

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.

March, April, May 2020

Seminole Audubon Society Receives Collaborative Grant from National Audubon Society

Cecilia Carey and Phyllis Hall

In November Seminole Audubon Society (SAS) submitted an application for a collaborative grant from National Audubon to create an educational kiosk to be placed near the Purple Martin nesting gourds at the Sanford marina on Lake Monroe. Jim Peters of SAS maintains the gourds, putting them up each January before nesting season and taking them down before hurricane season.

We received notice that we have been awarded the grant in early January. We worked on the grant with Robert Beall, Operations Manager, Parks and Recreation Department for the City of Sanford. The kiosk will provide conservation information about the life of Purple Martins, their role in the lake shore ecosystem, and how to assist them by planting pollinator gardens focusing on native plants and limiting pesticides. The kiosk will have the same look as other kiosks along the Riverwalk. The grant is for \$1,000. SAS will contribute \$250 plus volunteer hours.



Purple Martins Have Returned

In mid-January Cecilia Cary, Phyllis and Richard Hall assisted Jim Peters install Purple Martin gourds on Lake Monroe. It did not take the birds long to find them. Purple Martins were first sighted by Michelle Vaughn on January 31st. The sighting was confirmed on February 1st.

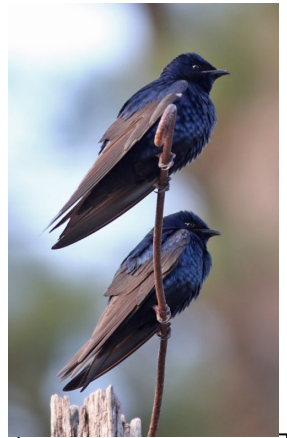
First to arrive were two males and two females. Since then, more birds have arrived and they are using the gourds. Thanks to Michelle Vaughn for keeping watch on the gourds.



Featured Species: Purple Martin

by Faith Jones

Order: Passeriformes
Family: Hirundinidae
Genus: *Progne*
Species: *subis*
Subspecies: *subis*



Purple Martin males
Photo Ken Schmidt

Similar to other members of the family Hirundinidae (swallows), Purple Martins have long tails and wings that aid in their long flights and provide the maneuverability that enables them to catch their major source of food, flying and water-skimming insects. They eat, drink and bathe on the wing. When perched, their long wings often extend past their tail. The legs and feet of the swallow are short and built primarily for perching, not walking.

The largest members of the swallow family, Purple Martins, are about 8" in length. There are three subspecies of Purple Martins found in North America. *Progne subis arboricola* are found in the Pacific northwest, *progne subis hesperia* are found in desert areas of the southwest, and *progne subis subis* are widespread east of the Rockies.

Their plumage is dimorphic. Adult male plumage is all dark with purple iridescence. Adult females and young birds are brown with buff-colored breast. Purple Martins take 2 years to acquire adult plumage, but they do breed as subadults. They have a large repertoire of vocalizations, most of which are best described as a chortle or gurgle. Males have a unique clicking sound at the end of their song.

Purple Martins spend the winter in South America, mainly Brazil, and return to the eastern U.S. to breed. Purple Martins are the earliest neotropical migrants to arrive with "scouts" arriving in Florida in early January looking for nesting locations. Scouts are thought to be the oldest individuals in a population and are the first to migrate north. It was once thought that scouts were males in search of nesting locations who would then return south to guide their colonies to the chosen nesting site. We now know this is not true. Scouts can be male or female. A martin colony is actually a group of unrelated birds attracted to a common breeding site. The birds arrive and depart in late summer, independently. They do not travel as a flock. The martin scouts may return to a previous nesting site. Purple Martins normally arrive over an eight-week period.

Purple Martins prefer to nest in groups. Most Purple Martins rely on humans to provide nest cavities in the form of multi-compartmented houses or gourds. Purple Martins prefer and have better breeding success in white gourds. Housing should be free-standing at a height of 10-17', and placed a minimum of 30' from human housing or trees.

Nests are built of mud, grass and twigs by both sexes. Nests are lined with fresh green leaves, which have been shown to have insecticidal properties and also moderate the humidity of the nest cavity. Parental tasks are shared by both parents. Between July and August, shortly after the young birds fledge they begin the migration back to South America. Similar to other neotropical migrants, only half of the birds that fledge survive their first year. Those that survive can be expected to live 4-9 years.

This is a much-studied species so there is a wealth of information available to assist you in learning the do's and don'ts of being a Purple Martin landlord.

Sources:

Ehrlich, P.R., D.S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. *The Birder's Handbook: a Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds*. Simon & Schuster, New York.
Sibley, David Allen Sibley. *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*. 2001. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
"Purple Martin: A Passion for Purple": James R. Hill III. *Birds Watcher's Digest*. March/April 2004 p28-37
"Purple Martins" Fact Sheet SS-WIS-49. Dept. Wildlife Ecology & Conservation, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, IFAU, Univ. of Florida. July 2001.
www.purplemartin.org
www.purplemartins.com

Update on Proposed River Cross Development

The original proposal for the River Cross development was composed of 600 single-family homes, 270 townhouses, 500 apartments and 1.5 million square feet for shops, eateries and offices on the 291 environmentally-sensitive acres just east of the Econlockhatchee River, west of County Road 419 and north of the Orange County line. The entire 670-acre River Cross property is zoned for one home for every 5 acres. About half the property is wetlands. This proposed development was on the agenda of the August 14, 2018 Seminole County Commissioner meeting. Over 60 people signed up to speak against the proposed development. Pam Meharg was able to speak on behalf of SAS. She also sent a very comprehensive letter to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. County officials said the additional growth would mean spending tens of millions of dollars widening roads, extending water and sewer lines, building new schools and adding more public safety facilities to accommodate all the new residents. The commissioners voted unanimously to reject the development.

The developer sued. The judge approved part of the motion. The developer submitted a new development proposal with nearly 300 fewer apartments and a 70% reduction in commercial space than the original plans but kept the same number of single-family homes and townhomes at 870. In June 11, 2019, the Seminole County Commissioners held a closed attorney-client session with legal counsel to discuss litigation strategy related to expenditures, and to consider a settlement offer from the River Cross Land Company, LLC. The developer sued the county in federal court, arguing that the rural boundary and rejection of his development plans violate the Fair Housing Act because it "has a segregative effect and disparate impact on protected minority classes in Seminole County." County Commissioners are in continued negotiations with the developer and there has been a lot of press on this issue. SAS conservation committee will continue to monitor this and advocate to maintain the rural boundary.



WELCOME New Members

and New to Our Chapter

Joan Louise Bayne	DeBary
Anne Blackadar	Lake Mary
Patrick Bohlen	Oviedo
Susan Connell	Casselberry
Shannon Flynn	Sanford
Eileen Glass	DeBary
Kevin Jackson	Sanford
Harvey Lewis	DeBary
Joanne McCardle	Sanford
Andrew Mears	Deltona
Yvonne Naese	Lake Mary
Barbara Palma	Sanford
William J. Selwitschka	Sanford
Carol Sheehan	Deltona
Phyllis Thomas	Lake Mary



Cathy Matthews spotted these three Limpkins on a golf course in Winter Park. Keep your eyes open as you never know what you might see!



Carbon Offsets

Samuel Kendall

National Audubon president David Yarnold announced at the National Convention that he would be purchasing Carbon Offsets for everyone in attendance. This was certainly generous but more importantly it brings attention to what is now the largest source of US greenhouse gases; the transportation sector. I have been purchasing offsets for my infrequent airline flights but this announcement by president Yarnold convinced me to examine my larger carbon footprint.

Public officials in both major parties have been discussing the possibility of a carbon tax and returning the money to citizens calling it a carbon dividend. This action would supposedly reduce the demand for carbon fuels. But some critics are saying that this approach to reducing a carbon fuel would only prolong its production and consumption. If, indeed, consumers are refunded their carbon tax in a dividend it would give them the means to continue purchasing gasoline and supporting the oil companies. What is the best way to reduce our dependency on oil and gasoline and pay for our environmental/atmospheric damage, too?

Acting individually I could begin purchasing my own carbon offsets depending on the miles I drive. I would then be including the cost of my pollution with the price of my gasoline. And some carbon offset companies have calculated this cost and determined a credit price per miles driven. I need only to keep a monthly record of my mileage and calculate my tons of CO₂. Then go online to whichever offset company I choose and clear my conscience. All this might even reduce my time on the road!

Here's a way to calculate your CO₂.

- Visit <http://www.carbonify.com/carbon-calculator.htm>
- This is the carbon offset organization David Yarnold used: <https://www.cooleffect.org/content/project/alto-mayo-protected-forest> Alto Mayo Protected Forest
- I have used: <https://thegoodtraveler.org/> The Good Traveler
- The Lahontan Audubon Society in Nevada, uses Offset Alliance <https://www.offsetalliance.co/>

LAWN, YAWN

Richard Poole

"We want shaven carpets of grass, but what nonsense it is to shave grass as often as men shave their faces! Who would not rather see the waving grass with countless flowers than a close surface without a blossom? Think of the labor wasted in this ridiculous work of cutting the heads of flowers and grass." William Robinson 1894.

"The lawn is one of the most interesting sociological and psychological phenomena of our times. It is a sort of living fossil, having evolved in western European culture. Lawns are kept alive only by an exorbitant amount of nursing and babying; otherwise they would disappear, to be as extinct as the dodo." Warren Kenfield of more recent times.

Why should our lawns be circumscribed by foreign plants and sit in a moat of foreign grass that requires constant fertilizing, watering and mowing to meet conventional standards? Somehow we have arrived at the point in which homogenization and monotony are called "aesthetically pleasing." Americans are emerging from this coma of landscape monotony and are reclaiming their yards. They are beginning a *true* American tradition by growing American plants, creating unique, personalized expressions based on plant communities that existed on the site before it was bulldozed.

Program Notes

January 12, 2020

Bears, Bears, Bears

Lori Lindsay, Program Coordinator with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) presented a very interesting educational program about Florida Black Bears. She shared many facts about bears including that they are mostly solitary, their usual range, and feeding habits. They are very smart and learn human patterns. They are shy and usually avoid humans. We have a high population of bears in Florida compared to other states. With our higher population density, we have a high people- to-bear ratio. We need to follow good bear safety practices including keeping garbage in closed garages and only put it out on the street the morning of pick up. If bird feeders are a draw for bears in your neighborhood, take them inside. It's important that we co-exist with bears. Keeping them wild and away from human use areas is a responsibility we all must share.



February 9, 2020

Little Things Mean A Lot in Photography

Professional photographer Wayne Bennett presented an inspiring and informative program on photography tips. He showed examples of his own photography on how little things make a big difference. Tips he shared included taking time to watch wildlife to see what they are doing and then having the camera focused and ready so you can capture that unusual pose or activity as well as taking photos from a different angle for added interest and something unique than the "point and click" photo. Wayne focused on bird photos but he included other photos from his trips around the world.

Trip Notes

January 18, 2020

Black Bear Wilderness Area, Sanford

This was a very well-attended walk from the parking area to the St. Johns River and for a short distance along the river. The leisurely walk was led by Lewis Gray who pointed out birds, alligators, and other things of interest.



Faith Jones shared the history of this property and its various past uses. She also explained the vital role SAS played in placing the property in the Seminole County

Natural Lands Program. She gave special thanks to Sam Kendall who represented SAS during countless hours of negotiations in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

It was a decent morning for birds with 25 species sighted. Highlights were an Orange-crowned Warbler, and a healthy population of Limpkins.



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
Limpkin
Anhinga
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Little Blue Heron
Tricolored Heron

White Ibis
Black Vulture
Barred Owl
Belted Kingfisher
Downy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
Eastern Phoebe

Tufted Titmouse
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Carolina Wren
Common Grackle
Black-and-white Warbler
Orange-crowned Warbler

Common Yellowthroat
Northern Parula
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Cardinal

Trip Notes

February 15, 2020

Great Backyard Bird Count at Audubon Park, Deltona

We had perfect weather for our outing to Audubon Park in Deltona. For many of the participants it was a first visit to this City of Deltona park. Although stormwater management is the primary purpose of the park, it is also used for passive recreation and natural resource preservation. The park adjoins the Green Spring – Osteen segment of the East Central Rail Trail.

Forty-three avian species were seen, but we were only able to positively identify forty species. It was still a very respectable list for submission to the Great Backyard Bird Count. The highlight of the trip may have been the two Blue-headed Vireos who were cooperative and stayed in mid-story branches long enough for all to get good views of them, or the Wood Stork that gracefully flew in and landed at the edge of one of the ponds. In addition to birds listed below, we also observed an American Alligator and Southern Black Racer.

Mallard x Mottled Duck (hybrid) 2	Little Blue Heron 1	Downy Woodpecker 2	Gray Catbird 1
Common Ground Dove 1	Cattle Egret 3	Pileated Woodpecker 1	Northern Mockingbird 2
Mourning Dove 1	White Ibis 2	Eastern Phoebe 3	American Robin 10
Sandhill Crane 5	Black Vulture 2	Blue-headed Vireo 2	Savannah Sparrow 2
Killdeer 9	Turkey Vulture 2	Blue Jay 3	Red-winged Blackbird 1
Wood Stork 1	Osprey 1	Fish Crow 8	Black-and-white Warbler 1
Anhinga 1	Bald Eagle 1	Tree Swallow 11	Common Yellowthroat 1
Great Blue Heron 1	Red-shouldered Hawk 3	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1	Palm Warbler 1
Great Egret 1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1	Pine Warbler 3
	Red-bellied Woodpecker 3	Carolina Wren 3	Yellow-rumped Warbler

Thursday February 20, 2020

Blue Spring State Park, Orange City

It is disappointing to say the least when your plan requires a cool winter morning to get in touch with your Manatee side, and the weather turns out to be in the 70s. We did get to see five manatees. The ten SAS members turned that disappointment to real sunshine by going to Plan B instead. We searched instead for Florida Scrub-jays. Shirley Reilly has done JayWatch at Blue Spring State Park, and knew where they might be found. A little trek through an empty camp site rewarded us with a family of Florida Scrub-jays. Four individuals sat in the top of an oak tree and peered down at us. Some in the group have never encountered these charismatic birds.



Eastern Towhee Sarah Donlan

As part of our Plan B, we took the Blue Heron pontoon boat tour out on the St. Johns River. It may have been a cloudy day, but it was perfect for wildlife viewing and imaging. We saw more Purple Gallinules than any had seen before. Great Blue Herons were nesting, and many Limpkins were seen searching for their favorite snails. Three gigantic gators and many babies came out as the sun broke through. A variety of wading birds, vultures, and Bald Eagles were seen. Florida and the St. Johns were at their most abundant and beautiful.

Saturday February 22, 2020

Project ColonyWatch—Jane Isle

Our intrepid survey team was undaunted by a frigid morning for the first survey of 2020. As they neared Jane Isle they were greeted by a huge flock of American White Pelicans. A full report of the project and the survey will be in the next issue of The JAY.



Photo by Sarah Donlan



Photo by Sarah Donlan

Upcoming Programs

Sunday March 8, 2020 at 2:00 pm

Meeting Place Changes



Flame-faced Tanager Leslie Martin

Birds of Ecuador and Colombia-

Leslie Martin & Faith Jones

Stalwart bird-seeking traveler Leslie Martin will share with us photos and experiences from her birding trips to Ecuador. Faith Jones will do the same for their trip to Colombia.

There have been about 1100 species of birds confirmed in the U.S. Colombia has 1850 species of birds, 81 of which are endemic. Ecuador has 1635 species of birds with seven endemic. They will show both bird and landscape images, plus some of the escapades from SAS's January

birding trip to Columbia. This meeting will be held in the **auditorium University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County, 250 W. County Home Rd., Sanford, Florida 32773.**



Glistening Green Tanager

Leslie Martin

Sunday April 5, 2020

Annual Meeting – Potluck & Paddle

This is our last meeting of the season and is scheduled a week earlier than usual. We will offer kayaking on the Wekiva River near Katie's Landing on **Wekiva Park Drive**, Sanford at the Russell homestead. Kayaks are available, or bring your own. The first group of paddlers will leave at 8 am and the second group will leave after the potluck lunch which will start around noon. Bring or wear appropriate river wear. You could get wet. Weather is changeable this time of year so dress accordingly. The meeting and election will take place during lunch. Contact Sarah at sarahdonlan42@gmail.com for directions and details.



Upcoming Trips

Thursday March 12, 2020

Orlando Wetlands Park, Christmas

Join us for a guided walk and tram tour of this premier birding area where 220 bird species have been documented. Weather can be cold and there is very little shade, so dress accordingly. Bring snack. Meet at the park at 8:00 am or carpool from in front of Ross in the Walmart parking lot on 17/92 near Lake Mary Blvd. Carpool will leave at 7:15 am. A donation for The Friends of the Orlando Wetlands is not required but would be appreciated. Please RSVP to Cecilia Carey cacarey@cfl.r.com if you plan to attend.



SAS Adopts Lake Jesup Park

As part of Seminole County's Adopt-a-Park Program SAS has adopted Lake Jesup Park. The first clean up was held on January 25th. Participants filled bags with trash, tallied a respectable bird list, and were treated to a drink

Leslie and Marguerite discovered on their recent trip to Colombia, coconut lemonade. It was certainly more fun than work!

The next clean up/birding at Lake Jesup Park will be **March 21st.**

Meet at the park at 8:00 am. If you are interested in helping, please contact Marguerite Terwilleger at mtewilleger51@gmail.com or Leslie Martin at woodstork.martin@gmail.com. Lake Jesup Park is located at 5159 S. Sanford Avenue in Sanford.



Another Threat to Migrating Birds

In the early 2000s, chemical companies developed a technology to treat crops with a new class of insecticides known as neonicotinoids (neonics) by coating the chemicals on to the seeds of annual field crops such as corn, soy, canola, wheat and cotton. Neonics are absorbed into the plant's tissue and their residues are present throughout all parts of the plant including pollen and nectar. Farmers use these insecticide-coated seeds whether there is an insect problem or not.

NWF



White-crowned Sparrow Ken Schmidt

Scientists have documented how neonics are devastating bees in many parts of the country. Now, a new investigation provides evidence that these agricultural chemicals also may be harming migratory birds. Birds are exposed to the insecticides if they eat neonic-coated seeds on farmlands when they stop to rest and refuel during spring migration which occurs about the same time farmers are planting the coated seeds for their crops.

Canadian researchers studying White-crowned Sparrows found that ingesting even tiny doses of a neonic causes the birds to lose weight. This decreases their ability to survive and reproduce. "The chemical is causing the birds to become somewhat anorexic and delay their migratory journeys," says coauthor Christy Morrissey, an ecotoxicologist at the University of Saskatchewan, "It's clear evidence these chemicals can affect bird populations." The research, published in *Science*, represents another potential blow to migratory birds that range in farmlands, especially grassland species that are among the fastest-declining groups of birds in North America.

You Can Help Protect Birds

Bird populations are plummeting. Loss of habitat is the primary cause.

Here are three activities to help the birds.

1. Remove your lawn and replace with Florida plants that occur naturally in your area. Don't have a lawn.
2. Reduce, preferably eliminate, your consumption of meat. Much less land is required to produce a meatless meal than a meal with meat. The Amazon forests are burning to create pastures for cattle.
3. Support the local Florida Native Plant Society local Florida Native Plant Society and help promote the use of plants that occur naturally in your area. The birds will thank you.

Buy organic food and drink shade-grown coffee. Increasing the market for produce grown without the use of pesticides, which can be toxic to birds and other animals, will reduce the use of these hazardous chemicals in the U.S. and overseas. Shade coffee plantations maintain large trees that provide essential habitat for wintering songbirds.

Will you help?

Eagle Watch

This is an exciting time for Eagle Watchers! The Bald Eagles have returned, constructed nests, and are either incubating eggs or feeding their incredibly hungry eaglets. Participating in this incredible journey is a great opportunity to help collect data and protect Florida's Bald Eagles. Find out how you can participate by contacting Shawnlei Breeding at eaglewatch@audubon.org.



Photo by Michelle Vaughn

Premiums available for Donations to SAS

Items available:

Bird Seed

White Millet and Black oil sunflower

Minimum donation \$3 for 1 or \$5 for 2 bags

Pocket Naturalist Guide, laminated & compact.

Waterfowl of N. America or Florida Birds

Minimum \$7 each.

Seminole Audubon Society labeled Backpacks

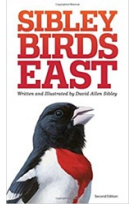
Lightweight for day hikes or shopping.

Minimum donation \$5

Sibley's Field Guide to Birds of Eastern N. America rev. 03/2016.

A birder's must-have reference book.

Minimum donation \$15.



Makes a great gift, too!

SAS History Archives

Chuck Honaker and Phyllis Hall are now the keepers of the SAS history archives. If you have items that should be in the archives, please give them to Chuck chonakerjr@gmail.com or Phyllis phylliscath814@gmail.com.

Birds & Bagels Hike at Lake Harney Wilderness Area

Join Seminole County Natural Lands Program and Seminole Audubon Society for bagels and bird watching at the **Lake Harney Wilderness Area**. Participants will hike through the oak hammock and end the hike on the Observation deck to enjoy bagels & juice! Participants should wear closed-toed shoes, and consider bringing bug spray and water. Leader: Chuck Honaker

When: April 4

Where: Lake Harney Wilderness Area, 2395 Osceola Fish Camp Rd, Geneva

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 am

Ages: 7+ Children must be accompanied by an adult

Cost: \$5/person

Pre-Registration Required. Register online at recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov Call 407-665-2211 for more information.

Visit the SAS Booth

Celebrate Earth Day at Lake Lotus Park, a beautiful 150-acre nature preserve which protects our wildlife and ecological systems. This free, family-friendly event includes:

Activities:

Nature Exhibits & Live Animals

Fishing Instruction

Panning for Gems & Minerals

Ranger-Guided Tours

Face Painting & Caricatures

Date: Sunday April 19, 2020

Time: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Location: Lake Lotus Park

Address: 1153 Lake Lotus Park Road
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714

Cost: FREE



Environmental Day Camp Grants Available

Do you know a child age 7-12 who would benefit from attending Seminole County Natural Lands Spring Break or Summer Adventure Eco Camp? Campers will have fun hiking, setting live traps, fishing, handling the animals in the Nature Center, doing arts & crafts and many other fun activities. It is an outdoor Adventure and Environmental Education program that is committed to promoting individual growth and environmental awareness. Grants may also be used for camps at Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Garden. Camp information can be found on their websites. Grant applications are available on our website, seminoleaudubon.org

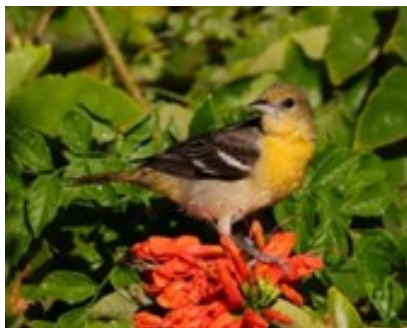
Shirley Folse's Yard, an e-Bird Hot Spot

Long time SAS Board member and birding instructor Shirley Folse has always tried to maintain a wildlife-friendly yard. Over the years her yard in Chuluota has proven to be a haven for birds. In November, Shirley began to hear a bird's chattering sound which she had heard before, but could not readily identify. On investigation she was finally able to spot the bird. On seeing the yellow-orange color, her first thought was Baltimore Oriole, but then she got a glimpse of the large white wing patch and knew it had to be a Bullock's Oriole. Shirley's journals note a Bullock's Oriole was in her yard during the winter of 2005-2006.



Bullock's Oriole by Ken Schmidt

Shirley's identification was confirmed by Lorne Malo who visited in early December. Lorne reported the sighting to e-Bird and the excitement began. We live in a different age than in 2005 when a few of Shirley's local SAS friends knew of the sighting. Bullock's Orioles are native to western North America and are a rare sighting east of the Mississippi. When the listing appeared on e-Bird, birders from many locales decided to take advantage of adding a western bird to their Life Lists without having to travel out west. Most birders stay about 30 minutes, while others stay for hours. About 90% of the visitors have seen the bird.



Baltimore Oriole by Ken Schmidt

Shirley Folse's yard is now an e-Bird Hot Spot with 65 species being recorded since December! The star, of course, is the Bullock's Oriole. At the time we are putting together this newsletter, the Bullock's Oriole and a Baltimore Oriole are still in Shirley's yard. If you would like to see them, please call first for directions and to let her know you are coming. Her number is 407-797-4636.

Make your voice heard!

How Did We Grow? is a follow up to the 2008 How Shall We Grow? effort that asked over 20,000 Central Florida residents how they thought the region should develop over the next fifty years. Now, we are asking, "**How Did We Grow?**" In 2008, the consensus was to grow in centers and connect those centers with transit.

Take an online survey and add your thoughts and comments regarding how East Central Florida Region is growing. The survey is located at <https://hdwg.metroquest.com/>. You will need to use a computer to fully access all the options in the survey.

For more information, or if you require assistance taking the survey, contact East Central Florida Regional Planning Council 407-245-0030 or visit their website at ecfrpc.org.

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What's Happening Outside?

The following is a list of things you can expect to observe during the next few months. The information is taken from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

March

Carolina Wrens begin nesting. Why not hang a gourd or open basket under your eaves for them to use?

Swallow-tailed Kites will be returning to Florida from their South American wintering areas to breed in Central Florida.

Frogs and toads move to ponds, streams and ditches to breed following rains.

Listen for newly returned Chuck-Wills-Widows calling after sunset.

Great Blue Herons that started nesting activities in January may now be seen on their nests.

Great-crested Flycatchers return late March to early April.

Brown Thrashers begin singing.

Migrating songbirds, in full breeding plumage, arrive in waves each week.

Wood Storks in central Florida begin courtship and nesting.

Florida Scrub-jays begin to mate and build nests in scrub oaks.

Wild Turkey and quail begin breeding in Florida.

Hummingbirds return.

Purple Martins begin nesting.

Litters of raccoons, bobcat, and armadillos are being born.

Black bears begin moving after winter's inactivity.

Horseshoe crabs lay eggs on coastal beaches on a full moon at high tide.

Snakes and other reptiles are more active and likely to be seen in yards and gardens.



Swallow-tailed Kite
Ken Schmidt

April

Migrant warblers concentrate on coasts after cold fronts.

Indigo Buntings, Mississippi Kites, Eastern Kingbirds, Grosbeaks, Warblers, Tanagers, Orioles and thrushes begin returning to North America.

Florida Sandhill Crane chicks are more conspicuous as they become old enough to begin foraging in open habitat.

Plant extra parsley for black swallowtail butterfly larvae to forage.

Most Wild Turkey hens are nesting.

Alligators begin moving about, seeking new territories and mates.

May

Bald Eagles begin migrating north.

Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers are breeding.

Courtship ritual of adult alligators begins, noted by the loud and resounding bellows and water slapping. Continues through June.

The last of the Cedar Waxwings and Goldfinches head for their northern breeding grounds.

Least Terns nest on beaches, sandy flats, and flat gravel rooftops that look like beaches!

Brown Pelican and White Ibis young are now visible in nests.

Breeding begins for many resident and summer songbirds.

Peak of coyote denning season.

Most bats give birth May through mid-June.



Wild Turkey Ken Schmidt



Least Tern Ken Schmidt

Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee (RCC)

Phyllis Hall

Phyllis Hall, Mindy Hellman and Cecilia Carey attended the January 12 RCC meeting via conference call. The RCC is composed of representatives from Audubon Chapters in Central Florida: Orange, Ridge, West Volusia, Southeast Volusia, Highlands, Halifax River, Kissimmee Valley, Lake Region, and Oklawaha. The RCC meets three times per year to share information and provide updates on our regional conservation priorities for 2020 which are 1) promote Lake Apopka restoration, visitor access and a new Audubon Nature Center, and 2) Monitor and act on local and state government land use decisions impacting wildlife habitat in our geographic area.

At the January 12 meeting, the new Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) Coordinator, Kristen Sims, was introduced. Kristen will coordinate CLI graduates throughout the state connecting them with each other and with their local Audubon chapter activities. Kristen is based at the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland. The president of the new UCF Audubon chapter was also introduced. CLI participants are college students with conservation-related majors who were selected to attend the program at Audubon Assembly and will continue working with Kristen and their Audubon Chapter mentor throughout the year. Phyllis is the mentor for Mackenzie Blevins, a marine biology major at Florida Southern College.

Charles Lee, Director of Advocacy for the FL Audubon Central Florida Policy Office, gave updates on legislative issues.

A decision was made on December 12 on the Osceola Parkway extension through a portion of Split Oak Forest, a wilderness conservation land east of Orlando in Osceola County. This was a compromise solution to the original proposal. It will add ten new acres of mitigation land to every one acre affected by the project. The action requested by RCC was to continue to pressure officials to provide adequate funding for this.

There is concern about the request by CEMEX to expand their mining in the Green Swamp Wilderness area. Over 322,000 acres of the Green Swamp region was designated as an Area of Critical State Concern in 1974. It is located west of Highway 27 and east of Interstate 75 in Polk, Lake, Sumter, Hernando and Pasco Counties. The headwaters of the Peace River, Withlacoochee River, Oklawaha River, and Hillsborough River are located here. Its 560,000 acres of wetlands, flatlands and low ridges are bounded by prominent sandy ridgelines. Rainwater drains across the surface to create headwaters of four major rivers: the Withlacoochee, the Oklawaha, the Hillsborough and the Peace. Rainwater also trickles down through the soil to replenish the Floridan aquifer system, the primary source of drinking water for most Floridians. The RCC chapters in that region were urged to contact the Lake County Commissioners to oppose the CEMEX project. Lake County Commissioners cannot approve this project on their own. It will also need to be approved by the Department of Economic Opportunity Division of Community Planning.

Another issue of concern discussed was legislation related to biosolid disposal. Osceola County received a proposal from TW Hill Trucking to process 150 tons/day, distributing it on 4,000 acres of ranch land. This will send several times the current limit of phosphorus into the Kissimmee River watershed. There is proposed legislation to tighten regulations and eliminate an exemption that currently allows this dumping. There is new technology that was started and had success in the City of Sanford some years ago to convert the biosolids to energy. That was abandoned during the Governor Scott era. Audubon Florida will be advocating for legislation to tighten regulations and eliminate the Class AA provision in the 2007 law, which allows the biosolids to be classified as fertilizer and therefore not regulated. RCC members were encouraged to advocate at the local level to encourage innovation to deal with biosolids from treatment facilities rather than dumping them on land.

"The Advocate" is an email issued weekly or more often during the FL legislative session providing updates on bills of interest to Audubon and alerting members to actions which can be taken to support/advocate for our positions. Sign up to receive "The Advocate" at <https://fl.audubon.org/about-us/audubon-advocate-newsletter>

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

Term	Board Members	Office & Roles	
2019-2021	Marguerite Terwilleger	Co-President Facebook	mterwilleger51@gmail.com
2018-2020	Phyllis Hall	Co-President Outreach, Conservation, Web Site, Seminole College Liaison	phylliscath814@gmail.com
2019-2021	Sarah Donlan	Vice President Programs & Trips, Facilitate monthly meetings	sarahdonlan42@gmail.com
2019-2021	Jan Peters	Treasurer	jan@janetkpeters.com
2018-2020	Shirley Reilly	JayWatch	shirleyreilly34@aol.com
2018-2020	Michelle Vaughn	Hospitality Eagle Watch, Programs & Trips	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 Christmas Bird Count, Backyard Bird Count	leslielou63@gmail.com
2018-2020	Corrinne Wertz	Publications	cwertz127@aol.com

Board Support Positions

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Mindy Hellman	Recording Secretary	mindy-hellman@usa.net
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Sam Kendall	Energy	samuelk32@embarqmail.com
Faith Jones	Newsletter Compiler	faithaudubon@gmail.com
Shirley Folse	Phone Communication	407-797-4636
Joy Rector & Cecilia Carey	Elementary Education	joy7audubon@aol.com
Cecilia & John Carey	Conservation	cacarey@cfl.rr.com
Margaret Loring	Monthly Meetings PowerPoint, Email blasts, Meet Up	mloring@cfl.rr.com
Chuck Honaker	New Member Welcome Letter SAS Premiums	chonakerjr@gmail.com

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The JAY

Seminole Audubon Society

PO Box 2977

Sanford FL 32772-2977



Calendar of Events

www.seminoleaudubon.org

Program Meetings are held at 2:00 pm on Sunday afternoons.

Sunday Mar. 8	Birds of Ecuador and Colombia <i>This meeting will be held in the auditorium at the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole Co., 250 W. County Home Rd., Sanford</i>
Sunday Apr. 5	Wekiva Paddle, Picnic, and Annual Meeting sarahdonlan42@gmail.com

SAS Field Trips Details and registration information for all of these trips are in this issue of The JAY and on www.meetup.com/seminoleaudubon-com, or e-mail us at seminoleaudubon@gmail.com

Thursday Mar. 12	Orlando Wetlands Park , Christmas
Saturday Mar. 21	Adopt-A-Park: Lake Jesup Park , Sanford. Cleanup & Birding 8:00 am.
Thur.-Sat. Apr. 16-18	Crystal River Overnight , Crystal River

Crystal Lake Preserve, Lake Mary.

Work mornings. Time and meeting location 407-323-4506 or bdenslow@cfl.rr.com

Seminole County Natural Lands Guided Hikes. Must Pre-register 407-665-2211. Cost \$5.00

Sat. Mar. 28	Herp (reptile) Hike	7:30– 9:30 pm	Geneva Wilderness Area
Sat. Apr. 18	Nocturnal Animals	7:30—9:30 pm	Lake Harney Wilderness Area
Sat. Apr. 4	Birds & Bagels	7:30– 9:30 am	Lake Harney Wilderness Area
Sat. Apr. 25	Swamp Walk	8:00—10:00 am	Spring Hammock Preserve
Sat. May 16	Morning Hike	8:00—10:00 am	Lake Harney Wilderness Area
Sat. May 23	Morning Trail Trek	8:00—noon	Black Bear Wilderness Area

Other Activities

Sun. Apr. 19	EarthFest	10:00– 2:00 pm	Lake Lotus Park, Altamonte Springs
TBA	JayWatch Training		Lyonia Preserve, Deltona