



Wing Beat

Reach us by calling 727-442-9140 or visit us at www.clearwateraudubon.org

Remembering and Giving Season 2009

The annual season of remembrance, giving, & family fast approaches. Let us not forget to include those volunteer non-governmental organizations [NGOs] that not only enrich the lives of others, and by doing so also enrich our own lives.

There are multitudes of such organizations, filling those needs that, for a variety of reasons, can be fulfilled by no other means. Needs often beyond the horizon of governments and politicians for any number of reasons; but raucous citizens often garner their attention and some sort of reaction.

The Purpose of those NGOs are mostly beyond the ability of individuals to make any difference by themselves; but cooperating individuals, working as a team, have a huge impact on the achievements of those NGOs.

Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. is one such NGO! Cooperating individuals have created a rich history of achievement of our purpose, and in the betterment of our community “think globally, act locally”.

Our North Pinellas community has been enriched by these volunteer achievements. As is often the case, the lives of those individual volunteers have been enriched in unforeseen ways, by new perspectives, understandings, & acquaintances.

As Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. marches confidently into its second five decades, reflect upon the achievements of your Society through generous cooperative efforts of its volunteer members, as well as the generous endowments that have enabled those endeavors to achieve that purpose!

Each member can be proud of and grateful for those experiences. In the meantime,

HAVE A KULE YULE/CHANUKA/KWANZAA & A FRANTIC FIRST!

Mike MacDonald, President
November 2009

Clearwater Audubon Society's 50th Anniversary Celebration

Clearwater Marine Aquarium
249 Winward Psg
Clearwater, FL 33767

Saturday, January 30, 2010
5:30 P.M.-6:30 P.M. Social Hour with Wine & Cheese
6:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M, Dolphin Show
7:00 p.m. Catered Buffet Dinner
Followed by 50th Anniversary presentation until 9:00 P.M.

Price \$35.00 per person \$60.00 per couple
For Reservations by January 22, 2010

RSVP: Jane Williams 727-447-7394
e-mail jwilli56@tampabay.rr.com
Make checks out to: Clearwater Audubon and mail to:
217 North Hillcrest Dr. , Clearwater Florida 33755

If room is available: \$40.00 per person
\$70.00 per couple at the door

If you are unable to attend, please consider a donation to Clearwater Audubon Society.



Photo Credits: Barb Walker

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Clearwater Audubon Society serving all of North Pinellas since 1959

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WING BEAT Editor - Barb Walker

Submissions deadline for the next issue

is February 10th, 2010. **Submissions must be un-formatted in Times New Roman.**

Please submit articles via email to: barbibird@tampabay.rr.com

or mail to the address above, Attn: Wingbeat Editor.

WING BEAT advertising deadline for the next issue

is February 10, 2010. Business size ads are \$25 per issue.

Please address other rate inquiries to

Treasurer, Jane Williams at 727-447-7394.

Please submit ads via email to: adsubmission@clearwateraudubon.org \

or mail to the address above, Attn: Wingbeat Ads.

Officers of Clearwater Audubon Society

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2nd VP, Sid Crawford	785-3960
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Conservation Advocacy, Barbara Walker	789-0183
Conservation Projects, Dana Kerstein	441-1609
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Electronic Delivery

229 of 1000 members have elected to receive the Wing Beat electronically. This has the advantage of earlier receipt, living color, and is easier on our budget and the environment. If you received this in the snail mail please consider electronic edelivery. Please call 727-442-9140 or email barbibird@tampabay.rr.com to initiate electronic e-delivery. CAS will not release your email address to any third party.

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**U Stor N Lock donates storage space
 to Clearwater Audubon**
*If you need a store room, see them and please
 mention Clearwater Audubon Society.*

Audubon Assembly By John Hood and Barb Walker

On October 23rd and 24th the Audubon assembly was held in St. Petersburg at the Carillon Hilton. Highlights of the event included a panel and workshop on climate change and keynote speaker Dr. Sylvia Earle whose job title is Explorer in Residence with National Geographic. Dr. Earle discussed the depletion of large fish in the ocean and degradation of coral reefs. One main reason she said, to conserve and save the ocean and its creatures, is because of the pharmaceutical possibilities. Additionally, the St. Petersburg Audubon Society was named Chapter of the Year, so congratulations to their outstanding year! The club had a banner year including the creation of an exhibit on the plume trade. The major emphasis at the Audubon Assembly was on global climate change. The data is sobering although there is the possibility of light at the end of the tunnel. The more immediate problem facing Floridians however is the possibility that near shore oil drilling may be coming our way soon.

Interestingly when putting together our display board for our 50th anniversary which was featured at the event, we discovered a cache of old newsletters. Your society first published a newsletter in 1970 although it was called the newsletter and not the Wing Beat. Volume 1 Number 1 was unfortunately not found but, Volume 1 Number 2 had a couple of articles talking about the aftermath of an oil spill in Tampa Bay. About 4000 birds were affected. Hundreds of people turned out to help and it took several months to rehabilitate some of the birds. Another spill happened in 1993 and Shannon Miller of the Defenders of Wildlife gave a talk with a slide presentation documenting the devastation of that spill. Your board of directors has issued a resolution against near shore oil drilling and I would urge all our members to advocate against near shore drilling via letters to your elected officials and the media. For more information please see page 6.

All members are urged to take action regarding climate change and oil drilling. For more information on how you can help please call us at 727-442-9140.



Audubon of Florida's John Ogden and Julie Wraithmell



Clearwater Audubon's Sid Crawford



Audubon of Florida's Ed Carlson



Clearwater Audubon's Mike MacDonald



Clearwater Audubon's Marianne Korosy



Audubon of Florida's Lynda White and Paige



Senator Paula Dockety



St. Petersburg Times, Craig Pittman

Help Wanted

Position: Volunteer Historian

When: Immediately

How much time: A couple of hours a week

Expertise needed: Good organization skills, computer literate.

Duties: Gather historical artifacts and develop the catalogue of CAS history.

Contact: Mike McDonald at 727-409-0459 or Email curmudgin2@yahoo.com

Position: Conservation Advocacy Chair

When: Immediately

How much time: 1—2 days per week, weekend and evening meetings both internal and external

Expertise needed: Excellent research skills, public speaking, writing

Contact: Mike MacDonald at 727-409-0459 or Email curmudgin2@yahoo.com

Notes

Palm Harbor Preservationist, Winona Jones passed away in early November. She was one of the Clearwater Audubon Society's first callers when we received our new phone line. Ms. Jones was delightful to speak with and the opportunity to speak with her again is greatly missed.

Will the person who sent the brownie pan to Joan Brigham last year please step forward!

Clearwater Audubon Society is interested in forming a Junior Audubon Club. Anyone interested please call us at 727-442-9140.

Many designs for bird houses and feeders can be found online. Most squirrels do not like safflower seeds, while the small songbirds, like cardinals do. Safflower seeds are small white seeds and can be found in most stores that sell bird seed.

110th Annual Christmas Bird Count By Marianne Korosy

The North Pinellas CBC will be on Sunday, December 27th. The date was incorrectly published in the annual trip schedule as December 20th. Counts in most areas will begin 1-2 hours before dawn (trip leaders) and team participants may join up for pre-dawn birding or later by coordinating with the team leader.

Owls and whippoorwills are among the pre-dawn “stars”. At dawn, team leaders will be situated at a location where songbirds are particularly active, at places where rails and Least Bitterns are found, or where large numbers of wading birds, ducks, blackbirds, gulls, cranes, and cormorants fly out of night roosts in coastal areas and head to their daily feeding areas. The early morning hours are full of new songbird sightings and as mid-day approaches, raptors, white pelicans, wood storks, and vultures begin to soar. Afternoons often find teams searching for shorebirds or ducks depending on the tides. At 6-6:30 p.m. we will convene at the home of Paul and Debbie Trunk for the annual dinner and “countdown” where we tally each team’s data to get the total number of species seen that day within our 15-mile diameter circle.

Experienced and intermediate birders are especially needed for several teams. If you have an iPod loaded with eastern bird songs or a portable tape player with Florida bird songs or some comparable techno-gadget, we need you! There also are opportunities for beginning birders on some teams to record data, to learn how Christmas counts are accomplished, and to see some new birds along the way!

Marianne Korosy is the compiler and organizer for the count. Team leaders are listed below and you may contact them directly. If you haven’t participated on the North Pinellas count before, would like to change teams, or want more information, contact Marianne at mkorosy@gmail.com or 727-772-7584 (voice mail if no answer).



Greg Butcher
Don Margeson, October 2009

Team leaders:

Tarpon Springs – Paul Trunk ptrunk@gmail.com, 727-447-4785
Palm Harbor – Marianne Korosy mkorosy@gmail.com, 727-772-7584
Honeymoon Island – Dave Gagne oporornis77@yahoo.com—team full
Caladesi Island – Dana Kerstein dana.kerstein@gmail.com, 727-441-1609
Clearwater – Mike MacDonald curmudgin37@gmail.com, 727-409-0459
Safety Harbor – Joan Brigham 727-446-9367
Oldsmar east/west Hillsborough – Dave Goodwin dgood389@aol.com—team full
Brooker Creek Preserve – Ken Rowe ksr28@verizon.net, 727-781-0745
Lake Tarpon/East Lake – Merle Hubbard merlinhubb@tampabay.rr.com, 727-939-1549
Oldsmar west – John Hood jhood2@tampabay.rr.com, 727-461-4762



Eagle Watch By Barbara Walker

Eagle Watch volunteers are currently monitoring 32 Bald Eagle nests throughout Pinellas County. Early in the season intense activity began occurring in cell towers at the south end of Lake Seminole. Two pairs formerly located on the east side of Lake Seminole have not yet been relocated. The territories around Lake Tarpon appear to be shifting around a little bit with one or more pairs trying to work their way into heavily guarded territories. There seems to be quite a few young eagles present noted by the bits of brown remaining in their tails and the faint eye stripes persisting giving us a hint of their youth. Mating pairs can become distracted by interference from subadults or juveniles within their natal territory. If the interference continues into incubation it is possible that the nest could fail, producing no young for the season. The number of Bald Eagle pairs monitored yearly fluctuates. Five years ago, there was a bumper crop of eagles, with North Pinellas counting 15 nests, and 23 young. Bald Eagles reach sexual maturity at the age of five so it is possible to see additional competitions for mates and nesting territories. Bald Eagles mate for life and will fight to their death over their mate or territory. If you see an injured eagle please call the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary at 727-391-6211 or call Barbara Walker at 727-431-2856.



Photo Credit: Barbara Walker

Progress Energy Awards \$12,000 Grant to Osprey Conservation

In November Clearwater Audubon Society received a \$12,000 environmental grant from Progress Energy. The funds will be used for restoration efforts, to help prevent mortality of Ospreys and Bald Eagles, and to fund osprey education and conservation. The Osprey Open will take place March 27th, 2010, at St. Andrews Links located at 620 Palm Boulevard, Dunedin. The Osprey Open has a 7am registration and an 8pm shot-gun start. It is an 18 hole 2 person scramble for \$35 per person. Proceeds also go towards Osprey conservation and education. St. Andrews links is the home of www.DunedinOspreyCam.com.



Photo Credit: Barb Walker

One Osprey was rescued by Terri Cunningham on July 18th at Tarpon Springs Yacht Club. It was released in early November. Many Ospreys which were rescued this year died of emaciation, never making it all the way to the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary.

Dr. Sumerson and the Squirrels – Mission Impossible

I had a nice size yard and purchased some bird feeders as I had seen cardinals, chickadees, titmice and robins in the yard. These two coincidental occurrences resulted in a battle with the resident squirrels – and an entirely unintended consequence.

I devoted much thought to the storage of bird feed so I purchased 30 gallon hard plastic trash cans which I stored on my side porch. This provided only a minimal obstacle to the squirrels who seemed to come out of nowhere in quantity and took great delight with the minimal challenges provided by my thoughtful purchases. They voraciously chewed through the plastic and ate directly from these ill-fated trash containers.

ROUND ONE – Squirrels 1, Dr. Sumerson 0.

I disposed of those plastic trashcans, and I purchased metal trashcans. I hoped beyond hope that these squirrels did not have teeth like crocodiles. The result here was even more insulting, but I was beginning to have more respect for the squirrels. When they surely realized that eating their way through to the birdseed was impossible, they decorated the trash cans with both liquid and solid excrement. YUCK!! I am uncertain that squirrels have human emotions. However, I was about to attribute a supreme appreciation for delicious vindictiveness to these squirrels.

ROUND TWO – Squirrels 2, Dr. Sumerson 0.

I have not yet described my inglorious defeat in the main arena of my efforts to provide food for my winged visitors. I had purchased two standard bird feeders. The squirrels successfully climbed up the poles and managed to steal the birdseed. I even took advice to grease the poles so that the squirrels would slide down to the ground and not reach the bird food summit. This band of squirrels showed AMERICA'S GOT TALENT jumping skills beginning at either our house or at surrounding trees and landing uneventfully at the feeders.

ROUND THREE – Squirrels 3, Dr. Sumerson a humiliating 0. (I was the recipient of a SQUIRREL HAT TRICK.)

I then strung a wire from the house to a tree so that the feeders were situated beyond my challengers' maximum and documented ability to jump a fourteen-foot distance. This group of squirrels must have been born in the circus. They were observed either walking on this wire or moving upside down along the wire as they arrived without incident at the feeders. I then placed two 33 1/3 RPM records on the wires as baffles in order to keep them from approaching the desired feeders. Once again, the squirrels made an immediate adjustment as they pushed down the baffles and ruined these precious records. My daughter was legitimately furious because I had elected to ruin her valuable records in my efforts to outsmart these obvious beneficiaries of superior breeding.

ROUND FOUR – Squirrels 4, Dr. Sumerson losing a big time shutout.

I made certain that none of my neighbors witnessed my shame as I took down the wire. I decided to design and build a cage out of fencing material which was small enough for BIRDS ONLY to enter the cage. The squirrels demonstrated their climbing skills, jumped behind the cage fence and proceeded to enlarge the size of the feeding tube holes by chewing through the plastic feeding tubes. My wife then entered the fray, gave into our mutual frustration and swatted the cage with a broom as the squirrels still did not budge from their buffet. The shrill call from my wife to me while I was working in the Operating Room was neither happy nor welcomed.

ROUND FIVE – Squirrels 5, Dr. Sumerson with an ego taking a major dive

I disposed of the materials which represented my latest defeat and purchased a bird feeder which was "designed to be squirrel proof," as the weight of a squirrel on the feeding bar would close the seed ports. It took these Advanced Placement Squirrels a few days to perfect a technique for getting the food by hanging from the roof of the feeder by one hind leg. They were thus able to reach the seed ports without touching the bar thus avoiding closing the feeder.

ROUND SIX – Squirrels 6, Dr. Sumerson surely running out of tricks

VICTORY WAS FINALLY MINE! I sold the house without telling the new owners about the MENSA squirrels who dwelled in and near our backyard. I now happily live in Florida where the only squirrels I encounter are in our local parks where they peer at me expecting to be fed. Sorry Florida Squirrels, I gave to your relatives in Pennsylvania!

Offshore Oil Drilling Official Position

Supporting our community since 1959

FACT: NOAA documents 32 oil spills, of every size & source, in the US so far in 2009.

FACT: Since August 21st this year, 400-barrels a day have spilled into the Timor Sea, off the NW coast of Australia; 1,400-barrels spilled 30 miles off Louisiana's coast, producing a 16 x 3 mile oil slick, described as a 'rainbow' by Coast Guard aircraft; basketball sized oil globs on the beaches of Padre Island, TX, where visitors were advised to use baby oil to remove the crude tar.

FACT: Hurricane Katrina destroyed or damaged 167 oil platforms, almost shutting down Gulf oil production, & yielding a 17,643-barrel oil slick, visible from space.

FACT: Oil spills in cold climates are somewhat easier to clean up & pose slightly less threat to eco-systems & wildlife than oil spills in warmer climates; Florida is sub-tropical, & any oil or toxin spill will have a significantly larger impact on human endeavors & wildlife, as well as the eco-systems which support those endeavors & that wildlife.

FACT: The "loop current" in the Gulf of Mexico could transport any oil spill in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico along the entire coast of the Florida peninsula, contaminating heavily populated coastal areas, as well as those beaches & eco-systems which enable Florida's tourism industry.

FACT: An oil spill in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico has the potential to impact: every Florida tidal estuary; Florida's Ten Thousand Islands; the Florida Bay; the Florida Keys & John Pennekamp State Park, the only coral reef in the lower 48 states [already impacted by climate change]; then flowing north in the Gulf Stream to wreak havoc along the Atlantic Coast as far as Newfoundland.

FACT: In 2005 former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, opposed oil drilling off the Florida panhandle due to the oil industry's conflict with training operations from military installations that occupy the Florida Panhandle; Robert Gates, current Secretary of Defense, will soon oppose oil drilling off Florida for the same reasons, according to FL Senator Bill Nelson.

FACT: 37-million acres of seabed in the central & western Gulf of Mexico are available for oil exploration; about 7-million of those acres [19%] have been leased & explored.

FACT: The Interior Department's Minerals & Mining Service *estimates* that there are about 6¼-billion barrels of oil in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico; the oil industry *claims* 25-billion.

FACT: The U.S. consumes about 20-million barrels of oil each day, of which about 12-million are imported; the MMS *estimate* of oil in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico equals about 10 months supply at current consumption rates; the oil industry *claims* would supply oil for about 3½ years.

FACT: *Any* oil found in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico would not be available for about 10 years, in all probability, with absolutely no guarantee that it would be sold to the U.S. market.

FACT: The result of the human consumption of fossil fuels is the principal source of carbon compounds contributing to climate change, verified by scientific research.

FACT: The concentration of carbon compounds in the atmosphere was 280 parts per million at the dawn of the industrial age, about 2½ centuries ago; today it is 387ppm & rising, forecast to be as high as 500ppm at the end of the 21st century, again confirmed by scientific research.

FACT: Climate change is a proven phenomenon, endorsed by more than 2,500 scientists around the world, including every Nobel laureate; the only variable is how climate change will ultimately affect life on Earth; humanity ignores the climate change reality at its peril.

FACT: The oil industry is a notoriously dirty one; contamination of ocean & fresh water resources by spills & toxins that adversely impact life on Earth, & threaten those natural eco-systems upon which life depends, are historically & scientifically known facts.

FACT: 964,700 Floridians depend upon the \$65-billion tourism industry for their livelihood, which would be severely impacted by even the tiniest of spills; the high paying jobs promised by the oil industry probably would not be filled by Floridians, because those skills do not exist in Florida's workforce; those jobs would most likely be filled by foreign workers, or from other oil producing states depressed by the current economy.

CONCLUSION: Oil drilling off the coast of Florida seriously imperils our natural resources, as well as Florida's tourism industry, for the *possibility* of 10 months to 3½ years supply of oil, & a small, undefined, number of jobs available to Florida's work force.

THEREFORE: Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. is opposed to oil drilling any closer to Florida's coasts than is already permitted under existing leases & laws; &

Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. supports energy conservation endeavors, & the development of alternative energy resources, in order to reduce U.S. consumption of fossil fuels & dependence upon imported oil, to create high paying jobs in alternative energy technologies, & to curtail carbon contributions to climate change.

Clearwater Audubon Society Membership Application

Name _____
Home _____ Cell _____
Phone _____ Phone _____
Home _____
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

To ensure you receive our electronic newsletter please fill in your email address, if you do not have email please call 727-442-9140 to request a paper copy.

Which membership category? Chapter @ \$15/year _____ National @ \$20/year _____

Please enclose check to Clearwater Audubon Society for Chapter membership, or National Audubon Society for National membership

<p>Clearwater Audubon Society P.O. Box 97 Clearwater, FL 33757 Attention: Barbara MacDonald, Membership Chair</p>
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How can you help Clearwater Audubon Society achieve its Purpose? [check all that apply]

advocacy ___ conservation ___ education ___ field trips ___ finance ___ hospitality ___
media/PR ___ membership ___ newsletter ___ investment security ___ other ___ [list below]

When can you help Clearwater Audubon Society achieve its purpose? [check all that apply]

SUN	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	MON	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	TUE	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	WED	am _____ pm _____ nite _____
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THU	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	FRI	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	SAT	am _____ pm _____ nite _____	HOD	am _____ pm _____ nite _____
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If not a Florida resident, which months of the year are you available?
From _____ To _____

Any other information about you that will help Clearwater Audubon Society achieve its purpose:

Clearwater Audubon Society

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WHAT IS THE CLEARWATER AUDUBON SOCIETY?

Reach us by calling 727-442-9140 or visit us at www.clearwateraudubon.org

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 www.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 the Clearwater Audubon Society at 727-442-9140 or an officer listed on page 2 and we'll tell you how you can help.

Our Motto: *Conservation Through Education*

Supporting our community since 1959