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A big thank you to everyone — donors and participants — who made our February Birdathon a success. Although the weather was less than ideal, 11 people (in two groups) took part in the daylong event. Complete details will be in our May issue.

Our April meeting will be held at Weeki Wachee Springs State Park (approximately at the intersection of U.S. 19 and Cortez Boulevard) **in Spring Hill, not at our usual meeting place in Brooksville.**

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Our Annual Meeting is on March 24.
See back cover for details.

March 24

Speaker: Bob Montanaro
Critters, Cows and Cowboys:

A photographic exploration into the wildlife and work of a Florida cattle ranch

Meeting Location:

Community Activity Center, 205 E. Ft. Dade Avenue, Brooksville

Start time:

Doors open at 6:45 p.m. for socializing. Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

This program illustrates the role ranches play in protecting Florida's diverse habitats while chronicling encounters with the many species of wildlife that call Treasure Hammock Ranch home. Additionally, the program reveals what a year of work is like on a Florida cattle ranch — from the stereotypical images of cowboys on horseback herding cattle to the more

realistic hot and dusty workday, spent on foot moving cattle individually through the cow pens for vet checkups and myriad other activities.

Treasure Hammock Ranch sold its development rights in exchange for a conservation easement that protects the

See CRITTERS, page 2 ►

April 28

Speaker: Michele Kline
Wings of Hope

Meeting Location:

Banquet Hall, Weeki Wachee Springs State Park, 6131 Commercial Way (U.S. 19), Spring Hill

Start time:

Doors open at 6:45 p.m. for socializing. Program starts at 7:00 p.m.

Michele Kline is the president of H.O.P.E. (Helping Our Precious Environment) Wildlife Rehabilitation, Inc. The organization has an educational program that features live birds of prey and tells of their natural history, their role in our environment, and of the injuries they endured to place them under its care. H.O.P.E.'s avian ambassadors include Skye, a Peregrine Falcon; Aztec, a Red-shouldered Hawk; Bits or Carson, Red-tailed Hawks; Shakespeare or Spencer, Barred Owls; and Griffin or Cupid, Eastern Screech Owls.



Michele Kline, president of H.O.P.E., with Aztec, a Red-shouldered Hawk and one of the organization's avian ambassadors. The photo was taken on Dec. 4, 2010, at an event in Floral City, Citrus County. Photo: Myrna Erler-Bradshaw

Join us to learn about and see these raptors up close and personal.

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2010-2011
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Call either of the editors, or
e-mail hernandoaudubon@yahoo.com,
with "Newsletter" in the subject line.



AT THE JANUARY 28 MEETING OF NATIONAL DIRECTORS IN NAPLES, Fla., (from left), National Audubon Southeast Regional Director Joyce King, Audubon of Florida Chapter Conservation Manager Jacqui Sulek, and Hernando Audubon President Linda Vanderveen.
Photo: Bruce Vanderveen

Work of Hernando Audubon members with RCWs featured at National Audubon meet

Friday, Jan. 28, was a special day for Hernando Audubon and for me. I attended the National Audubon Board of Directors' meeting in Naples, Fla. Joyce King, our southeast regional director, thought our chapter's participation in the Red-cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Program was a good example of how volunteers play a crucial role in conservation, so I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to tell the national board about the efforts of Hernando Audubon members to help these endangered birds in the Withlacoochee State Forest in Hernando County.

We were one of four Audubon Chapters that had an opportunity to 'show their

► **CRITTERS, from page 1**

land in perpetuity as a place where wildlife and cattle ranching can co-exist in an increasingly urbanized Indian River County. The ranch attracts a wide variety of birds throughout the year.

Realizing the photographic opportunities inherent in having such a diverse population of birds on one property, Bob Montanaro approached the Sexton family, the owners of Treasure Hammock, with a plan to spend at least a year on the ranch, photographing its wildlife and the cattle ranching that has continued now at Treasure Hammock for four generations

stuff' to the national leaders. We were also able to express our needs and concerns to national board members.

Listening to Audubon's recently elected president, David Yarnold, was inspiring; he really is trying to tune in to all the chapters.

I wish I could have taken all of you with me! Now more than ever, we must keep plugging away to save places for our wildlife.

Linda

**LINDA VANDERVEEN
CHAPTER PRESIDENT**

of the Sexton family. While extensive, this program is only a sampling of the diverse species found on the ranch and the work done there. Bob is continuing the photographic work at the ranch to expand the record and bring a more complete picture of how Treasure Hammock benefits wildlife, cattle, and the people of Florida.

Bob Montanaro is the administrative assistant for the Pelican Island Audubon Society. *Critters, Cows, and Cowboys* follows on the heels of his previous program, *Ospreys of Pelican Island: An Exploration into the Life of the Fish Hawk*, which documents three years of Osprey nesting at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. For more information visit www.lunarcabin.com.

Man-made hazards take huge toll on migrating birds

BY BEV HANSEN, ORNITHOLOGY EDITOR

During spring and fall migration, millions of birds are killed every year by tall man-made structures. It has been known for over a century that when there are overcast skies, night-flying songbirds become disoriented when they fly in the vicinity of a tall structure that is lighted. Instead of bypassing the area, they fly into the lighted area, and are reluctant to leave. They keep circling the structure, until they drop from exhaustion, or are killed in collisions with other birds or with the structure and any associated guy wires.

Pioneer study conducted in Florida

The first long-term study of this problem was begun in 1955 at Tall Timbers Research Station, north of Tallahassee, when systematic counts were made of the migratory birds that were killed at a television tower. In the first 25 years, 42,384 birds from 189 species were killed at this one lighted tower. In recent years, the number of communication towers has increased exponentially, with an estimated 5,000 towers being constructed every year to provide service for cell phones, digital television, etc. Many other studies have been done that indicate that the taller a tower is, and the greater the number of guy wires that it has, and if it is lighted continuously, the more risk there is of bird strikes on nights when there is poor visibility. In western Kansas, an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 dead birds were found one morning on the ground around a 420-foot communication tower. Other studies have indicated that if such towers are lighted by flashing strobe lights, they are less hazardous to nocturnal migrants, although, paradoxically, that tower in Kansas had strobe lighting.

Cumulative effect of bird mortality from communication towers should be assessed by FCC

In 1999, environmental groups and other agencies concerned about this problem held the first national workshop to discuss bird mortality at towers. Four years later, after frustration with inaction in solving this problem, environmental groups launched a suit against the Federal Communications Commission challenging new tower

construction. After years of procrastination, the FCC is finally taking steps to reduce songbird deaths at such towers. A public comment period was just completed concerning whether the FCC should conduct an environmental impact assessment on its antennae structure registration program. If the FCC proceeds with this assessment, it will require looking at the lethal effects of all communication towers collectively, rather than deciding whether each individual tower is causing bird deaths.

Another frequent cause of migrant deaths is the practice of leaving empty office skyscrapers lit up all night. In recent years, campaigns have been launched in a number of large cities urging tall office buildings to turn off their lights at night during birds' spring and fall migration. Since 1999, Chicago has had a "Lights Out" program that calls for steps such as lowering or turning off exterior decorative lights to protect migrating birds. At the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History, a study indicated that bird deaths decreased by 80 percent when nighttime lights were turned off at the museum. In Toronto, buildings that have redirected or eliminated exterior lightings are rated "bird-friendly buildings."

Audubon's "Project Safe Flight"

In New York City, Audubon's "Project Safe Flight" is working with building owners on a second front – to make glass visible in order to reduce mortality from birds striking glass in the daytime – in addition to their lights out campaign at night.

Daniel Klem, Jr., an ornithologist at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa., estimates that collisions with windows kill up to 1 billion birds a year in the United States alone. These birds are both migrants and year-round residents. He states that, "except for habitat destruction, collisions with clear and reflective sheet glass and plastic cause the deaths of more birds than any other human-related avian mortality factor." The problem is that birds don't see glass as a barrier: when glass is clear, birds see only what's on the other side; when it is reflective, birds see only

reflected sky and trees. They frequently hit the glass while flying fast and have little chance of survival. Frank Gill, chief scientist for the National Audubon Society, said, "This is a largely unseen but seriously unappreciated phenomenon and we're starting to take a serious look at it."

As new buildings are constructed, a few are now experimenting with patterned plate glass that is both visually attractive to humans and visible to birds, to deter them from crashing into it. And various deterrents are being tried on the glass of existing buildings.

Steps you can take to prevent death or serious injury to birds

For homeowners who frequently have birds strike their windows, below are some suggestions from the Bird Conservation Network. For more suggestions see its website: www.bcnbirds.org.

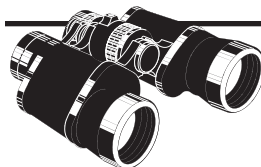
Put something on the outside of the window to alter the appearance of the entire window. The coverage must be total and allow for openings no larger than 4 inches (10 cm) across.

- Hang strips of 1 inch-wide paper, ribbons, string or mobiles every four inches.
- Cover the windows with CollidEscape, a perforated film to make windows visible to birds while allowing those inside clear view to the outside.
- Cover the window with a fine-mesh net so that the birds bounce off.
- Apply any form of non-reflective, contrasting decals that uniformly cover the entire window. Hawk or owl forms are no more or less effective than other shapes.
- Move bird feeders, baths and other attractions (like nutritious vegetation) against the window or more than 30 feet away.

What does not work:

- A few scattered decals; the entire window must be covered.
- Owl forms on the roof of the building.

It has been suggested that even not washing the windows during the migration months helps keep the reflective qualities low and thus can help reduce bird injury and death. What better excuse can you think of for not doing housework?!



Field Trips and Special Events

GUIDELINES: Field trips are open to everyone, and non-members are welcome. To participate, contact the trip leader to confirm time and meeting place.

Bring binoculars and birding guides. We suggest comfortable clothing, insect repellent, sunscreen and water or other suitable beverages. You can visit www.hernandoaudubon.org for updates.

March 5 and 6 – Saturday and Sunday 18th annual Weeki Wachee Swamp Fest

Linda Pederson Park
6400 Shoal Line Blvd., Weeki Wachee.

Clay Black and Andy Maywalt are looking for volunteers to help with Hernando Audubon's booth at the Swamp Fest. If you enjoy meeting and talking with people, it's a fun thing to do. Even if you can't volunteer, stop by our booth to say hello.

March 15 – Tuesday Weeki Wachee Springs State Park - Work Day

6131 Commercial Way (U.S. 19),
Spring Hill, Fla.

Meet at the park at 8:30 a.m. We'll team up with Hernando Native Plant Society to help remove nonnative invasives from the park, and work until about noon. Call for details.

Contact: Linda Vanderveen
352-428-2629

March 17 – Thursday Tour of Centralia Natural Historical Site and Nature Walk in Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area with hike to Buford Springs

Meet at the main entrance to the CWMA, on the west side of U.S. 19, about 10 miles north of State Road 50, or 4 miles north of Centralia Avenue. Look for the brown Florida park/forest signs. Sid Taylor, with the Florida Division of Forestry, will conduct a tour of the ruins of the old township of Centralia. This will be followed, for those who want to participate, by a strenuous 4-mile hike to Buford Spring, led by Jenny Roberts, a biologist with the Florida FWC. This hike may be wet, muddy, and tricky walking due to small cypress knees that may be covered by water. Wear boots, bring water and binoculars. A Florida Fishing License is required to enter the CWMA, or pay \$3.00 at the entrance. Florida residents 65 years of age or older, can obtain a free fishing license at the Hernando County Tax Office on Forest Oaks Boulevard in Spring Hill, or at the Hernando County Government Center, 20 N. Main Street, in Brooksville.

Trip leader: Elaine Maywalt
352-686-8195
andymaywalt@bellsouth.net

March 18-20 Audubon Academy

Paramount Plaza Conference Center
2900 SW 13th St. (U.S. 441)
Gainesville

The 7th Audubon Academy is only a couple of weeks away so, if you haven't already made your plans to attend, it's time to do so. The Academy is designed based on feedback from chapter leaders. As a result, Audubon of Florida has incorporated sessions on Chapter Programs, Citizen Science protocol, Fieldtrips, the power of Facebook and on and on. For additional information and to register online

go to this website: audubonofflorida.org

March 26 – Saturday Rainbow Springs State Park Marion County

3 miles north of Dunnellon on
U.S. Hwy. 41

Meet on the patio in front of the snack bar at 8:15 a.m.. The park opens at 8:00 a.m. There is a \$2.00 per person admission fee. We will walk about 2 miles, starting out in an area of mixed hardwoods and uplands habitat looking for owls, Red-headed Woodpeckers and early migrants. We will return through the butterfly gardens and a beautiful walk along the springs. About four hours. Bring lunch to have on the patio or you can order from the snack bar. Join us after lunch (optional) for a 1 mile walk on the new Blue Run Trail near town and along the Rainbow River. We'll be looking for Prothonotary Warblers, wading birds, and other migrants.

Trip leaders: Eileen Riccio/Jim Meyer
352-419-5205
elriccio@yahoo.com

March 26 – Saturday Cypress Lakes Preserve Scrub and Sand Hill Habitat Restoration

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the gate on Ridge Manor Boulevard at Olantha Road. Following a short talk about the Preserve and the needed work, volunteers will cut small trees along firebreaks and in habitat restoration areas. Work will be completed



HANGING OUT TOGETHER ON A COLD, WINDY DAY

Photo: Lucille Lane

by noon. An optional guided nature walk will be offered following completion of work. Volunteers should wear long pants, long sleeves, and sturdy shoes with closed toes. Please bring your own gloves, eye protection, hearing protection, insect repellent, sun screen, and drinking water. Useful tools might include pruning saws, bow saws, chain saws, and other tools for cutting small trees. Free oak fire wood will be available to volunteers.

Contact: Jim King
Conservation Lands Specialist
Hernando County Planning
352-754-4057, ext. 28020, or
jkking@hernandocounty.us

March 30 - Wednesday Weeki Wachee River Canoe/Kayak trip Hernando County

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Hardee's on U.S. 19, just north of State Road 50. You must have your own canoe or kayak. There will be no fee for launching. Bring snacks and lunch. We'll have a picnic. Please call early for reservations.

Trip leader: Vera Huckaby
352-848-5776
bhuckaby@innet.com

April 2 - Saturday Red-cockaded Woodpecker Field Trip Hernando County

The endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker is making a comeback in this area. We'll visit the Croom Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest to see these woodpeckers that nest in live pine trees. It's likely we'll also see and

hear some early spring migrants. Meet at 6:45 a.m. in the large parking lot at the fire tower on Croom Road, 5.2 miles east of U.S. 41.

Trip leader: Bev Hansen
352-686-0460 or e-mail
bevalhansen@earthlink.net

April 9 - Saturday Goethe State Forest for Birds, Butterflies and Carnivorous Plants Field Trip - Levy County

We'll meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Hardee's at U.S. 19 and State Road 50 in Weeki Wachee to car pool. We'll be joined by Audubon Citrus folks at the north entrance to the Crystal River Mall at 7:45 a.m. We should arrive at Goethe at about 8:15 a.m. There is a \$2 per person fee for the Goethe trail if we use it. I'll decide exactly what sites we'll visit on a scouting trip a few days before the event. We might not use the trail and save the fee, but we should be prepared for it either way. The main area of Goethe State Forest is located in the southeastern portion of Levy County. We'll see probably four species of carnivorous plants and spring butterflies should be about. We'll also have a chance for migrating birds and should see Brown-headed Nuthatches and we'll visit some Red-cockaded Woodpecker areas - but there's no guarantee that we'll see either species. This should be easy with no strenuous walking. The longest walk is probably about a mile round trip if we use the trail. Otherwise, it's mostly car stops at selected sites. We'll probably spend two or three hours at the forest with another two hours of roundtrip driving to get there and back.

Trip leader: Clay Black
352-592-4949
cjbird@bellsouth.net

April 9 and 10 - Saturday and Sunday Backyard Bonanza Florida Audubon's Ahhochee Hill Sanctuary 24268 Lake Lindsey Road, Brooksville

From 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. This fundraiser for the sanctuary will have many items for sale, including native plants, shrubs and trees; bird nesting boxes, feeders and accessories; and butterfly blooms and rearing boxes. Experts will be on hand to answer questions and offer suggestions.

Contact: Christie Anderberg
352-797-3545

April 23 - Saturday Green Key (Robert Rees Park) Field Trip Pasco County

This park is #72 on The Great Florida Birding Trail. On U.S. 19, one block north of Main Street in New Port Richey, turn west on Green Key Road. Be there at 6:30 a.m. for best chance at migrant landfall. Wear long-sleeved shirt in case of "no-see-ums." We will bird the entrance area for an hour the beach and boardwalk. Around 9:00 a.m. we will drive to James Grey Preserve (#74 on the Great Florida Birding Trail) for a combination boardwalk/trail walk along the "Cotie" River. Bring snack and beverage to enjoy afterward at picnic area.

Trip leaders: Eileen Riccio/Jim Meyer
352-419-5205
elriccio@yahoo.com

Kathleen East has accepted the nomination to be our treasurer for the 2011-2012 term, so we'll be looking for a volunteer to serve as membership chair. This is not a complex or time-consuming job and only basic computer skills are required. To learn more about this important activity, contact Kathleen at 352-666-3066.

Sparrow drive nets long-distance traveller

BY CLAY BLACK, DRIVE COORDINATOR

The fourth annual Weekiwachee Sparrow Drive was held on Jan. 15 and 29, 2011. The weather was perfect. A total of 48 birds were banded including LeConte's, Henslow's, Grasshopper, Swamp, and Savannah sparrows and House and Sedge wrens. The best bird was probably a recaptured Savannah Sparrow which was originally banded in 2010 in the same net. This little bird breeds north of the Ohio and Missouri river valleys all the way up to the Arctic Sea, so it made a round trip of at least 2,000 miles and possibly more, before being recaptured in its winter home.

Forty volunteers assisted with setting up nets, driving birds, and banding duties. We hope to see you all again next year.



GRASSHOPPER SPARROW

Photo: Alice Horst



LeCONTE'S SPARROW

Photo: Alice Horst



SPARROW DRIVE PARTICIPANTS in Weekiwachee Preserve are lined up and ready to start.

Photo: Clay Black

Hernando Audubon seeks scholarship applicants

Deadline is Monday, Apr. 11, 2011

Hernando Audubon will again offer to qualifying Hernando county high school graduates the *Steve Fickett – Hernando Audubon Environmental Scholarship*. Seniors planning studies and careers in any of the Earth Sciences, and students who have participated in environmental clubs, are encouraged to apply.

Information required includes GPA, field of study (how broad), and the college or university the applicant will attend. Students should submit a 300- to 500-word essay titled: “The Importance of Caring for Our Environment and Natural Resources.” Students should submit their essays, a copy of their transcript, and a resumé to Hernando Audubon Scholarship Committee, attention Elaine Maywalt, 5194 Mosquero Rd., Spring Hill, FL 34606 by Monday, April 11, 2011. Call 352-686-8195 for more information.

First-ever Allen’s Hummer recorded in this area

On Jan. 17, renowned bander Fred Bassett made a whirlwind visit to band hummingbirds in Hernando County. He banded an immature male Allen’s Hummingbird at the home of Helen Johnson and Terry Smith, where HAS visited on a field trip in December. This is the first time this species has been recorded in the county. A few miles away Fred banded an immature male Black-chinned Hummingbird at the home of Chris and David Cock, but a female Rufous Hummingbird that had been in that yard days earlier didn’t make an appearance.

Earlier, Fred had banded a very hard to trap adult male Ruby-throated in the backyard of Al and Bev Hansen. Fred had come by two days earlier, and watched the male approach many times, but refuse to enter the trap with the hummingbird feeder inside. So Fred suggested installing a “trainer trap,” open on two sides, with the feeder inside. The male got used to that and when Fred returned he caught the bird almost immediately.

Before coming to Hernando County that day, Fred had banded a Black-chinned Hummingbird and six Ruby-throateds in Valrico. By late afternoon he was in Gainesville, ready to band more hummers!



BY BOB KEIM, CONSERVATION CHAIR

Hernando County’s Environmentally Sensitive Lands Fund – or is it?

We have the opportunity to help ensure long-term protection of Hernando County’s Environmentally Sensitive Lands program – but we have to be aware and ready to speak up when the time comes.

Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 25, at about 2:15, the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners took up Legislative File #4727. This item had been submitted by Commissioner Dave Russell Jr., who represents most of the southern boundary district of the county. The file as posted pre-meeting on the county government website read as follows:

“Attached is a proposed ordinance codifying the 1988 Environmentally Sensitive Lands millage levy referendum and providing for the use of .05 mils for the maintenance of County-owned parks and recreational lands.”

The monies gained through the 0.1-mil tax (or, about \$10 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value) were intended for and have been used to acquire and manage lands that meet very specific guidelines and principles, the most usual being that the property:

“Supports prime examples of ecological communities native to Hernando County” or
“Supports exceptional biodiversity” and is threatened by development.

What Commissioner Russell’s original proposal would have done would have been to take half of these funds to use to help maintain existing parks and recreational lands. In other words, these being tight budget times, let’s raid the environmental funds to pay for mowing parks and fixing swings and repaving tracks. Would these funds ever have been paid back?

But commissioners met a bit of a buzz saw because once activists and interested

individuals got wind of what was going on they turned up the heat. Between e-mails and telephone calls, came the realization that this maneuver was not the will of the public.

So instead of the daytime raid that had been planned for Jan. 25, what we have now is that Commissioner Russell will work with county staff to come up with “appropriate language” to go to referendum in 2012. If in fact this does come to pass, we will have at least three opportunities to both have input and speak our minds about this issue: first in the redrafting of the ESL itself; second, in the progress of the proposal before the BOCC; and third, assuming that things move on schedule, in the 2012 referendum.

Your input and support is vital in this process. ESL lands are critical to the variety and health of habitats and wildlife in this county. It’s time for all of us who care to stand up for what we believe in.

One way to get started is to participate, if you haven’t already done so, in the county’s online survey that might help shape our future. Go to the Hernando County Government website at www.hernandocounty.us/plan/EAR and answer the series of questions about what you value in terms of environmental factors. The survey is located on the right side of the page. Your input is extremely valuable. But don’t delay, it’s our understanding that the survey may only be available through the end of March.

We’re still looking for Hernando Audubon members to join our conservation committee. Please give me a call or e-mail me if you are interested.

Bob

352-793-2268
rbkeim@gmail.com



SUN AND FUN ON THE SALT MARSH SAFARI. Participants in this year’s trip were greeted with sunny skies, comfortable temperatures, and great sights of the inhabitants of the marsh. Photo: Clay Black

Field Trip Reports

JAN. 8 – SALT MARSH SAFARI by ANDY MAYWALT

Trip leader Clay Black led our annual Salt Marsh Safari from Hernando Beach to the Gulf in perfect weather. Eighteen adventurous folks participated, including *St. Petersburg Times* reporter Dan DeWitt and the newspaper’s photographer. As we were sloshing through a particularly muddy part of the hike, the photographer slipped and fell in the mud, along with his camera equipment. No harm was done and he took it in stride. Amazingly he finished the rest of the trip bare-footed. Now that’s true grit! Professor Mike Wollam was along to describe the natural history of the marsh. We saw several interesting birds, crabs and plants, as well as skull fragments, fossils, and a recently dead snake. You don’t want to miss next year’s trip as there is no telling what we will come upon. I have one suggestion if you do come: Wear rubber boots.

JAN. 14 – MERRITT ISLAND FIELD TRIP by SHIRLEY KOHLER

This year’s trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge was unexpectedly different from previous years. We met our guide, photographer Tom Dunkerton, at the kiosk



MIXED FLOCK. Roseate Spoonbills, White Ibis and Great Egrets share one of the ponds at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Participants in the Jan. 14 trip noted that a drought is adversely affecting wildlife in the area. Photo: Dan Kohler

Brooksville and Aripeka/Bayport CBCs surprise with higher than average tally

Brooksville Count - by Clay Black

The 2010 Brooksville Christmas Bird Count was conducted on Dec. 18. The 123 species tallied by 41 field counters and feeder watchers was slightly above the count average of 120 species. A Great Crested Flycatcher, if accepted by the state compiler, was probably the best bird found. Other notables included Rufous and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, American Bittern, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Black-bellied Whistling Duck.

Good area leaders make for a good count and HAS is lucky to have kept an experienced cadre of leaders for many years. Mike, Bev and Al, Linda, Mary, Vince, and Kristin really came through this year during the less than ideal morning weather conditions. Alex wasn’t able to count this year but has in years past. Thank you all.

The after-count dinner was superb as usual, thanks to James and Mary. And thanks to all who participated, whether in the field or at a feeder. We couldn’t do it without you.



RARE VISITOR. This Orchard Oriole, enjoying a Florida orange, is the first of its species to be recorded on the Aripeka-Bayport Christmas Bird Count. Photo: Betsy Hoeft

Aripeka/Bayport Count - by Bev Hansen

On the 20th Aripeka-Bayport CBC held on Dec. 21, 156 species of birds were counted, which is higher than the mean for the last 10 years of 151 species. Four birds had never previously been recorded in this count circle, the most unusual being an adult male Orchard Oriole that had been visiting Betsy Hoeft’s feeder all month. Betsy remained at home with her eyes glued to the feeder until she saw this bird and was able to take the image above. Other new birds for the count circle were four LeConte’s Sparrows, a White-crowned Sparrow, and an adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

We extend many thanks to the 27 people who participated to make this effort a success.



Hernando Audubon Society, Inc.
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 Brooksville, FL 34605

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**The mission of
 Hernando Audubon Society
 is to promote an
 awareness and
 appreciation of nature;
 to preserve and protect
 wildlife and natural
 ecosystems; and to
 encourage responsible
 environmental
 stewardship.**

AWESOME!

Since Gerry Olesen has been taking your aluminum cans to the recycling facility for us, he has turned nearly \$5,000 dollars in to Hernando Audubon. So, a big thank you to all of you who bring these recyclables to our monthly meetings, and a huge thank you to Gerry for taking them in and collecting the bucks for us.

YES, EVERY CAN HELPS!

Notice of Annual Meeting

Hernando Audubon Society will hold its Annual Meeting on March 24, 2011, at the Community Activity Center, 205 E. Fort Dade Ave., Brooksville, FL 34601. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. and will be followed by the presentation by Bob Montanaro (see front page for program details).

The nominating committee presents the following slate of officers for the 2011-2012 term:

- President..... Linda Vanderveen
- Vice President..... Elaine Maywalt
- Vice President..... Lucille Lane
- Treasurer..... Kathleen East
- Secretary..... Bob Keim

Nominations for any elected position may be made from the floor at the annual meeting, with prior consent of persons to be nominated. Twenty members in good standing, including no less than three of the elected members from the board of directors, shall constitute a quorum.

SPECIAL NOTICE
Birding and Botany in Ecuador
10 days, June 11-21, 2011
Professional guide
Call Linda for details
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