

The JAY

www.seminoleaudubon.org

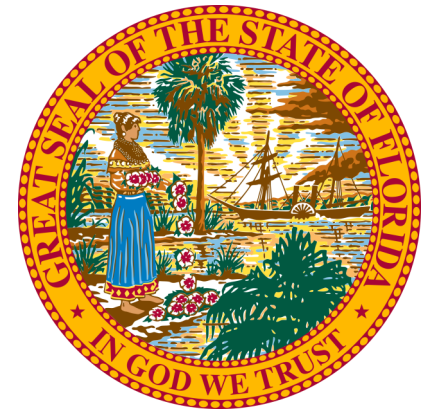


The mission of the Seminole Audubon Society, Inc. is to promote awareness and protection of the plants and animals of the St Johns River basin in order to sustain the beneficial coexistence of nature and humans.

June– July– August 2019

2019 Legislative Session

This year proved to be another disappointing year for our environment. The Legislature has yet to abide by the will of Florida voters. In 2014 we passed Amendment 1 with 75% voter support. Full funding for land conservation was the goal of that amendment. Historically \$300 million was budgeted annually for Florida Forever, conservation land programs. This year's budget has allotted only \$33 million with rural and family lands and local parks receiving nothing.



There were good bills presented to preserve some of our beautiful and endangered areas. Remember, Florida's drinking water also depends on adequate protection and management of natural lands such as wetlands and other areas that are vital for aquifer recharge. Other bills would have banned fracking, promoted renewable energy, provided better stormwater management, regulated onsite sewage treatment and disposal, and improved our water quality. Did you make a phone call or send an email to your legislators urging them to support any of these good bills?

Instead of funding to preserve our precious natural areas and our water we will be funding construction of massive new highways through sensitive rural areas of the state. New roads will bring other new building all along their paths.

On a positive note, this session did approve the acquisition of land in Hendry County that is critical panther habitat and part of Devil's Garden Florida Forever project. They also approved funding for the acquisition of 160 acres in Columbia County to help protect the springshed of



Ichetucknee Springs. Funding was approved as well for Everglades restoration. If only we would have the foresight to spend money to preserve so that down the road we would not have to spend a lot more to try to restore our natural areas!

Let's all do a better job next legislative session of communicating our will to our legislators!

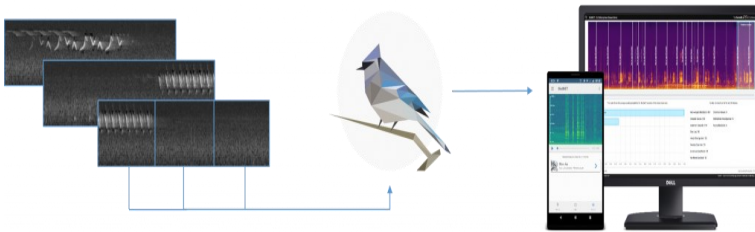
Faith Jones,
Conservation Committee

You Can Help Computers Learn Bird Vocalizations

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has given us eBird to help us keep records of our bird sightings, Merlin to help us identify birds we see, and now, along with Chemnitz University of Technology, they are working on BirdNET to help us identify birds we hear. BirdNET is currently a free research prototype app for machine-based learning to provide bird song identification.



The app allows you to record bird sounds. You can see a visualization of the recorded sounds in a spectrogram. You then can select a portion of the spectrogram to submit for analysis. The app returns the resulting list of possible birds. BirdNET matches your location with eBird.org data from your location to narrow the possibilities.



BirdNET splits your recording into one-second segments and makes a prediction for each segment. Each prediction has a probability value for every bird species. The species with the highest probability in all chunks is the species most likely in your recording.

Why not download BirdNET onto your smartphone and use it? You will not only be helping the Cornell Lab of Ornithology improve BirdNET, you will likely get some assistance identifying birds you hear.

Audubon Eagle Watch

May 15th was the official end of the Bald Eagle nesting season in Florida. Citizen Science volunteers all over the state watched excitedly as eggs were laid, eaglets hatched, and then matured. Like proud parents we celebrated as the eaglets fledged and left their nests.



Adult bringing food to nestling Photo by Michelle Vaughn

This season I had the privilege of monitoring two nests in Seminole County and was thrilled to watch four eaglets grow and fledge. This miraculous process will begin again in the fall.

If you are interested in becoming involved with Eagle Watch next year please contact Shawnlei Breeding at eaglewatch@audubon.org.



Eaglet

Photo by Michelle Vaughn

Michelle Vaughn

Keep Up With SAS

Visit our website **SeminoleAudubon.org** or follow us on:



Jay Watch

The Seminole Scrubbers, led by Shirley Reilly, continue to assist St Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) Land Management team by monitoring the Florida scrub-jay population at Lake Monroe Conservation Area. As an appreciation for their assistance, SJRWMD included the Scrubbers in a private tour of Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. Forty-eight avian species were documented during the tour.

Audubon Jay Watch training was held in early May, and the dates for annual Jay Watch are being set in late June and July on various local properties. If you were unable to attend this training session, but would like to volunteer, please contact jsulek@audubon.org.



Florida scrub-jay at Lake Monroe Conservation Area

F. Jones

Thanks to all the SAS Event Volunteers



Cecilia Carey, Phyllis Hall & Marty Shepherd at Casselberry Earth Day

Seminole Audubon Society (SAS) participated in the following outreach activities: Seminole County Gardening Expo on 2/23, Seminole College Earth Day - Oviedo Campus on 4/18, Lake Lotus Earthfest on 4/20, Goldsboro Elementary Magnet School (Sanford) on 4/24, Casselberry Earthfest on 4/27, and T.W. Lawton Elementary (Oviedo) Earth Day event on 5/3.

Kudos to SAS volunteers who staffed our outreach table and provided information about SAS, including how to attract birds with plants and bird boxes as well as other conservation topics. We did our best to help identify which bird when we got the question: "I saw this bird..." Our fantastic volunteers were: Cecilia Carey, Jenny Koester (UCF student), Leslie Martin, Joy Rector, Marty Shepherd, and Jenny & Jules Stewart.

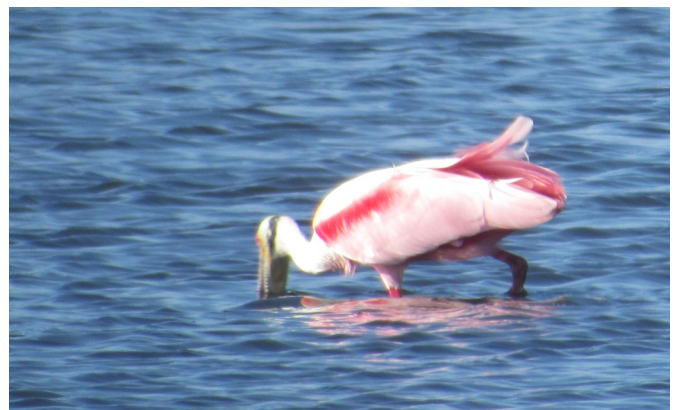
Goldsboro Elementary celebrated Earth Day 2019

In April, Joy Rector, representing SAS, met with two second grade classes at Goldsboro Elementary School. Topics of discussion included John James Audubon, what characteristics make an animal a bird, and reminders not to collect wild nests, eggs or feathers.

They spent time comparing and contrasting the American Flamingo and Roseate Spoonbill. The students enjoyed practicing the feeding behaviors of these two species. The students then colored a drawing of a Roseate Spoonbill.

The Sandhill Cranes on their campus were also discussed. The height of each student was measured and compared to the height of some birds. The students later graphed their height on a chart with the height of the birds. At the end Joy showed a video featuring the sights and sounds of large numbers of birds from 13 species at the Celery Fields in Sarasota.

The students loved it! Thanks to Joy for providing this wonderful program.



SAS Activities with Seminole State College 2018 - 2019

Phyllis Hall

In the fall, Phyllis sent the electronic version of the SAS brochure with the programs and field trips to Dr. Debra Socci, the Environmental Club advisor at Seminole College. That was distributed to students. During the year Phyllis reminded Dr. Socci and the Environmental Club leaders of upcoming field trips. Seminole College students expressed interest in participating in the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and were offered a short bird ID class by Faith Jones. However they didn't respond to this offer and no students signed up to participate in CBC.

Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) was held on October 19th in West Palm Beach. There are several corporate sponsors for CLI and SAS also contributed scholarship money to CLI. It was quite an honor for Aislin Cerron, an environmental engineering student at Seminole State College, Lake Mary, to be one of only 25 CLI students accepted into the program out of over 100 applicants. Phyllis Hall served as a mentor at the CLI program. Aislin's comment: *During my time at CLI, I was able to network and learn from some of the top leaders involved in the Audubon community. I am truly indebted to Florida Audubon and for Seminole Audubon for connecting me to this event which has allowed me to make so many new connections. This experience and all the knowledge I gained from it will have a lasting impact on me as I continue on my career path.*

SAS was contacted by Duke Energy Foundation in early December with an opportunity for a grant for planting to attract pollinators and birds. Phyllis made the connection with Dr. Socci. Dr. Socci and her grant team completed the application and received the grant. Seminole State College students will work with community partners to learn and create habitats for pollinators on the Oviedo campus as an extension of learning in the classroom and activities of the Environmental Club.



Hayley Furman, Natalie Boutwell, Janina Bagherzadeh, Dr. Debra Socci, Tina Crampton, Professor Patricia Smith (not pictured)

Neta Villalobos-Bell, Cuplet Fern and SAS member, spoke to Dr. Socci's students on February 14 on the topic of planting for pollinators.

Neta also gave the presentation, *Plant Strategies to Attract Pollinators*, at the biology colloquium on the Oviedo Campus on February 22. Over 70 students and faculty attended this event in the classroom and through live streaming. Phyllis attended as a helper and provided SAS brochures and other relevant handouts.

Four students and Dr. Socci attended the March 16, 2019 boat trip at the Marine Discovery Center in New Smyrna Beach.

Cecilia Carey and Marty Shepherd (pictured to the right) participated in the Earth Day festivities at Seminole State College – Oviedo Campus on April 18. They provided students with information about SAS and local birds. Their display featured Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and the native plants they depend upon.



The number of students who had never seen a hummingbird was surprising.



Landscape Photography in Seminole County

Reg Garner, local landscape and nature photographer, wowed the crowd at the March 10th program meeting with his images of area landscapes. Reg is the founder of the Sanford Camera Club and loves taking pictures around Seminole County where he grew up. He showed us familiar area scenes as we had never seen them before and many hidden treasures unfamiliar to most in the audience.

By his images, it was evident that Reg enjoys exploring lakes, rivers, natural springs, and even the cypress swamps where not too many would dare to venture. He showed incredible images of Lake Norris and its stands of dwarf cypress trees. There were images captured at sunrise and sunset in and around Lake Monroe, and many stunning shots of various sections of the Econlockhatchee River.

Another of Reg's favorite locations to shoot from is the 415 bridge. Those of us that travel that bridge without noticing much other than an occasional bird flying over were astounded by the magnificent images captured at that location. In addition, his images of large expanses of *Helianthus angustifolius*, Florida sunflowers, in full bloom taken at various locations were breathtaking.



Reg Garner

Photo by Sarah Donlan

Our thanks go to Sarah Donlan for arranging this program. Congratulations to the many door prize winners and thanks to Faith Jones for donating the books that were used as door prizes.

Kayaking on the Wekiva & Annual Meeting



Photo by Sarah Donlan

April weather certainly can be daunting and this year was no exception. Seminole Audubon again met at the Russells' property on the Wekiva River to potluck and kayak for the last meeting of the year on Sunday April 14th.

The first kayakers of the day were met with beautiful but slightly windy conditions. Great Blue Herons, numerous Limpkins, American Coots, Common Gallinules and an Osprey showed off for the group, giving us a close-up of their flying skills. Pickerel Weed bloomed beautiful purple spires as well as coreopsis, and the lush green islands created by Hurricane Irma's back-lash last year created hot spots for many colorful birds, some in breeding plumage. Great Egrets and Sandhill Cranes were around almost every bend.

Recently, at the same spot, a couple of us had the privilege of watching a Sandhill Crane couple teach their small one how to cross the River by positioning him between them and showing him an exaggerated way of walking with high knees and actually dog-paddling to reach the island in the middle of the River. The baby can float! Exclamations all around, of course!!

Potluck always brings out the best of conversations. The second group of 5 kayakers enjoyed completely calm waters, no wind and a lovely drift back to the launch place. Approximately 17 people attended. Kayaks and safety gear were contributed by the Russells and Lucinda Russell gave us an overview of the property and its natural lands. We are always grateful for their generosity.



Photo by Sarah Donlan

Kayaking on the Wekiva & Annual Meeting

Marguerite Terwilliger, chapter President, conducted a brief business meeting the main topic of which was our annual **elections**. The recommendations of the Nominating Committee for Board of Directors for Seminole Audubon were announced and unanimously approved. Jan Peters was elected and Sarah Donlan, Lewis Gray, Leslie Martin, and Marguerite Terwilliger were re-elected for two year terms. The remaining Board Members, Jim Denslow, Phyllis Hall, Shirley Reilly, Michelle Vaughn, and Corrinne Wertz will complete their current terms in June 2020.



We welcome all participants to our meetings and hope that we can secure volunteers to help in all departments of the group. Field Trip organizers, outreach volunteers and other assorted positions would help us reach our goals for the coming year. Board meetings are usually held in July and August for the upcoming season. Feel free to direct all inquiries to our website or email address.

Sarah Donlan, Vice President

SAS Conservation Committee

Our conservation committee has been hard at work throughout the year monitoring potential development issues in Seminole County, attending Audubon Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee meetings, and attending the Wekiva River Basin Commission meetings to monitor the construction of the parkway link from 429 to I-4. Special thanks to committee members: Cecilia Carey, Jim Denslow, Mindy Hellman, Faith Jones, and Sam Kendall.

Phyllis Hall Conservation Chair

Boni Sivi is Retiring!



After nearly twenty years, Boni Sivi will be stepping back from her Seminole Audubon Society volunteer work. Boni served SAS in numerous positions including Membership Chair, and for the last eleven years as our Newsletter Editor.

Boni lives with her husband, Tom, and Foxxie, her 20-year-old cat! They split their time between Florida and Pennsylvania.

SAS is indebted to Boni for all of the hours she has devoted to our Chapter over the years.

WANTED: Ideas for Programs or Trips

The Programs Committee is seeking ideas for programs next season. Is there a bird-related or conservation-related topic that you find of interest? Is there a particular species that intrigues you? Do you know of a good place for a field trip? A place you have been, or one you want to visit?

If you have an idea for a program or trip that might be of interest to our group we would love to hear your suggestions. We are also in need of speakers and would welcome your suggestions.

Please send your program and trip suggestions to SeminoleAudubon@gmail.com.





Marine Discovery Boat Trip

SAS members and guests filled the Marine Discovery Center's tour boat for our pre-St. Patrick's Day outing on March 16th. Captain Walt Hangen and Lisa



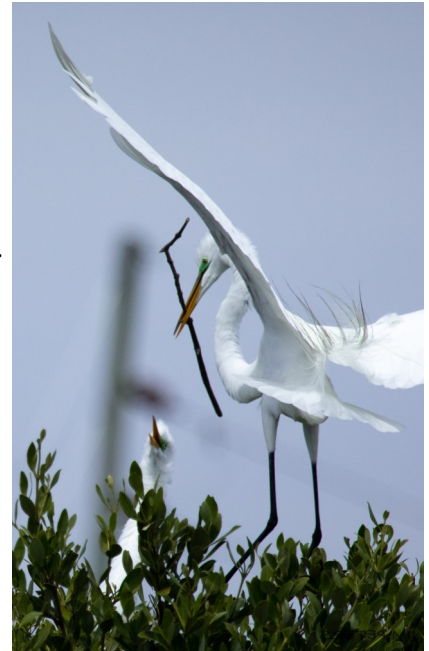
Mickey, a Florida Master Naturalist, led us on an informative and most enjoyable mid-day trip.

After leaving the dock in New Smyrna Beach our first stops were near mangrove islands in the Indian River Lagoon where seven avian species nest. The Brown



Pelicans and Great Egrets were spectacular in their breeding plumage. We then headed north up the Indian River, past the Ponce Inlet, and into the Halifax River. Bottlenose Dolphins entertained us along the way.

The birds were plentiful and we saw most of the species you would anticipate in mid-March. Our bird list of over twenty-five species included three species of gulls, two species of terns, and three species of herons. Although we saw plenty of oyster beds, we did not locate any American Oystercatcher.



After we had traveled a short distance up the Halifax River we spotted the best bird of the day, a Common Eider. To put into perspective how rare it is for a Common Eider to be in Florida, it was a "lifer" for Shirley Folse who has birded this area for over 60 years!

We are extremely appreciative of all the work Shirley Reilly did organizing this trip for us.

Photos by Jim Peters and Lewis Gray



Common Eiders are normally found along rocky coasts of the North Atlantic. They can dive to 60 ft., and survive on a diet that includes mussels and other bivalves, along with some crabs, other crustaceans and small fish. Apparently, their prey is swallowed whole and then crushed in the gizzard!



Do You Have Any Spare Time?

As the Board plans for next season, we find that we could use a few more volunteers. Is there a specific task you enjoy that is not listed below but might be beneficial to SAS? If so, we would like to hear from you!

Here is a list of tasks with which we could use assistance. Please contact seminoleaudubon@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer, or for more information.

Refreshments:

Coordinate volunteers to bring refreshments to our meetings. Coordinate the food for any pot lucks we might plan.

MeetUp Website:

Post upcoming SAS activities to our MeetUp site.

Historian: Maintain SAS archive materials, including scrapbooks, binders of previous newsletters, brochures, etc.

Maintain Inventory of SAS Premiums:

We keep a stock of mainly books and bird seed on which an inventory needs to be kept. The items need to be brought to meetings.

Mail Welcome Letter to new members who do not have e-mail. New members are sent a welcome email with a copy of the Season Brochure and recent newsletter attached. Not all new members have or provide an email address. Once a month you would be provided with a list of new members who need a letter, brochure and newsletter mailed to them. Some months there are none; others up to six letters need to be mailed.

Lead a Bird walk: Do you have a favorite place you like to go birding? Or a place you have wanted to visit? Would you be willing to lead a group of people to that location?

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Introductory offer For New Members Only \$20.00/ 1 year *Join on our website SeminoleAudubon.org*

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

Seminole Audubon Associate Membership \$10.00 / year

Available to Audubon Society members assigned to other chapters.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zipcode: _____

Phone/ e-mail: _____

Chapter Code: C9ZE310Z

Federally recognized 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation

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2019-2020
Board of Directors & Committee Chairs (eff. 7/1/19)
407-797-4636
SeminoleAudubon@gmail.com

2018-2020	Phyllis Hall	Co-President	phylliscath814@gmail.com
2019-2021	Marguerite Terwilliger	Co-President	mterwilliger51@gmail.com
2019-2021	Sarah Donlan	Vice President	sarahdonlan42@gmail.com
2019-2021	Jan Peters	Treasurer	jan@jankpeters.com
	Vacant	Secretary	
2018-2020	Shirley Reilly	JayWatch	shirleyreilly34@aol.com
2018-2020	Michelle Vaughn	Hospitality	michellevaughn329@gmail.com
2018-2020	Jim Denslow	CLP Liaison	bdenslow@cfl.rr.com
2019-2021	Lewis Gray	Jane Isle	lewisngray@bellsouth.net
2019-2021	Leslie Martin	Programs & Trips	woodstork.martin@gmail.com
	Sarah Donlan & Michelle Vaughn	Programs & Trips	
2018-2020	Corrinne Wertz	Publications	cwertz127@aol.com
	Marty Shepherd	Membership	gindad@cfl.rr.com
	Phyllis Hall	Conservation	phylliscath814@gmail.com
	Michelle Vaughn	Education	michellevaughn329@gmail.com
	Jim Peters	EagleWatch	jim@jameshpeters.com
	Peggy Stickney	Purple Martins	peggyrn@bellsouth.net
	Sam Kendall	Press	samuelk32@embarqmail.com
	Phyllis Hall	Energy	phylliscath814@gmail.com
	Faith Jones	Outreach	faithaudubon@gmail.com
	Shirley Folse	Newsletter Compiler	
		Phone Communication	407-797-4636



WELCOME

New Members

&

New to Our Chapter

Marlene Alva	Geneva
Robert Beery	Deltona
Lee Ann Earle	Sanford
George Jacobs	DeBary
Yvonne Kimball	DeBary
Barbara Konecny	Lake Monroe
Lynn Lord	Sanford
Janet Simerville	Sanford
Cameron & Diana Smith	DeBary

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AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

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On your first visit to **AmazonSmile** (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted to select a charitable organization from our list of eligible organizations. You can change your selection at any time.

The JAY

Seminole Audubon Society

PO Box 2977

Sanford FL 32772-2977



Calendar

www.SeminoleAudubon.org

Sunday July 21 3:00 p.m. SAS Board and Season Planning Meeting



2019 Audubon Assembly

October 25-26, 2019

Hilton University of Florida Conference Center

Gainesville, Florida

This year's *Audubon Assembly* will be in Gainesville, Florida. The North Central Florida region is full of sparkling freshwater springs, incredible wetlands, thriving working forests, and, of course, magnificent birding. Be sure to save the date on your calendar to join us October 25 and 26 for the largest gathering of conservation professionals and activists in Florida.

Our Assembly planning team is eager to hear from you. As we plan field trips, learning sessions, keynote addresses, and more, [let us know what you'd like to see at this year's Assembly!](#) We expect to receive many suggestions, and we may not be able to include them all.

Registration for the Assembly opens in late July or early August 2019. The hotel is currently accepting reservations at the discounted Audubon rate. Check out FL.Audubon.org/Assembly for more information.

A special thank you to host chapters Alachua Audubon, Marion Audubon, Santa Fe Audubon, and Four Rivers Audubon!