
SUN CITY CENTER AUDUBON CLUB

February 2021

Ponderings from your prez

Mary

I hope you all have gotten outside and had a chance to do some walks with this beautiful weather. I see so many people out walking and I hope it continues. I mentioned the Hillsborough Hiking Spree a couple of months ago. Look it up if you need inspiration (but I want to warn you that the walk at Edward Medard Conservation Park is not that easy – lots of steep ups and downs due to erosion). I slipped and fell twice so be sure to follow the age-old advice not to hike alone!

Of course, our Nature Trail is nice and flat but there are still roots and dips to watch out for. Get out there and walk it before the mosquitoes take over for the summer. We also have some exciting news regarding another grant to get rid of the invasive plants. More on that later.

Field Trips: As I mentioned in the last newsletter, Ray has resigned as Field Trip Organizer – but fortunately he is staying on as Master Birder to lead us on any walks. I am willing to follow through with planning the trips which are already set through April. However, we need a volunteer – or two – to organize the “non-season” field trips (May through September). These trips give people new to the area and those who stay through the summer a chance to get out with others and enjoy the area. If you are interested in volunteering to help plan these trips, please let me know. (My number is at the end of this article). Let’s not let another summer go by with no trips. Call or email me if you are interested in helping with this. Let’s do a Zoom meeting or outdoor meeting to kick around ideas and make some plans.

So, to continue on Field Trips....We had 22 people gather at Siesta Key Beach on February 15th. The weather was nice for strolling on the beach and there were lots of birds. Ray will probably give us a list in his column but I enjoyed finally being able to distinguish between the different types of seagulls – not to mention the plover and sanderlings that we saw. There were many sunbathing black skimmers as well! This is just a few of them – note the lack of social distancing.



A virtual hug to you all,

Mary

*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

February Zoom Meeting Saturday, February 6, 2021

Speaker to Reveal “Bear” Essentials

Did you know there are about 4,000 adult Florida black bears across the state, including in the Tampa area? Our February 6 virtual meeting will highlight the issues of growing interactions between bears and people – and what each of us can do to protect the natural behavior of these animals.

Lori Lindsay, a graduate student at Miami University and an intern at the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, will explain how habitat loss, access to “human” food and proximity to people can disrupt bears’ health and natural habits. She will provide guidelines for all of us on avoiding bear problems from dangerous “close encounters” to traffic accidents and unhealthy diet.



Black bears are the only species of bear in Florida. These bears are black with a brown muzzle and may have a white chest marking called a blaze. Adult bears can weigh from 150-400 pounds, with males usually being larger than females.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. with socializing and business topics, and Lori’s presentation will start at 10:00 a.m. The Zoom link will be sent to Audubon Club members prior to the meeting. Non-members can contact Patsie Ginley for the link at patsieginley@aol.com.

Field Trip – February 23rd

We are going to the **Bishop Museum in Bradenton**. The Museum will be open only to us! We will be limited to 20 people and those 20 will be divided into two groups of 10 with guides for each group. Masks and social distancing will be required. While one group is touring – including a special view of the manatee presentation from the downstairs boardroom; the other group will watch the new planetarium show on Mars. Because of the limit, this trip is open to SCC Audubon members only. We will meet at the CA parking lot at 9am on the 23rd but you must register and pay the fee of \$15 ahead of time.



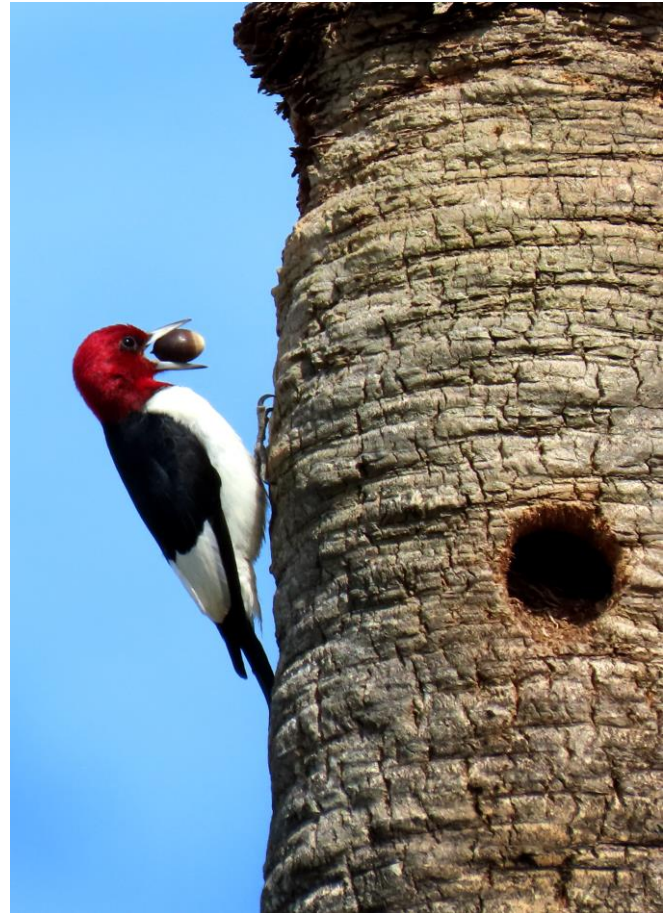
Picture taken from the balcony – not the boardroom window

To register for this trip, please call Mary Duncan at 813-442-2950. You can then mail a check for \$15 (made out to SCC Audubon Club) to her at 1606 No. Pebble Beach Blvd., Sun City Center. We have to pay with one check so you cannot pay at the door.

*Name these birds? Here is your chance to enjoy some of our beautiful local birds.
Choose from the list below!*

Photos by Tom Bredesen

Gnatcatcher, Great Blue Heron Nestbuilding, Kestrel, Mockingbird, Red Bellied Woodpecker, Redheaded Woodpecker (2), and Spoonbill in flight



Name that Bird – Continued...



News from our Master Birder

Ray Webb

I, for one, am very glad to see 2020 pass into the rear-view mirror! Now, with the winter resident birds firmly in place, we can look forward to a brand-new year of bird activity.

Every year begins with the arrival of purple martins. These largest of our swallows arrive this month, with the males preceding the females by a few weeks, to set up housekeeping. I saw my first one at the Celery Fields on January 10 - right on time. As I write this, at the end of the month, I await northern parula warblers and red-eyed vireos, two of our February arrivals. The parulas will nest in Sun City Center and throughout the southeast in swampy areas. The vireos will move further north to hardwood forests such as Withlacoochee State Forest up around Brooksville, and throughout the U.S.

I have been watching the osprey nest at the corner of Pebble Beach Blvd. N and La Jolla Ave, to see if the great horned owl will once again commandeer the nest. So far, so good. It will be available for the rightful owners and builders, the ospreys. I have heard, however, that an owl has taken over an osprey nest somewhere in Kings Point,



Purple Martin

The purple martin (*Progne subis*) is the largest [swallow](#) in North America. Despite their name, purple martins are not truly purple. Their dark blackish-blue feathers have an iridescent sheen caused by the refraction of incident light giving them a bright blue to navy blue or deep purple appearance. In some light they may even appear green in color.

Wikipedia

Bluebirds 2020 Monitoring Season

Melanie Higgins

As many of you know, the Sun City Audubon Club has five teams of two individuals each who monitor our 25 bluebird boxes every summer. Kudos to our volunteers! Team #1 - Pat Gelsey and Marlene Velanis, Team #2 – Nancy Shrom and Teri Brockway, Team #3 – Ann Rodriguez and Elaine Dow, Team #4 – Joann Wilkinson and Denise Rosen, and Team #5 – Pam and George Viner. These intrepid individuals devoted an hour or so every week to check their five bluebird nest boxes. They peeked in boxes, took pictures, and recorded data. This monitoring took place from the beginning of March through the hot days of July and into August in some cases where there was a late nesting bluebird pair.

We had boxes with zero activity and one box that had four nests, one right after the other, and a total of 19 fledglings for the season. In total, our bluebirds fledged 108 babies in the 2020 nesting season.

This summer of 2021 will mark the 6th year club members have been monitoring the nests. The first year we had an unofficial count of 70 fledglings, with the numbers going up to 100+ in the next four years.

We've noticed that the publicity and good will created by our project has inspired many other residents to erect bluebird nest boxes which is great because, even though the survival rate of fledglings is about 30%, it means we have still added over 100 birds to the local population.

Teams have been assembled for this season and the monitoring will start March 1st. For more information on this project check the [website](#). The website will be updated with this year's data in the next month or so.

SCC AUDUBON BLUEBIRD PROJECT 2020

Location	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledglings	Total
1	#1	4	4	4	4
2	#1	2	2	2	6
	#2	4	4	4	
	#3	3	0	0	
3	#1	5	4	4	8
	#2	4	4	4	
4	#1	5	5	5	5
5	#1	5	4	4	4
6	#1	4	4	3	8
	#2	4	3	3	
	#3	4	2	2	
7	0	0	0	0	0
8	#1	3	3	3	6
	#2	5	3	3	
9	#1	4	4	4	4
10	#1	3	3	3	4
	#2	4	1	1	
11	#1	5	5	5	5
12	#1	5	5	5	10
	#2	5	5	5	
13	0	0	0	0	0
14	#1	4	4	4	11
	#2	4	4	4	
	#3	4	3	3	
15	#1	4	4	4	19
	#2	5	5	5	
	#3	5	5	5	
	#4	5	5	5	
16	#1	5	1	1	5
	#2	5	4	4	
17	#1	3	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0
19	#1	4	4	4	4
20	0	0	0	0	0
21	0	0	0	0	0
22	#1*	5	0	0	0
23	0	0	0	0	0
24	#1	4	2	2	5
	#2	4	3	3	
25	#1*	5	0	0	0
				TOTAL	108

- predated



SUN CITY CENTER AUDUBON CLUB
www.sccaudubonclub.com

2021 Membership Registration

Annual Dues: \$10 for CA and Kings Point Gold CA Access Card holders


Print this form, fill it in, and bring it with you to the next in-person meeting. One form per person or mail it to Dennis Morris, 373 Club Manor Dr., Sun City Center, FL 33573. Make checks payable to SCC Audubon Club.

1

Check # _____ Cash _____ Date _____
(In-Person only)

Name (Please print legibly) _____

_____ New Member _____ Renewal



2 **To become a member, you must sign below.**

Liability and photo release
I voluntarily choose to participate in field trips sponsored by the Sun City Center Audubon Club. I recognize the field trips may expose me to harm or injury resulting from travel to and from the field trip site, and due to forces of nature and natural wildlife, including, but not limited to birds, animals, plants, and other wildlife. I expressly assume the risk of any harm that may occur directly or indirectly from travel to and from the field trip site, or from the forces of nature or wildlife that I may be exposed to. I release the Sun City Center Audubon from any and all liability arising from or in connection with the field trips.

I grant to the Sun City Center Audubon Club, its representatives and members the right to take photographs of me and my property in connection with field trips or other activities of the Sun City Center Audubon Club. I authorize the use of same in print and/or electronically.

_____ Date _____
Member Signature

3 **Enter only NEW or CHANGED information in this box.**

E-Mail _____

Address (SCC) _____

Telephone # _____ CA/KP # _____

Birthday Month _____ Day _____

Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering on the following committees:

<input type="checkbox"/> Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-Day Trip
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> December Meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Field Trips
<input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/> Serve on Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Greeters	

***Officers & Committee Chairs
2020-2021***

President	Mary Duncan
Vice-Presidents/ Programs	Patsie Ginley Ann Fenimore
Secretary	Betty Giles
Treasurer	Rod Rodrigues
At Large	Linda Floyd
Refreshments	Pat Dean
Membership	Dennis Morris
Name Tags	Jo Ann Wilkinson
Conservation	Peter Aluotto
Historians	Ed & Clara Clancy
Newsletter	Denise Rosen
Publicity	Susan Shuttleworth
Field Trips	TBD
Master Birder	Ray Webb
Three Day Trip	Kathy Eckhart



www.sccaudubonclub.com

Backyard Bird Watch



Each year people from around the world come together to watch, learn about, count, and celebrate birds. Join us, February 12-15, 2021.

Visit below site for more details:

<https://www.birdcount.org/?emci=79c9c580-e954-eb11-a607-00155d43c992&emdi=11001c25-eb54-eb11-a607-00155d43c992&ceid=3377126>



Audubon Center for Birds of Prey

<https://cbop.audubon.org>

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(407) 644-0190

