

AUG - SEPT 2018

in this issue >>>

Beach Nesting Birds Report

Tribute to Sid Crawford

October Field Trips -Plan Ahead!

President's Message

Title Photo by Robert Neff



Conservation Through Education

The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society Vol. 84 No. 1

Wing Beat

JUST SKIMMING THE SURFACE

Jason Sigismondi: Three Rooker Stewardship Coordinator.

I just wanted to give you an update as to how things are going out on Three Rooker so far this season. Skimmers have nested on both ends of the island and fortunately recovered after Alberto. The South colony has already fledged approximately 16-17 fledges with several two-week-old chicks still on the ground. I know some fledges have recently shown up in more southern sites, and it's likely that they're from Three Rooker. The North colony had approximately 65-75 nests just before Alberto however, the storm took away a lot of sand and eliminated most of those nests. The first day back out there I only saw four or five still incubating within the posted area. Fortunately, they have recovered well with renesting close to their original numbers. On Thursday I saw twenty chicks, and several fledges which I imagine are from the surviving nests during Alberto.

South Three Rooker serves as a significant tern colony for caspians, sandwich, and royals. On our last survey we had an estimated 700 royal chicks and between 100-200 flight capable fledges. Sandwich terns nested within the center of the royal colony with about 40 nests. Caspians had about ten nests out there, and we saw five or six chicks on the last survey.

Unfortunately as is with nature there have been failures specifically for the least tern colony on South Three Rooker. Alberto came at a terrible time for them, about a week or so after hatching chicks. The proximity to the skimmer colony as well as being located within a laughing gull colony also put a lot of pressure on the least terns... (continued on pg.4)

Tribute to Sid Crawford >>> Paul Trunk

Birder, Photographer, Advocate, and Friend

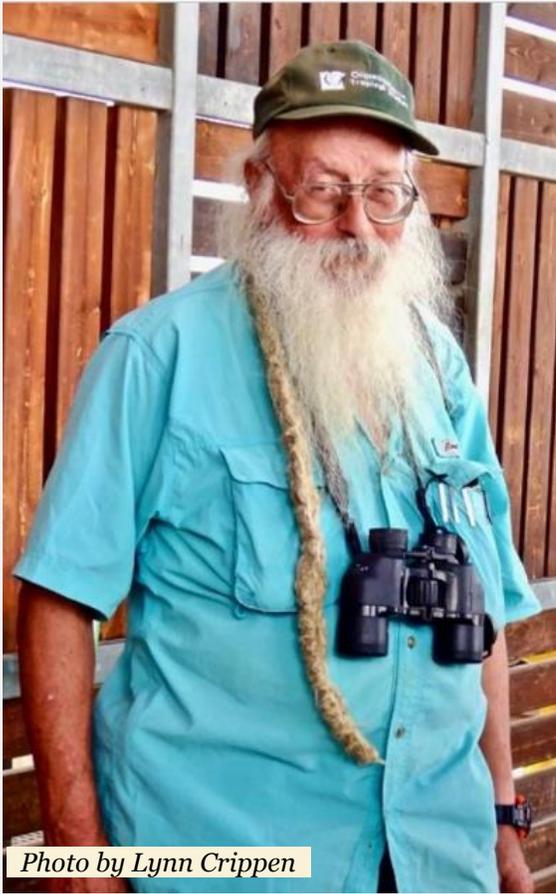


Photo by Lynn Crippen

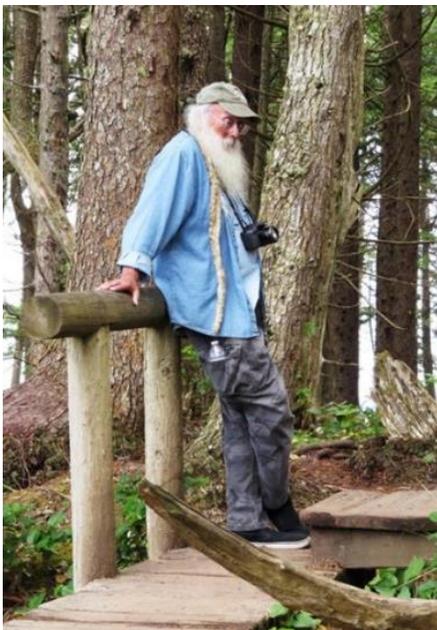
Clearwater Audubon lost a dear friend this past month. Sid Crawford, long-time board member, photographer, advocate for the environment and life-long birder passed away. He will be deeply missed.

Sid was on the CAS board and a long time FOS member. He served on the Board of Friends of the Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuges and was an active participant at Audubon of Florida Assemblies. He was committed to grass-roots efforts, attended and engaged in discussions about issues surrounding the local environment. He participated in local bird counts and had a special passion for Honeymoon Island.

He enjoyed stamp/coin collecting. His knowledge was vast. Many times, I just shook my head after listening to him explain how states name their license plates, or the different types of planes or train cars, or anything to do with the military. I felt I could ask him anything and he would know the answer. He was remarkable.

But most of all, Sid was kind and caring. He had a great sense of humor and was a real gentle-man. His opinions were thoughtful and respectful. He loved to travel and was always open to new experiences. There was no one else like him. Everyone loved Sid.

Photos below by Dale Goebel



Sid birding at Cape Flattery, WA



Audubon trip to Maine

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Clearwater Audubon Society
<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>
Supporting our community since 1959 Our Motto: Conservation through Education
For more information call us at 727-442-9140



We represent Audubon Society members in Northern Pinellas County and provide services to all who are interested: free local field trips with expert birders; inexpensive extended field trips within the US and to other locales, free monthly programs, volunteer & networking opportunities within the local conservation community; scholarships to local summer camps and speakers for a variety of classrooms and groups.

Past Issue of Wing Beat
[click issue to view](#)

Membership

[Membership Application](#)

Monthly Meetings

October – May

The first Monday of each month at [Moccasin Lake Nature Park](#):

Meet and Greet @ 6:30PM

Public Program @ 7:00PM

(Unless otherwise noted)

[Pinellas County Birding Checklist](#)

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 1st.



JUNE - JULY 2018
In this issue: 100
Hiking Birds on Three Rooker
On the Road With Our Species
Zoo's New Foundation
School's Great Again

Starting Our Shore
A Special Issue on the Bay's Birding Hot Spot

Wing Beat

NESTING BIRDS' NEEDS
Three Rooker Bar hosts threatened species.

The Gulf Islands State Parks is a Global Important Bird Area (not just state or national) based on rigorous scientific criteria described populations, not just some bird lover's whim or fancy. A significant number of the entire world's population of the very, intensely endangered Frigate Flamer uses these islands - especially Three Rooker Bar. More than 5,000 pairs of nesting seabirds and shorebirds use the island, including several near-threatened species. In 2011, Clearwater Audubon Society started a bird survey program during the nesting and chick fledging season on Three Rooker Bar.

This involves having volunteers set up stations adjacent to the nesting areas with equipment including binoculars, spotting scopes, bird identification guides, and literature. The volunteers talk with people on the beach about reporting the species needed by nesting birds and show them the birds and their tiny, flightless chicks. We also make sure there is no intrusion into the colonies by people or dogs. We are present on Saturdays and Sundays from 6AM till 2PM. Last year the program was successful by Audubon Florida who purchased a boat capable of carrying 100 volunteers to the island. The boat will provide boat transportation to and from the island 4 days a month.

The program will cover weekends and holidays from May 1st to July 31st. The number of volunteers to be transported would be from 4 to 11 depending upon boat capacity. The Park requires that the boat remain in close proximity to the island so that the volunteers could be quickly evacuated in case of bad weather (our weather often is unpredictable) or medical emergency. We will provide chairs and water. You will provide your lunch, sunscreen, hats, and nesting material. It is a fun and exciting. Clearwater Audubon is asking for your help. Please consider becoming a volunteer for bird surveying. It is a remarkable experience to be in the middle of 5,000 nesting birds. Thanks for your consideration.

For more information contact our new Audubon member steward Dawn Dignard at jdignard@audubon.org or John Hood johnh@clearwateraudubon.org. Please put 2 Rooker in the subject line.

Just Skimming the Surface >>> Jason Sigismondi

After Alberto, they decided to renest at mid-island which periodically gets flooded with high tides. Those nests hatched about eight chicks before high tides and weather put an end to their colony. It also has been a very rough nesting season for oystercatchers. They had a total of seven nests with only one producing a chick that did not succeed. An interesting observation was that many of the nests did not have the typical three egg clutch. Most only had one or two, and I'm interested to see how many other nests in the area have had similar clutch sizes.

As the season has progressed, we have seen a significant reduction in the number of dogs being brought out there. The stewards that come out with me on the weekends have done an incredible job, and I couldn't thank them enough for their time and commitment. Stewarding on Three Rooker is unique compared to the other sites just due to its remoteness, lack of restrooms, etc.

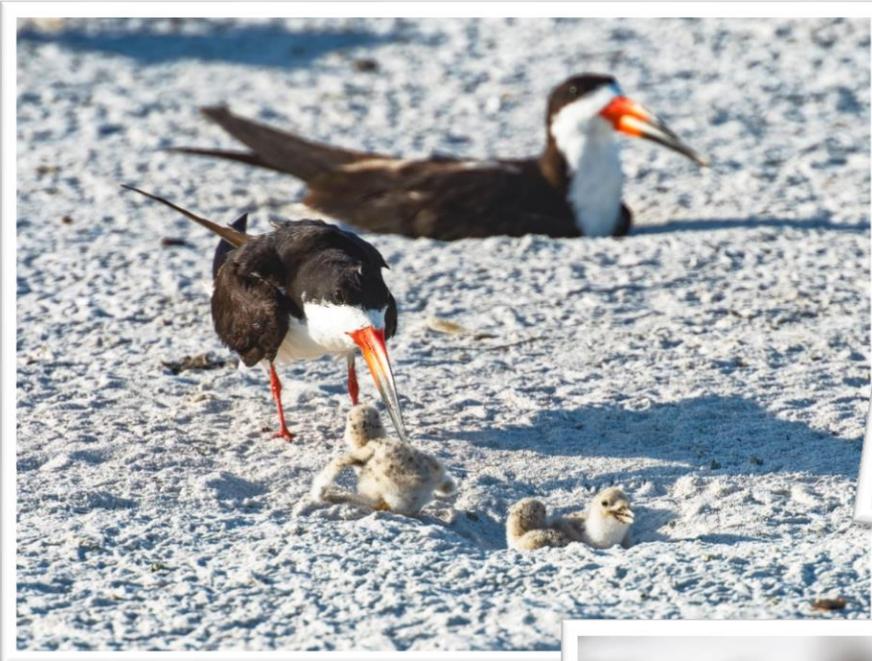
SHUTTERBUG SPOTLIGHT

Bird Steward, Robert Neff, offers a perspective through his lens.











UPCOMING EVENTS: >>> October Field Trips

10/6

Bird Walk

- Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park Meet at 8:00am
- Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885

10/12-14

Birding Festival

- Suncoast Birding Festival Highlights Wildlife Corridors and Migrating birds, experience Central FL's peak migration - over 180 species, field trips to the best wildlife sites in W. Central FL.
- Leader- John Hood 461-4762

10-13

Birding in Largo

- Largo Central Park Nature Preserve Meet in the parking lot at 8am.
- Leader - Dale Goebel 510-1462

10/20

Birding in the Park

- John Chesnut Park Meet at shelter 6 at 8am.
- Leader - Steve Reardon 871-2706

10/27

Birding the Fort

- Ft. DeSoto Park Meet at the Wal-Mart 2677 Roosevelt Blvd. at 7:30am.
- Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 748-6885



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hi! If you haven't heard it's the Year of the Bird! This year National Audubon, National Geographic, Cornell and Bird Life International have formed a partnership to celebrate the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is the strongest legislation ever passed to protect birds. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) was formed by the United States, Mexico, and Japan. Please support efforts to protect the MBTA.

I want to thank all of you for your support. You are packing the house for our programs and we continue to have interesting and engaging speakers. Special thanks to the hospitality crew for the great job they do with food and drinks. I hope you will be able to join us for additional events in the fall, particularly our VIP event, and the grand re-opening of Moccasin Lake Environmental Education Center. Our raptor care takers and trainers are doing a great job and we have some very engaging feathered friends that will be celebrating the Year of the Bird with us in October.

We have formed new education partnerships with teachers and schools as well as a partnership through National Geographic called "Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants". The classes are monthly through skype and reach 5,000 + students. We look forward to seeing students from Eisenhower Elementary as they will help us celebrate the year of the bird and Elvis's 31st birthday.

Thanks again for your support, we need it now more than ever. We are looking for volunteers and appreciate donations! Special thanks to Highland Lakes Birding Bunch for continually supplying us with things we need. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in the fall.

P.S.

Remember <https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>

Barb Walker



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THE YEAR of THE BIRD

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fbnfestival.org



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