

Wing Beat

Conservation Through Education
The Newsletter of the Clearwater Audubon Society
Jan-Feb 2022 Vol. 104

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

February 7th Program with Paul Trunk



Over 100 species of birds can be discovered in the Sonoran Desert! Join **Paul Trunk** as he takes us to the Sonoran Desert and speaks about how major plants have adapted to survive in the desert. Paul will also show bird species found in the desert that compliment the birds in the east.

Will you attend in-person or online? [TELL US HERE](#) to help us plan.

January 3rd Program with Tom & Lindsay Bell



Belugas, Polar Bears and Birds of Churchill, Manitoba.

The Bells shared another one of their breathtaking adventures from the Canadian Arctic! Tom & Lindsay Bell will share their story of their amazing adventure- join us and get excited about birding in 2022.

Did you miss it? You can watch it on our YouTube channel along with other past programs.
[YouTube](#) channel

FIELD TRIP OBSESSED

YES! We're ready to get outside! Join us & bring a friend!



January 8th Monthly Bird Walk/Outing at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater.

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885

Accessible with assistance 

January 12th WEDNESDAY Florida Botanical Gardens

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the gardens at 12211 Walsingham Rd, Largo 33778 Largo.

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885

Accessible with assistance 

January 15th William E. Dunn Water Reclamation Facility and Wall Springs Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Dunn Water Reclamation Facility 4111 Dunn Dr., Palm Harbor then to 621 Wai Lane Rd, Palm Harbor. Just north on Alt 19 on the left.

Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz 727-657-0803

January 22nd Tour of Oldsmar

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Mobley Beach Park (\$5 parking fee), then continue to Mobley Bayou Wilderness Preserve 423 Lafayette Blvd, Oldsmar, 34677 and Oldsmar Veterans Memorial Park 250 Shore Dr E, Oldsmar, 34677.

Leader - Bill Kaempfer (303) 717-5063

February 5th Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater.

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885

Accessible with assistance 

Moccasin Lake Nature Park Event: Jurassic Park Day 3-8 PM

February 12th Celery Fields

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Walmart 2677 Roosevelt Blvd. Largo, (SE corner of US 19 and Roosevelt/East Bay). Celery Fields 6893 Palmer Blvd, Sarasota, 34240. Bring lunch.

Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz 727-657-0803

Accessible with assistance 

February 18th FRIDAY - Chinsegut Wildlife Area & Ahhochee Hill Sanctuary

Sandhill Cranes, bluebirds, red-headed woodpeckers, warblers, sparrows, hawks, feeders and much more. Meet at Chinsegut at 8:00 a.m. at 23212 Lake Lindsey Rd, Brooksville, 34601, then to Ahhochee 24064 Lake Lindsey Rd, Brooksville, 34601. Bring lunch.

Leader - Bill Kaempfer (303) 717-5063

February 19th Largo Central Park Nature Preserve

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park at 150 Highland Ave N, Largo, 33770.

Leader - Steve Aversa 727-218-7938

Accessible with assistance 

February 26th Three Sisters Springs, Crystal River and Bluebird Springs Park

Winter warblers/birds, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and manatees. Also, beautiful views from the boardwalk of the springs. Meet at the Walgreens at the corner of US19 and Curlew Rd. on the SW corner at 7:30 a.m.

Cost of Three Sisters is \$12 - \$20. Ntl Park pass discount. Park at 450 SE US19, Crystal River, 34429 (This is a Bank of America, we will park there).

Bring lunch...we'll take our lunch to Bluebird Springs Park 8950 Bluebird Springs Lane, Homosassa, 34448.

Leader - Dale Goebel 727-510-1462

March 5th Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater.

Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885

Accessible with assistance 

March 12th Sand Key Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the SW portion of the parking lot, 1060 Gulf Blvd, Clearwater, 33767. Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz 727-657-0803

March 26th Aripeka Sandhills Preserve

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Walgreens on the SW corner of US19 and Curlew Rd., 18000 Aripeka Rd, Hudson, 34667. Bring Lunch.
Leader - Paul Trunk 727-430-0368

April 2nd Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00 am at 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater.
Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885
Accessible with assistance 

April 5th TUESDAY Dunedin Hammock Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the north entrance by ball fields, 1867 Harvard Ave, Dunedin 34698.
Leader - Bill Kaempfer (303) 717-5063

April 9th Fred Howard Park

Meet at 8:00 am at Fred Howard Park, Shelter 9, 1700 Sunset Drive, Tarpon Springs.
Leader - Dale Goebel 510-1462

April 16th Honeymoon Island State Park

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at 1 Causeway Blvd, Dunedin at the Osprey Trail head at the north end of playground parking lot.
Leader - Cuneyt Yilmaz 727-657-0803

April 23rd John Chesnut Park

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at 2200 East Lake Road Palm Harbor, Shelter 6.
Leader - Steve Reardon 727-939-8276

April 30th Ft. DeSoto Park

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at 3500 Pinellas Bayway S, Tierra Verde, 33715 at the north end of the North Beach.
Leader - John Swenfurth (813) 390-4734

May 7th Monthly Bird Walk at Moccasin Lake Nature Park

Meet at 8:00 am at 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater.
Leader - Madeleine Bohrer 727-748-6885
Accessible with assistance 

Would you like to ‘bird local’?

Please visit our website to view the current listing of bird outings.

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/field-trips.html>

Most trips are led by volunteer Clearwater Audubon Society leaders. Unless otherwise indicated, they are free and open to the public. We host monthly guided bird walks at Moccasin Lake Nature park which is free to the public and accessible with assistance. The schedule will be updated as more information becomes available. When you arrive we'll have our sign-in sheet as usual but added to the form will be some CDC practices we all need to follow...please don't come to a walk if you have a fever, feeling sick, sore throat, shortness of breath, etc. We will ask that everyone practice social distancing as much as possible and encourage you to wear a mask. We look forward to seeing you at the park.

We believe that diversity, equality and inclusion are essential to creating global citizens who celebrate the unique differences of all and understand that each person plays a critical role in our global society. **All are welcome.**



Renew your Membership

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If you don't feel comfortable paying online, either for joining or renewing, please make out a check for \$20.00 to: National Audubon, and send to: Clearwater Audubon Society, PO Box 97, Clearwater, FL 33757

ISLAND REFRESH

By Méichelle Long

I consider myself an ‘accidental birder’ for the most part. I love birding, but I usually only see the most amazing ones by accident. I grew up in Florida, so I have always been connected to my environment as a natural part of life. As an adult, I just take my camera and binocs everywhere in case the opportunity arises. Don't we all? As I travel, I want to be sure to take time to notice the local flora and fauna- make notes if possible.



My latest trip was one that many people were ‘forced’ to take. Time was running out on points and credits from previously canceled trips during the pandemic. Fortunately, our excursion to the Caribbean & ABC Islands (-Bonaire; it was closed to cruise ships) was ahead of the OMICRON curve. Thankfully, I was able to add a few birds to my life list that would never have been possible!



Although **Aruba** gave me the shortest time frame to see birds, there were ones abundant for recognition.

The Magnificent Frigate birds and Terns were in abundance at all ports and along the shore lines.

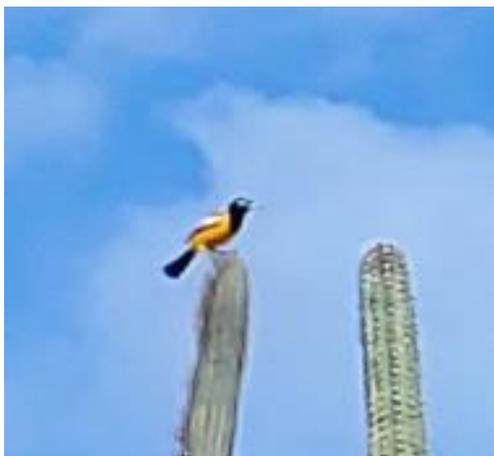
The pair on the beach should also be familiar; House sparrows, which are residents on all three islands.



We were touring up the shoreline to a place named ‘Natural Bridge’ within their National Park, and I was anxious to exit the van with my camera. I couldn't believe my eyes! Up on the rocks above a very tumultuous tide were American Oystercatchers! The photo is a bit blurry because of the mere distance, but they are unmistakable even from so far away.



I saw my first Tropical Mockingbird at Mi Dushi Casibari Rock formation in Arikok National Park. A tropical counterpart to our Florida favorite, but I'd say these two are a tad more handsome. They are abundant on all three islands and sing and mimic like our own friends.



On the ride back to the ship, I was taking pictures through the window at every clump of cactus we passed hoping to get any type of woodpecker or any unsuspecting bird. It wasn't until I returned to ship that I noticed a brilliant splash of orange in the corner of one of my pics. It's a Venezuelan troupial! Because the ABC Islands are so close to Venezuela (we could see it from the ship), these birds come and go as they please. It's the national bird of Vz. They do not construct their own nests, but are instead obligate nest pirates. They are surprisingly large and wicked fast.

Moving along to **Curaçao**, from the moment we docked in port, I was snapping my camera off the balcony. I was not alone. As I looked down the starboard side, there were at least 10 other cameras or binoculars feasting on the sights. All the expected shorebirds were there. Magnificent Frigate birds, a variety of terns and gulls with a dash of Ruddy turnstone. It was really great to see so many species in one area.



We visited the Curaçao Liqueur Distillery (popular destination) and found ourselves enthralled not with the drink, but with a tree engulfed with Bananaquits! They are stunning warbler-like birds that feed primarily on fruit and nectar. They have a bright red mouth and white 'eyebrows'. There were a few small dishes of sugar water and cut fruit in the tree creating a constant opportunity for photos for those who looked past the free sample table.



Next, we were off to visit the Hato Caves, an archeological site that contains marine coral limestone. It also houses a large population of fruit bats. Though reported to be rarely seen, they flew overhead in great numbers without much concern for us. Although no photos are allowed inside, upon emerging I was ready with my camera and quickly rewarded. As fast as a blink, two Blue-tailed Emerald hummingbirds buzzed by my ears and over to a tree close by. I was fortunate that they stayed a while and didn't mind a line of descending tourists.



After we recovered from the cave hike, we settled for a snack at the rest area below. It was the sound, then the color that grabbed my attention. What in the world? I was in love instantly! Saffron finches were gathering nesting materials in a great tree just above my



head. They watched me as much as I did, and a small group massed as they played and gathered twigs and leaf bundles. Beautiful! There are postage stamps of these lovely birds from various countries.



On the way out, we were greeted by a Gray Kingbird, a widespread resident. Although I have only blurry or body photos of the Bare-eyed pigeon, they are fairly common in cactus and trees. Our driver called them the blue-collar pigeon because of that physical characteristic, but their eyes are the most noticeable feature. We also saw a few Caribbean Coots and Gallinules in a small pond on our drive.

On the last leg of the tour, our guide asked the driver to take a different route. Usually, in a foreign country, this is where things could get dicey, right? We were all pleasantly surprised that our guide had him take us to a large colony of Flamingos! We could see them in a wetland area along a road that seemed to go nowhere at all like an abandoned airstrip. St Willibrordus, Jan Kok, is a Flamingo sanctuary for preserving their natural habitat. Only once have I ever seen a flamingo that was not in captivity... there were thousands!





There were a few sea days because we had three ports that were closed due to Covid restrictions. The seabirds were fantastic and plentiful. To see these birds dive full-on disappearing under the sea and return to the surface to eat on the water was spectacular.



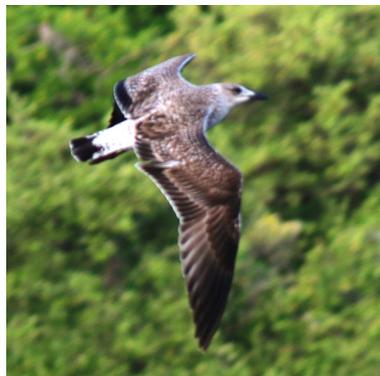
There were many adult and juvenile Brown boobies and Masked boobies at sea. At times we were so far from any shore or visible island, I couldn't imagine their flight to find rest. Heck, we even saw flying fish!



I was hoping to see a Jaeger or something to blow my mind even further. There were many great terns, and a few that I just couldn't identify (maybe a Sandpiper?). Although the ship's library helped me with a copy of Birds of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao: A Site and Field Guide, you can email me any of these three that you can identify. I would be delighted.



Bird 1



Bird 2



Bird 3

Thanks for joining me on this adventure... I hope that you saw something new!

Camera: Canon EOS 70D

Lens: EF 400mm f/5.6 L Ultrasonic

AUDUBON FL HIGHLIGHTS

Did you get your copy yet? If not, check out the winter edition of the **Naturalist** magazine!



Be sure to read the tribute to former Clearwater Audubon board member Marianne Korosy! She most recently was the Audubon FL Director of Bird Conservation, but she has a long history of leadership and amazing work with Audubon. **She recently retired! Congrats! We ❤️ you!**

← I saw this Yellow-throated warbler in my oak tree this morning!

https://fl.audubon.org/.../files/winter_naturalist_2021.pdf

Coastal Conservation



Spotted! Interesting Piping Plover Lineage at Outback Key

By Audubon Staff

Coastal team member Kara Cook reflects on one of her favorite Fall 2021 sightings.

Audubon Assembly



Year 11 of Conservation Leadership Initiative Program Launches at Regional Audubon Assemblies

Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) is an experiential learning program providing opportunities for undergraduate college students to immerse themselves in Audubon.

Birds



Best Florida Bird of 2021

By Erika Zambello

What was your favorite Florida sighting of 2021? For Communications Director Erika Zambello, it was an American Flamingo.

NORTH PINELLAS CBC REPORT

Conducted by Bill Kaempfer and Cuneyt Yilmaz

The North Pinellas Christmas Bird Count was held on Sunday, December 26th. CBCs have been held since 1899 and North Pinellas has had a count since at least 1977. The National Audubon Society is the sponsoring organization for CBCs, and more information is available on their website. Clearwater Audubon sponsors the North Pinellas CBC which is one of three held in Pinellas County.

The format for all CBCs is to organize teams of birders to go out and census the entire population of birds that can be found in a circle with a 15 mile diameter. The NP circle is centered at US 19 and Tampa Rd. and that 15 mile diameter covers just about all of the northern part of Pinellas County from Gulf-to-Bay to Pasco and from Upper Tampa Bay to the Gulf of Mexico.

This year on count day, 61 birders found a total of 158 species, one less than our 10 year average. A total of almost 25,000 birds were tallied with 49 species clocking in at 100 or more individuals. Top totals were over 6,000 Redhead, mainly at William Dunn Water Treatment Facility and 1,500 Lesser Scaup mainly on Upper Tampa Bay. Laughing Gull and Fish Crow populations were also well over 1,000.

104 species had been found on each of the previous 20 NP CBCs, and all of them were reported in 2021. **Rare birds found on the CBC this year included Black Scoter, Lincoln Sparrow and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.** The first two of these are unusual northern species that occasionally are found here in early winter. The latter is a common migrant early on in the fall, but usually departs from our area by mid-December.



We invite **you** to become volunteer **Citizen Scientists** and make a measurable difference in our environment and quality of life. In essence, Community Science is 'Citizen Science' conducted by members of a community of stakeholders; be they professionals or concerned individuals. It involves research conducted by members of the public, often with the help or supervision of a professional scientist or scientific institution. [Learn more...](#)

Thank you for your continued support.

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Join the Board or a Committee

Becoming a member of a nonprofit organization's board can be a meaningful way to explore how your experience and expertise can be applied in the nonprofit sector at the governance level, and ultimately, how your experience and expertise can help advance a nonprofit organization's social impact. Please take a few moments to read Audubon's statement of [Equity, Diversity & Inclusion](#) and the [Board Member Expectations](#). Board members meet on the last Monday of each month. Monthly general membership meetings (open to the public) are the first Monday of the month unless otherwise noted.

To view a list of available positions on the board or on a committee, please view [this document](#). Complete the [Board Interest Survey here](#).

Clearwater Audubon Society

Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. P.O. Box 97 Clearwater Florida 33757
EIN 59-6177460

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>

Supporting our community since 1959

Our Motto: Conservation through Education

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.

[Membership Application](#)



Organizations We Support

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Important Bird Areas
Important Bird Areas

Important Bird Areas in Florida

 GFBWT
floridabirdingtrail.com



Great Florida Birding Trail

 Florida Ornithological Soc...
fosbirds.org



Florida Ornithological Society

 Friends of Brooker Creek ...
friendsofbrookercreekpreserve.org



Friends Of Brooker Creek Preserve

Florida Herb Society
Suncoast Herpetological Society, Inc.
Tampa Bay Turtle & Tortoise Society
Pinellas Chapter FNPS
Friends in Focus
Photography Club
Safety Harbor Garden Club
Friends of Moccasin Lake



Moccasin Lake Nature Park



Florida Botanical Gardens

Moccasin Lake Raptor Sanctuary

Jurassic Park at Moccasin Lake:

Day of Raptors

Saturday, February 05, 2022
3:00 pm - 8:00 pm

[Moccasin Lake Nature Park](#)

2750 Park Trail Lane Clearwater, FL

[Directions](#)

Price: Free



The Friends of Moccasin Lake, the Clearwater Library and the City of Clearwater are delighted to host a free community event, Jurassic Park at Moccasin Lake! Day of Raptors! This one-day event will host a variety of fun Jurassic Park themed education & craft stations, snacks, and a movie on the lawn at 6 p.m. Please bring your own lawn chairs.

To learn more, call 727-562- 4315, ext. 1 for details. Moccasin Lake Nature Park, 2750 Park Trail Lane, Clearwater 33759.

Contact Info:

Lloyd Simmons
Moccasin Lake Nature Park
lloyd.simmons@myclearwater.com
727.562.4315