



Wing Beat

Conservation Through Education
The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society
Mar-April 2023 Vol. 111

Shorebird Shenanigans

Join the flock of Shorebird Stewards

Beach-nesting birds are among the fastest group of declining birds in North America. These birds lay camouflaged eggs in the sand, hiding nests from predators. Unfortunately, eggs and chicks are also hidden in plain sight to beachgoers. When beaches become heavily populated during the summer months, people may unintentionally disrupt or destroy nests, causing population declines in beach-nesting bird species.


Bird Steward Training
Pinellas County Beaches

This training will be specific to stewardship at Ft. De Soto County Park, St. Pete Beach, and Redington Shores. Multiple species of shorebirds and seabirds use these beaches to nest and rest.

FREE! Registration required.

Join Audubon Florida coastal staff to learn how to be an effective bird steward on the beach. You will learn about each nesting site located on multiple public beaches throughout Pinellas County, including Ft. De Soto County Park, St. Pete Beach, and Redington Shores. Bird stewards are needed to chaperone nesting sites and chicks while educating the public about sharing the beach with shorebirds. This is a great volunteer opportunity for anyone interested in shorebird conservation and education.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023 AT 7 PM - 8 PM | [Register here](#) | ONLINE Training

In this training, you will learn about how to identify threatened shorebird species of Florida, how to effectively educate the public, and how to sign up for volunteer shifts.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

March 4th Monthly Bird Outing at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00am. Leader - Paul Trunk (727) 430-0368

Accessible with assistance 



March 6th Monthly Program: [Dave Goodwin](#) presents the Crested Caracara

This program takes a look at the most unusual member of the falcon family in Florida. We will discuss the current status of this species in Florida, looking at its behavior, breeding, and adaptation to changing habitat within Florida.

Meet & Greet at 6:30, Program at 7PM.

March 11th Celery Fields

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

Carpooling, bring gas \$\$ and lunch.

Celery Fields 999 Center Road, Sarasota, 34240.

Leader - Dale Goebel (727) 510-1462

March 18th Picnic at John Chesnut Park

Bring a dish to share. Shelter 10 at 11:30am

Drinks, paper products & dessert provided.

Contact Dale Goebel (727) 510-1462

March 25th Possum Branch Preserve

Mulberry trees, great migrants.

Meet at the gated entrance just south of Curlew Rd. on McMullen Booth Rd. at 8:00am.

Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz (727) 657-0803

April 1st & 2nd Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park w/ [Gallus Quigley](#)

[\[View the Flyer\]](#) Must make reservations - Dale Goebel (727) 510-1462

April 1st Monthly Bird outing at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00am. Leader - Lynn Sumerson (727) 215-7477

Accessible with assistance 



April 3rd Monthly Program: Ron Smith presents Butterflies of Pinellas County

Join us for an evening all about the butterflies of Pinellas County. Ron Smith, author of the Birds of Pinellas County, will share with us the details and adventures of his latest Pinellas County butterfly book.

Meet & Greet at 6:30, Program at 7PM.

April 5th Fred Howard Park Migrants and shorebirds.

Meet on the park's causeway at the SW corner before the beach at 7:30am.

Leader - Merle & Jo Hubbard (727) 939-1549

April 8th John Chesnut Park

Meet at Shelter 6 at 8am. Leader - John Swenfurth (813) 390-4734

April 15th Honeymoon Island State Park

Migrating songbirds, raptors, owls, wintering shorebirds & more.

Meet at 8:15am

1 Causeway Blvd, Dunedin at the Osprey Trail head at the north end of the playground parking lot.

Leader - Steve Reardon (727) 871-2706

April 22nd Ft. DeSoto Park

Meet at the flagpole inside the gate at 7:30am.

3500 Pinellas Bayway S, Tierra Verde 33715

Guest Leader - Dave Goodwin (813) 481-8228

May 26th-31st Maine

Mountains to the Sea with Seth Benz

[View the Flyer](#) Reservations required



All photos by Dale Goebel

What a trip! On January 20th, with Dale Goebel driving and Nicki Armstrong spotting, we left Clearwater bound for Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Green Cay Wetlands, and Peaceful Waters Sanctuary in Palm Beach County. Taking backroads south and east, we saw things that a snowbird like me seldom see, such as fields of feathery sugar cane and small "Old Florida" towns. The highlight of the drive for me, however, was a side trip on Old

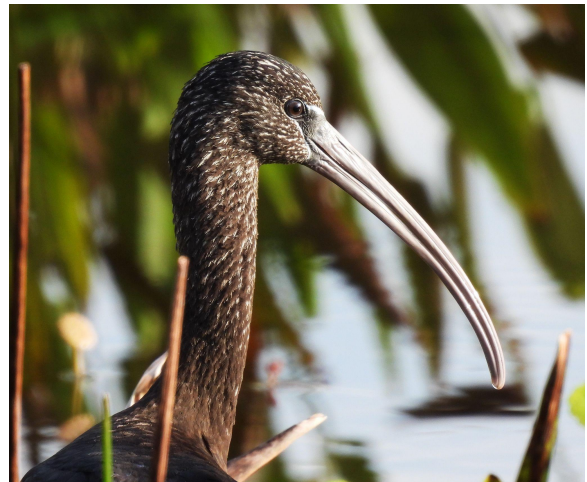
State Route 8, where we saw several birds, including my first and only view of a Florida Scrub Jay. Another notable sighting in the same area was a Crested Caracara.

Bright and early the next morning we arrived at Wakodahatchee Wetlands to join a rather large group of birders led by Nancy & Brian with Tropical Audubon. At first skeptical that such a large group could be a hindrance, but I was quickly proven to be wrong. Only a few steps onto the boardwalk

was a beautiful Magnolia Warbler, another first for me. There were far too many birds to list here, but included Black-bellied Whistling ducks, Egyptian Geese, White-winged Doves and Wilson's Snipe. We were also fortunate to see nesting Great Blue Herons with young. Many of the group saw a Virginia Rail; however, I was focused on a Sora and missed it.



We then traveled to Green Cay Wetland, another area with more birds than can be listed here. Some of the more interesting sightings there were Purple Gallinule, Glossy Ibis, Tree Swallows, Painted Buntings, and a White-eyed Vireo. There were also abundant egrets and herons, including many Green Herons.



The last stop was Peaceful Waters, where we saw many of our bird friends from earlier in the day. But finally, ducks! Seen were a great list; Blue-winged, Green-winged Teal, Shovelers, American Wigeon, and Ring-necked Ducks. A bonus were four otters, including one that ran on

the grassy path in front of us for about fifty yards. After that we started the long drive back to Pinellas County, feeling tired but very satisfied.

Thank you, Dale, for making all of the arrangements and driving.



*Do you have a story to tell?
Email it with photos to
newsletter@clearwateraudubonsociety.org*

CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

Conservation VP Kim Begay and Eckerd College Intern Jessica Hughes attended and presented at the Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's annual Symposium. Kim taught a Common Loon class with Dr. Maria Passerelli (Save our Seabirds Wild Bird Learning Center in Sarasota) and Marge Gibson from the



Raptor Education Group, Inc. (REGI) in Wisconsin.

L to R, Kevin Grezner, Kim Begay, Marge Gibson from REGI (Raptor Education Group),
Linda Grezner, Jessica Hughes

Kevin & Linda are some of the most experienced and active Loon rescuers in the country.

"This class is important for rescuers and rehabilitation centers because we only have loons in the winter. A lot of mistakes are made during rescue calls about how to interpret what's going on with the loons", instructs Kim. "Interpreting their behavior, placing them in dangerous crates that can crack their beaks, etc., so I'm happy to get the word out about using the best protocols for the safety and best outcome for the loons." She also notes how the Common Loons are unique and pose a lot of challenges, from rescue to rehab.



Jessica is pictured here with Kim Begay and Dr. Beth Hirschfield, President of the FWRA. She spent a decade as the Director of Veterinary Services at South Florida Wildlife Center, part time with Flamingo Gardens Wildlife Sanctuary and the Humane Society of Broward County.

Jessica was able to learn more about the work that the Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators Association does, as well as network with stakeholders from around the state.

The FWRA provides networking and educational opportunities for rehabilitators, thus enhancing the general level of wildlife care. The annual FWRA Symposium offers basic and advanced training courses as well as expert speakers on a variety of topics such as specialized care of unusual species, laws and regulations, organization management, wildlife restraint, feeding and nutrition, reptile handling, seabird husbandry & medication, fundraising for nonprofits, and much more.

If you see a wild bird in need. Do not touch the bird. Call Kim Begay: 727.480.9010

Clearwater Audubon Internships are available for the following priorities:

Conservation | Educational Outreach | Habitat Restoration
Marketing/Media | Non-Profit Management

If you have a specific area of interest not listed above, please include your project/research idea with the application to better pair you with a mentor.

If you have any questions about the [Clearwater Audubon Society Internship Program](mailto:clearwateraudubonsociety@gmail.com), contact clearwateraudubonsociety@gmail.com.

[APPLY HERE](#)

PROGRAM RECAP

February Program: In September of 2022, Tom & Lindsay Bell headed on a 6,000 mile round trip in their Sportsmobile (affectionately known as The BirdMobile) around Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula to the mouth of the mighty St. Lawrence River. This area is one of the best whale-watching spots in the world and also has a wealth of other marine mammals as well as very diverse birdlife. Fantastic!






DUNEDIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

BACKYARD Birding

MARCH 1ST | 6:30 PM
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.



223 Douglas Ave. Dunedin, FL 34698
727-298-3080 ext: 1707
www.dunedingov.com/library

Backyard Birding



March 1st Backyard Birding with Jim at Dunedin Library

Jim McGinity, Florida Avian Conservation, will host this presentation on birding in neighborhoods and preserves with a focus on the Dunedin area. Participants will also be encouraged to learn more about the Dunedin library "birding backpack program."

STRUCTURES FOR WILDLIFE

MARCH 10 6:00 PM
[REGISTER HERE](#)

TY SHARROW - M.S. STUDENT ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
JONATHAN BAXTER - ARKANSAS PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE STATE COORDINATOR
ROD WITTENBERG - PHD BIOLOGY/HAAS HALL ACADEMY
SARA WITTENBERG - POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP

Structures for Wildlife

Fri, Mar 10, 2023, 6:00 PM CST

Landowners can leave natural materials or add artificial structures to benefit wildlife on their property. We'll give you the resources.

Join Ty Sharrow (ASU), Jonathan Baxter (PFW), Rod Wittenberg (HHA) and Sara Wittenberg (P2) as we learn how landowners can modify practices on their property by leaving natural materials to create structure or adding artificial structures to benefit wildlife. There are ample resources to help those wanting to implement structures, including free technical advice and cost-share assistance.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/523738314397>

2023 Spring Festival

Saturday, March 25

9am- 4pm

hosted by



in support of



Activities for
the whole
family

Environmental
speakers

Join us in our mission to help
save the West Klosterman
Preserve! A portion of sales
for the day go straight
towards saving the 14 acres
of untouched woods that are
home to many Florida native
plants and trees, as well as
animals!

Florida Native
Plant Genus
Bar

Local
Businesses

Wilcox Nursery & Landscape

12501 Indian Rocks Rd.

Largo, FL 33774

Your Clearwater Audubon Society Board

Executive Committee:

John Hood
Lynn Sumerson
Dale Goebel
Méichelle Long
Cuneyt Yilmaz

Committee Chairs:

Conservation Projects: Dana Kerstein
Field Trips: Dale Goebel
Communication/Media: **Position Available**
Membership: Cuneyt Yilmaz
Newsletter/Webmaster: Méichelle Long
Programs/Outreach: **Position Available**

Officers:

VP Conservation: Kim Begay
Treasurer: Deborah Larkin
Secretary: Stephanie Hall

Board Member at Large:

Mardy Hornsby
Diane Ives
IP President: John Hood

Committees:

CBC: Bill Kaempfer
Eagle Watch: Louise Roy
Finance: Don Peccia

Join the Board or a Committee

Becoming a member of a nonprofit organization's board can be a meaningful way to explore how your experience and expertise can be applied in the nonprofit sector at the governance level, and ultimately, how your experience and expertise can help advance a nonprofit organization's social impact. Please take a few moments to read Audubon's statement of [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging](#) and the [Board Member Expectations](#). Board members meet on the last Monday of each month. Monthly general membership meetings (open to the public) are the first Monday of the month unless otherwise noted.

To view a list of available positions on the board or on a committee, please view [this document](#). Complete the [Board Interest Survey](#) [here](#).

Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 97 Clearwater Florida 33757 EIN 59-6177460

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>

Supporting our community since 1959

Our Motto: Conservation through Education

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.

[Membership Application](#)



[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)



Partnering Organizations



[Audubon Florida](#)

[St. Petersburg Audubon Society](#)

[Tampa Audubon Society](#)



[Important Bird Areas in Florida](#)

[Great Florida Birding Trail](#)

[Florida Ornithological Society](#)

[Florida Avian Conservation](#)



[Moccasin Lake Nature Park](#)

[Moccasin Lake Raptor Sanctuary](#)

[Friends of Moccasin Lake](#)



[Pinellas Chapter FNPS](#)

[Florida Herb Society](#)

[Safety Harbor Garden Club](#)

[Florida Botanical Gardens](#)



[Friends of Dunedin Hammock](#)

[Friends Of Brooker Creek Preserve](#)

[Suncoast Herpetological Society, Inc.](#)

[Tampa Bay Turtle & Tortoise Society](#)

[Friends in Focus Photography Club](#)

CLEARWATER AUDUBON

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION-MINDED

APPEALS & DONATIONS FUNDED: Youth EcoCamps, Intern Scholarships, Conservation efforts, Wild Raptor Sanctuary & more



CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Monofilament tubes, Hooked Birds, Anti-Rodenticide, Community Advocacy for trees.

PARNERSHIP PROJECTS

Plants 4 Birds area in Dunedin Hammock: Friends of Dunedin Hammock, Pinellas Native Plant Society & City of Dunedin



OUTREACH

700 MEMBERS
7 Months of PROGRAMS
30 FIELD TRIPS
8000 VOLUNTEER hours

CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION

Thank you to everyone who donated via Paypal, snail mail and online! Your generosity demonstrates that you care about conservation in the Tampa Bay area.

We are honored to receive donations of volunteer time, in-kind products, and financial donations that allow us to serve our community by protecting birds and their habitat.

Be sure to join us on a field trip or program meeting.