

APRIL - MAY 2018

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Barb Walker, Lynn Sumerson, thanking Lindsay & John Hood for their service, with Sid Crawford.

Conservation Through Education

The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society Vol. 82 No. 1

Wing Beat

Upcoming Programs >>>

April 2nd - Sea of Cortez

Dr. Lynn Sumerson
Cousteau called Baja California and the Sea of Cortez the world's aquarium. Lynn Sumerson will take you on a trip to this spectacular place to observe Wilderness, Whales, Birds and other creatures in this extraordinary place.

May 7th Caterpillars

Paul Trunk
Natural history of North American caterpillars. He will touch on topics such as role they play in the food web, life cycles, strategies for survival and identification.

Monthly Meetings are held at 7pm on the first Monday of the month October-May at Moccasin Lake Nature Park 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater, FL 33759.

Mix-and-mingle starts at 6:30.
All of our meetings are free and open to the public.

SERVICE LEADERSHIP

Making a lasting impression counts!

Traditional leadership generally involves the exercise of power by one at the "top of the pyramid." By comparison, the service-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible. Recent Past President, John Hood, exemplifies these qualities coupled with a wide body of knowledge and friendly handshake.

John has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to the conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. He has spent countless hours creating habitats where they didn't exist in order to secure the future for nesting birds and their hatchlings. During his time as President for Clearwater Audubon, he has encouraged our organization to expand its outreach and also



motivated the community to engage in the conservation and appreciation of nature by providing funding to local and neighboring 'friends groups', societies, parks and schools. This reinforces our 'Conservation through Education' mission and organizes participation in those, like us, who have strong educational programs to amplify their environmental mission.

He has brought together the talents of community leaders, bird enthusiasts, and neighbors to produce one of the most welcoming Audubon societies.

John's not leaving us, just handing over the reins. He will still be involved and encouraging us all to become more involved in forwarding the mission. But don't just take my word for it...

"Farewell to the Hardest Working CAS President I've ever known!! Thank you John from the Birds and the Board", Dale Goebel.

"John Hood made CAS what it has become: GREAT. His dedication to the Audubon cause (one of many) is nothing short of exemplary; his will certainly be a tough act to follow." -Mike Mac Donald

Field Trip Leader >>> Dale Goebel's
**BIRDING THE DUNGENESS
SPIT FROM THE NEW
DUNGENESS LIGHTHOUSE**

Eva Renfroe, Anne Richter, Clare Johns and I participated in the lighthouse's Keeper Program the last week of September. The spit is approximately 5.5 miles in length and the lighthouse is at mile 5. We were to purchase all of our groceries for the week and meet at the lighthouse's manager's office at 930pm. We were driven out in two large pickup trucks at low tide and reached the lighthouse in about 45 minutes where we quickly transported all of our food and luggage into the house and the current keepers departed taking their belongings and trash from their week. We began our adventure on Saturday of the week, the busiest day for walkers. The walkers would start out at the Dungeness Preserve walking the spit a 10 mile round trip adventure. We split our days up into shifts with

two on each shift. The lighthouse and museum were open from 9am to 5pm each day. We greeted, shared information and directed guests as they arrived and departed each day. By the end of the week we had 172 guests...who made the 10 mile trek. We took turns sharing the evening cooking and ate on our own for the other meals.

As for the birds we had a count of 55 on the spit and at the lighthouse and an additional 33 in our coming and going from Seattle and birding with Bob Boekelheide on our last day of the trip. Some of the birds were...

Common Loons, White-winged and Surf Scoters, Brandt's, Pelagic and Double Crested Cormorants, Dunlin, Sanderling, Gulls... Western, Olympic (Western/ Glaucous winged), Herring, White-throated, White-crowned, Savannah Sparrows and a rarity... a Sooty Fox Sparrow (see above), Hermit Thrush, Bald Eagles, Merlin and we had over a dozen Golden-crown Kinglets in the one tree at the lighthouse in one one day. What fun we had watching and listening to them. We even had one come into the house (See Clare's write up).

We also enjoyed watching the shipping traffic traveling the Strait of Juan de Fuca. We had the amazing cruise ships and tankers in and out of Seattle and the Naval ships from the Bremerton Naval Base and we watched as two men from an area American Indian Tribe net fished in the Dungeness Bay. The hours we spent alone on the spit were so serene and relaxing. If you ever have the opportunity to be a keeper at any lighthouse I would encourage you to experience it.

Our days spent on the spit at the lighthouse were magical!

~Dale Geobel



Hermit Thrush



Golden-crown Kinglet



Common Loon



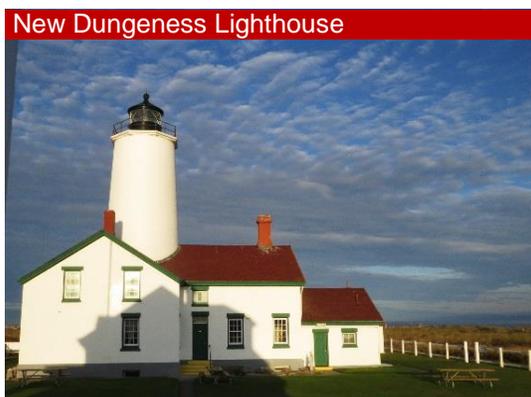
Harlequin Ducks



Sooty Fox Sparrow



Eva relaxing



CLARE offers a LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S PERSPECTIVE



New Dungeness Lighthouse Keeper Program

<http://newdungenesslighthouse.com/keeper-program/>

With all the traveling I have done working as a Lighthouse Keeper, this ranks really high on the list of unusual trips. There were four of us CAS members there for the week. My sister Anne Richter, Eva Renfroe and Dale Goebel our coordinator. Didn't know what to expect but was pleasantly surprised. I was surprised by how many visitors made the trip alone. Perfect weather, lots of interesting visitors to the lighthouse sharing their stories of why they walked five miles (10 miles round trip) to reach the Lighthouse made the days fly by.

On Tuesday of that week a little Golden-crowned Kinglet flew into my bedroom. At first I thought he was just on the windowsill but then I realized he was actually in the room. Thanks to Eva's quick thinking she gently picked him up and let him fly out the window to safety (See photos in previous).

We brought plenty of food and took turns cooking. We ate like lumberjacks... not really. Very little food was left by the end of our time at the lighthouse.

The ride to (10:30pm) and from (5:30am) the lighthouse was at low tide, in the dark and not for the faint at heart. We rode in large pick-up trucks with the lighthouse non-profit volunteers driving. Our driver said some keepers have gotten sick as it was really bumpy along the water's edge but none got sick.

The Lighthouse Keepers program has been very successful and they're normally booking almost 2 years ahead of time. Check the lighthouse website for its availability. When I was not on duty, I enjoyed sitting on the porch or walking the beach, both brought me inner peace.



SPRING 2018 BANDING DATES SET

For everyone who loves to visit the banding station, it was a long fall without banding in Fall 2017. The City of Dunedin didn't reopen **Hammock Park** until mid-November with all the large trees that went down during the Hurricane. One of the largest was right next to the banding station location. It has really changed the canopy and it will be interesting to see if/how it affects the use of the park by migratory birds.

Here are the Spring 2018 Banding Dates in **Hammock Park**: April 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th, May 6th.

Banding takes place from 8 am to 12 noon on each of these dates.

We hope to see everyone at the banding station this spring! [Banding Website](#)

DUNEDIN
Home of Honeymoon Island

ISLAND EARTH DAYS

Saturday & Sunday, April 21 & 22, 2018

11 am - 5 pm

\$8 / vehicle (8-person limit)

[Honeymoon Island State Park](#)

Celebrate Earth Day with crafts, activities, live birds, nature exhibits, shell displays, guided trail walks and refreshments. Presented by Honeymoon Island State Park. For more information, visit www.IslandEarthDays.com

please **WELCOME**

New CAS President

Barbara Walker

I have been an Audubon volunteer for 15 years with the last 10 of those being full-time. During that time I have been the Newsletter Editor, Media Representative and the Conservation Advocate. In 2012 I was Audubon Florida's Volunteer of the Year due to my work with Bald eagles and Ospreys.

I have served for the last 3 years on the board for Audubon Florida and am currently the Gulf Coast Region's Committee Chairperson.

I see the chapter as a solid, well run chapter and seek to keep up the good run! My vision is to incorporate national, state and regional conservation goals into all of our programs and to continually seek diversity.



Trusted Leadership >>>

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Tampa Bay Raptor Rescue
Audubon Gulf Coast Regional Chair
Birds of Prey Moccasin Lake Nature Park

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Clearwater Audubon Society

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>

Supporting our community since 1959 Our Motto: Conservation through Education

For more information call us at 727-442-9140



We represent Audubon Society members in Northern Pinellas County and provide services to all who are interested: free local field trips with expert birders; inexpensive extended field trips within the US and to other locales, free monthly programs, volunteer & networking opportunities within the local conservation community; scholarships to local summer camps and speakers for a variety of classrooms and groups.



Upcoming Field Trips >>>

APRIL

April 7th Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park.

Meet at 8:00am

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885

April 11th - Wednesday Ft. DeSoto Park. Meet at the Wal-Mart 2677

Roosevelt Blvd. at 7:30am

Leader - John Hood 461-4762.

April 14th - Saturday Ft. DeSoto Park.

Meet at the Wal-Mart 2677 Roosevelt Blvd. at 7:30am

Leader - Paul Trunk 430-0368.

April 21st John Chestnut Park. Meet at Shelter#6 at 8:00am.

Leader - Steve Reardon 871-2706.

April 28th - Honeymoon Island State

Park. Meet at 8:00am. Shorebirds, eagle/owl nests.

Meet behind McDonald's corner of Curlew and Alt 19.

Leader - Frank Brandt 219-7509.

MAY

May 5th Brunch With the Birds at Moccasin Lake Nature Park. Meet at 8:00am.

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885.

A NOTE ABOUT POISONS

A local birder recently told a story about two screech owls found dead in his neighborhood. It appears they succumbed to the effects of rat poison which a few neighbors have been using to supposedly control a problem they were having. Another in the same neighborhood had to rush their dog to the pet emergency hospital after finding the dog had played with a container of rat poison that had probably been dropped in their yard by a squirrel, who would also be attracted to rat poison. And another had recently lost a beloved pet cat who was poisoned, apparently also ingesting either poison or a mouse or rat that had been attracted to the rat poison.

Ironically, the neighborhood presence of nesting owls would be the best deterrent to keep unwanted mice and rats under control, but instead, the owl's prey becomes its certain death, as the poison ingested by the rat kills the owl and deprives it of raising its young, who are probably also poisoned by the very food their parents are bringing to the nest. In addition, the mice, squirrels, and rats who ingest poison die a horrible death, bleeding internally - the same fate which is passed on to the owls and hawks unlucky enough to catch them and feed them to their young. A poisoned mouse, rat, or squirrel becomes easy prey for an unsuspecting owl or hawk; ill and slow, its behaviors make it an easy catch.

Before using poison on your property, think of the effects it has on the avian predators who are designed to do the job more effectively and efficiently.



Squirrels cavorting through trees and springing onto bird feeders can also be vexing or entertaining to bird-lovers. If you don't find them entertaining, squirrel-proof feeders are an important first step. Have-a-heart traps can be helpful in catching and humanely removing squirrels to a safe location. Squirrels are prey for owls and hawks, so removing them is also eliminating an important food source for birds of prey.

Garbage and feed stored for other animals (birds, pets) are among the frequent sources of problems attracting unwanted wildlife to our own or neighbor's property. If a problem is persistent, see advice from a professional who understands your wildlife concerns. If you're aware of a neighbor using dangerous or inhumane methods to eliminate wildlife, a copy of this article may be a starting point for a conversation.

Organizations We Support



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