

# The JAY

*The mission of the Seminole Audubon Society is to promote awareness and protection of the plants and animals in the St. Johns River basin in order to sustain the beneficial coexistence of nature and humans.*

June – July – August 2015

A Publication of Seminole Audubon Society

## Seminole Audubon in the Community

As part of Earth Day celebrations and community outreach, Seminole Audubon volunteers manned a booth at both Discover Wekiva and Earth Fest 2015. Discover Wekiva: *Our Springs, Our Community, Our Future* was hosted by Friends of the Wekiva River on April 18<sup>th</sup> at Katie's Landing. It was a day of activities focusing on the preservation, protection, and enjoyment of the Wekiva River Basin. There were guided canoe/kayak tours, and native plant strolls. Leslie Martin, Seminole Audubon co-president, led a bird walk through the Lower Wekiva River State Reserve. A thank you goes out to Teague Middle School's National Junior Honor Society for helping with set-up and our booth's activity.



The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Earth Fest 2015 was hosted by the City of Casselberry and Casselberry's Friends of the Park. The event was held at Lake Concord Park, Casselberry on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Some of the activities included seminars, live music, and free tree giveaways.



Seminole Audubon's booth was well attended at both events, especially by children, because of its 'Banding Activity.' In keeping with Seminole Audubon's involvement with Jay Watch and Least terns, the children made a bracelet (band) and added beads for their initials. This was quite a hit!

**The printing and mailing of this newsletter is made possible in part by the generous donations of Bob and Inez Parsell and ACE Hardware stores in Sanford, Longwood, Casselberry, and Oviedo.**

**2015-2016 Board of Directors & Committee Chairs (eff. 7/1/2015)**

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Vacant	Hospitality	
Vacant	Historian	

# WELCOME

**NEW MEMBERS**

**and Members NEW to our Chapter**

Deborah Alvis  
 Robert Andres  
 Regina Armaly  
 Cecilia Bryant  
 Carol Carpenter  
 Jacquelyn Dercole  
 Yasuo Fukushima

Oviedo  
 Sanford  
 Longwood  
 Sanford  
 Sanford  
 DeBary  
 Heathrow

Barbara Garner  
 Alice Heilman  
 Janice McIntosh  
 Zarina Muhammed

Sanford  
 Deltona  
 Lake Mary  
 Lake Mary

## Amendment One

Amendment One was approved by 75% of the Florida voters last November. The amendment dedicates 33% of the existing documentary tax to the purchase and protection of environmentally-

# Good News

## Imperiled Species Management Plan Set for Florida

FL FWC staff has completed a comprehensive strategy to protect 60 imperiled species that have previously received only minimal attention and research. Twenty-one (21) birds are included. The Plan goes to the Commissioners for consideration in June. After Commissioner feed-back and public comment it is hoped the Plan will be finalized by November 2015. Read the Plan at: [http://share1.myfwc.com/ISMP/Lists/Announcements/Attachments/12/ISMP\\_Draft2\\_2.9.2015.pdf](http://share1.myfwc.com/ISMP/Lists/Announcements/Attachments/12/ISMP_Draft2_2.9.2015.pdf) Contact Claire Sunquist with comments or recommendations: [Claire.Sunquist@myfwc.com](mailto:Claire.Sunquist@myfwc.com)

## The Earth is Getting Greener

Research published in *Nature Climate Change* provides a bit of hope for the restoration of forests worldwide. Deforestation in the Amazon Region and Indonesian Provinces is still severe, but these losses are being offset elsewhere on the planet. New growth has been verified in Africa, Australia and other areas of South America. Forests are growing on abandoned farmland in Russia and China has initiated large-scale, tree-planting projects. But the challenge of global warming remains critical. Only about a quarter of the CO<sub>2</sub> released by burning fossil fuels is absorbed by plants. The March 2015 NOAA report shows global average CO<sub>2</sub> has surpassed 400 ppm. <http://theconversation.com/despite-decades-of-deforestation-the-earth-is-getting-greener-38226>

## New Clean Power Capacity Surpasses New Fossil Fuel Power Capacity

Beginning in 2013 more renewable electricity-generating capacity (solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, hydropower) and nuclear power (counted as "clean") was added to world power supply than new fossil-fuel-fired power plants (coal, natural gas and oil). If the pace continues the International Energy Agency says solar energy will be the largest source of power by 2050. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-04-14/fossil-fuels-just-lost-the-race-against-renewables>

sensitive lands that help protect the water quality of our rivers, lakes, springs and the Everglades. During the current legislative session Audubon has worked closely with the Legislature in an attempt to assure that the funds are spent as they were intended. We have been disappointed in the allocation of the Amendment One taxes to fund existing government operations.

Audubon will continue to work with the Legislature during the special legislative session to implore them to honor the voters' intent when Amendment One was passed. Thank you to all who have made calls and sent email to their elected representatives. You have made a difference and funding for *Florida Forever* was increased because of your efforts.

Seminole Audubon has also joined with Kissimmee Valley Audubon, Audubon Florida and other Audubon chapters to provide input on the North Ranch Sector Plan in Osceola County. This proposed development of 133,000 acres of the Deseret Ranch would be the largest development in Florida history.

An independent peer review of the plan by three conservation experts found that an additional 19,107 acres of conservation/agricultural lands should be added to the plan submitted by Deseret Ranch. We will continue to advocate to the Osceola County Commissioners for the additional lands to be preserved as recommended by the peer review team of experts.

## Least Tern Update

The Least Tern is a state-threatened, colony-nesting seabird that, due to loss of beach nesting habitat, sometimes will nest on a gravel rooftop. Here in Sanford the terns are attempting that again this year at Monroe's On The Lake, the hotel on Marina Island.

We've seen as many as 25 Least Terns returning to the roof at dusk in April. There is evidence of breeding behavior, and birds have been seen returning to the roof with small fish. Unfortunately there may have been some predation of eggs by crows, but we still hope to have successful nests. All data is being reported to the Florida Shorebird Database created by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. **Leslie Martin**

## **New York Takes Migrating Birds into Consideration**

Migrating birds will get a break from tall buildings in NYC. The city will follow the examples of the Rockefeller Center and Chrysler Building by turning off bright outdoor lights in its buildings during migrating seasons. Fatal Light Attraction causes millions of bird crashes and deaths annually.

**Sam Kendall**

# **Top Shelf**

## **The Omnivore's Dilemma**

**Author – Michael Pollan**

*Review - Joan King*

I am totally hooked!! Michael Pollan is a wonderful writer. He is able to take the subject of food science, environmental concerns and the conscious decisions we make as a nation and put them into a story form to take you on a journey from farm to table. Making decisions on what we eat makes so much difference in our health, the health of our farmlands and environment. We as Audubon members know how important it is to save natural areas for our wildlife, but we need to learn how choices of what we choose to eat affect our farmlands. Monoculture and big industry are putting our environment in danger.

The Omnivore's Dilemma is also a study of how we as omnivores have evolved to eat a bewildering array of food choices. Americans lack the centuries-old food culture that other older countries have followed, making us trendy eaters. We are obsessed with diets to make us thin or healthy and end up as dysfunctional eaters. Many "healthy" foods have later been proven to make us unhealthy and make big business in charge of our health and food systems. Big agribusiness has Washington in its pocket.

The stories in this book make the issues easy to understand and entertaining. You will want to read his other books *Cooked* and *The Botany of Desire*. These books are truly an adventure worth taking.

Everyone in America should read this book!

# **Program Notes**

## **Birds that Breed in Central Florida**

On March 8th we learned about the Florida Breeding Bird Atlas II (BBAII) project and the birds that breed in our area. Faith Jones organized her program by nest type, starting with ground-nesters and working the way up to those that nest high in the trees. She showed images of nests and the birds that use them, plus provided the nesting dates. Greg Bretz, Seminole County BBA II Coordinator, assisted with the program by providing current breeding statistics. We thank Scott Simon and Ken Schmitt for permission to use their images which greatly enhanced Faith's program.

Thanks to all those who provided refreshments, and to congratulations to our door prize winners: Shirley Reilly, Sarah Donlan, and Tom Lane.

## **Birds, Birds, Birds**

### **April 12th Program**

Food makes any event a success! Seminole Audubon's final program and meeting of the season started an hour earlier than usual and centered on delicious food brought in by members to share. Two tables were filled with dishes of entrees, casseroles, salads, desserts, and more.

While eating we enjoyed a Bird Identification program presented by Leslie Martin. Bird images, previously sent in by members, were projected on the screen and we used our Field Guides to narrow down which species we were viewing. This was followed by a friendly competition of 'Name that Song.' Leslie played various bird songs as the audience worked to identify the source.

The nominating committee presented their nomination of Lewis Gray to the Board and everyone in attendance was thrilled that he accepted. Also re-elected to the Board for another two-year term are Bill Chapman, Sarah Donlan, and Bettye Leidigh.

Special recognition was given to Sarah Donlan and Donna Lea Needham for their contributions to

Seminole Audubon Society. Sarah spent countless hours organizing our spectacular field trips and Donna Lea has spent years working to protect our environment as Seminole Audubon Conservation Chair.

Congratulations to our door prize winners: Kathy Rowe, Ingrid Swenson, Dorothy Massie, Sarah Donlan, and Ann Nunez.

## Eagle Traffic

Mosey driving down a side street the other day with eyes peeled for neighborhood activities—cars backing out, kids at play, critters crossing the road—I was startled by a black and white flash as a very large black bird swooped down in front of me. With a gasp and an OMG, I braked to make room as it did a quick-stop landing and a squirrel pick-up. Then with a few flaps and squirrel dangling from talons, it disappeared into the trees. Out of sight just like that. If I'd had my field glasses or camera it wouldn't have mattered much. Gone.

I had forgotten to breathe. I released a breath, and rewound my head-video, mumbling to my invisible company in the passenger seat—black body, white under tail, white head—bright white head without markings, much larger than an osprey. What was that? Was that an eagle up-close-and-personal? Couldn't be. This is a neighborhood, not a preserve. Beginner birder that I am keeps me humble; no assumptions, only guesses. Later I'll get to the book; no photo this time.

Driving slowly, mumbling, scanning the foliage of leafy backyard trees, hoping for a bit of movement, wishing for another looksee, I decided that he was gone for sure and moved on. I was wide-eyed, astonished and disbelieving, still. Did this really happen? It may have to be a "fish story" with my arms extended "this big" as I retell the story. I'll add it to my life list and my brag book.

When I arrived at the 7-11 for gas, I chatted with staff and listened to many stories about nesting pairs of eagles in the neighborhood. Time to schedule a morning walk with camera, glasses, and field guide!  
**Bella, Beginner Birder**

## Jay Watch Training- Lyonia Preserve

Five members from Seminole Audubon Society, along with about 30 other advocates for our Florida scrub-jays, attended an orientation on May 16 for the "Citizen Scientists" who will participate in the "Jay Watch" program in June and July. Faith Jones, Pam Meharg, Jane Miller, Marty Shepherd and Shirley Reilly were the SAS members who enjoyed watching "At Home in the Florida Scrub," a video available online that describes habits and behaviors of our federally-endangered species. Last year there were orientations in seven counties and the number of Citizen Scientists in the state grew from 103 in 2012 to 131 in 2014.



Annually the Jay Watch is conducted in many of the scrub habitats in Florida. Why in the hottest months? Florida scrub-jays nest in February, March, and April. They're busy raising their nestlings in May and early June. By late June-July the young have matured enough to fledge and they are out and about with their parents. So, the birds are more visible at this time of year and the adult and juvenile plumage is distinct. (It's probably their vacation time.)

The training program consisted of learning to identify the adult and the juvenile birds and where they were seen. Reading and recording the colored leg bands is very important. Unbanded birds will be caught and banded so we can identify which area they are occupying. There are many areas in Central Florida, like Blue Spring, Lyonia Preserve, and Ocala National Forest among others where you can volunteer to help.

The program was conducted by Jay Watch coordinators: Marianne Korosy, Audubon Florida and Maria Zondervan, St. Johns River Water Management District. **Shirley Reilly**

## Scrub Jay Orientation at Lake Monroe Conservation Area

On a very warm Sunday morning May 17<sup>th</sup>, Rosi Mulholland, Land Management Specialist with St Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), assembled five volunteers at the Lake Monroe Conservation Area (LMCA) in Osteen. Rosi had asked for help in locating and recording Florida scrub-jays on the property. The "ready and willing" volunteers who managed to complete the requirements to be SJRWMD volunteers were Faith Jones, Pam Meharg, Jane Miller, Marty Shepherd, and Shirley Reilly.

Rosi provided aerial maps of the property with trails and the locations of 65 historical Florida scrub-jay sightings marked. Of the fifteen jays recorded during 2014 Jay Watch, the current general location of only three jays is known. SJRWMD does not have the staff to spend the time necessary to search the property for Florida scrub-jays.

We drove the main trails (some of them would look friendlier to hikers than our two four-wheel drive vehicles) making note of the points that need to be explored and the existing habitats. Some of the jays may still be nesting, but we did find two curious birds that were too far up in a snag for us to see the band colors. We were able only to confirm one was banded and other had no bands.



This group plans to meet and explore LMCA as is convenient to the members. Rosi suggested we name our explorer group and Pam and Faith decided on "Seminole Scrubbers"-not to be confused with house cleaners! Maybe "Seminole Searchers" would have been a more appropriate name. Looks like we're in for some fun!

**Shirley Reilly**

## Sending Two Campers to Eco-Camp

Seminole Audubon is happy to provide scholarships for two campers this summer. Each one will attend one week of Eco-Camp at the Ed Yarborough Nature Center in Geneva FL. Eco-Camp is put on by Seminole County Natural Lands.

## Birdsong App

If you are looking for a way to improve your birding skills or just keep them sharp during the summer doldrums, consider purchasing the Larkwire Birdsong Master Birder app.

The format is fun and simple. First you view an image of a bird and listen to its song. When you become confident that you can recognize the song, you can play a game that uses the songs of four different birds and tests your ability to recognize them. If you choose correctly, you are moved to the next song. If you miss it, you have the opportunity to replay the song and continue with the game.

The Master Birder song pack includes the songs of 343 species in two song packs and has four game levels: beginner to master. You can view birds by families (warblers, hawks, cuckoos, etc.) or look them up individually. You can also customize the games, allowing you to sharpen your skills for a specific area. Learning birding by ear is difficult, but this app is a great tool to help you improve those skills. Check it out at [www.larkwire.com](http://www.larkwire.com).

**Pam Meharg**

# Trip Notes

## Jane Isle

Jane Isle (Bird Island) in Lake Jesup is listed with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as a significant wading bird nesting colony. Seminole Audubon began formally recording bird counts of the island in 2001 and at one point was conducting monthly flight-line surveys by boat. The flight-line surveys haven't been done in a couple of years, but in early May a few members took a boat ride to Jane Isle in order to get a general count of the birds present. A significant change in vegetation from previous years was noted and is probably due to some invasive or undesirable plant species. In fact the plants on the outer perimeter were so tall, Faith Jones climbed up on the poling platform in order to get a glimpse of the inner part of the island. Even with the change in vegetation, it was nice to see that the island remains a desirable and safe breeding location for some of our most admired avian species. It was particularly exciting to see a pair of eagles leaving a tree in the center of the island!

Here is a list of the birds seen. Data from some previous counts can be found on Seminole Audubon's website at <http://www.seminoleaudubon.org/>. Once on the site, click on Bird Island. There is also a vegetation assessment on the website.



**Photo: Sam Kendall**

### **May 3<sup>rd</sup> Jane Isle Bird Count**

- 9 Double-crested Cormorant
- 20 Anhinga
- 3 Great Blue Heron
- 53 Great Egret
- 35 Snowy Egret
- 6 Little Blue Heron
- 18 Tricolored Heron
- 110 Cattle Egret
- 1 Green Heron
- 495 White Ibis
- 67 Glossy Ibis
- 2 Osprey
- 2 Bald Eagle
- 5 Common Gallinule
- 30 Bobolink
- 70 Red-winged Blackbird
- 250 Boat-tailed Grackle
- 10 Brown-headed Cowbird

**Marguerite Terwilliger**

## Crystal Lake Preserve

On March 14, our combined trip with Cuplet Fern Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society was a great success. Jim Denslow led us on a very informative walk through this pristine property. He explained the various plant communities and their relationships. Red maple, Wax myrtle, Virginia chain fern, Sand pine, and Longleaf pine are a few of the species we learned about. Jim taught us how the particular plants in each area of the preserve provide clues about the type of habitat, such as how moist or dry the area has been for many years.



During our morning learning about and enjoying the beautiful surrounding over thirty avian species made their presence known. Species of note were a northern harrier and a small flock of cedar waxwings.

**Faith Jones**

# Fort De Soto Park Pinellas County Florida April 7-8, 2015

Fort De Soto in Pinellas County is undoubtedly one of the best dropout points to see migrating birds. This year was no exception when 9 of our members took the trip to Florida's Gulf Coast. Tent camping, motorhomes, motels, whichever way one wants to bird there, it is truly a fascinating place to go. Tampa Bay and its inlets give an opportunity for diverse birding. The five of us in tent camping sites enjoyed nature at our doorstep. Binoculars and cameras in hand we were able to get up close to many uncommon species. Yellow-capped night herons, a loon, little blue egrets and many varieties of shorebirds, from willets to dunlins, were steps away. As the tide went out, there was a wide



young families.

**Photo: Sarah Donlan**



**Photo: Sarah Donlan**

margin of shallows between the Bay and us and we saw roseate spoonbills feeding, as well as white pelicans and numerous seagulls, dolphins and the fins of redfish protruding above the water.

As we gathered near the mulberry tree and fountain, many warblers of various kinds were feasting on the berries or taking turns in the fountain. Pine, yellow-rumped, prairie, northern parula, and a Louisiana water thrush were easily identified. Numerous doves, crows, as well as parakeets were visible and we hiked down the beach to see baby great-horned owls in their nest. Many osprey babies nested nearby in snags that looked as if they had supported wildlife forever, many gone by a long time, but refuge for the

On the trail behind the fountain looking up for those tiny warblers, Leslie and I encountered an oversized diamondback rattlesnake that looked as if he had just shed his skin and enjoyed a large meal. He was spectacular, estimated length at 5 feet or more, and totally in charge of his universe, since after taking quick pictures, we hurriedly returned down the trail from whence we had come-- very quickly! He gave us bragging rights though and we impressed anyone to whom we could show the pictures of our fearlessness. YES!! He had no interest in us, since he had had a large meal, thank heaven.

We were not through yet, though. Hiking to the beach we found a designated nest area, and on sandbars just off shore we could see dozens of shore birds enjoying near- perfect weather. Among those were a reddish egret and a morph egret, the male trying to impress her in every way possible. His dance was truly an inspiration and made us all laugh in wonderment. We continued on to a spit of land where terns, skimmers, and various shorebirds made their stop. Least terns, Leslie's specialty, and royal terns, skimmers, and

laughing gulls, all crowded on the peninsula to rest. These were picture-perfect scenes for the professional photographers that collected there. Large flocks of birds would launch themselves into the sky as a small helicopter came by.

Blue sky, puffy clouds and many, many birds intrigued us. We will go back there next year by mid-April and see it in wonder all over again.

**Sarah Donlan**

# Kraft Azalea Gardens Field Trip and Tree Destruction during Nesting Season



**Photo: Shirley Reilly**  
**Great Egret on nest at Kraft Azalea Gardens**

Members of Seminole Audubon Society and some guests met at Kraft Azalea Gardens on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Finding our way through the mansion-lined streets of Winter Park was a field trip of its own. One step out of our car, we were greeted by a cacophony of birds screeching; mostly young, high up in their nests, hollering to be fed and the parents swooping in with the breakfast fish. We spotted a nest of Pileated Woodpeckers with two heads poking out of the nest. Nearby was a nest of Blue Herons and a nest of three Anhinga chicks. Great White Egrets occupied another tree. Many Red-winged Blackbirds claimed smaller nests. It was a very ethnic neighborhood. One nest was quite active. It was a neighborhood fight between two Great White Egrets. Each one was claiming and fighting over the same nest. These things happen in crowded neighborhoods.

Under the trees were hundreds of blue, white and various colors of broken egg shells. But why were there so many egg yolks in many of the shells?

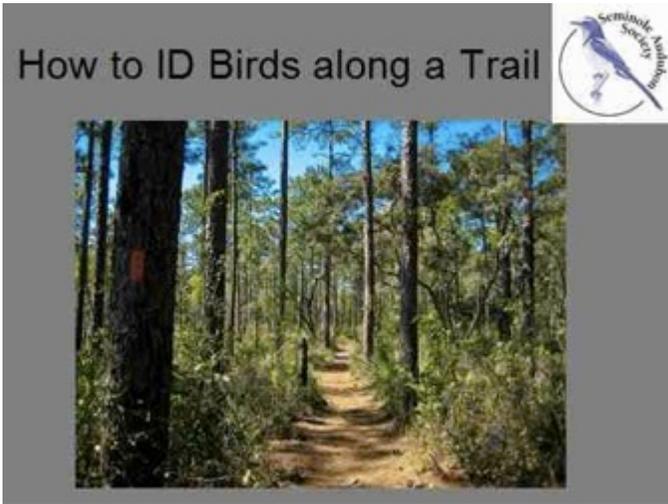


**Photo: Shirley Reilly**  
**Anhinga babies in nest at Kraft Gardens**

About this time, Jim Bronzo arrived and we discovered why so many yolks. The birds had been frightened out of their nests in the past five weeks by a tree service that was chopping down these huge trees during nesting season. A total of 250 birds were killed in five weeks.

Jim Bronzo is owner/operator of Second Chance Wildlife Sanctuary and he keeps a close eye on the Gardens. A few weeks ago he confronted the tree choppers and called the police when they wouldn't stop cutting. They had chopped down many huge trees around the parking lot; a total of 35 trees had been demolished. A huge pile of mulch remains as proof of this loss of habitat. Jim contacted the city commission and the tree company came back and painted over the "X's" on the trees that remained to be cut. But, you can still see the "X's." What will happen to these birds remains to be seen. People enjoy the birds, but that often-used acronym, "NIMBY, Not In My Back Yard" is one reason our birds are losing their habitats. I suggest you all visit Jim Bronzo's website [secondchancewildlifesanctuary.org](http://secondchancewildlifesanctuary.org) and click on the video at the bottom "Kraft Azalea, Winter Park" to see the dead chicks Jim has seen and some he's rescued. **Shirley Reilly**

# SAS Presents at FTA Conference



The Florida Trail Association invited Seminole Audubon Society to provide a program at their Annual Conference. On Saturday April 11, Faith Jones gave a presentation entitled "How to Identify Birds Along the Trail" at their State Conference held in Fruitland Park. The program was well received and no doubt there will be more hikers paying attention to sights and sounds on Florida's trails.



Cameras on smart phones are now able to produce some impressive images. Think of what a smart phone camera image might look like if taken through your binoculars! If you are interested, you can purchase an adapter for your smart phone. Carson IB-542 HookUpz is available for less than \$15. Meopta and SnapZoom also make these adapters. If you are a do-it-yourself person go to [Instructable.com](http://Instructable.com) and search for Binocular Mobile Phone Mount for detailed instructions on how to make one.

**Faith Jones**

## New Gadget for Birders

Digiscope photography, taking pictures with a digital camera through a spotting scope, has been a photographic technique since digital cameras emerged on the marketplace.



## Stay Connected with Seminole Audubon this Summer

Summer is almost here and although Seminole Audubon doesn't have programs scheduled, you can still stay connected!

1. Facebook - Email your bird photos to [seminoleaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:seminoleaudubon@gmail.com). We will continue to post images.
2. Twitter - Remember to follow us on Twitter. [Seminole Audubon@AudubonSeminole](https://twitter.com/SeminoleAudubon).
3. Bird Bits - When questions about birds pop into your mind, email them to [seminoleaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:seminoleaudubon@gmail.com). We will continue with Bird Bits next season and will do our best to answer your questions at the monthly programs.

**Marguerite Terwilleger**

# Make Coffee, NOT TRASH



As the drip coffee makers, such as Mr. Coffee, once took over the market from percolators, the single-cup coffee makers, such as Keurig, now dominate the market. It may be convenient, and make a great tasting cup of coffee, but what about all those little plastic cups? We can't recycle the plastic from which those little cups are made. Therefore, they end up in the landfill.

According to research done by **Mother Jones**, an independent news organization, the trash generated by K-cups sold in 2013 could circle the earth at the equator 10.5 times!

There are good alternatives to the purchase of those little plastic cups. You can buy universal refillable cups. These cups allow you to drink your favorite shade-grown, organic, fair-trade coffees.



Don't contribute to the trash. Drink the right coffee!

Scan the QR Code below with your mobile device to go to our web site.



## Membership Application

### For New Audubon Members Only

JOIN for the special rate of  
\$20.00 for 1 year - that's \$15 off the regular  
membership dues!

When you join Seminole Audubon Society you also become a member of Audubon of Florida and the National Audubon Society. Your membership benefits include our newsletter *The JAY*, *Audubon Magazine*, and the *Florida Naturalist*. Most importantly, your membership will help us work for better preservation of the environment for the benefit of all species, including mankind.

Make checks payable to:  
**National Audubon Society**,  
and mail with this form to:  
**Seminole Audubon Society**  
P.O. Box 2977  
Sanford FL 32772-2977

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