



The Avocet

Tampa Audubon Society October 2019 Newsletter

www.tampaaudubon.org

GENERAL MEETING—Oct 3

**Hillsborough County UF Extension Conference Center, 5339 CR 579, Seffner
6 PM Photo Club ~ 7:00 PM Potluck dinner ~ 7:30 PM Meeting and Program
Bringing a dish to pass is optional.**

Woodpeckers—Nature’s Wood Workers

Reinier Munguia



It’s been said that every animal plays an important role in the ecosystem, yet some have a harder job than others. Meet the woodpeckers, a group of

highly adapted birds with the ability to chisel through wood better than a power tool and without suffering any injuries. Their work goes beyond the building of a simple shelter or gathering food. When they finish their breeding cycle, many will leave a suitable home ready for other birds and mammals.



They are considered a keystone species in forest ecology, and an indicator of forest health. But are we doing the right thing to help them survive? This program will answer many of these questions and will venture the audience into the life of nature’s wood workers.

TAS North

Monday, Sept 9, 11 am

Concordia Village, 4100 E Fletcher Ave.

Speaker Francine Prager

Tampa Bay Bats— with live bats to see!

Francine’s program will tell us about these insect eaters, pollinators, fruit eaters, bat motherhood and more.

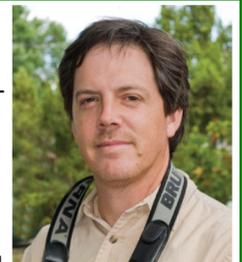
The bats are tiny and fuzzy with adorable faces, most people are surprised at how cute they really are.

Francine will bring several bats, one of which will be a yellow bat, one of our tree bats, who never fails to echolocate so everyone can hear what bat echolocation sounds like.

Free parking.

Our Speaker

Reinier Munguia is a full-time naturalist and nature photographer based in Lakeland, Florida. He serves as the President of the Lake Region Audubon Society and EagleWatch Volunteer Coordinator. His work has appeared in various publications including books, magazines and scientific publications. He spends a great amount of time documenting wildlife and their struggles in our constantly changing environment.

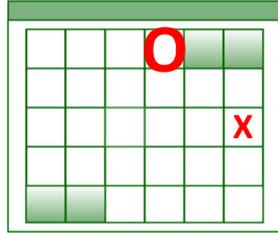


UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

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! As

always, **check the TAS website for details.**



[See leader list on the next page for contact emails.](#)

Oct 3 —General Meeting. Woodpeckers, Nature's Wood Workers.



Oct 5—Native Plant Society Walk at Lettuce Lake, 9 am. Start at Visitor Center.

Oct 5—Cockroach Bay. 8 am. Parking lot on Gulf City Rd. Wetlands, woodlands and migration! Done by 11 am. Bring insect repellent! Leader [Mic McCarty](#).

Oct 12 —Lettuce Lake Beginners Bird Walk. Meet at 9 am in the parking lot by the Visitor's Center to walk the park with us. Fall migration is upon us, warblers and vireos are moving through. Done by noon. Leader [Megan Campbell](#).

Oct 14—TAS North. 11 am. Monday, at Concor-

dia, 4100 E Fletcher, Tampa. Tampa Bay Bats!

Oct. 17—FESTIVAL! Opening keynote, Dr Mark Madison, USFWS, FLORIDA AND CONSERVATION

Oct 18—FESTIVAL! Expo, field trips, seminars, Keynote Denver Holt, OWLS OF NORTH AMERICA

Oct 19—FESTIVAL! Expo, field trips, seminars, Keynote KENN KAUFMAN, MIGRATION!

Oct 20—FESTIVAL, final field trips!

Oct 25-26—Audubon Assembly, Gainesville

Oct 27—Lower Green Swamp, 8 am. 3612 E Knight's Griffin Rd, Plant City. Flat walking. Golden winged warbler was here last year! Leader [Sherry Keller](#).

Lettuce Lake Beginning Birder Walks

Nov 9, Dec 14, Jan 11, 9 am

BIRDING FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

STILL NEEDED

Volunteer for 2 hours at the festival, get into the seminars of the day for free. Pick your day and time at: <https://www.floridabirdingandnaturefestival.org/volunteers>



Thursday Keynote and Reception
Dr. Mark Madison, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Historian



Friday Keynote and Dinner
Denver Holt, founder of the Owl Research Institute



Saturday Keynote and Dinner
Kenn Kaufman, originator of the Kaufman Field Guides

A special symposium with seven speakers on *Saturday* -
"Exploring Florida's Rich Turtle Diversity"

Learn about turtle diversity, ecology, and conservation.



Co-sponsored by the Florida Turtle Conservation Trust.



October 17-20, 2019

Learn more at
fbnfestival.org

HCC
BRANDON CAMPUS



Do you need new optics?

REDSTART Optics

will be at the EXPO with a full line of binoculars, and experts to help you find the pair that fits your hands, your face, your birding style, and your pocketbook! Come browse and upgrade your bins!

The EXPO is free to all!

Fri-Sat 10 am to 4 pm.

Registration open, some trips are sold out!

WINTER BIRDING IN NEW MEXICO

FEB 15-22, 2020

Come with us to New Mexico, for wintering waterfowl by the thousands—cranes, geese and ducks, plus all 3 species of rosy-finches, and a wide range of other western, winter and higher elevation species.

The trip starts and ends in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



Feb 15 we will meet our leader from Wings and have dinner, to start early the next morning.

Feb 16 we'll be in juniper canyons, looking for Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers, Cactus and Rock Wrens and Townsend's Solitaire; Rio Grande Nature Center for waterfowl & Mountain Chickadees; then we move south to Socorro and Bosque del Apache

Feb 17 it's Bosque del Apache for thousands of Snow and Ross's Geese taking off at dawn, then explore the refuge for Roadrunners and more.

Feb 18, for a change of scenery, we'll head to Percha Dam and Caballo Lake in the Chihuahuan Desert, for Gambel's Quail, Verdin, Black and Say's Phoebes,



Pyrrhuloxia and Phainopeplas. Elephant Butte may bring more waterbirds, and Las Animas Creek should have Bridled Titmouse and Acorn Woodpeckers.

Feb 19 we'll go to the grasslands east of Bosque, for raptors and hopefully the *Liliana* subspecies of Eastern Meadowlark, then north to Santa Fe, and hopefully golden eagles on the way.



Feb 20 we're looking for Clark's Nutcracker, Gray Jay, Pine Grosbeak and hopefully the elusive Dusky Grouse. Then north again to Las Vegas NWR for Rough-legged Hawks, Tundra Swans and Black-billed Magpie, maybe even Dippers in the river canyon.

Feb 21 targets will be all 3 species of Rosy-finch, as well as Northern Pygmy Owl, Steller's Jay, Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches and more.

Feb 22 Return to Albuquerque for our flights home.

Costs

Deposit donation to TAS is \$75 per person. The cost for the trip for a **minimum of 9** persons, is:

Double Occupancy: \$2,000; Single supplement: \$552
Charge to pay with credit card is 4% additional. Cost will increase \$250 if fewer than 9 register.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY NOV 1!

This covers all travel from Albuquerque back to Albuquerque, meals from dinner on Feb 15 through dinner on Feb 21, motels, and transportation to/from airport. Tips for the leader are not included, nor is travel arriving to/departing from New Mexico, nor personal items such as laundry, phone calls, etc.

Check the tampaaudubon.org website for details & bird list. Questions to Mary Keith.

Registration: mail to Tampa Audubon Society, PO Box 320025, Tampa, FL 33679 with deposit donation of \$75 per person. Make check to Tampa Audubon Society. **Note: N Mex 2020**

or pay with credit card on-line at our website, under Field Trips.

Name: _____ email: _____

Address: _____

City

ZIP

Single__ Double__ Rooming with: _____ Phone: _____

You will receive a receipt for the donation to TAS as confirmation, and instructions on how to pay rest of trip costs once your name is sent to Wings, Inc.

Project Perch is Underway!



Burrowing Owl Ejecting a Pellet (*It must feel so much better now!*)

I'm very happy to tell you that the Tampa Audubon's Project Perch is moving ahead! We had our first organizational meeting on September 13 at Bell Creek Preserve. We exchanged a lot of great information and laid out a plan to proceed.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 11 from 1-3 pm, at Bell Creek Nature Preserve at 10940 McMullen Rd in Riverview. Volunteers are welcome to attend this meeting.

We will be reviewing our progress and sharing any updates and additional information. We still have a lot to determine before installing any burrows— like where do we have owls????

I look forward to being able to investigate historical sightings from eBird and FWC removal permit applications to get us out there doing what we do best...looking for birds.

Thank you for your interest and support of this program.

Sandy Reed, Tampa Audubon
813-956-6096

If you have any information on the location of burrowing owls in Hillsborough County now, or of where they used to be in the past, please share that with Sandy. Sandy.reed@tampaudubon.org.

In the future she will be initiating a Sponsor a Burrow

Project. So if you're inclined to help buy supplies to build a burrow for a homeless owl, save your pennies! More information will be coming on that soon.

Loss of Birds!

You have surely heard that Cornell's new study published in the journal Science lays bare a shocking finding: More than 1 in 4 birds have vanished from our skies since 1970. The Lab of Ornithology offers 7 steps we can do to make this a friendlier place for birds. Read their full recommendations at <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/seven-simple-actions-to-help-birds>

A quick synthesis is:

Watch birds and share what you see. Take part in citizen-science projects like eBird to show us where birds are thriving—and where they need our help.

Reduce lawn, plant natives. Convert your lawn or balcony into a native habitat with local plants to feed and shelter birds. Get gardening!

Keep cats indoors. Do your local birds a favor by keeping all cats inside—it will help your cat live a longer, healthier life too.

Make windows safer. Install screens or break up reflections—using film, paint, or Acopian BirdSavers or other string spaced no more than two inches high or four inches wide.

Avoid Pesticides.

Enjoy shade-grown coffee. It's delicious, economically beneficial to coffee farmers, and helps more than 42 species of North American migratory songbirds that winter in coffee plantations, including orioles, warblers, and thrushes.

Protect our planet from plastic. Reduce your plastics: Avoid single-use plastics including bags, bottles, wraps, and disposable utensils. Choose reusable items, recycle the rest.

FUTURE TRIPS—

REGISTER NOW TO SAVE YOUR SPOT!

Put these in your calendar and **check the [website](#)** for more details:

Nov 17, Airboat birding on Lake Kissimmee. \$45

Jan 10-12, Two nights at Wakulla Springs State Park, and birding in St Marks NWR. \$350/390 + tax

CUBA: The Natural Beauty The Photographic Expeditions of Clyde Butcher

HCC Art Gallery, Ybor City Campus
Oct 3—Dec 6, 2019
Opening Reception: Thursday, Oct 3, 4:30-7:30pm
Book Signing 4:30-6:30pm

The majestic beauty, boldness and depth of Clyde Butcher's photographs have earned him recognition as the foremost landscape photographic artist in America today. He has been called the next Ansel Adams by Popular Photography magazine. Clyde was invited to photograph the mountains of Cuba for the United Nations' Conference for the Sustainable Habitat of the Mountain. This exhibit transcends political boundaries and challenges us to work together to protect natural places across the globe. Meet Clyde at the opening reception Oct 3.

VOLUNTEERS ARE LOVED AT LETTUCE LAKE!

The visitors at the **Audubon Resource Center at Lettuce Lake Park** would really love having a few more volunteers to answer their questions! Duties include: be available once every few months for a weekend afternoon to answer questions, direct visitors, keep track of numbers at the Visitor Center, and rarely lead a walk along the boardwalk. You will be certified as a County volunteer, and will receive orientation and training. Contact Roger Sheets, ARC Director.

And in case you have not been there recently, the Visitor Center/Audubon Resource Center at the Park is undergoing remodeling. The restrooms are enlarged, there's a new floor and paint job. The building has been closed for several weeks, so we are all waiting to see the new final version! Go visit!

CONTACT LIST FOR TRIP LEADERS and BOARD

Mary Keith, President, trip leader
Mary.keith@tampaadubon.org
Michelle Hoffman Wrobel, Treasurer, trip leader
michelle.hoffman.wrobel@tampaadubon.org
Sherry Keller, Secretary, trip leader
sherry.keller@tampaadubon.org
Connie Anderson, BoD, trip leader
Connie.anderson@tampaadubon.org
Megan Campbell, BoD Member, trip leader
Megan.campbell@tampaadubon.org
Doug DeNeve, BoD member, Conservation Chair, trip leader
Doug.deneve@tampaadubon.org
Pat Lewis, BoD member, past President
pat.lewis@tampaadubon.org
Mic McCarty, BoD Member, trip leader
Mic.mccarty@tampaadubon.org
Lucy Polak, BoD Member, trip leader
lucy.polak@tampaadubon.org
Sandy Townsend, BoD Member, Event Coordinator
Sandy.townsend@tampaadubon.org

Roger Sheets, Lettuce Lake ARC Volunteer Director
roger.sheets@tampaadubon.org
Sandy Reed, Chair, Hooked Bird Project
Sandy.reed@tampaadubon.org
Mary Miller, Bluebird Box Trail coordinator
limpkin1945@verizon.net
Nancy Murrah, Raptor Rescue, 205-1851
Nancy.murrah@tampaadubon.org

Membership

Welcome to all the New and Renewing Members we're received! If you haven't renewed in some time, you're probably due too. Renew your Audubon membership through TAS so we get the funds sooner. When you receive your renewal notice from National Audubon, just **renew on our website**, download the application form from our website, or 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!!

We welcomed the following new or renewing members this past month: Yippee!

Heather, Matti, William, Richard, Melanie, Marcia, Don, Chris, Gail, V.R., Penny, Elaine, Pat, Betsy

EAGLE WATCH IS STARTING UP AGAIN



As we prepare for the upcoming eagle nesting season, here's what happened last year:

- 422 volunteers monitored 740 nests in 45 counties
- 584 nests were occupied by a nesting pair, hatching 821 chicks, of which 770 survived to successfully fledge!

- Nest productivity remained stable: 1.32 fledglings per occupied nest vs. 1.31 fledglings per occupied nest last season.
- The fledge rate was slightly higher this season: 94% of chicks fledged vs. 92% last season.
- Despite concerns about red-tide along our coasts, monitored nests near affected waters were just as successful as non-impacted nests around the state.
- **Eagle Watch would love new volunteers:**

All new volunteers are required to go through training. If you joined the program mid-season last year, please make plans to attend one of their upcoming in-person or online trainings. They currently have 6 trainings scheduled with a few more to be added. The first training will be Sept 15th in Central Florida. You are welcome to attend any training that works for you! Due to space constraints at some of the locations, registration is required to attend. To see the current training locations and to sign-up to attend, visit the registration page at: http://www.eaglewatchflorida.org/training_registration.html

Current volunteers are also welcome to attend if you would like a refresher. For more information, please contact:

Shawnlei Breeding, Audubon EagleWatch Program Manager, at 407.644.0190 , sbreeding@audubon.org

Update on Nesting on Nesting Islands

TAS donated money to help hire a Sheriff's deputy to patrol the islands of Three Rooker, Anclote Key, Anclote Bar and Caladesi, during peak nesting season. Here's the Park Ranger's report to us:

"We contracted the Pinellas County Sheriff's office Marine Unit to patrol, one day a weekend from May 4 through the July 4th weekend. The deputy worked from 10a to 3p on alternating Saturdays and Sundays during those weeks. I hoped the visible presence of the officers would rapidly diminish the number of times our stewards were needed to speak to non-compliant dog owners.

The effectiveness of that contract effort is debatable. I can say that the results do not justify the cost of the project. The officer was helpful on many occasions during the nesting season, but the number of dogs removed from the island by the deputies' efforts pales in comparison to the result of the constant presence of our volunteers stewards. The stewards documented over 200 dogs excluded from the Rooker Islands and Anclote Key as a result of face to face outreach! The continued stability of the Rooker colony is a direct result of our amazing partnership with Tampa Audubon Society and Audubon Florida. Please share my appreciation with your members and board. "

Dan Larremore, Environmental Specialist
Honeymoon Island State Park



Three Rooker nests:

3 AMOY nests, 120 black skimmer (BLSK) nests, 1,300 royal tern (ROYT) nests, 250 Sandwich tern (SATE) nests, 12 Caspian tern (CATE) nests, 6,000 laughing gull (LAGU) nests, 300 white ibis (WHIB) nests, 2 reddish egret (REEG) nests were observed.



Egmont Key: 330 Brown pelican nests, 75 ibis nests, 4 AMOY nests, 30,000 LAGU nests, 3,000 ROYT nests, 655 SATE nests, 61 BLSK nests.

While Dan may wonder about the value of the deputy, I know that the volunteers appreciated knowing there was backup. They have often been ignored or blatantly disrespected by boaters. And as boaters learned the deputy was there word surely got around to avoid those islands.

Photos of Black Skimmer and Royal Terns with chicks are from Holley Short.

Eaglet stretching its wings at Eureka Springs, Mary Keith.