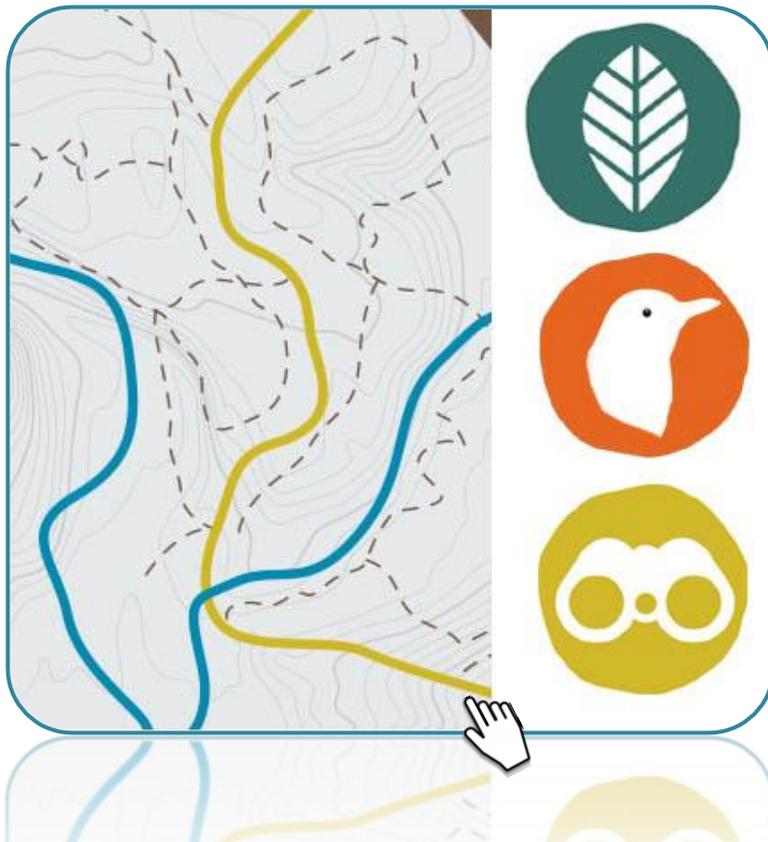


Wing Beat

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.

Need a Reason to Go Outside?



The Clearwater Audubon Society field trips are open to members and non-members alike, to anyone interested in birds, nature and being outdoors.

We 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.

Pets and smoking are prohibited.

[Click here to download](#)  a copy of CAS Field Trips and Programs for 2013-2014

Clearwater Audubon Society

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>

February, March 2014

Vol. 57 No. 1

Supporting our community since 1959

Our Motto: Conservation through Education

For more information call us at 727-442-9140





Raptor Fest 2014

-Anastasia Steinbrunner

It never fails. When I am out walking, whether with fellow birders or not, the fly over of a raptor stops everything. Generally this phenomenon is also accompanied by an audible, "Whoa!" and all eyes transfixed on the sky. I'm not certain if there is one explanation as to why these birds excite more people than others but for me the mere idea of working with them played a major role in my moving 1,000 miles to volunteer with the Birds of Prey program at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve.



The BOP program, as we like to call it, is an entirely volunteer run effort caring for, training, and manning raptors for educational programs. In the last three months of 2013 alone we got our birds in front of more than 20,000 people. Everywhere we went our raptors drew large and small crowds, lots of questions and always stopped passers-by in their tracks. Many had never seen a raptor before and the majority had never seen one so close. Sightings of apex predators in the wild tend to be few and far between. Raptors tend to avoid people as much as possible and the secretive owls are excellent at concealment. Sadly, it is difficult for people to care about something they rarely see.

So the volunteers with the BOP program created the not-to-be-missed first annual Raptor Fest at Boyd Hill. We are bringing in rehabbed birds from all over the state for up close and personal encounters with the public. Falconers will be providing free-flight demonstrations with their birds. Earth Quest will be coming down from Georgia with their Andean Condor, one of the largest flighted birds on Earth. We will even have a movie star in attendance as we welcome one of the Snowy Owls that played Hedwig in the Harry Potter series. Our fifteen resident birds of prey will be on display and walking around with their handlers for close encounters, questions and photo opportunities. The public will also be treated to Native American storytelling, guided bird walk, environmental exhibitors, interactive educational displays, a raptorial dinosaur talk, a discussion on raptor rehab, tree climbing and much more. Due to the generosity of our sponsors, including Clearwater Audubon, we can offer free admission to Raptor Fest. Clear your calendar for **Saturday, February 1st, 10AM-4PM** and join us in celebrating some of the most awe inspiring creatures on Earth. Raptor Fest, Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, 1101 Country Club Way S, St. Petersburg.

Admission is free but donations are gladly accepted. Our raptors eat meat and meat ain't cheap!



2013 CBC at Caladesi Island

- Madeleine Bohrer

Traditions are comforting and the Christmas Bird Count is one that always seems to hold fast in our collective birding memories. This year's CBC fell on the Winter solstice which happened to be one of those perfect Florida Winter days. Our trip was to Caladesi Island under a clear sky and over sun-sparkly, green-blue water. The tide was low so the boating was slow—perfect for birding the northeastern shore. Great and Snowy Egrets, a Solitary Reddish Egret, a half dozen Roseate Spoonbills, Laughing Gulls, and Great Blue and Tricolor Herons dotted the flats. Several Horned Grebes with their lovely white necks appeared and disappeared as they fed in the morning gleam.

Turkey Vultures teetered over the mangroves and the inimitable Kingfisher gave us his rattled greeting as we rounded the bend to the Caladesi inlet. Yellow-crowned Night Herons seemed unphased by our passing.

On shore, splitting into three groups, we ventured to south beach, north beach, and the inland woods. Following are the thoughts from several participants who emailed me afterwards...

Dana Kerstein had these precious words: “My sense of the overall rightness of the world takes over when I do the Christmas bird count. The birds are seeking a place to eat and rest, and they are the same species as last year. I also enjoy the difference in weather each year. Caladesi Island doesn't change much with its beautiful grasses and trees and beach. However Mother Nature does put on a show each year with some parts of the island beaches accreting sand and some losing sand. The birds in the morning light are at their finest with the soft features and colors. I love the drive down the channel to the marina with its long canal as its entry way to the possibilities of the day....”

Susan Silberberg spoke for many of us when she said “...the best part for me was the interesting people. I always enjoy the birds, but talking with Ted [Tanner] about his life as we strolled through the beautiful woods was really a pleasure. Also I've been to Caladesi too many times to count, but have never walked the woods



Photo by Dermot Breen



trail, very beautiful and 'Old Florida'." Patty Tanner echoes the joy we all feel: "...the time spent with friends that like to do the same things! The day was a highlight of my year..." Yes! The CBC is truly a punctuation to



Left to right: Susan Silberberg, Patty Foreman, John Uhlmann



Harvey and Dana Kerstein (above)
Vevie & Genevieve Dimmitt (below)



the birding year. Birders and non-birders come together to contribute to the longest running wildlife census; we make a critical difference.

My counting partner, John Uhlman, and I, after following a stunning adult Northern Gannett diving in the Gulf, came upon a solitary Black Scoter. This bird, unusual for our coast, was letting himself be rolled onto the shore by the waves, then preened and dabbled in the sand. He was our ambassador, as a short while later, we found his comrades: a raft of over three dozen Scoters! If I could bottle my excitement I would have enough energy to last until the 2014 CBC! I cannot think of a better way to spend a December day.

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for a Trip to Israel**

November 8-18, 2014
[Click here for itinerary](#)

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Birding South Texas

-Paul Trunk

At a time when much of the country was firmly embraced by cold, South Texas offered a mild, yet rainy climate along with the usual diversity of both wintering and resident birds. The lower Rio Grande Valley's remnants of mesquite and riparian woodland harbor an array of species much sought after by North American birdwatchers. Our visits to such famed spots as the Brownsville area, Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Bentsen - Rio Grande Valley State Park, and the riverside below Falcon Dam, we looked especially for birds whose ranges in the United States are restricted to South Texas. Winter is also a time when rare vagrants from Mexico appear.



Most of the world's wild Whooping Cranes winter along a small stretch of the Texas coast, and on our trip we were able to see 8 of these magnificent birds on Goose Island State Park.

Among these famed "Valley specialties," we saw were Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Plain Chachalaca, Least Grebe, Neotropic Cormorant, Gray and White-tailed hawks, White-tipped Dove at feeders, 200 + Green Parakeets, Common Pauraque sleeping next to the path. Buff-bellied Hummingbirds give us great views. Both Ringed and Green kingfishers, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee, Tropical and Couch's kingbirds, Green Jay, Black-crested Titmouse, Long-billed Thrasher, Olive Sparrow, and Altamira and Audubon's orioles were seen by the group. All-in all we missed only one of the Texas specialties...The Hooked-billed Kite.

Office Hours By Appointment



Kamilla Sztanko, DMD, PA
3830 Tampa Road, Suite 100
Palm Harbor, FL 34684
Telephone (727) 789-4044

Michael J. Adams, DDS
Pamela G. Adams, DDS, MS, PA

15 North Missouri Avenue
Clearwater, Florida 33755
(727) 461-4832 fax (727) 461-4835



Birding South Texas (cont.)

A few years back some of the parks were flooded and the snails that the kites feed on were killed off. They are starting to make a comeback and hopefully the kite will be more common in the coming years. We had 163 species for the trip. Not bad considering the weather prevented us from doing any shorebirding and kept the wintering sparrows from being seen in the open country.



Photo credit for this article: Randy Harrod

Upcoming Field Trips 2014

Feb. 8th [Roosevelt Wetlands](#) 8:00am Meet at *Party City. John Hood 461-4762.

Feb. 14-15th [Merritt Island](#). Dale Goebel 734-3384. Reservations required.

Feb. 15th Audubon Explorers [Moccasin Lake Nature Park](#) 8:30 AM. Lynn Sumerson 596-8822.

Feb. 22nd [Emeralda Marsh](#) Meet at *Party City 7:15 AM. Mike McDonald.

Feb. 28-Mar. 1st [Paynes Prairie](#). Dale Goebel 734-3384. Reservations required.

March 1st Monthly Bird Walk [Moccasin Lake Nature Park](#). 8:00 AM John Hood 461-4762.

March 8th Audubon Explorers 8:30 AM. Lynn Sumerson 596-8822. Place TBA.

March 8th [Emerson Point/Felts Preserve](#). Paul Trunk 447-4785. Meet at *Party City 7:15 AM.



*Party City is located on the corner of US 19 and East Bay drive. It is in the old Tri-City Plaza.

CAS strongly encourages car pooling and helping the driver with gas expenses. If you want to go on a field trip and do not want to car pool then you may want to consider meeting the group at the destination.

[Click here to download](#)  a copy of CAS Field Trips and Programs for 2013-2014



North Pinellas Christmas Bird Count

- Marianne Korosy

For the 38th consecutive year, the North Pinellas Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was a success both in terms of bird species and number of participants. The weather, always a wild card in late December, was a bit breezy after mid-morning making it tough to spot warblers and vireos among tree leaves in motion and discouraging sparrows from perching visibly.

Several teams began the day before dawn in search of Barred, Great Horned, and Eastern Screech owls and they were rewarded for their efforts. David Laliberte did a marathon owling effort beginning at 12:01 a.m. in the Spanish Trails and Spanish Oaks area and logged 27 Eastern Screech-owls solo before joining a Brooker Creek Preserve team for the rest of the day.

A total of 78 participants, including more than ten first-timers, birded in ten circumscribed areas within a circle 15 miles in diameter. The area covered extends from the Pasco County line south to Gulf-to-Bay Blvd. in Clearwater and from approximately Racetrack Road and Gunn Highway in western Hillsborough County westward to include all of Caladesi and Honeymoon Islands.

Participants tallied 31,205 individual birds of 158 “countable” bird species. Highlights included a Northern Parula found by Dale Goebel’s team, Snowy Plover spotted only by Dana Kerstein’s Caldesi Island team, Bonaparte’s Gulls counted along Courtney Campbell Causeway by Stephen and Jane Mann. Least Bittern, Song Sparrow and Lincoln’s Sparrow were seen only by John Hood’s team in northern Safety Harbor.



Broad-winged Hawk by Ron Smith at Brooker Creek Preserve

The five Brooker Creek Preserve teams, organized by Don Margeson added several species recorded nowhere else in the circle: Brown-headed Nuthatches, Broad-winged Hawk, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Northern Bobwhite, Whip-poor-will, and Tree Swallow. Feeder-watchers in two areas of the circle added Painted Bunting on count day and White-winged Dove was seen only at the Mann’s feeder on count day.

Fifty Black Scoters were counted between the Honeymoon Island and Caladesi Island teams. At Honeymoon, Dave Gagne’s expert team tallied species not seen elsewhere within the CBC circle: Gull-billed Tern, Magnificent Frigatebird, Virginia Rail, Wilson’s Plover, Whimbrel, and Nelson’s Sparrow. The Palm Harbor area was covered by four sub-teams: Wilf Yusek added Great Black-backed Gull to the count on Dunedin Causeway, Marianne Korosy’s team and Jim McGinity’s team added Ruddy Duck, Northern



Gull-billed Tern by Ed Kwater at Honeymoon Island



Shoveler, and Greater Scaup, Korosy’s team added Grasshopper Sparrow, and the Dunedin Hammock team led by Sandy Harris was one of only two places where Ovenbird and Hermit Thrush were seen on count day. Another observer in the area sent in a photo of two Greater Scaup at Fred Howard Park where a group of people waited to count the Bar-tailed Godwit that never did show up on count day, to team leader Sid Crawford’s chagrin.

By 6:30 p.m., Paul and Debbie Trunk’s living room was full of hungry birders and their dining room table was packed with dishes brought to share along with the

Trunk’s tasty chili. Thanks, Debbie, for sharing your birthday with us, and thanks to both of you for hosting the dinner and countdown. A big “Thank You” goes out to all continuing participants and to everyone who enjoyed their first-ever Christmas Bird Count. We hope to see you again next year!

The Legacy Campaign Update

Generations of Floridians will thank you for your hard work and enduring support to protect clean water and natural areas! The Water and Land Conservation Amendment will be on the November 2014 ballot thanks to you!

Founder and Chairman, Bob Graham; Vice-Chairmen, Nathaniel Pryor Reed & Lee Constantine





Officers of Clearwater Audubon Society

Membership

[Membership Application](#)

Size : 141.717 Kb

Type : pdf

Monthly Meetings

October – May

The first Monday of each month at Moccasin Lake Nature Park:

Meet and Greet @ 6:30PM

Public Program @ 7:00PM

(Unless otherwise noted)

First meeting is October 7

Past Issue of Wing Beat



*click issue to view
Dec-Jan 2013-2014*

"A Boater's Guide to Clearwater Harbor & St. Joseph's Sound including Three Rooker Island, the Anclote Keys and Anclote Bar" is now available online.



PRESIDENT: JOHN HOOD

president@clearwateraudubon.com

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: BARBARA WALKER

barbibird@tampabay.rr.com

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT: SID CRAWFORD

blumax100@gmail.com

TREASURER: JANE WILLIAMS

jwilli56@tampabay.rr.com

MEDIA: CHRISTINA KUGEARES

media@clearwateraudubon.com

MEMBERSHIP: CAROL LINOWSKI

membership@clearwateraudubon.com

SECRETARY: ANASTASIA STEINBRUNNER

secretary@clearwateraudubon.com

CONSERVATION ADVOCACY: RONDA MUSCA

rmusca1@tampabay.rr.com

CONSERVATION PROJECTS: DANA KERSTEIN

conservation@clearwateraudubon.com

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: MARIANNE KOROSY

mkorosy@gmail.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT & CLIMATE ACTION CHAIR:

MICHAEL MACDONALD

curmudgin@hotmail.com

FIELD TRIPS: PAUL TRUNK

fieldtrips@clearwateraudubon.com

EAGLE WATCH & OSPREY WATCH: BARBARA WALKER

barbibird@tampabay.rr.com

EDUCATION: LYNN SUMERSON

education@clearwateraudubon.com

PROGRAMS: CYNTHIA E. KLUSS

programs@clearwateraudubon.com

DIRECTOR AT LARGE: LINDSEY DAY

LEGAL COUNSEL: R. BRUCE McMANUS

lawoffice@mcmanusestateplanning.com

WEBMASTER: PAUL TRUNK

webmaster@clearwateraudubon.com

WINGBEAT/NEWSLETTER: MÉICHELLE LONG

newsletter@clearwateraudubon.com



Monthly Programs & Merritt Island Trip

January 28, 2014 Travels with **Lindsay and Tom Bell**; skillful photographers with worldwide expedition experience and broad species expertise. Held **6:30-9:30 PM** at Sunshine Center located at 330 5th St. North St. Petersburg, Florida 33701. The phone number for the Center is 727-893-7101.

February 3, 2014 **Lara Miller** introduces Nature's Notebook and provides an opportunity for local participation in a phenology project at Moccasin Lake Nature Park.

March 3, 2014 **Jim McGinity** introduces the Neotropical Migratory species banding project and provides local participation in the National Audubon Society Atlantic Flyway program.

April 7, 2014 **Maura Scanlon**, MA Biology at St. Petersburg College provides an update on what the student Sustainability Club on the Seminole campus is doing and what recommendations they endorse for public wide action plans.

Field Trip to Merritt Island Feb. 14-15th. [Click here](#) for information or call Dale Goebel 734-3384. Reservations required.



We're having a YARD SALE!

Clearing out your closet? Downsizing your house?
Kids heading off to college? Want to get organized? Great!

Whatever your reason might be, if you have too much stuff, consider donating it to the Annual Clearwater Audubon Society's Community Yard Sale. The CAS Yard Sale, held each spring, attracts more than 1,000 shoppers. All proceeds benefit CAS conservation projects and local organizations we support.

Donating items for the sale is easy. To schedule a pickup from your house, call our Pickup Hotline (AKA John Hood) at 727-461-4762. We also accept donations at our monthly meetings on Mondays from 6:30-9 PM.

We do not accept the following items:

Mattresses, sleeper sofas, baby car seats, FAX machines and telephones, halogen lamps, large appliances, building products, magazines, encyclopedias, pianos, organs, ceiling fans, broken or chipped glasses and plates, torn or stained clothing, school uniforms, worn or stained furniture, and particle board furniture.



Climate Change Sources

-Michael MacDonald

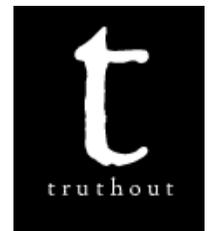
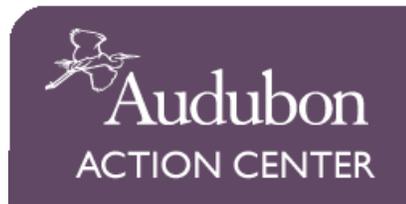
There are huge numbers of organizations working on Climate Change all over the world (including in the U.S., despite the ‘deniers’). Nearly all U.S. government agencies produce information about Climate Change and its impact on their area of responsibility (DOE, NOAA, DEP, USDA, DJ, etc.). Alternative publications (Mother Jones, Rolling Stone, Daily Kos, Huffington Post, etc) feature Climate Change reports and issues.



Mainstream publications often have Climate Change articles (Economist, Der Spiegel, Time, Forbes, Bloomberg, etc.). Radio (NPR) and TV have Climate Change programs and report Climate Change issues.

NGO publications (Sierra, Audubon, NRDC, Rocky Mountain Institute, World Wildlife Fund, etc.) feature articles on the effects of Climate Change, e.g.: ‘Natural History’ (NYNHM) had an article about mountain pine beetles and Climate Change; FNPS featured a Laurel Wilt article and the impact of Climate Change; etc.

Google your favorite topic to find *mountains* of information. Here are a few I’ve visited. Click on the image to be directed to its web site.



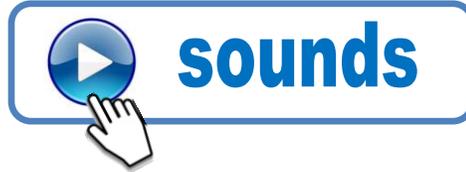


Shutterbug Spotlight

These photos were taken by our own Lynn Sumerson at Honeymoon Island.



Osprey with mullet



*First photo taken of two (count them)
Eagle chicks!*



Redhead ducks

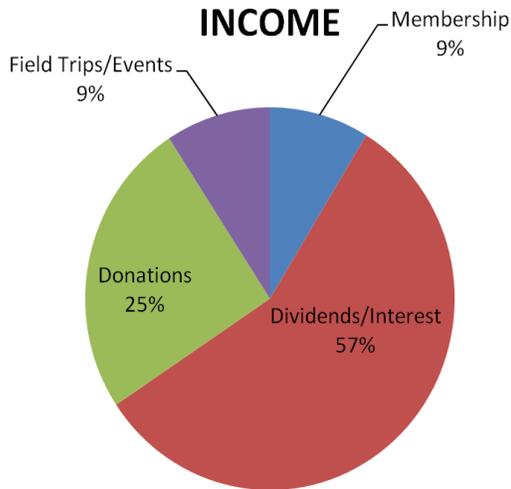




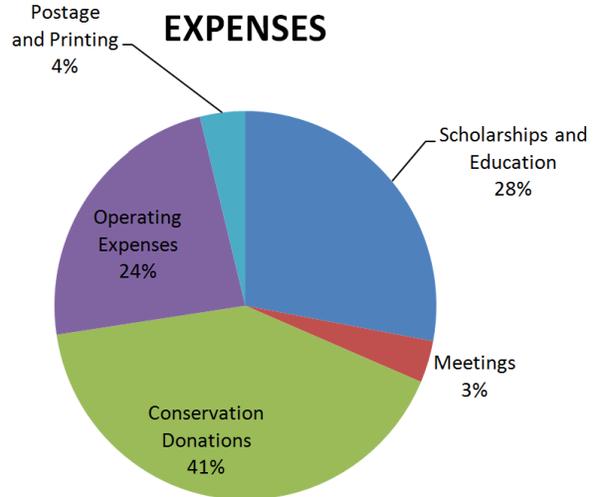
Annual Financial Report

-Jane Williams

The work we do relies on the support of people like you who believe that conservation and establishing an environmental ethic in our communities is paramount. Thank you for your continued support.



Total Revenue** \$22,432



Total Expenses \$13,415

a portion of this amount was the result of asset turnover. \$5300 was carried over into the current (2013-2014) fiscal year

Adjusted Total Revenue \$17,132



Boyd Hill Photo Contest at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve Contest opens January 2, 2014

Please join in on the 31st Annual Photography contest sponsored by the Friends of Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, Inc. and the City of St Petersburg. This competition promotes the appreciation of our natural environment through the medium of photography and enhances awareness of the uniqueness of Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, a 245+ acre nature preserve nestled in St. Petersburg, FL.

More information at: <http://friendsofboydhill.org/PhotoContest.html>



Organizations We Support



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[St. Petersburg Audubon Society](#)



[Important Bird Areas in Florida](#)



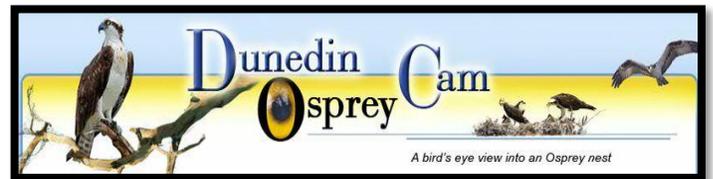
[Great Florida Birding Trail](#)



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