

EAGLE AUDUBON SOCIETY
The South Hillsborough County Chapter of the National
Audubon Society

P. O. Box 5813
Sun City Center, Florida 33571-5813

2023-2024 Brochure



PROGRAMS
FIELD TRIPS
SPECIAL EVENTS

Eagle Audubon Mission

As a chapter of the National Audubon Society, we strive to increase knowledge and involvement in our environment through interest in birds and bird habitat, ecosystems preservation, and habitat restoration.

Visit our website at: <https://eagleaudubonflorida.org>

Email us at: EagleAudubonFlorida@gmail.com

“Like” us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/eagle1984>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie Stocksdale, President
 John Warbach, Vice President
 Nancy Danvers, Treasurer
 Larry Costello, Secretary
 Members-at-Large:
 Steve Burkholder
 Joanne Finney
 Ned Kuehn
 Dan Roberts
 John Stocksdale
 Anne Whitehall

COMMITTEES

Camp Bayou's Butterfly Habitat	Coordinator: Donna Carty	Volunteers
Conservation	Coordinator: John Warbach	Dan Roberts
Field Trips	Coordinator: Anne Whitehall	Volunteers
Membership	Julie Stocksdale	
General Information	Board Members	
General Meeting Chair	Julie Stocksdale	
Historian	Chris Deno	
Hospitality	Need a volunteer	Linda Couture + volunteers
Website	Steve Burkholder	
Brochure, Newsletter	Need a volunteer	
Publicity	Need a volunteer	
Speakers	Coordinator: John Warbach	Volunteers
Facebook	Anne Whitehall	Julie Stocksdale
Window-in-the-Woods	Ned Kuehn with Dan Roberts	Volunteers

Please consider volunteering for one of the open committee positions in the table above. This is a good way to serve our chapter and you will have plenty of support for the efforts. See Nancy Danvers or Linda Couture if you would like to coordinate the coffee and snacks for our membership meetings. See Julie Stocksdale or Anne Whitehall for more information on content editing for the brochure and newsletter or for providing publicity for EAS.

Monthly Programs 2023-2024

We welcome you to our monthly programs. Our meetings take place in the Fellowship Room at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 1239 West Del Webb Blvd, Sun City Center. Meeting dates and times are listed below. The doors open at 1:00 PM for social and sign-up time; the public is invited. The meeting and program begin at approximately 1:40 PM.

Note: We will follow current CDC guidelines and we ask for courtesy toward mask wearers.

Monday, October 16, 2023

Marine Fisheries Restoration in Florida

Dr. Jason Lemus and Kerry Mesner

Research Administrator, Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
Marine Fisheries Enhancement Center, Apollo Beach

After a brief historical introduction by Dan Roberts, Dr. Lemus will present the major tenets of responsible stock enhancement and an overview of the new facility in Apollo Beach (which EAS saw in development on a field trip last year) including its novel approach to seawater sourcing and the recirculating aquaculture technologies used at the facility. He also will present details on techniques of intensive fish production, maturation, and spawning as they relate to approaches for fish enhancement.

Monday, November 20, 2023

Managing Bird Colonies for Conservation

Mark Rachal

Manager, Audubon Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries

Mark will focus on Audubon Florida's Coastal Islands Sanctuaries Program and its history in Tampa Bay. He'll talk about bird surveys, habitat management and bird sanctuary conservation of these significant waterbird colonies, including 3 designated as Critical Wildlife Areas by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission along the Florida Gulf Coast.

Monday, December 18, 2023

Seagrass Restoration in Tampa Bay

Dr. Ed Sherwood

Tampa Bay Estuary Program

Seagrass is a vital component of the ecosystem in Tampa Bay, providing habitat, nursery areas, food sources, carbon sequestration, and, of course, oxygen. Dr. Sherwood will share his informed perspective on seagrass status, habitat conditions, and restoration efforts for the bay.

Monday, January 15, 2024

EAS's 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Cat Tale: The Wild, Weird Battle to Save the Florida Panther

Craig Pittman

Journalist, Author, Environmentalist

It wasn't so long ago when a lot of people thought the Florida panther was extinct. They were very nearly right. That the panther still exists at all is a miracle—the result of a desperate experiment that led to the most remarkable comeback in the history of the Endangered Species Act.

Monday, February 19, 2024
The Nature of Owls
Barbara Walker
Manager, Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Barbara is currently developing the birds of prey program at Moccasin Lake Nature Park. She will bring at least four owl species for us to enjoy and learn about.

Monday, March 18, 2024
Audubon Florida's work for our state
Julie Stocksdale
Eagle Audubon Society

For more than a century Audubon has encouraged people to take care of the places that make Florida special. Julie will talk about the many ways our state organization promotes stewardship and appreciation of public land and water through sanctuaries, nature centers, programs, and support for chapters such as EAS. She also will focus on Jay Watch and amaze us all with her experience in this program in July 2023.

Monday, April 15, 2024
Eco-Engineers
Ashley Waite
Director of Museum Experience
The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature

They live deep in the forests and down in the swamp. Along the breezy coasts and the bottom of the ocean. They are *Eco-Engineers* – plants and animals that profoundly impact their ecosystem. Through their presence or behavior, eco-engineers create microhabitats – unique areas within an ecosystem. Ashley will discuss some of Florida's eco-engineers and why our landscape wouldn't be the same without them.

The Eagle Audubon Society is a 501c-3 organization
#85-8012681268.
We gratefully accept any donations or bequests.



Tuesday Birding with Jan and Steve

When: Tuesdays November 1, 2022, through February 28, 2023 (except January 14-24 & 2nd Tuesday of each month)

Time: 9:00 through 11:00 Weather permitting

Where: Meet in the parking lot in front of the main (North) Kings Point Clubhouse.

To enter through the gate, tell the guard you are part of the Audubon Tuesday Field Trip.

What: Easy walking trips in the area for beginning birding identification.

We will occasionally walk from the parking lot and take a golf cart or even a car. I'll send out an email a day before giving location information, weather forecast, and other pertinent details. Free and open to non-members. If you want to be on the mailing list, send me an email at steve@steveandjan.com.



Membership News

This year at membership meetings we will accept credit card payments for membership dues as well as charges for field trips. There will be a small fee added to the charges to cover the convenience fee from our credit card platform. A fee list will be at the membership and trip tables. Cash and checks continue to be welcome.

A current membership form is found on the last page of this Brochure. Feel free to print it, fill it out, and mail it along with the membership fee of \$15 per person to Julie Stocksdale (address is on the form) or bring it to a membership meeting. If you mail your membership form and fee to Julie, she will have your receipt and membership card at the membership table in the meeting hall.

We also want to recognize our generous donors, so we have designated donation levels as follows: White Ibis: \$25, Anhinga: \$50, Brown Pelican: \$100, Northern Parula: \$250, Florida Scrub-Jay: \$500, Bald Eagle: \$1000. Of course, any amount is welcome and will allow us to continue and even expand our conservation initiatives.

Eagle Audubon Society (EAS) Conservation Committee

Conserving natural bird and other wildlife habitats is part of the mission of EAS. Our conservation activities have included letter writing and volunteering at Audubon-related projects: Window in the Woods, the Butterfly Habitat, and the Sun City Center Nature Trail. EAS has also brought in speakers to address plantings for birds and butterflies, pond ecology, and other conservation topics. This July, our fisheries expert and member of the EAS Board, Dan Roberts, represented EAS as he spoke at the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission (FWC) hearing on the Skyway fishing pier seabird rule. As a result, he has been invited by Mark Rachal of Audubon Florida's Coastal Islands Sanctuaries to continue working with Audubon and FWC to monitor the results of the rule.

The EAS Board re-activated a Conservation Committee in 2019 to further the mission of the Chapter to the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. The purpose of the Conservation Committee is to bring information about local, state, and federal conservation efforts of the Audubon Society, other non-profits, and government to EAS members. With such information, EAS members may choose to discuss those efforts among themselves or with non-members. They may also choose to take part in on-the-ground activities, contribute time or money, and write to comment on those efforts.

We recognize that there are numerous opportunities to help support Florida preserves, parks, and natural areas, Environmental agencies, legislatures, and commissions enact or carry out rules that affect natural areas and an

informed public can help guide the development and implementation of those rules. In the months to come, please look for ways you can help the EAS Conservation Committee fulfill the conservation mission of EAS.

John Warbach, Vice President, Eagle Audubon Society: warbach@comcast.net

Forty Years of Eagle Audubon at Work and Play

2023 is the 40th anniversary of the founding of EAS. In that time, members have pushed for restoration of the Everglades, opposed the use of a controversial power plant, worked for the use of non-cypress mulch, participated in coastal cleanup efforts, built a butterfly habitat, maintained a nature sanctuary, planted beach grasses, helped in national bird counts, attended zoning and other county meetings to protect the environment, spent money and effort on educating children about the environment including working with school groups at Camp Bayou, publicized Florida's outdoor, and given thousands of dollars in grants to Florida environmental organizations.

EAS field trips have ranged over Florida from the Everglades to St. Augustine, from the Gulf coast to the Atlantic coast: birding, exploring, canoeing, hiking. We visited parks and preserves, museums and historic encampments, boardwalks, and ranches. We have been on boats in bays and rivers and great estuaries. We picnicked, dined, laughed, and learned together. We have seen beauty in the wildlife and the land, including the transformations wrought by human hands – both good and bad. We treasure all our experiences and look forward to many more years of work and play. We will formally celebrate this milestone at our regular January membership meeting with cake and an outstanding speaker in Craig Pittman, who will talk about our beloved Florida panther. Don't miss it!

Window in the Woods

Window in the Woods (WITW) is a bird blind in the Freedom Plaza area of Sun City Center that EAS maintains. Several bird feeders attract a variety of bird species, which are easily viewed from the blind. Nest boxes also provide a place for birds such as bluebirds to nest and raise chicks. Information on bird identification is provided inside the building.

Board member Ned Kuehn, with assistance from Board member Dan Roberts, has assumed the mantle of coordinator for WITW. Volunteers are needed to fill feeders and tidy the building. Contact Ned with any questions or to sign up for one or more days: nedfkuehn@gmail.com



EagleWatch News from Audubon Florida

The dedicated Audubon EagleWatch volunteers are the heartbeat and lifeblood of our program, monitoring roughly half of the active nests in the state. Recently, 480 community volunteers donated 7,530 volunteer hours for nest monitoring, data reporting, and in some instances, the rescue and transport of bald eagles in need of medical attention.

Volunteers submitted more than 14,900 nest observations. Volunteers also play a key role in protecting nests and reported 90 potential nest disturbance violations due to development, recreational activity, and other human encroachment issues.

To learn more about EagleWatch and other Audubon Florida programs, plan on coming to the EAS March membership meeting, where Julie Stocksdale will discuss how Audubon is active in conservation efforts and citizen science projects in Florida, including Julie's own exciting experience with Jay Watch.

BUTTERFLY HABITAT'S BLOOMING SEASON

At Camp Bayou Outdoor Learning Center

Camp Bayou Nature Preserve, Ruskin

The Butterfly Habitat is a lovely, long-term community project that EAS has sponsored and maintained ever since it was created between the driveways of Camp Bayou in 1999. By planting only Florida native plants throughout, this butterfly garden was made to serve as a teaching tool for the many school groups that come to the Camp Bayou Learning Center for environmental education classes, and for the public who are often motivated to include native plants in their own yards or create their own butterfly gardens.

A steadfast garden crew of mostly EAS volunteers does the planting, mulching, weeding, and pruning of these natives year-round, dedicating Friday mornings to quiet work and conversations in a delightful setting. Knowledge of Florida native plants and/or butterflies is not a requirement to join us, but one will soon get familiar with them all. Currently in the garden, there are 25 different host plants (food for the larvae of the butterfly as it grows) and 46 different nectar plants (food for the adult butterflies), with many of the plants providing both.

Ours is not an enclosed habitat; it is open to any butterfly that happens to be living in, or migrating through, the Nature Preserve. Regularly, we see zebra longwings, Gulf fritillaries, sulphurs, and skippers, occasionally giant swallowtails, monarchs, and buckeyes float through. At the height of our blooming season (end of June into September), it is exciting to see and hear the huge variety of different pollinators busy and buzzing on the blooms: all kinds of bees, butterflies, wasps, flies, beetles, and moths. For sheer numbers of pollinators their flowers attract, the natives in the Butterfly Habitat that are the champions are: dotted horsemint, goldenrod, blue porterweed, necklacepod, Spanish needles, Simpson stopper, button sage, firebush, and wild coffee. Successfully raising these natives attracts pollinators and is a benefit to our environment.

We urge you to take time to visit the Butterfly Habitat – stroll along the winding shell path, sit and rest in our shady gazebo, and watch the blooming season at its best. If you are interested in joining our garden crew (always welcomed!) on any or all Friday mornings, please contact Donna Carty at 813-938-3164 or tgcteach@tampabay.rr.com.



Giant Swallowtail



Gulf Fritillary



Zebra Longwing



Cloudless Sulfur



October 12 to 15, 2023

The festival, headquartered at the Suncoast Youth Conservation Center in Apollo Beach, and sponsored in-part by EAS, coincides with the peak migration of more than 180 species and features expert-led field, bus, and boating trips to the best wildlife sites in West Central Florida.

The festival also will offer two days of seminars, where experts will cover topics such as sea urchins, dolphins, butterflies, burrowing owls, sandhill cranes, turtles, bird nests and much more. There are even workshops on bird photography and bird banding.

A free Nature Expo on Friday, Oct. 13, and Saturday, Oct. 14, at the Center will feature displays from numerous environmental organizations (including EAS), nature-related businesses, and artists. Exhibitors will offer for sale artwork, binoculars, bird boxes and other products for nature lovers. There will be a silent auction each day. (We need volunteers to attend the EAS table at the expo for 2-hour stints on Friday or Saturday. Call Julie Stocksdales for more information.)

Hillsborough County Conservation and Environmental Lands Management Department has partnered with the festival to provide guided field trips at some of our most popular birding sites! To register for this exciting event, visit the Florida Birding and Nature Festival website.: floridabirdingandnaturefestival.org

Sea Turtles on Egmont Key National Wildlife Refuge

I'm a DAD (says EAS Board member Ned Kuehn, who supports Friends of the Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuges). Here's what the Friends organization wrote to him about the sea turtle nest he sponsored.

Little loggerheads have hatched and are safely out in the Gulf!

The little turtles waited in the nest 'til all of their brothers and sisters came out of their eggs and then, under the cover of darkness, they all dug their way out of the nest together. This made it easier to dig their way out of the sand and increased their chances of survival. They headed for the brightest light they saw, which was the reflection of the moon and stars over the Gulf of Mexico and scurried to the water. As each wave came in, they started to swim out to their new life. They swim and swim to get offshore to floating rafts of Sargassum seaweed for safety.

They are very hungry and look for mollusks, crustaceans, hydrozoans, seaweed, jellyfish, and fish eggs to eat.

It will be many years until the female hatchling reaches maturity. She will mate at sea and return to Egmont key National Wildlife Refuge to lay her own eggs and start the cycle over again. The male hatchlings will remain offshore their entire lives.

Congratulations Ned!

Eagle Audubon Society

YEARLY MEMBERSHIP \$15 PER PERSON – OCTOBER 1 – SEPTEMBER 30

Please complete the following information for 2023-2024

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email address _____

Areas of interest (feel free to add comments on the back of this form):

Conservation _____ Trip coordination/leading _____ Speaker _____ Window in the Woods _____
Butterfly Habitat _____ Meeting snacks _____ Christmas Bird Count _____
Fund raising/grant writing _____ Membership _____ Publicity & Promotion _____

Please mail completed membership form and check for \$15.00 per person payable to Eagle Audubon Society to: Julie Stocksdale, 256 Silver Falls Dr, Apollo Beach, FL 33572

If you wish to make an additional contribution to EAS, it would be greatly appreciated. You can leave it undesignated, in which case we will use it for general operating expenses; or you can designate it for one of our programs, such as Window in the Woods or the Butterfly Habitat. EAS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity. The following levels of donation are suggested, though you may give whatever you like:

White Ibis: \$25, Anhinga: \$50, Brown Pelican: \$100, Northern Parula: \$250, Florida Scrub-Jay: \$500, Bald Eagle: \$1000. Please indicate if we can publicly acknowledge your gift or if you prefer to remain anonymous.

LIABILITY AND PHOTO RELEASE

By this agreement, I the undersigned, have voluntarily applied to participate on field trips sponsored by the Eagle Audubon Society. I expressly assume the risk of any harm that might occur directly or indirectly from travel to and from the field trip site and from any harm that might occur directly or indirectly from any forces of nature or wildlife that I may be exposed to that causes me injury.

In addition, on behalf of myself and my assignees, heirs, personal representative, and legal representative, in consideration of the opportunity to participate and attend the field trips organized by the Eagle Audubon Society and being eighteen (18) years of age or older, I hereby agree to release and hold harmless the Eagle Audubon Society, and the National Audubon Society.

I grant the Eagle Audubon Society, its representatives, and members the right to take photographs of me and my property in connection with field trips or other activities of the Eagle Audubon Society. I authorize the use of same in print and/or electronically.

Member Signature _____ Date _____

Member Signature _____ Date _____