



June & July, 2008

Volume XLI Number 6

Wing Beat Goes Electronic: Call Us If You Still Want A Paper Copy!

Starting with the NEXT issue, we will deliver Wingbeat primarily through email. This will save printing costs, paper, postage, and the fossil fuels required for paper delivery. This step saves Clearwater Audubon dollars for more direct education and conservation uses, and also demonstrates our respect for consumption and a smaller carbon footprints.

To Receive Wingbeat Via Email

To receive Wingbeat via email, please email us at wingbeat@clearwateraudubon.org. Please use the subject line: electronic wingbeat.

To Receive A Paper Copy

We do realize that some members are not and do not intend to become email users. If you wish to continue to receive a paper copy of Wingbeat, you must let us know. Call Barb Walker at (727)442-9140, or write to us at P.O. Box 97, Clearwater, Florida 33757.

If I Do Nothing?

If we do not hear from you, we'll assume you plan to download Wingbeat from the Clearwater Audubon website at your own convenience. Wingbeat issues are already online. If you've never looked at one there, we encourage you to check out this very edition at clearwateraudubon.org/newsletter.html or by following the About Us menu item to Newsletters.

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GOING GREEN - TINY CHANGES!

by Clearwater Audubon Society President, Mike MacDonald

UPS is an innovator that began as a package delivery company in suburban Seattle in 1907 & has grown into the world leader in package delivery. UPS has always been sensitive to the bottom line - a firm believer in "a penny saved is a penny earned." That ethic is visible every time one of those brown delivery vans stops in front of your home, while that brown clad person hustles your package, twitching impatiently as you sign for it. A few years ago UPS investigated ways to save energy. UPS analyzed delivery routes & discovered that eliminating left turns would yield huge savings. A TINY CHANGE that saved over 3,000,000 gallons of fuel in the first year!

What TINY CHANGE could each of us accomplish with equally impressive results, & carbon footprint reduction? Here's one: print documents on both sides of the paper! Assume each of us consumes two reams of paper per year printing documents on one side [realistic assumption]. Savings: one ream of paper per person. If all Wingbeat readers were to achieve this TINY CHANGE, it would equal more than 800 reams of paper per year, equaling 5+ trees [one tree yields 80,000 sheets of paper]. Do the math - keep multiplying! At \$30/10 ream carton [realistic assumption], \$2,400 would be saved just in over-the-counter costs! Plus the energy to harvest, process & transport that paper around the Earth. A TINY CHANGE equals huge results.

What TINY CHANGE[s] are you making in support of the "green" effort? Send us your stories. We will be offering more TINY CHANGE ideas for you to adapt. Next up: vampire electronics. Stay tuned.

WING BEAT

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Clearwater Audubon Society serves all of North Pinellas.

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www.clearwateraudubon.org

WING BEAT Editorial Committee: Aydelette Kelsey,
Barb Walker, Bill Raymond

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Please submit articles via email to:
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the address above, Attn: Wingbeat Editor.

WING BEAT advertising deadline for the next issue
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Please address other rate inquiries to
Treasurer, Jane Williams at 727.447.7394.

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**We are currently seeking a Recording Secretary. We
also need a Coordinator for the 2009 Rummage Sale.**

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS June & July, 2008

-Monthly Programs resume in October-

Summer Field Trips

Sunday, 6/8 8AM

Gibbons Preserve

Tampa Audubon Field Trip

Meet at the Preserve, 8 mi. east of Hwy 301 on Boyette Rd just past the driving range. Bring water. Parking on left side of road. Contact: Rob Heath heathcomm@aol.com or 813.310.0072.

Saturday, 6/21 9AM

Florida Aquarium & Liberty Ship

Clearwater Audubon Field Trip

Meet at Tri-City Mall in front of Party City: explore the riches of Florida's marine world, discover the splendor of a WW II merchant ship. Lunch in Ybor City. Contact trip leader: Mike MacDonald, 727-538-8688. More information online at: www.flaquarium.org
www.americanvictory.org/about-resources.asp

Lake Park Beginning Birders' and Children's Bird Walk. Saturday June 21.

Easy outdoor walk for beginning birders, parents & school children. Bring binoculars. Learn Florida's resident birds using songs, antics, and appearance & native plants. Contact Jo Anne Hartzler, 813.310.7676 or usarealty@msn.com

Saturday, 7/12 10AM

Mote Marine Laboratory

Clearwater Audubon Field Trip

Meet at Tri-City Mall in front of Party City. We'll explore one of the premier cetacean marine research laboratories in the USA. Lunch at St Armand's Circle. Contact: Mike MacDonald, 727-538-8688. More information about the Mote Marine Laboratory at www.mote.org

Saturday, 8/2 8AM

Clearwater Marine Aquarium

Clearwater Audubon Field Trip

Meet at Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Buy tickets to explore the marine environment of St. Joseph Sound with CMA biologists. We'll lunch on the mainland. More information about the aquarium can be found at www.cmaquarium.org.

Seasonal Volunteer Opportunities

**Become a Beach Nesting Bird Steward
Spend Mornings on Deserted Islands!**

Dana Kerstein coordinates our Project Colony Watch program and can direct you to the opportunities that match your calendar and skills – everything from driving your own boat to tying flags that make twined nesting areas more visible. Contact her at: hkerstein@tampabay.rr.com or 727. 441-1609

**Join the Rooftop Reserves
Resolutely Rescuing Chicks on Asphalt**

Not interested in a boat ride or the beach? Maybe you're more the urban guerilla type? Find out how you can participate in the chick-a-booming adventures of our rooftop observers and rescuers. There's a job waiting just for you. Call Jane Williams, project coordinator for North Pinellas at mjwilli56@tampabay.rr.com or 727.447.7394

FOR SALE:

New/unused Bushnell Elite 10 x 43 binoculars.

8' close-focus. Comes with hard plastic carrying case and neck strap. \$500 firm. Current retail price \$800.

Contact Marianne Korosy at mkorosy@mail.ucf.edu (for quick response). By phone 727-772-7584.

Advocacy Corner

by Liz Drayer

Mostly good news from the state legislature. Florida Forever, the state program that purchases environmentally sensitive land and protects it from development, was reauthorized for another 10 years with continued funding. Everglades restoration received another \$50 million. An energy bill was passed containing a number of environment-friendly provisions including: 1) a cap and trade program for greenhouse gases; 2) new energy efficiency requirements for utilities; and 3) a requirement that the Public Service Commission develop rules increasing renewable energy supplies. Unfortunately, the bill makes it somewhat easier for utilities to put power lines across state lands and build new power plants.

City of Clearwater environmental initiatives. The city is pursuing "green city" certification from the Florida Green Builders Coalition. This certification is available to cities that achieve goals for waste reduction, water conservation, air quality and other areas. The city has also launched "Green Clearwater," a new website with conservation tips for residents, as well as information about the city's efforts to protect the environment. The city is still deciding how it will implement the recommendations of the USF sustainability study, intended to make Clearwater a "greener" city. Please contact your city commissioners and tell them you support all these efforts and also want to see more green space, less chemical fertilizers, more native plants instead of grass, and cleaner waterways in the city.

Oppose development of Brooker Creek Preserve. The county has proposed a new plan which would open large portions of the Preserve to pumping of water and associated construction. These activities would harm natural habitat as well as the beauty of the Preserve. Please contact your county commissioners and tell them to keep the county's "wildest place" just the way it is, with no more building or pumping. You can also congratulate them on acquiring more land for Wall Springs Park.

THANK YOU to the members of our conservation advocacy committee. We could not be effective without the continuing efforts of Lola Brett, John Burr, Pat Coughlin, Sid Crawford. Dee Dubendorff, Bill Gammonley, John Hood, Barb Howard, Jo Hubbard, Dana Kerstein, Mike MacDonald, Mac McMullen, Jeanne Murphy, Paula Roman, Ken Rowe, Lynn Sumerson, Susan Traub, Barbara Walker, Chrissy Williams, and Jane Williams. Thank you also to Paul Trunk, immediate past president, and Joan Brigham, Eagle Watch chairperson, for their consistent support.

Do you want a cleaner, greener community? Join our letter writing committee. For just minutes a week you can have a positive impact on your world. The more people who get involved, the more we can get done. Contact Liz Drayer at edrayer@tampabay.rr.com for information.

Nature's Food Patch Makes a Difference

by Barb Walker

What is 178.65 divided by .05? 3,573. That is how many times Nature's Food Patch donated a nickel in the month of March to the Clearwater Audubon Society. Nature's Food Patch had a sign in sheet at the door for customers to vote for their favorite charity. "In March the Clearwater Audubon Society won" said Cheryl Rosselle, Marketing Manager. Every time a customer brought in a reusable shopping bag five cents went to the customer selected charity. Nature's Food Patch which is privately owned has been in business for 21 years.

On Earth Day Nature's Food Patch hosted an event to help raise awareness of what people can do to help the planet and be better consumers. The store was buzzing with customers who could grab their organics or watch an environmental video called the Battle of the Bag. Among the vendors was Pat Freed from Pinellas County Utilities who reminded people not to pour grease down the drain. "It may be a whole neighborhood that gets affected" stated Pat. Another vendor, Linda

Taylor, established her company called It's Our Nature, on Earth Day, in 1996. She sells Healthy-Wear for People Who Care and just released a book titled Great Women Exploring Nature.

Dave Lesh of SYSCO also set up a booth. He promotes eco-friendly disposable food containers which Nature's Food Patch uses in their store. He *knows* the life of plastic bags is 10 – 20 years. Some of their products are made of Bagasse. Bagasse is made from unused sugarcane stalks. The stalks are turned into pulp and then molded into different products. Even the tableware is biodegradable. Combine that with a tasty meal from Nature's Food Patch and you can't help but want to go back. The store is located at 1225 Cleveland Street in Clearwater.

Understanding Spiders

by Madeleine Bohrer

The next time I see a spider, my first thoughts will *not* be, "Where is the nearest shoe?" "Ick." "What happens to them after they've been sucked into the vacuum bag?"

Only a spider enthusiast like Francia Smith could convert a lifelong spider eradicator like me. She did not have to endow them with human qualities to make them attractive. She simply gave a thorough and fascinating talk and slide show about what makes 38,000 (and counting) species of spiders so unique and worthy of our respect and attention. She described them as adaptable, preferring solitude, peace, and quiet. I never realized how much we had in common.

Unlike insects, spiders have no antennae, 2 body parts, 8 legs, no wings, and up to 8 eyes. Spider venom comes from the front and silk from the back while insects deliver these from the opposite ends. Arachnids eat only liquefied meals while insects swallow theirs. Insects have 20 times more species but the specialization of spiders deserves our note.

Ms. Smith gave us the "4W" way to classify spiders: web builders, wandering (like the

jumping and wolf), waiting (like the tarantula), and water (ones who trap food in bubbles). They all lay eggs and grow by molting.

Since hearing Ms. Smith's talk, I find myself keeping my magnifying glass handy and looking twice when I see gossamer. Now I ask myself, "What kind of spider is this?" OK, I admit that I also ask "How can I usher this spider safely out of the house?" At least my revulsion has been replaced by curiosity and respect thanks to Francia Smith.

It's Electrifying!

by Barb Walker

On February 28th Tampa Electric Company removed Osprey nesting materials from a switch pole at the intersection of Tampa Road and State Road 580 in the city of Oldsmar, and placed a nesting deterrent on the pole. The switch pole was in need of immediate repair and the Ospreys attempting to nest there were at risk of electrocution. Below the switch pole is not one, but two busy streets. The Oldsmar skyline is webbed with power lines. In the distance tall utility towers with varied purposes house the Ospreys of Oldsmar. Across the street from Oldsmar City Hall to the north lays a construction site completely void of trees. The only nice pine for night perching was a tree to the south at Oldsmar City Hall. The City of Oldsmar graciously agreed to host a pole with an artificial nesting platform near the pine. Tampa Electric Company placed the nesting materials on the platform. Ospreys have been seen on the platform but the pair was unproductive this year.

Marylynne Jones of Clearwater initially reported the endangered Osprey pair and has been monitoring that nest and others in Oldsmar. When describing the nesting territories in Oldsmar Marylynne wrote, "There are two very high telephone towers and there are nests on both of them. One is easy to view and I have often seen the Osprey perched in the nest. The other tower is too far off to see the birds."

Meanwhile, in front of the Publix at East Lake Road and Tampa Road another Osprey attempted to nest right on top of a deterrent. "Sometimes they get lucky depending on the deterrent," wrote a representative of Tampa Electric Company who helped in saving the Ospreys. Numerous nests are draped across the tower cross bars all the way down the Progress Energy corridor. Some of those nests may be considered prime real estate for other raptors, like Bald Eagles, if populations fluctuate in that direction. "We're pretty much saturated," said Joe Zarolinski who has been watching for many years. Osprey and Bald Eagles are known to compete over nesting sites.

The Osprey territories are quite different in East Lake where Progress Energy Platforms are the domain. On January 30th the Tarpon Woods Osprey returned and began nesting immediately on the platform that Progress Energy provided for them. They never even dropped one stick on the Tarpon Woods Country Club sign. They are currently feeding two young chicks. The YMCA Osprey has two nice sized chicks and plenty of fish too. One new spot on lights in a shopping plaza in Tarpon Woods has been eyed by a pair of Osprey which may possibly be the couple who lost their tree last year at Tarpon Woods Country Club. They have been unproductive this year.

The Osprey nest at St. Andrews Links, where an OspreyCam is proposed by the City of Dunedin, was the first to fledge! A private donor has funded the project. The nest currently rests on top of a light fixture just above the putting green and the Pinellas Trail goes right by! Another pair of Osprey in Palm Harbor has a nest on top of the Muvico sign. This is their first year on the sign. Habitat loss to the east towards Lake Tarpon may be the reason for their move.

The Osprey antics are amusing. This year one Osprey was observed flying over East Lake Road with a fish in his talons. In a rare case, he dropped the fish. The fish landed on top of a car! Another Osprey picked up some moss during nesting which must have been 8 to 10 feet long. He looked like a small airplane

pulling a banner across East Lake Road. If anyone would like to help with Osprey Watch please call Barb Walker at 727-789-0183. Someone with wood working skills to build a platform is needed.

Eagle Watch

by Joan Brigham

Our two late nests surprised us by being viable and producing two young each. This will mean a very late fledging probably in the middle of June. For the first time since I began Eagle Watching I'm turning my back on a nest before fledging. But the north calls. Joe Zarolinski will continue to observe and report the final outcome. If all goes well our season total should be 12 nests with 16 young.

Happily Ever Raptor

by Barb Walker

It was late in the day on April 17th when I found out #79 could fly again and that we would need a suitable place for release in familiar territory. "Your baby is ready to go" said Lynda White, Audubon Eagle Watch Coordinator when she called. We planned to release the rehabilitated Bald Eagle which had been injured in a territorial dispute near the Pinellas Pasco County Line the next day at 3:30. I drove north up East Lake Road and east on Keystone Road while I still had some light to try to find a suitable release location. I saw one Bald Eagle in the Progress Energy Corridor at Grey Oaks that night. Despite data from two flyovers we never saw a chick or fledging from the ground in Grey Oaks and the Eagle Watch Team wonders if there is an alternate nest on property.

Two sites on the east side of East Lake Road looked suitable but they were too far north, coming too close to the territory where the young eagle was found. I had reports from the Progress Energy Corridor all the way west towards the Anclote River near the proposed Wal-Mart site of Bald Eagle interactions. Southward was a late nest with two chicks in it at Boot Ranch. We wanted to get as close to

Brooker Creek Preserve as possible to give the young eagle a good start.

Early the morning of April 18th I drove eastward again on Keystone Road towards Brooker Creek Preserve to pick a final location. I felt sure I spotted a couple of clearings on the north side of the road. I passed by several pristine horse farms and then pulled onto a 3 acre property I had spotted the night before. Upon the land was a wonderful rustic farm, complete with friendly goats and a good sized clearing perfect for releasing an eagle. I knocked on the door and Elton G. Dixon III answered. I was lucky to catch him home. He graciously agreed to let us use the farm for the release and I drove away relieved for having found such a warm and wildlife friendly family.

Lynda and Jim White came in just after 3:30pm and several attendees called to let us know they were on the way but had been delayed due to heavy traffic. The eagle arrived with a falconer's hood on. Joe Zarolinski helped remove the hood. Michelle Simoneau of the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary released the Bald Eagle after receiving brief instructions from Lynda White. As predicated by Lynda White, the eagle flew north. Next year we will be on the look out for an eagle wearing a silver band.

Joe Zarolinski informed me on May 21st that one of the Boot Ranch chicks perished. The sibling will fledge in about 3 weeks. Usually Bald Eagles are gone by now. The nest of a mating pair of Swallow-Tailed Kites was also discovered in the East Lake area between April 30th and May 5th. The pair appears to be nesting late and it is unclear whether they will be productive or not. Citizen studies in Georgia from 1999-2001 indicated the mean egg laying date was April 14th and ranged to May 3rd.

Bird populations fluctuate but urban environments do not. Preserving swamps and woodlands within our human landscape is one of the ideal ways to give the Bald Eagles, Osprey, and the Swallow-tailed Kites a chance to live Happily Ever Raptor.

Audubon Membership Form

National Audubon Membership includes membership in Clearwater Audubon as well as annual subscriptions to Audubon Magazine, Florida Naturalist, & Wing Beat. Introductory membership to National Audubon is \$20.00 (Renewal is handled by National Audubon.) Make your check payable to National Audubon Society.

Chapter Only Membership enrolls you as a member of Clearwater Audubon Society and includes an annual subscription to Wing Beat. Annual dues are \$15.00. Your renewal date appears after your name on your mailing label. Make your check payable to Clearwater Audubon Society.

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WHAT IS THE CLEARWATER AUDUBON SOCIETY?

Our purpose is embodied in our motto: **Conservation though education** & our activities include:

- protection of nesting, wintering and migrating birds through Project Colony Watch, rescue of chicks fallen from rooftop nests, Project Eagle Watch, and participation in the county-wide beach nesting bird survey;
- education, including Audubon Adventures for elementary school students, environmental education scholarships for teachers and students, free birding classes for the public, and a speakers bureau;
- sponsorship of projects at local nature parks;
- field trips to prime birding locations in Florida, throughout the United States and internationally;
- monthly meetings held October through May featuring speakers on a wide array of environment-related topics;
- participation in bird surveys, which provide data for vital ornithological research;
- participation in local nature festivals;
- publication of our bimonthly newsletter, Wingbeat, and our website, at ClearwaterAudubon.org;
- advocacy at the local, state and national levels.

YOU CAN HELP!

Whatever your interests or skills, we can use your help protecting birds and the environment. If you like working outdoors, writing, speaking, organizing, baking, or just meeting new people, we have opportunities for you. Call Paul or Debbie Trunk at 727.447.4785 and we'll tell you how you can help.