach with these imperiled species.

Learn about the birds that call our summer beaches home in this informative



Black Skimmers

workshop.

No obligation to join the stewards, just come to learn.

April 5, 9-11 a.m.  
at the Nature Center picnic tables  
Suggested donation \$5



Snowy Plover

## The Last Word Is Graphic: Know your Northern Cardinals Bird & Moon by Rosemary Mosco

### Know Your Northern Cardinals



Juvenile



Adult Male



**Bloödcheep, Frightful Molt-  
Demon of the Cursed Abyss**



Adult Female

Editor's Note: I live in North Carolina and discovered that the "Frightful Demon" is common here. I was worried last fall when I had a bald cardinal at my feeder for over a week. A couple good



resources: My go-to [Cornell Lab](#), or [Outside my Window Blog](#)

[Donate to Sarasota Audubon](#)



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