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# SUN CITY CENTER AUDUBON CLUB

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October 2020

## *Ponderings from your prez*

*Mary Duncan*

What a strange year it has been so far. Here it is October and we should be back with our usual season of meetings, speakers and field trips. The Florida Room is closed for meetings for the rest of the year so we are trying something a little different for the next couple of months.

Our first meeting of the new season is on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. It will be a Zoom meeting. You will find the directions for getting on the meeting elsewhere. It is really quite easy. We have been having Board meetings through Zoom and we have now paid for a Zoom account in order to have a longer session. We have also purchased an Audubon film to show in order to help us all become better birders.

### **Meetings – First Saturday of the month through December on Zoom**

#### **Saturday, October 3rd Zoom Meeting**

9:30 to 10:00 Getting on Zoom and Social Time  
A great chance to see all of your friends -- and you can talk to them – or “private chat” with them (i.e. send a message to one or more individuals)

10:00 Very Short Business Meeting to include news from the President and Bird Spotting from our Master Birder

10:20 Film presentation: **Watching Warblers –A video guide to the warblers of Eastern North America** by Michael Male and Judy Fieth. We previewed a bit of this film at our board meeting and I think you will really like it (especially if, like me, you have trouble identifying warblers -- or if you just want to see some beautiful little birds).

### **2021 meetings**

If all goes well, everything will be open. We have speakers lined up but we have something extra special for **our January meeting**. We decided to postpone our big December meeting with live birds to January in order to have a big welcome back event. It will be the Wonders of Nature presenter that we all love. We have reserved the Community Hall for that meeting.

### **Field Trips**

For now, we have cancelled planned field trips. (If I know anything about birders, I know we can't resist crowding together when someone spots an interesting bird and so this is not really a safe activity.) You can, however, go on your own and some good birding locations (both near and far) are listed elsewhere.

**JOIN**

**October 3<sup>rd</sup> ZOOM MEETING  
9:30 AM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89118567821>

**Meeting ID: 891 1856 7821**

***And now for some important news:***

Melanie Higgins has resigned from the Board and from committee responsibilities. She has retired this year and is taking this time to travel and just have fun. Melanie has worked with the Audubon for 14 years. She has written grants to clean up the Nature Trail and the canal and she helped to develop the habitat plan for the future of the Trail. She also started the Bluebird Project which has been such a great success. She has said that she will continue to lead this project and write grants when needed. We are thankful for that. And, of course, very thankful for all of her past efforts. The club owes a lot to her.

Our Conservation Committee which helps oversee the Nature Trail is now, more than ever, in need of volunteers. Please let me know if you are interested.

**Loni Baxter** has resigned as Membership Chair. Loni has done a wonderful job in keeping track of our membership. Of course, you see her at meetings when you sign in; but, she has also kept the membership list up-to-date and sent the list to the CA when required. It isn't a glamorous job but it is an important one and Loni has done it efficiently and skillfully. She has also really added good input to our Board meetings as well. Her commitment to the club even when she had to pay as a King's Point resident to belong was really appreciated.

And, so, we really need a Membership Chair. Some knowledge of spread sheets is needed. This would be an excellent time to volunteer when there are few joining up. That way you would have the routine down before we start up again. If you are interested, please give me a call 813-260-3322.

Enjoy every moment,

Mary

***Officers & Committee Chairs***

***2020-2021***

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



[www.sccaudubonclub.com](http://www.sccaudubonclub.com)

## Field Trips

We will not be planning formal field trips until it is safe to do so within CDC guidelines. We are taking a page (more or less literally) from the Eagle Audubon and suggesting that you go on "do-it-yourself" field trips. Take your binoculars and drive to the birding site and enjoy. If you wear a mask, please cut the straps off, then dispose properly. Birds are getting snared in them. Here is a list of 14 birding sites near and far.

### NEAR

--Sun City Center West Campus Nature Trail is off of Del Webb West just north of Bunker Hill. It has a range of birds (woodpeckers, blue birds, cardinals and many warblers when they pass through).

--Window in the Woods—It is a bird blind on a nature trail with bird feeders, so you are guaranteed to see some birds all the time. Go past Tillers and Toilers to get there.

--North Course abandoned golf course. All year-round water birds such as egrets, cormorants, anhingas, herons, gulls and roseate spoonbills can be seen plus blue birds, cardinals, red shoulder hawks and an occasional red tail hawk. Get in your golf cart and go birding!

--Camp Bayou in Ruskin—You are welcomed as you turn in to Camp Bayou by the Eagle Audubon butterfly garden. Stop and look at the butterflies and plants. You can see water birds since it is on the Little Manatee River. The camp is open Thursday through Saturday 9-2, and the Paleo Fossil Museum is open Saturday 9-12 where you can see fossils, mastodons, saber cats, and much more from the area.

--Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve in Ruskin—You will see a wide variety of birds since the preserve has fresh and saltwater lakes. It is considered on e-bird as the best place to bird in Hillsborough County.

--Bahia Beach Nature Preserve in Apollo Beach---It is a great place to see ducks and other water birds. Also, you can see hogs on the other side of the lake.

--Calvary church (not on a Sunday) 1250 E College Ave. Ruskin

--Swan Lake, Sun City Center



*Continued next page*

## ***Continued Field Trip Locations:***

### **FAR**

--Lettuce Lake in Temple Terrace —A great birding place with the Tampa Audubon building near the boardwalk along the Hillsborough River. You are guaranteed to see some great birds, especially herons and limpkins.

--Celery Fields in Sarasota—It is a gem for water birds with some special birds like soras, purple gallinules, Virginia rails and bitterns. If you want help, arrive at the boardwalks before 10:30 am and members of the Sarasota Audubon have scopes out and will point out the different birds. Near the Sarasota Audubon Building is a gazebo with gardens where you can observe indigo and painted buntings and, occasionally, a yellow headed black bird.

--Felts Preserve in Palmetto—It is a preserve owned by Manatee Audubon. They have a bird blind with feeders where you can see indigo and painted buntings. Hint: Sit quietly for 15 to 20 minutes before the painted buntings come out.

--Circle B Bar Preserve in Lakeland—It is a gem! First timers always say, "I never saw so many birds." Lots of water birds.

--Fort De Soto in St. Petersburg—It is the best place for water birds (can see a reddish egret dance). During migration, all the birds returning from Mexico stop here for food so if you want to see warblers, this is your spot.

--Bennett Park, Bradenton- South on 1-75 to Route 64 West. Nature trail.

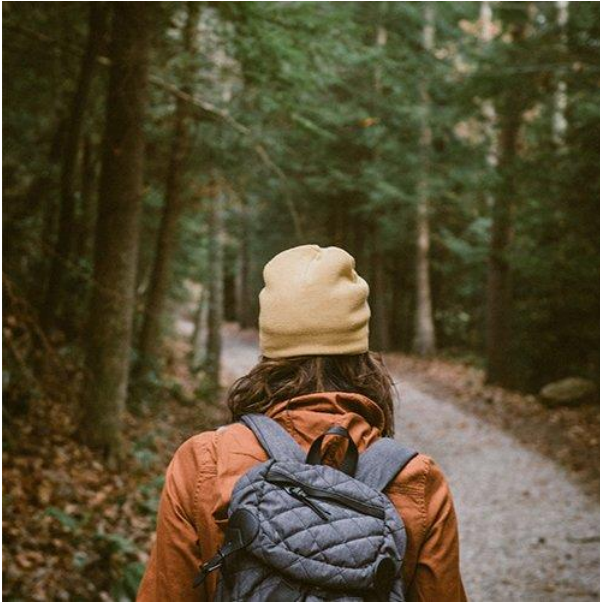
## ***HAPPY BIRDING!***



***Celery Fields***

# Nature Walks

September 25, 2017  
by Dr. Sarah Ballantyne, PhD



For some of us, walking in nature is just another form of exercise—and maybe it’s a little more interesting than walking in place on a treadmill. So it might come as a surprise that walking in nature is *much* more beneficial than walking indoors or in a city, and the benefits extend far beyond fitness.

Compared to a similar stroll in an urban setting, a 50-minute walk in nature has been shown to decrease anxiety, reduce rumination (repeated negative thoughts about ourselves or our experiences), lower negative affect (poor

self-concept and emotions), improve positive affect (positive moods like joy and alertness), improve symptoms of major depressive disorder, and even offer cognitive benefits, such as boosting working memory performance. In other studies, a 90-minute walk in nature has been shown to reduce neural activity in brain areas linked with mental illness. (A 90-minute walk in an urban setting offered no such benefits.) Nature walks of 80 minutes also appear to lower blood pressure and adrenaline, increase mood test scores for vigor, and decrease mood test scores for depression, fatigue, confusion, and anxiety.

Strapped for time? Even short nature walks can boost our well-being. In one study, a 15-minute stroll through an urban park resulted in significantly lower heart rate, lower sympathetic nerve activity (the fight-or-flight response), and higher parasympathetic nerve activity (the “rest and digest” system) than a similar walk through the city. Likewise, participants reported feeling “comfortable,” “relaxed,” “natural,” and “vigorous” after their nature walks and exhibited significantly lower levels of anxiety and negative emotions. These benefits occurred no matter what the season, even during the cold winter months.



*Lettuce Lake*



*Bennett Park Bradenton*