September brings so many changes to our daily routines. Summer vacations are over. The kids are back in school & fully engaged in their after-school sports & other clubs. — But for birders in Florida, we’re excited because the weather is more comfortable for birding, and fall migration is starting!

Manatee Audubon has been busy this summer planning our 2015-2016 events & guest speakers, and enhancing Felts Audubon Preserve. Thanks to Fred Allen and unknown other volunteers, the bird blind interior was painted. New educational trail signs were created & will be installed this fall. A new Bee Hotel will also be added to the educational aspects of Felts Audubon Preserve.

Steve Black already hosted a field trip to Ft. DeSoto in late August. Other events for the 2015-2016 birding season include:

- a VIP preview of the new Nature Center at Rye Preserve on Saturday, Sept 19 (before this opens to the general public)
- Audubon Adventures as our Junior Audubon initiative launches at Felts Preserve on the 2nd Saturday of each month from October through April
- Christmas Bird Count – save the date: Dec. 19th
- **NEW! Bird Photography Institute.** This is for a small group of amateur photographers who will be tutored in the field by professional photographers.
- Back by popular demand…Basic Bird Identification Course, which includes both classroom & field trips to maximize your learning experience.

Our 7 distinguished monthly guest speakers have decades of avian research experience. Hear from:

- **Sept 17** – David Sadkin, PhD, Wildlife Inc. – “Unique Adaptations of Owls”
- **Nov 19** – Andrew Cox, FL FWC – “Recovering Avian Species in a Conservation-Dependent World”
- **Dec 17** – Mark Rachel, Audubon FL – “Too Close for Comfort”…a look at FL bird sanctuaries
- **Jan 21** – Dr. John Herman, FL Gulf Coast Univ., “Invasion of the Exotics”
- **Feb 18** – Jim Cox, Tall Timbers Research Station. “Sex in the Sitta – the Secret Life of the Brown-headed Nuthatch”
- **Mar 17** – Dr. Ken Meyer, ARCI – “Saving Swallow-tailed Kites & Snail Kites”

Now some of these trips or events have a maximum number of participants, so sign up soon. We’re looking forward to a fun season together! Let’s have fun & go birding!!

Nick

Nick Ziemba, president
Manatee County Audubon Society
Owls are excellent, stealthy hunters, capable of hunting in darkness and light. Unlike some of their distant cousins, such as crows and vultures who scavenge, owls rely entirely on their skills as predators to feed. Their predatory adaptations are so impressive, that they have provided inspiration for our own technological endeavors.

Dr. David Sadkin of Wildlife Inc, with the assistance of 3-4 “feathered rehab patients”, will share insights about the “Unique Adaptations of Owls”.

As Volunteer Director of Education Services for Wildlife, Inc. Center for Education and Rehabilitation, located in Bradenton Beach, Dr. Sadkin provides programs on wildlife education and habitat management for a wide variety of private and public schools and organizations. He helps staff the education booth that Wildlife, Inc. deploys at numerous arts and crafts shows throughout Manatee and Sarasota Counties throughout the “season.” He also is principal writer for the Center’s website (www.wildlifeinc.org), and has written many articles for The Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators Association Newsletter.

ABOUT WILDLIFE INC...

Wildlife, Inc. is the oldest rescue/rehab center in Manatee County. Gail and Ed Straight opened their doors 28 years ago and they have now rescued thousands of injured/orphaned wild animals. Financial donations help to buy medicine, food, rescue equipment, cages and more to continue their mission of rescuing and rehabilitating Manatee and Sarasota county wildlife. (Photos at left: Blue Heron rescued; found hanging in mangroves. Brown Pelican with fishing hook in leg. Cormorant tangled in sailboat lines. All safe & rehabilitated.)
After a century-long absence, the elegant pink waders are back in the Everglades. But where did they come from?

STA2 attracts a high diversity of birds including teals, wigeons, and sandpipers. Flamingos don’t always return to the same nesting sites year after year, so there must be something about the area that draws them to this specific location. “I think it’s food-related,” says Cook, who surveys the area by helicopter to understand how birds use the system. “STAs are huge; there is something about this unit.”

More mysteries abound. “The big question is, are these escapees or are they wild birds?” says Cook. It’s possible that they broke free from the captive population that’s spent the past 73 years at Hialea Racetrack in northern Miami-Dade County. Or it’s possible they migrated up here from the Bahamas or Mexico. To find out, scientists and biologists from the National Park Service and Miami Zoo, with support from the Tropical Audubon Society and others, are attaching satellite transmitters on flamingos to track their journeys.

Frank Ridgley, a wildlife veterinarian who serves as head of conservation and research at Zoo Miami, is leading the effort to tag the birds. Typically, flamingos are banded before they fledge, when they’re easy to catch. But the flamingos in Florida are grown, so they’re stuck using netting and loose traps designed to ensure the four-foot-birds aren’t harmed when caught. So far they haven’t been able to snare any. “There’s a reason why no one’s studied adult flamingos before,” he says. “They just fly off.”

While they continue trying to tag flamingos, Ridgley says researchers are still watching the birds, trying to learn how they’re using the area. “We noticed a lot of courtship behavior,” Ridgley says. “All seemed to be pair bonded and stayed close together.” Flamingos are believed to mate for life.

When word got out that flamingos were in STA2, a number of birders began sneaking into the restricted area to see them. Realizing that the draw of flamingos was likely irresistible, the water district reached out to Audubon Society of the Everglades about leading weekly car tours to the area, which began in March of this year. It’s a win-win solution: People get to see flamingos, and the birds can go about their business undisturbed.

Audubon Everglades received more than 1,200 requests for spaces on these trips, says Susan McKemy, the group’s vice president. Birders from across the United States and the Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, and Canada signed up, and more than 620 participants took part in the 13 trips conducted between March 7 and May 2.

“It’s incredible,” says McKemy. “My life has become consumed with flamingos.” While each trip offered incredible views of the magnificent birds, one day—April 18—stands out for McKemy. “There was a pair of flamingos foraging at the north end of the impoundment. The pair then flew closer to the berm where the trip participants were located,” she says. “They foraged and then we heard them calling to each other. A few minutes later the two mated.” It’s possible those lucky birders were the first ever to document flamingos mating in the wild in Florida.

There’s plenty more to learn from these birds, including solving the mystery of where they came from. “We may have to rewrite everything we know about flamingos,” Ridgley says.
Susan Goch (in photo at left), Amy Miller, Connie Zack and Lori Roberts survived the intense rain during Snooty’s 67th Birthday Bash at the South Florida Museum on July 18th. Manatee Audubon exhibits at this event each year as a community outreach, promoting conservation & bird awareness.

MIDDLE LEFT: Jack & Bunny Schneider accept their Great Egret Award from National Audubon, presented by Carmenza Stephenson. (As you may know, Bunny was in the hospital & couldn’t attend our Annual Awards celebration in April.)

BELOW: Dick & Deb Comeau receive their certificate of appreciation from president Nick Ziemba since they weren’t able to attend the Annual Awards meeting.

Fred Allen discovered Manatee Audubon has a birding garden at Rye Preserve. He invested days cleaning it up before our Sept 19th field trip to Rye Preserve for the VIP peek at the new Nature Center.

THX to Audubon FL for buying Little Bird Key in Terra Ceia Bay!
Memories from 2015 Summer Birding Fun

Our beach-nesting shorebird stewards staffed the Manatee Audubon information tent during both the 3-day Memorial Day weekend, as well as the Independence Day weekend. Lots of news coverage this year due to the crazy pair which drove an ATV right through one of the Black Skimmer colonies, and also destroyed 3 turtle nests.

There were 190 visitors during the 3-day July 4th holiday weekend. A count of the nesting Black Skimmers on Friday AM came to approx. 200...(100 nesting pairs). A total of 67 chicks were counted on Sunday AM. There was little/no predation seen as the chicks were all pretty well advanced in growth. Thanks again for all of your help. A special THANK YOU to Skip and Suzi for their help in setting up and taking down each day: and for transporting the "stuff". — Article by Dee Hanny, committee chair.

June Birding Challenge

As June comes to an end, we would like to thank everyone for their help in our Manatee County Group Challenge. We ended up with 127 species: 121 ABA/6 Non-ABA.

Special thanks to:
- Scott Niblick for finding that elusive Wild Turkey in Duette Preserve,
- Marianne Korosy for finding the very rare Burrowing Owls,
- Cole Fredericks for finding Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Gull-billed Terns, American Avocet while he was doing environmental work in Manatee County,
- Mary Foster who saw and photographed a Sora at Emerson Preserve, a rare bird for Emerson any time of year,
- and the ever-vigilant John Ginaven, who ended the month with a Lesser Black-backed Gull at Anna Maria.

Thanks, Everyone!

PS -- For those of you looking for the Burrowing Owls, Marianne was doing a Scrub Jay Watch survey and found them at Gilley Creek Preserve off Rutland Ranch Road. — Article by Billy Knight

Welcome New Members!

Be sure to say HELLO to the following 5 newest members of Manatee Audubon:
- Susan J Devinney
- Eric Haas
- Patti Krumeich
- Dr. Carolee K Lesyk, PhD
- Chuck Palmer
- Fred Teeter

THANK YOU DONORS!!

Non-profit organizations like Manatee Audubon are dependent on donations. Thank you to these special donors:
- Stuart R Wilson
- Jim Stephenson
- Gene & Diane Strandberg
Sheraton Orlando, North Maitland 2015
Sheraton Orlando North Maitland, Florida

The Audubon Assembly is Florida’s premiere conservation event. Join friends for 2 days of informative workshops, exciting guest speakers, and unforgettable field trips. This year’s theme is: Parks: The Heart of Natural Florida.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO: AUDUBON OF FLORIDA

We are delighted to announce that Rafael Galvez, celebrated artist, birding tour leader, and director of Florida Keys Hawkwatch, will be our keynote speaker at this year’s banquet.

Audubon Assembly attendees will participate in interesting workshops with leading guest speakers, join local Audubon chapter leaders for field trips to their special places, take part in Audubon Florida’s unique conservation agenda setting session...and much more!

Field Trips List:
- Apopka North Shore Restoration Area
- Wekiwa Springs State Park
- Lake Jesup Wilderness Area
- Mead Gardens
- Audubon Center for Birds of Prey

Click here to learn more about the individual field trips.

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Bird Festival at Fairchild
Oct. 1-4, 2015

This year’s keynote speaker will be Kenn Kaufman. The festival begins with 2 days of off-site tours of South Florida bird habitats led by Tropical Audubon Society experts. The festival continues at Fairchild on Saturday & Sunday with activities for birders of all ages, including presentations by bird experts, bird walks, amateur bird photo contest and exhibit.

Location: Miami, FL
Organizer: Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Contact: Vanessa Cook Ph: 305-663-8077
Website: http://www.fairchildgarden.org/Events-Community-Outreach/Bird-Festival

4th Annual Wings & Wildflowers Festival
Oct. 2-4, 2015

Join us for keynote dinners, vendors, classroom presentations, field trips to over 21 locations (birding, paddling, and wildflower hotspots), classroom presentations, Birds and Brews, wildlife shows, butterfly tent, Hook Kids on Fishing Program, and many other fun and exciting events!

Location: Venetian Gardens, Leesburg, FL
Organizer: Lake County Economic Dev. & Tourism. Contact Person: Yvonne Powers Phone: 352-742-3918
Website: http://www.wingsandwildflowers.com

1st Annual Indian River Birding Festival
Oct. 16-17, 2015

Location: Sebastian, FL. Register & pay in advance for choice of: Owl Prowl, lectures, Jungle Trail tour, Scrub Jay tour, Butterfly Talk, Beginning Birding seminar, Sunset Cruise.

More info on Facebook: Treasure Coast Bird Art Show or call: 772-494-6306, Deb Avery.
**Upcoming Events & Key Contacts**

**Thursday, September 17**
6:30pm  Monthly Meeting – “Unique Adaptations of Owls”
**Dr. David Sadkin, Wildlife Inc. rehab center.**
Social time at 6:30pm; speaker at 7pm.
Hope Lutheran Church, 4635 26th St West, B’ton.

**Saturday, September 26**
8:00am  Work Day, Felts Audubon Preserve 729-2222
List of routine grooming and cleaning projects posted on shed door. Choose one & have fun!

**Friday, October 2**
8:30am  **Oscar Scherer Park** -- Matthew Press 747-7295
Register with Connie: **zacodo@tempebay.rr.com**
Meet at Oscar Scherer State Park at 8:30 AM for a tram ride; limited number seat on tram, so email Connie. (Park address: 1843 S Tamiami Trail, Osprey, FL)
Little Walking, Bring lunch or join a group for lunch at nearby restaurant.

**Wednesday, October 14**
8:00am  **The Celery Fields & Pinecraft Park** – Leader: Jim Stephenson 301-466-1973 or email: **aladdinllic@gmail.com**
Meet Jim at The Celery Fields (address: 6798 Palmer Blvd, Sarasota) at 8 AM to view an assortment of wading and water birds. We’ll try to catch warblers at Pinecraft Park. Bring money for your lunch as we’ll chat together at a nearby restaurant.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS 2015-2016**

President — Nick Ziemba …….716- 785-4732
Vice Pres — Deb Comeau…………..752-1835
Secretary — Jim Stephenson ….301-466-1973
Treasurer — Lucette Wombacher 776-8424
Asst. Treas -- Jack Schneider ……. 792-1794

**Monthly Meetings of Manatee Audubon**

are held the third Thursday of each month from September through April. Fellowship starts at 6:30pm; the featured speaker starts at 7pm.

**Location:** The public is invited to attend monthly meetings held at Hope Lutheran Church, 4635 26th St West (south of Cortez Rd.), Bradenton.

Manatee Chapter Board meetings are monthly on the 2nd Wed at 6pm in the main Manatee County Library. These meetings are open (if you want to attend).

**2015-2016 STANDING COMMITTEES** (* = Board member)

- Beach Nesting Bird Stewardship ……. Dee Hanny …….745 - 1553
- Christmas Bird Count……………. Dick Comeau* ……. 752 -1835
- Conservation…………………. Open
- Education………………………. Deb Comeau* & ……. 752 - 1835
- Field Trips…………………………… Connie Zack* …….758 -2929
- Felts Audubon Preserve ……….. Fred Allen ……. 723 - 6045
- Felts Open House ……………… Amy Miller* ……. 758 -7478
- Historian ………………….. Deb Comeau* ……. 752 -1835
- Hospitality ………………… Ed* & Amy Francis…720-357-4447
- Jr Audubon / Audubon Adventures.. Steve Black* ……. 376 -0110
- Membership Directory & Dues ….. Lucette Wombacher*.. 776-8424
- Membership Recruitment……….. Open
- Newsletter Editor ……………….. Lori Roberts* ……. 784 - 512-1965
- Photo Contests…………………. Scott Niblick* ……. 757- 613-3948
- Photo Displays…………………… Deb Yodock* ……. 228-1269
- Publicity……………………………. Open
- Social Media—Facebook ………… Billie Knight ……. 592-7622
- Webmaster………………………….. Jim Stephenson*… 301- 466 -1973

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**Wildlife, Inc.**

Education & Rehabilitation
A Non Profit Organization
(941) 778-6324
Serving the Manatee and Sarasota County area since 1988

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Thanks to Fred Allen and others who helped with painting the interior of the bird blind at Felts Audubon Preserve...in “the warmth” of AUGUST!