

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.

January - February 2024

Seminole Forever Update

By Phyllis Hall

The ordinance for Seminole Forever was approved by County Commissioners in August. Without requiring any new taxes or fees, this program aims to identify, acquire, and preserve environmentally sensitive lands, water resources, forests, and farmlands. Priority areas will be on lands connecting the wildlife corridor and the Wekiva River Basin.

The ordinance includes an Acquisition and Restoration Committee (ARC) consisting of seven voting members selected by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), one by each Commissioner and the other two members nominated and selected by the BCC. Each member will serve two terms.

At their meeting on November 14, 2023, the BCC unanimously approved the members of the ARC:

- Jay Exum, environmental consultant. Appointed by Commissioner Lockhart.
- Tim Jackson, planner, engineer, and Board Member of 1000 Friends of Florida. Appointed by Commissioner Constantine.
- Gabbie Milch, Soil & Water District 4 plus St. Johns River Water Management District middle basin coordinator. Appointed by Commissioner Herr.
- David Bear, attorney and president of Save Rural Seminole. Appointed by Commissioner Dallari.
- Beverly Evans, real estate agent. Appointed by Commissioner Zembower.
- At large: Jeanette Schreiber, treasurer of Friends of the Wekiva River, and Phyllis Hall, president of Seminole Audubon Society.



ARC. Left to right: Tim Jackson, Jay Exum, Phyllis Hall, Jeanette Schreiber, Gabbie Milch, David Bear.

Missing: Beverly Evans

Terms will be two years, but they were randomly assigned at 1 or 2 years to balance out the committee. Phyllis has a 2-year term. The committee will meet in January for orientation which will include a review of the ordinance, legal issues such as Sunshine Laws, determine the meeting schedule and place, etc. A website with application process, committee names, etc., will be launched soon. Funding already exists and inquiries have already been submitted. The committee will adopt acquisition criteria based on the ordinance, develop an evaluation report, announce and launch the program and acquisition process, review applications, and develop a 5-year plan.

In Remembrance:

Myra Eisencoff Platel

By Corrinne Wertz



Myra Lee Hicks Eisencoff Platel was the oldest member of Seminole Audubon Society and had been a loyal member since the 1970s. Some say she had been a member longer than anyone else. Myra died peacefully in hospice care at the age of 91 on September 24, 2023.

Myra was born in Crosby, AL, on February 28, 1932. After her family moved to Florida, Myra graduated from Florida State University in 1954 with a B.S. Degree in Elementary Education. On August 9, 1958, she married Robert Eisencoff, moved to Sanford, and taught at Pinecrest Elementary for 23 years.

Myra was an advocate for teachers, including being a lobbyist in Tallahassee for educational issues. Being active in Seminole County politics for many years led to Myra's being named a delegate for the 1980 Democratic National Convention in New York City. Later, she was able to visit the White House to meet Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter.

Faith Jones remembers that Myra was a very active "Graham Cracker" - a staunch supporter and campaigner for Bob Graham in all his political endeavors. Graham was the Keynote Speaker at one of the early Florida Audubon Assemblies. Myra and Faith went representing SAS. Myra wore her "Graham Cracker" scarf to the program and Graham spotted it right away. They had a very nice chat after his speech. Myra was on cloud nine. Faith remembers taking a photo of Myra that day with Mr. Graham and says it was published in *The Jay* around October 2003. Chuck Honaker did an extensive search of the archives for that photo, but it was not located.

Upon her retirement, Myra enjoyed working in her flower garden, reading, attending live theater and musical performances, and staying informed on current events. She was active in the Seminole Audubon Society as well as the Sanford Historical Society for many years. She continued her love of learning by taking classes for seniors at Seminole Community College and enjoying trips with various groups to art museums and botanical gardens.

Myra served as hospitality chair for SAS and headed up the mailing of as many as 600 newsletters for many years. She chaired a team of volunteers who would gather to fold, tape, stamp, and sort the newsletters by zip code. Transitioning to providing the newsletter digitally on the website has eliminated that expense and labor-intensive effort. Myra wrote a series of articles for *The Jay* about SAS history. The series of 11 articles ran from the September-October 2016 issue through the March-April-May 2019 issue, skipping only two issues in between.

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Robert Eisencoff in 1973. He had worked for the railroad.

Photograph Courtesy of DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory
<https://www.degusipefuneralhome.com/obituaries/Myra-Hicks-Eisencoff-Platel/#!/TributeWall>

The Sad Case of the Buckled Sycamore Tree

By Sam Kendall

When I downsized from my house I left behind a yard of proud, long-needle pine trees. I didn't recognize the tall tree squeezed between the sidewalk and parking lot in front of my new apartment. My moving helper said it looked sick. That prompted me to identify it. It's a sycamore tree, the largest deciduous tree in North America. The peeling bark is actually a primary identification feature; sycamores are normally grey and scaly, apparently mistakable for diseased. Now after five years here the tree has become my welcome-home friend. You can't imagine my shock last September when I returned from the afternoon Audubon meeting. The tree was bent like a bow!

Searching through some photos from previous years I could see it leaning slightly but now it was threatening collapse. Was the tree responding to some extreme stress? Can a tree suffer from heat stroke?

The temperatures in the summer months in Central Florida were all record setting. The *National Weather Service* said August was the hottest month ever recorded and that all of Central Florida was 2-3°F above normal. Are the sycamores abandoning Central Florida and migrating north with the mangroves and spoonbills in response to climate change?

In 1986, the respectful builders of my community on the Little Wekiva River took care to save lots of trees. But, with all the concrete surrounding them their roots cry out for breathing room and water. What a shame those big sycamore leaves no longer contribute to a carbon rich forest floor; instead get herded by obnoxious, CO₂spewing gas blowers and discarded as if trash. This community is only feet from busy State Road 436. The leaves do courageous work filtering particulate matter and muffling vehicle noise. Has this work become the trees undoing?



The Buckled Sycamore Tree
Photo by Sam Kendall



Peeling bark, shed in thin strips, is a primary identifying feature of the Sycamore. Maple-shaped, coarse-tooth lobed leaves bring a touch of color to fall in Florida.

Photos by Sam Kendall

Last year nearly all the sea turtles hatched in Florida were females. Similar to alligators, their sex is determined by the nest temperature during incubation. Only females emerge when the covering sand is consistently above 88.8°F. We might worry that this could create a problem for their continuing procreation. But unlike humans, the turtles have survived 250 million years of climate and earth upheavals. Scientists doubt anthropogenic warming will pose an insurmountable hardship.

The *World Meteorological Organization* said the earth endured its hottest northern hemisphere summer ever measured; according to *Climate Central* the hottest in 125,000 years. The struggling sycamore will have to endure year after year of higher temperatures unless a compassionate hurricane brings relief.

2023 Audubon Assembly

By Phyllis Hall



Assembly by Audubon Florida
Photo by Phyllis Hall

Assembly ended on Saturday morning. After breakfast, there was a chapter celebration of awards to chapters and ending with a PowerPoint of photos from each chapter highlighting one accomplishment. SAS submitted a photo from the St. Richard's Episcopal Church planting for birds grant. Assembly concluded with a plenary presentation.

The Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) students followed a parallel track. Their field trip was to Fred & Ida Schultz Nature Preserve. For one learning session, students had their own session with orientation to the CLI program, professional development, etc.



Audubon Florida 2023 Conservation Leadership Initiative
Students with their Mentors
Photo by Phyllis Hall

The 2023 Audubon Assembly was held in Tampa on October 27 and 28, 2023. There were two guided field trips to choose from on Friday morning to either Lettuce Lake or a boat tour of Tampa Bay. After the luncheon, there were opportunities to attend learning sessions in the afternoon. These included creating habitat in unconventional ways to maximize connections for conservation lands, a panel discussion on perspectives from the next generation of conservationists, and bringing new birders into the conservation movement. The awards banquet was followed by a keynote panel presentation with photographers discussing the topic: When does wildlife photography become conservation photography?



Phyllis Hall with her CLI mentees,
Marie Sebastiani (left) and Alex Barath (right)
Photo by Phyllis Hall

Hopefully, more SAS people will be able to attend next year's Assembly which will be held in Daytona Beach on November 8-9, 2024.

Audubon Florida's 2024 Conservation Action Agenda

Audubon Florida's 2024 Conservation Action Agenda was set at the 2023 Assembly. The items determined can be found at <https://fl.audubon.org/news/read-audubon-floridas-2024-conservation-action-agenda>

Full details of the agenda items can be found in the PDF located at: <https://fl.audubon.org/sites/default/files/>

2023 National Audubon Leadership Conference

By Alex Barath

My trip to the 2023 National Audubon Leadership Conference at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado the first weekend of November was an exciting adventure! Colorado is a mountainous landscape, which both myself and my UCF Knighthawks' president, Ava-Marie Gomez, relished. We were taken by bus straight from the airport to Denver's Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was originally a war-time manufacturing site, later transformed into the well-known urban wildlife sanctuary. We saw magpies, hawks, loons, finches, prairie dogs, and even bison! Our visit to the park was limited to thirty minutes and we were then transported for two and a half hours to our hotel in Estes Park, a mountain town surrounded by the incredible Rocky Mountain range. We immediately jumped back on the bus to go downtown for the welcoming reception, a meet and greet with a choice of eating places.



Alex Barath and Ava-Marie Gomez
Photo by Alex Barath

The next morning, at the plenary session, Audubon's next steps as a progressing organization, their "Flight Plan," were revealed. The Flight Plan includes a strategy to counter the 3 billion bird decline by working towards measurable goals and expanding Audubon Society's outreach across the entire western hemisphere. Using more communication, more unity, and more relationships across the Americas, the Audubon Society foresees a greater possibility for expanding conservation progress, sustainability, and support for biodiversity! It was fascinating to hear them talk about strategies and unifying all efforts to "Bend the Bird Curve" and reverse the decline in bird populations.

Shortly after the plenary ends, all the campus chapter leaders and attendees met up at a separate lodge to discuss effective strategies to enforce the Flight Plan at college chapters. We listened to a chapter leader from Connecticut question ways we can include indigenous support into protecting and restoring lands. We also had the chance to talk about our own conservation efforts that have worked in Florida—including projects such as starting native plant gardens or building least tern sandboxes on rooftops.

Following lunch, I attended a seminar that featured the executive director of the Seal River Watershed Alliance in Manitoba, Canada - Stephanie Thorassie. The goal of the SRWA is to conserve one of the biggest, intact watersheds on the planet using western science, and the combined knowledge of indigenous people. She listed several success stories of their boreal forest wildlife research, collaborations with scientists, and featured multiple barriers faced by her people trying to sustain the watershed. I was fascinated by the SRWA's efforts to conserve a critical habitat for lots of northern species of plants and animals alike.

After the seminar we rushed our bus to go to Bear Lake – a natural mountain lake that stands at a high



American Three-toed Woodpecker



Canada Jay
Photo by Alex Barath



Steller's Jay

2023 National Audubon Leadership Conference Continued from page 5

elevation of 9,500 ft. The hiking trails were super icy the entire walk, and the evening brought in incredibly chilly winds that deterred most birds. However, we spotted the elusive American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*), a brilliant Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*), a Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), and an American Dipper (*Cinclus mexicanus*)!

At the evening dinner, four speakers talked about their efforts to reach out to the community to inspire conservation efforts in their communities in Canada, Chile and the U.S. The next morning included various bird watching options. After lunch, the seminar topic was "Including More People in Mindful & Accessible Bird Outings." We learned about the significance of "mindful birding," or slow bird watching, with the aim of deeply engaging with and enjoying the birds and nature around us. We were also taught new strategies to engage new bird watchers who join our clubs, such as identifying birds by characteristics first before revealing their actual species' names; or holding hiking groups for specific levels of bird watching: beginner, amateur, advanced, etc. We had a handful of notes by the end of the meeting and more ideas to incorporate into our own Knighthawk Club at UCF. During Saturday evening's dinner, we met up with

other Audubon Staff from Florida chapters. Matt Hogan, the regional director of the mountain-prairie region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (US FWS), spoke about aligning the causes of Audubon and US FWS. He signified the importance of hunting in conservation and awareness; brought up the efforts and effects in prairie bird populations through land acquisition; and spoke about a need for pressuring the departments of the government to help fund and advocate more sustainable projects.

At the closing reception, the following day, we listened to Marshall Johnson, Audubon's Chief Conservation Officer, give a final, wonderful speech about all of us coming together to protect birds. With a midnight flight home, and after enduring the cold weather and high altitude, I was truly exhausted by the time I got back to Florida, but I am so glad I was able to attend the 2023 Audubon Leadership Conference.



All University Campus Chapter Leaders attending the
2023 National Audubon Leadership Conference
Photo by Alex Barath

Feed the Ducks

Many of us have grabbed a loaf of bread and headed to a pond or lake with our families to "feed the ducks." That was before we knew it wasn't good for them. When ducks see us arrive with our loaf of bread, they hurry to greet us as they wait for treats. But bread is not healthy. It fills them up and provides little to no nutritional value.

Did you know that feeding ducks a high-protein, high-carbohydrate diet, which includes food such as bread, can cause a deformity known as Angel Wing? Angel Wing occurs when the wing bones grow too fast, causing joints to swivel and making the duck unable to fly. Ducks with Angel Wing cannot fly to new food sources and may be ousted from their flock.

So, what do ducks eat? In the wild, ducks forage for snails, worms, insects, frogs, salamanders, fish and fish eggs, nuts, fruits, berries, and plants.

When we know better, we do better. Good snack foods for ducks include lettuce, cabbage, kale, pea shoots, cucumber, corn, peas, beans, broccoli, beets, squash, flowers, alfalfa, tomatoes, eggplant, peeled bananas, pineapple, and pomegranate seeds.

Remember: Don't let ducks become dependent on you for food or allow them to fill up on snacks, no matter how healthy they may be. Nature provides a healthy diet with all the nutrients ducks need.

Reference: Blog Education National Geographic

This article also appears on Seminole Audubon Society's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/seminoleaudubonsociety/>.

By Imagine Our Florida, Inc.



Feed the Ducks

Econ River Wilderness Area Bird Surveys 2023

By Chuck Honaker, Florida Master Naturalist

This year a team from Seminole Audubon Society (SAS) conducted bird surveys in the Econ River Wilderness Area (WA). It is a property in Seminole County's Natural Lands program. Other Natural Lands properties are Geneva, Lake Harney, Lake Jesup, Chuluota, Lake Proctor, and Black Bear Wilderness Areas and Spring Hammock Preserve.

I contacted Allegra Buyer, Seminole County's Natural Lands Program Manager, late last year to offer volunteer help for bird surveys. Incidentally, Orange County Audubon Society provides volunteers and does bird surveys in a number of state parks, such as Wekiwa and Rock Springs. Natural Lands properties employ various surveys during the year, such as Bioblitzes, that serve to document various plants, reptiles, mammals, birds, insects, et al.



Eastern Wood Pewee
Photo by Lewis Gray

A group of SAS members, including myself as leader, volunteered to do monthly bird-specific surveys in 2023. These surveys serve to document the number of species seen and provide a count of the number of birds identified from month to month. Our data is sent to Ms. Buyer and can be used to monitor population changes over time. Along with familiar species like the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*), Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*), Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), Tufted Titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*), Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*), and Carolina Wrens (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), we were able to identify spring and fall migrants like American Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and American Redstarts (*Setophaga ruticilla*), Yellow-rump Warblers (*Setophaga coronata*), Palm Warblers (*Setophaga palmarum*), Black-and-white warblers (*Mniotilta varia*), Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*), Swallow-tailed Kites (*Elanoides forficatus*), and Great Crested Flycatchers (*Myiarchus crinitus*).

We also were able to observe several unique, or perhaps less commonly seen birds, such as Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*), Eastern Wood Pewee (*Contopus virens*), and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). Monthly totals ranged from 23-36 species. The overall species total for the year was 76.

I want to thank all of the regular volunteers: Lewis Gray, Sharon Lovell, Joy Rector, Kate Dolamore, Brenda Feliciano, John and Cecilia Carey, and Lorri Lilja (Orange Audubon). John and Lewis provided their excellent photography skills. Thanks also to those people who occasionally joined a survey.

At this writing, I am waiting to hear from Natural Lands about our survey location for 2024. Those persons who would like to participate can reach me at cwh.jr@hotmail.com.



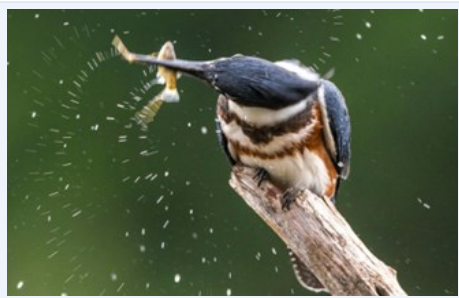
Eastern Bluebird
Photo by John Carey

Fun Belted Kingfisher Fact!

By National Audubon Society

When they're nestlings, Belted Kingfishers have acidic stomachs that help them digest bones, fish scales, and arthropod shells. But their stomach chemistry changes by the time they leave the nest, and they begin regurgitating pellets, similar to owls.

Photo by Christopher Ciccone / Audubon Photography Awards



Program and Field Trip Notes

Prescribed Burns

Sunday, November 12, 2023

By Phyllis Hall

Allegra Buyer is the Program Manager for the Seminole County Natural Lands Program. She manages 9 properties, totaling over 6,600 acres of county lands, and is responsible for conducting resource management activities including invasive plant removal, restoration, and prescribed fire. The mission statement of the Natural Lands Program is to preserve and manage natural areas within Seminole County to enhance or promote bio-diversity, corridors, water resources and passive resource-based recreation and environmental education for existing and future generations. Natural areas are burned to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Habitats rely on fire—animals and plants have adapted to it. We can't let nature take its course because of housing density. The burn boss writes a prescription for the burn that takes into account the different habitats in the burn area, and especially, the weather prediction including wind direction and speed. Burn goals include reducing fuels, keeping pine tree mortality low, season-oriented, keep smoke off sensitive areas and reduce time smoke is impacting neighbors, and not burn too much area at once so wildlife can recover. Plants and wildlife are seen just days after a burn.

Florida law recognizes the importance of prescribed fire with statutes and codes. Florida Forest Service is the leading agency to authorize burns, respond to escapes, and provide training. Around 2 million acres are burned every year in Florida. The burn boss has to complete a 40-hour basic wildland firefighter course plus a 40-hour certified prescribed burn manager course. There are many additional course options including engine academy, wildland/urban interface, smoke management, etc. Allegra brought her fire retardant personal protective equipment to show the audience. Her presentation included video of actual burns. Seminole County Natural Lands has a close partnership with Seminole County Fire Department.



Prescribed Burn in Progress
Source: Seminole Audubon Society

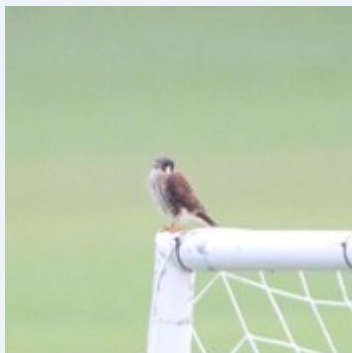
Central Winds Park Field Trip

Saturday, November 18, 2023

By Cecilia Carey

The rain held off for Seminole Audubon's field trip to Central Winds Park in Winter Springs. The morning started off slow and then finished strong as the sun began to peak between the clouds. Thirty-three species were spotted on a walk through the woods and adjacent sports fields on the north end of the park. Highlights include a White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*), Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), and a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*).

Central Winds Park is ranked #3 for eBird hotspots in Seminole County. It is located on the south shore of Lake Jesup and has a mix of upland and wetland birds.



Left to Right: American Kestrel, Field Trip Attendees, Loggerhead Shrike

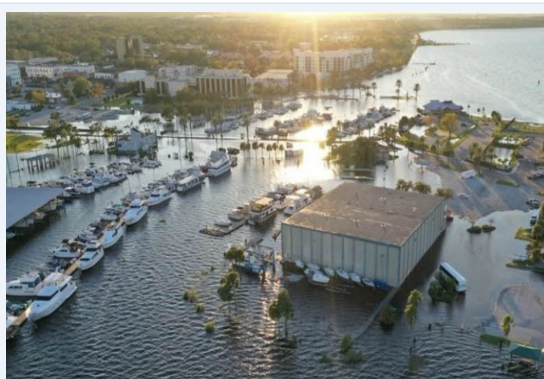
Photos by John and Cecilia Carey

Program and Field Trip Notes

Inland Flooding from Rainstorm Events

Sunday, December 10, 2023

By Phyllis Hall



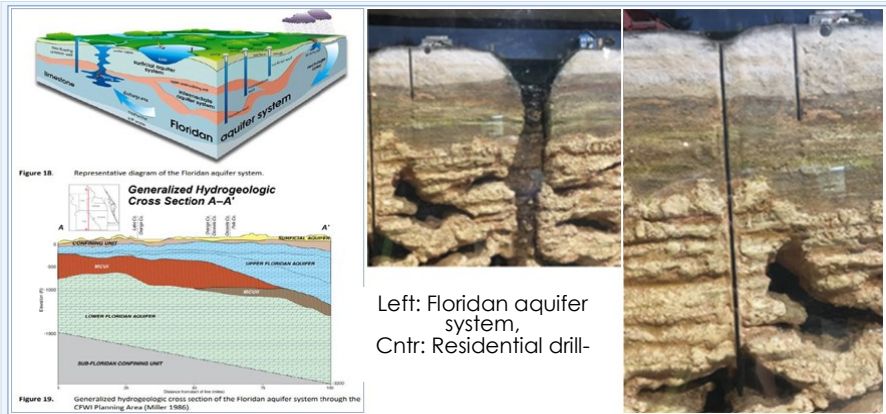
Hurricane Ian caused the extensive flooding of Sanford Marina in September

Gabbie Milch provided an interesting and informative presentation on a very complex water system. Gabbie is both the St. Johns River Middle Basin Education Coordinator and the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District 4 Representative. The river's middle basin extends from the Econlockhatchee River in Osceola, Orange and Seminole counties northward into Lake and Volusia counties¹.

We learned many facts about the human impact on this river basin. The St. Johns River is 310 miles long. There are 100 springs that provide about 30% of the river flow. When we have rain events like hurricanes or heavy downfall, it takes 72 hours for the river to reach peak flow. Wetlands are defined as those areas covered with water for at least 30 days a year. At certain times of the year they may be dry, but they are important water storage areas that also

drain into the aquifer. If they are filled, flooding can result. The Floridan Aquifer, which stores a great amount of Florida's groundwater, has 3 layers. Personal wells reach into the aquifer at depths of about 100 feet and are easily contaminated by surface runoff and leaking septic tanks. Municipal wells are drilled to depths of 800-1000 feet.

Gabbie provided data from the Water Supply Impact Study which is conducted every 20 years and studies withdrawals for consumption, among other impacts. Fifty percent of water used by the public is for landscaping. We can all do our part to conserve water by watering less and according to the published watering schedules, plant native plants which are drought tolerant; we can also install water saving toilet flush kits.



Source: Gabbie Milch

1. <https://www.sjrwmd.com/waterways/st-johns-river/middle/>

Of Note: Seminole County Fall/Winter Irrigation Guidelines

FALL/WINTER IRRIGATION GUIDELINES

MANDATORY IN SEMINOLE COUNTY

Odd Addresses:
Water Only on Saturday

Even Addresses:
Water Only on Sunday

NO WATERING BETWEEN 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

SEMINOLE COUNTY
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE

IRRIGATION GUIDELINES: Fall and winter irrigation guidelines are in effect now through March 10 to conserve water during the dry season.

GUIDELINES:

- Water only once weekly
- Use the last digit of your street address to check which day to water your lawn and landscape. Watering only once per week conserves groundwater, preserving water quality and protecting our lakes, springs, and wetlands.
- Odd-numbered addresses: Water only on Saturday
- Even-numbered addresses: Water only on Sunday
- No watering lawns between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- If you use your irrigation system during the hottest part of the day, much of the water will evaporate before it reaches your lawn and landscape. Irrigate before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.
- Do your part to conserve

These rules apply to everyone in Seminole County, regardless of whether your water comes from a private well or city/county utility.

For more information, visit <https://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/conserve> or call (407) 665-2121

124th Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 16, 2023

This is the longest-running, citizen-science project in the world. Due to inclement weather and then the holidays, the count was postponed to Friday, December 29, 2023. The results, which are used to help determine the long-term health and status of bird populations, will be published in the February-March of The Jay.

Upcoming Programs and Field Trips

Meetings are held on the second Sunday at 2 pm except the April meeting will be on the third Sunday in 2024. Meeting **Location:**

IFAS Extension Education Building
University of Florida/IFAS
Extension Seminole County
250 W. County Home Rd. (off 17/92)
Sanford, FL 32773

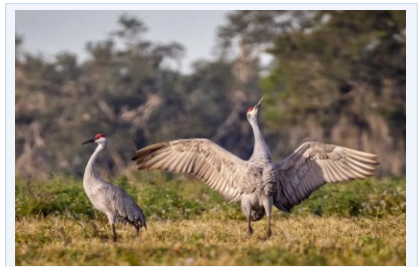
Seminole County Natural Lands Monthly Bird Surveys

The site for the 2024 Seminole County Natural Lands bird surveys will be determined in the upcoming weeks. If you would like to help with these surveys, contact Chuck Honaker at cwh.jr@hotmail.com.

All levels of birding experience are welcome.

Program: January 14, Sunday. Sandhill Crane Research

Tim Dellinger from Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI), the research arm of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, will discuss his research on Sandhill Cranes. Sandhill cranes live and breed in open habitats such as open prairies, bogs and marshes and also in urban areas. The Florida sandhill crane is one of five sandhill crane sub-species found in North America. Florida sandhill cranes are non-migratory and their range extends from southeastern Georgia to the Everglades. They are a State-designated Threatened species by Florida's Endangered and Threatened Species Rule.



Source: birdfact.com

Field Trip: January 19, Friday. Yankee Lake Treatment Facility: Florida Scrub Jays

This is a guided tour of the only habitat in Seminole County for Florida Scrub Jays. Along with Audubon Florida, SAS was instrumental in this habitat being preserved in 1993 when the treatment facility was being planned, and so we visit this property each year. We will meet at 8:00 am at the Seminole County Northwest Water Reclamation Facility on 501 Yankee Lake Road, Sanford, off SR46 just before the entrance to the Seminole Forest. Restrooms are available in the administration building. We will be riding in the management company's pickup trucks. We may be joined on the tour by County administration staff. All levels and ages of birders are welcome. **Limited to 10 people. Reservation is required.** Contact Phyllis Hall at: phylliscath814@gmail.com.



Program: February 11, Sunday. Swallow-tailed Kites

Ken Meyer, Executive Director of Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI), will discuss the life cycle and habitat needs of Swallow-tailed Kites. He will share the latest research on tracking them during their long migration and how you can help with this research.

Ken received his Ph.D. in Zoology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1987. Since 1996, he has served as an adjunct Associate Professor in the University of Florida's Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. Ken co-founded Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) in Gainesville, Florida, in 1997. During his 38 years of conducting field research and producing management and conservation plans, Ken and his team have studied the behavior and ecology of 16 species of birds of conservation concern from eastern Canada to Brazil.



Source: ebird.org/Brad

Upcoming Programs and Field Trips *Continued from page 10*

Field Trip: February 17, Saturday. Pond Hopping in Sanford

Join us as we look for migrant and resident wetland birds at several ponds in the Sanford area. Meet at 7:30 am at the pond in front of Joann's Fabric and Crafts, Seminole Mall, 120 N. Entrance Rd, Sanford. Coordinators: Cecilia Carey, Leslie Martin, Connie Dolan.

Seminole County Gardening Expo 2024 Saturday, February 24, 2024

The Seminole County Gardening Expo 2024 will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 250 W County Home Road, Sanford, Florida. Come visit us at our display tent.



Lyonia Environmental Center Annual Wildlife Festival Saturday, March 9, 2024

Lyonia Environmental Center Annual Wildlife Festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Location: 2150 Eustace Ave, Deltona FL 32725.

SAS Membership Meeting Sunday, March 10, 2024

Membership vote for the 2024/2026 terms for SAS Board members will be held at the March monthly meeting. If you would like to nominate someone (or volunteer yourself) to serve on the board, contact Phyllis Hall at phylliscath814@gmail.com.

Mexico | Birding the Ruins of the Yucatán with SAS November 8, 2024 - November 18, 2024

Pack your binoculars and embark on an intense birding adventure to the environmentally diverse Yucatán Peninsula. Join Seminole Audubon Society to witness native birds soar above the stunning ruins of Oxtankah, Chicanná, Calakmul, Hochob, Uxmal, and other archaeological sites on this journey through the Mayan world. Heads will turn at every point of this expedition as you look for a rainbow array of birds including hummingbirds, parrots, tanagers, toucans, raptors, and many more. From trail hikes to boat rides, birders will have an opportunity to participate in a variety of outdoor activities while exploring the history of the Maya and the birds that inhabit the ruins of this ancient civilization.

For full itinerary or to join the trip go to <https://holbrook.travel/seminole-mx24>.

Land Cost \$3,075 per person for 8-9 participants.

What's included:

- Activities and meals as mentioned in itinerary
- Airport transfers
- Full time expert birding naturalist guide for duration of program
- Non alcoholic beverage with meals
- Private transportation and driver for the duration of the program

Land cost only. Does not include round-trip airfare to and from destination.

Single room supplement \$675



Photo by PhilippN, CC BY-SA 3.0/ <https://holbrook.travel/seminole-mx24>

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS or **NEW** to **OUR Chapter**

Sandra Berry

Alena Bialkouskaya

Constance Cleary

Kathryn Graves

Lake Mary

Lake Mary

Sanford

Deltona

Anne Hemmert

Joan Lowe

Melinda Toepp

Chris Wilds

Lake Mary

Lake Mary

Lake Mary

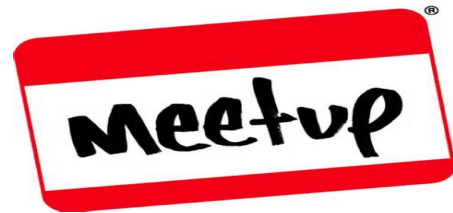
Sanford

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Audubon Membership

Your membership contribution supports our chapter and makes you a partner in our mission to promote the awareness and protection of wildlife and the environment that supports it. In addition, you receive membership in the National Audubon Society and Audubon Florida including the Audubon and Florida Naturalist magazines.

Join on our website: <https://seminoleaudubon.org/membership/>

Donations are always appreciated to support chapter activities. Consider honoring someone with a donation to Seminole Audubon Society. Just click on the Donation icon on our website. Payment is with credit card or PayPal at <https://seminoleaudubon.org/>.



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2023-2024

Board of Directors & Committee Chairs (eff. 7/1/23)

SeminoleAudubon@gmail.com

Board	Name	Term
President	Phyllis Hall	2022/2024
Vice President	Leslie Martin	2023/2026
Treasurer	Jan Peters	2023/2025
Secretary	Peggy Stickney	2022/2024
At-Large	Lewis Gray	2023/2025
At-Large	Tracey Comazzi	2023/2026
At-Large	Connie Dolan	2023/2025

Per 9/11/2022 board meeting, keep the board at 7 members. Add a year to a term as needed to keep the terms balanced.

Committees

Bird Surveys

- The Big Sit! Leslie Martin
- Christmas Bird Count. Leslie Martin
- EagleWatch: Sarah Donlan, Michelle Vaughn, Chuck Honaker, Phyllis Hall
- Econ River Wilderness Area. Chuck Honaker (Chair)
- Jane Isle Survey: Lewis Gray (Chair), Marguerite Terwilleger, Leslie Martin
- Jay Watch: Chuck Honaker

Conservation: Phyllis Hall (Chair), Sam Kendall (Energy), Chuck Honaker, Sarah Donlan, Cecilia Carey, John Carey, Marguerite Terwilleger, Tracey Comazzi

Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI). Phyllis Hall

Crystal Lake Preserve (CLP). Connie Dolan (Chair), Corrinne Wertz

Butterfly Survey co-chairs: Connie Dolan & Tracey Comazzi

Education. Garden clubs, libraries, schools and scouts, eco-camp, etc. Cecilia Carey (Chair), John Carey, Joy Rector

History Archives. Stored in Seminole County History Museum. Electronic files: Phyllis Hall

The JAY Newsletter. Tracey Comazzi (Chair), Corrinne Wertz

Lake Monroe Purple Martin Nests. Jim Peters (Chair), Jan Peters, John & Cecilia Carey

Lake Jesup Park Clean Up. Leslie Martin (Chair), Marguerite Terwilleger

New Member Welcome Letter. Margaret Loring

Media:

- **Meetings PowerPoint, MailChimp, Meet Up, Facebook.** Cecilia Carey
- **Website.** Phyllis Hall

Membership. Marty Shepherd

Outreach/Festivals. Phyllis Hall (Chair), Marty Shepherd, Cecilia Carey, Leslie Martin, Joy Rector

PO Box Mail Pickup. Marty Shepherd (Backup: Marguerite Terwilleger)

SAS Gmail Inbox. Phyllis Hall (Backup: Cecilia Carey)

Programs & Field Trips. Phyllis Hall (Chair), Leslie Martin, Cecilia Carey. Release keeper: Peggy Stickney

Scholarships Eco-Camp. Marguerite Terwilleger (Chair), Corrinne Wertz, Joy Rector, Michelle Vaughn