

OCT – NOV- DEC 2018

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Title Photo by Méichelle Long
@ Caladesi Island



Conservation Through Education

The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society Vol. 85 No. 1

Wing Beat

SURPRISES AT FORT DE SOTO

Madeleine Bohrer, CAS Treasurer

As with any bird walk, one never knows what is going to be around each corner, up in a tree, behind a bush, or soaring in the sky. That is part of the appeal—the joy of the hunt!

Our late October walk to Fort de Soto had a few thrills and surprises before we even entered the park. It is always mandatory to scan the ponds on the west side of the Pinellas Bayway and it paid off: we had five Ring-necked ducks—one male, the rest female—bobbing in the water, preening in the morning breeze. Lovely! Then we heard the chittering of a Kingfisher—a beautiful female skimming the water like a Black Skimmer! Great start for the day.

Continuing down the road, there is a small boat ramp between the toll booths with a beautiful view of the lagoons to the west—never forget to turn your head at this spot because you just might see something amazing. How about one to two thousand White Pelicans? This was our estimate—many were right by the shore and hundreds more were tucked in the further reaches of the lagoons. Some would lazily lift themselves into the air but most were in the water. I wonder if they were resting from their trek from the north. We could have stood there all day: White and Brown Pelicans, Forster's Terns, Royal Terns, Laughing Gulls—a beautiful flurry of peaceful activity with the sun slowly rising behind us.

(cont. pg 2.)

Surprises at Ft. DeSoto >>> Madeleine Bohrer

Onward! How could anything top that? Well, something did: two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers perched in the trees by the mulberry bushes next to the ranger's house! Their pale, peach-colored flank feathers were glowing in the sun. One had a shorter tail than the other suggesting either female or juvenile. In true flycatcher form, they would suddenly leave their perch and return. We had a perfect view of them—this was a life bird for more than half of our group of fifteen people. What a thrill to say the very least and all this before 10:00 in the morning. Who needs coffee? These birds give us enough energy for the day!

The rest of the day was a bit tamer but just as fun: American Kestrel, Black-bellied and Wilson's Plovers, Short-billed Dowitcher, Reddish Egret, Red-shouldered and Cooper's Hawks, Prairie and Palm Warblers... We walked over to the Gulf beach where there was a strong hold-your-hat wind blowing, lifting the water into huge waves. On a sandbar a few hundred feet away, we saw dozens of Laughing Gulls, a few juvenile Herring Gulls, more terns, and a nice group of Black Skimmers.

What a glorious morning with a great group of people to revel in 45 species of birds by the end of the day. I wonder what the next bird walk has in store for us. It is always a surprise!





Photos by Dale Gobel

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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.

Past Issue of Wing Beat
[click issue to view](#)

Membership

[Membership Application](#)

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)

[Pinellas County Birding Checklist](#)

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT MEETING
First Monday of the Month unless otherwise noted.



AUG - SEPT 2018
In this issue: 2018
Academy Award Nominee
Orlando Field Trip - Plan Ahead!
President's Message
Tale from the Robert Mag

Conservation Through Education The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society Vol. 34 No. 1

Wing Beat

JUST SKIMMING THE SURFACE

Jason Sigmond: Three Rooker Stewardship Coordinator.

I just wanted to give you an update as to how things are going out on Three Rooker as for this season. Observers have nested on both ends of the island and fortunately recovered a few Alberto's. The South colony has already fledged approximately 40-50 fledges with several two-week-old chicks still on the ground. I know some fledges have recently shown up in more southern sites, and it's likely that they're from Three Rooker. The North colony had approximately 65-75 nests just before Alberto's however, the storm took away a lot of sand and eliminated most of those nests. The first day back out there I only saw four or five still incubating within the posted area. Fortunately, they have increased well with nesting close to their original numbers. On Thursday I saw twenty chicks, and several fledges which I imagine are from the surviving nests during Alberto's.

South Three Rooker serves as a significant test colony for Caspian, sandwich, and royal. On our last survey we had an estimated 750 royal chicks and between 300-500 light caspian fledges. Sandwich terns nested within the center of the royal colony with about 40 nests. Caspian had about 200 nests out there, and we saw five or six chicks on the last survey.

Unfortunately as is with nature there have been failures specifically for the least tern colony on South Three Rooker. Alberto came at a terrible time for them, about a week or so after hatching chicks. The proximity to the all-mother colony as well as being located within a laughing gull colony also put a lot of pressure on the least terns... (continued on pg 4)

Checklists >>> Provided by the Florida Birding Trail



[just click image]



IS IT NESTWATCH SEASON ALREADY?

Help the Cornell Lab of Ornithology NestWatch using Community Science.

 **HELP MEASURE NATURE'S SUCCESS**
nests, clutches, broods, and fledglings

For over a decade people like you have helped scientists by collecting valuable data on the successes and failures of nesting birds.

 EXPLORE THESE BIRDS: WE'D LOVE MORE DATA

 Eastern Bluebird	 Tree Swallow	 House Wren	 Black-capped Chickadee
 Western Bluebird	 American Robin	 Eastern Phoebe	 Barn Swallow

HOW TO COUNT!

- 1 GET CERTIFIED**

Become a certified NestWatch monitor using our online resources and test.
- 2 SEARCH**

Find active nests to monitor.
- 3 VISIT NESTS**

Visit the nests you found every 3 or 4 days and record what you see.
- 4 REPORT DATA**

Report your data using our online data entry tools.

[Join Now and Count!](#) 



NestWatch is a nationwide monitoring program designed to track status and trends in the reproductive biology of birds, including when nesting occurs, number of eggs laid, how many eggs hatch, and how many hatchlings survive. The database is intended to be used to study the current condition of breeding bird populations and how they may be changing over time as a result of climate change, habitat degradation and loss, expansion of urban areas, and the introduction of non-native plants and animals.

UPCOMING EVENTS: >>> *November & December Field Trips*



11/3

Bird Walk

- Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park Meet at 8:00am
- Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885

11/5

November Meeting *Potluck*

- Hear about the adventures and see the amazing photos. Please provide your own dinnerware and a dish to share. Drinks provided by CAS.
- Meet & Greet @ 6:30 PM, Program begins at 7PM

11/10

Upper Tampa Bay Park

- Meet at the park 8001 Double Branch Rd. by the education center at 830am. \$2 fee per car.
- Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz 657-0803

11/17

Werner - Boyce State Park

- Birding by Kayak Meet at the Walgreens at the corner of US19 and Curlew Rd. on the SW corner at 8am.
- Leaders - Paul & Debbie Trunk 430-0368

11/24

Honeymoon Island State Park

- Shorebirds, eagle/owl nests. Meet behind the McDonald's on the corner of Curlew and Alt 19 at 8:00am.
- Leader - Frank Brandt 219-7509

12/1

Bird Walk

- Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park Meet at 8:00am
- Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885

12/3

"Spiders" Jim Stevenson

- Pinellas County Educator presets how Spiders play an important role in the environment. Come learn how to recognize spiders, find out what their benefits are and their role in the ecosystem...bird food and nesting material. Meet & Greet @ 6:30 PM, Program begins at 7PM

12/15

South County Christmas Bird Count

- Want to help? - Contact Don Margeson 415-1371

12/22

North County Christmas Bird Count

- Want to help? - Contact Paul Trunk 430-0368.

12/29

Cross Bar Ranch IS BACK!

- Limited to 16 birders. MUST Make Reservations. Meet at Walgreens at the corner of US19 & Curlew Rd. at 6am. \$10 fee, Carpooling, BRING LUNCH & gas \$\$.
- Contact - Dale Goebel 510-1462

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



A couple of years ago I was taking a walk with my friend, Louise Roy, to scout out some nests. As we walked along, I put my hand upwards toward the sky and the most curious thing happened. A feather drifted down into the palm of my hand. I appreciated that "super" natural confirmation that birds are supremely important. It's been said, that when we take care of birds, we take care of everything. I believe it. It's why I volunteer and invest in Audubon and why I am asking you to do the same. We have several important efforts underfoot. At the national level, birds are under threat. Please continue to support the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) by calling your legislators.

Please keep an eye out for our annual letter. Our organization is in critical need of generosity in order to expand our educational programs and care for our feathered educational ambassadors. We are also in need of volunteers in our new office. Yes, I said that! Our new office! We have moved into our office, dust still settling, and are looking forward to Moccasin Lake Nature Park re-opening so the public can stop in to visit. We will also be looking for volunteers to participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count, one of the best examples of community science in existence today. We appreciate your support and have a track record of excellence. We will continue to focus on quality, learning and value.

We are glad that so many of our winter visitors, both human and bird, are back and that we are out of hurricane season. Addressing the causes and impacts of climate change remains top priority. We continue to see record breaking hurricanes and extreme weather events throughout the world, but also note nature's resiliency in the face of these events and changes. This year on February 14th, a special antennae was sent up on the Russian rocket ship to the International Space Station that will read the [satellite transmitters](#) placed on birds and animals. In 10 years time, large environmental disasters may be able to be predicted 2 weeks in advance by watching animal migrations. So much has been accomplished and we need to ground truth more now than ever. Please enter your sightings in programs like [E-bird](#) and let community science help advancement of our people and planet.

We are flying towards the end of the *Year of the Bird* and into Clearwater Audubon Society's *Big Year*. Please watch our [Facebook page](#) and our emails for grand opening information at Moccasin Lake Nature Park and for our holiday gatherings in our new facility. Thank you for caring about birds and for as much participation as you can give in the coming year.

We all make a difference, but it is up to us what kind of difference we make.

Barb Walker

THE NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL

January 17-21, 2019

The North Shore Birding Festival on Lake Apopka in Central Florida is a weekend event that is perfect for birders visiting Florida or locals wanting to learn more from well-known, knowledgeable birding guides. You can add to your life list while exploring a unique birding area. The Festival is only 35-45 minutes from Orlando attractions.

On Friday, January 18th, through Monday, January 21st, participate in field trips on the 20,000-acre Lake Apopka North Shore property and other nearby sites, sponsored by **Orange Audubon Society**. Trips will search for as many as possible of the **360+ species documented**, plus recently sighted rarities.

Timing in January is perfect to see a multitude of overwintering and resident species!

For photos of some of the fantastic birds of the Lake Apopka North Shore, visit the **Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive Facebook Page** or **Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive Facebook Group**



Birding Adventures

Paddy Cunningham

5181 SW 27th Terrace

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33312

birdpaddy@yahoo.com

(754) 201-1141

www.birdadventure.com



11th Annual Everglades Birding Festival January 17-21, 2019

Festival Site: Holiday Inn Express

2540 Davie Road, Davie, FL 33324

(954) 585-7071, 866-882-6368

WINGS OVER WATER

Discover the beauty of Southwest Florida's water, land and wildlife at Harms Marsh!

ADMISSION IS FREE!

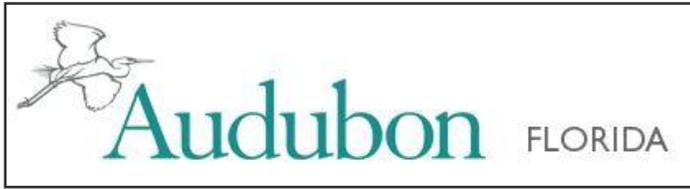
SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

Festival opens 9 a.m. - 2p.m.

**Exhibits, Walks, Presentations, Kid's
Activities, Farmer's Market, Native Plant
Sale, Food and More!!!**



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