



The Avocet

Tampa Audubon Society May 2017 Newsletter www.tampaaudubon.org

Meeting Thursday, May 4, 2017

Hillsborough County UF Extension Conference Center, 5339 CR 579, Seffner
Photo Club 6 PM 7:00 Potluck dinner ~ Bring dish to pass (optional)
7:30 Meeting and Program

General Meeting May 4 Last meeting until September!

PHOTO CLUB YEAR FINALE

It's our traditional grand finale of the year, with the Photo Club members showing off their best shots of the past season. There are usually photos for sale, so if you need something for your own home, or a one-of-a-kind gift for someone special, this will be your chance!



Screech Owls
Cheryl Merz

Contact Roger Sheets if you have questions about who can share, what photos to bring, or other concerns. Roger.sheets@tampaaudubon.org



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

On most trips we have binoculars to loan, so don't hesitate to come! Unless otherwise indicated field trips do not require advance registration. Most are free. Everyone is welcome!

May 13 — Lettuce Lake Bird

Walk. Meet at 9 am in the parking lot by the Visitor's Center at the park to walk the boardwalk with us. The parulas and prothonotaries are back, and the gnatcatchers have a nest right over the boardwalk again. Come see what else we can find. Done by noon. Leader Mary Keith, for more info.



Mary.Keith@tampaaudubon.org

May 7 Bluebirds trip has been cancelled.

May 20— Celery Fields and Felts Preserve. Meet at the Celery Fields at 8 am for birding there, then we'll move to Felts at mid-morning. The least bitterns were putting on a show last week by the boardwalk, and the purple gallinules were showing off too. We'll see if there are any late buntings at Felts, walk the loop looking for wood ducks and warblers, and check for the owls. If you bring lunch we can eat at Felts. Bring hat, sunscreen, water, repellent.

Celery Fields are located off Fruitville Rd exit from I-75 south. Go east on Fruitville Rd to the light by the library. Turn right/south on Coburn, follow it to the stop sign at Palmer. Turn left/east and go to parking lot on left side. Contact leader Mary Keith if you're interested in carpooling from the Brandon area.

Mary.Keith@tampaaudubon.org

SPECIAL EVENT!

PICNIC IN THE PARK MAY 13, noon



Roger Sheets, our long-time Treasurer, is stepping down from the position. He's adamant that he wants no gifts. But he has allowed us to twist his arm into coming for a special picnic in his honor! So we'll be enjoying a potluck picnic at noon in Lettuce Lake Park. We have reserved **Pavilion 9**, near the east end of the boardwalk. Come, join us to say THANK YOU to Roger for so many years of wise and patient service to Tampa Audubon.

May 4 is the Clean Air Fest in downtown Tampa. Stop by the TAS table if you're in the area between 11:30 and 1:30!

FURTHER FORWARD

Lettuce Lake Beginning Birder Walks

June 10

July 8

August 12

Our beginner bird walks at Lettuce Lake continue through the summer, but **start at 8 am** to avoid the heat. Meet at the Visitor Center parking lot.

RAPTOR MIGRATION IN TEXAS! SEPT. 24-30, 2017

Trip with WINGS, Inc. to Corpus Christi and the great hawk migration, then Lower Rio Grande Valley for south Texas specialties. Cost \$1576 to \$1770, depending on the number, MAX 10 people. See web [flyer](#) or contact Mary.keith@tampaudubon.org.



The initial registration and payment date have passed for this trip, but we still have a few spots. If you decide you want to come, contact Mary so she can see if Wings can still accommodate a late registration.

ELECTIONS THIS MEETING

May is our election month. **All members present will vote for our new Board members.** The slate as presented at the last meeting is as follows:

President—Mary Keith, returning
1st Vice President—Sandy Reed, returning
2nd Vice President—Nancy Murrah, returning
Treasurer—Michelle Hoffman, NEW
Secretary—Sherry Keller, returning
Board Members:

Returning— Connie Anderson
Megan Campbell
Doug DeNeve
Pam DeNeve
Cheryl Merz

New— Mic McCarty
Rob Yoho

COMMITTEE UPDATES

BIRD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Sandy's grant application was approved! The Bird Protection committee was awarded \$1,000 to con-



tinue educating and assisting our local fishermen to not hook a bird. If you know a fishing pier, boat ramp or other location where birds are being fed by fishermen, please contact Sandy so she can add it to the list of target locations.

Sandy.reed@tampaudubon.org

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Congress is back in session, and passing an appropriations bill will be necessary in order to avert another government shutdown on Friday. While this will not be specifically about the Trump budget proposals for next year, it will have everyone focused on spending priorities. In his recent budget proposal, he seeks a 31% reduction in funding for the EPA, leading to a 20-25% reduction in staff. This would greatly hinder the agency's ability to carry out even routine inspection and monitoring activities. The proposal also calls for termination of large-scale regional environmental cleanup programs in Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes, elimination of more than 50 other ongoing EPA programs, and cutting R&D funding for the agency by roughly 50%. It would eliminate nearly all grants made by the EPA to independent researchers studying environmental issues. It would kill the Tampa Bay Estuary program, which has been enormously successful in cleaning up the waters of



Birds' reaction to proposed cuts!

the bay. Such drastic cuts, if enacted by Congress, would severely hamper the EPA's ability to carry out its mission. The effects would likely be felt for many years to come, even if funding is restored at a later date.

This is an especially good time to remind Sen. Rubio, Sen. Nelson, and the Representative from your House district that protection of birds and their habitats is a priority item to you. Let them know that the air we breathe and the water that we drink and swim and fish in are important to you, and that President Trump's proposed cuts to the EPA and other environmental programs are NOT acceptable!

Doug DeNeve, Conservation Committee

Doug.deneve@tampaudubon.org

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Tampa Audubon was well represented at the OPEN HOUSE event 3/25 at Nature's Classroom. About 900 folks toured the facilities and grounds and it seemed like most stopped at the Tampa Audubon Exhibit. We sold \$260 worth of hats, tote bags and t-shirts while giving out packets of crayons and coloring pages to the little folks. Tampa Audubon donated two books to the silent auction that generated a \$40 donation to Nature's Classroom. Thanks to Krista, Sherry, Pat and Connie!

The TAS display table at MetLife Eco-Fair on 4/20 had 30 visitors. Several people took membership applications or added their names to the contact list.

TAS had a display and donated a basket to the UT Roots and Shoots for their Earth Day Gala 4/22. The basket raised \$100 in their silent auction.

Krista Kutash, our vibrant Events Chair, is moving!
THANK YOU SO MUCH KRISTA!

If anyone is interested in chairing that committee, or helping with it, please contact
Mary.Keith@tampaaudubon.org

YOU ARE NEEDED! VOLUNTEER!

SWFWMD is interested in having us do some bird surveys on several of their properties. Doug is working with one of their managers to set up dates, locations and access to the areas. If you are interested and able to help, please contact us!

Doug.deneve@tampaaudubon.org
Mary.Keith@tampaaudubon.org

LETTUCE LAKE PARK VOLUNTEERS

Closer to home, Mike Mullins, the coordinator of volunteers and activities at Lettuce Lake is in need of more help. We have traditionally provided volunteers for the Visitor Center. Currently numbers are dropping due to retirements and relocations. Mostly the duties are to be available in the Visitor Center to answer questions, direct visitors, keep track of numbers, and occasionally lead a walk along the boardwalk. You will need to be certified as a County volunteer, and Mike will provide orientation and training. If interested, please contact Mike at 390-4696 or mikemullins7@gmail.com.

BIRD RESCUE

Nancy Murrah and the Bird Rescue team are always in need of a few more good people. If you could help them pick up and drive injured birds to get care, please contact Nancy. She'll be happy to give you the training you need to transport injured birds safely. Nancy.murrah@tampaaudubon.org

The owls pictured on the front of this newsletter are a family of screech owls that were successfully moved from a location that was about to be tented for termites by the Bird Rescue team.  GO TEAM! THANK YOU VERY MUCH! *Mama Screechie and family*

Remember Membership Renewals

If you renew your Audubon membership through TAS we get the funds sooner. When you receive your notice to renew from National Audubon, just download the application form from our website, or even just cut out the address label from the Audubon magazine, and send it to us with your check. We then forward your renewal to National, but we've recorded it here first.



Thank you!!

Smile!

"It doesn't have to be Christmas to use Amazon Smile and choose TAS. Here's a link to help: How to donate to a charity on Amazon. Personally I have an Amazon Smile on my browser's navigation bar that points to "smile.amazon.com". Now I don't even think about it—it's free money for TAS."

NEXT YEAR'S TRIPS AND PROGRAMS

The board will be meeting soon to start planning next year's calendar of trips and meetings. If you have a favorite birding spot you'd like to see us visit, or have heard a great speaker whom you'd like to share with all the members, please contact any board member, or mary.Keith@tampaaudubon.org

More ideas are always better! Tell us!

No more meetings until September. Have a great summer, and Happy Birding!