

# Wing Beat

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*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.*

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## It's Nesting Time

**-John Hood**

It's that time of the year again when our shorebirds & seabirds are nesting.

Rooftops are at an all-time low with only 3 rooftops being occupied. They are at Kee Action Sports, Victor Distributing, and the Space Center. The first 2 are near the Gandy Bridge and the Space center is at the southwest corner of Hercules and the railroad track. At the Space Center we have catchment pens, a chick-a-boom, and volunteers all set up. We are waiting for the first chick to fall. Hopefully with proper parental instruction this won't happen but I doubt it. If they do fall and have a wing cord of 30mm or greater they will be banded. Fledglings with a wing cord of 100mm or greater will get a unique set of bands. There appear to be about 25 pairs on the rooftop.

Our barrier islands are covered in birds. We have 3 species of terns, egrets, oystercatchers, skimmers, gulls, herons, egrets, and ibis on 3 Rooker. Unfortunately we have no least terns this year. All these species have chicks and/or eggs. There are probably about 7,000 pairs of birds. The island has again been split into 2 parts by winter storms with a pass about 200 yards wide through the middle. The steward program is again in place with volunteers going out every weekend to monitor the birds and keep dogs off the island and people out of the nesting areas. FWC law enforcement has an increased presence this year and they have been giving out tickets for dogs! If you want to spend the day on a beautiful pristine barrier island please contact me [jhood2@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jhood2@tampabay.rr.com). Thanks.



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### **Clearwater Audubon Society**

<http://clearwateraudubonsociety.org/>

June- July 2015

Vol. 65 No. 1

Supporting our community since 1959

Our Motto: Conservation through Education

For more information call us at 727-442-9140





## CAS Programs

-Cynthia Kluss

### How to Read a Beach

How to read a Florida Gulf Coast Beach was the theme of the March, 2015 program for the Clearwater Audubon Society meeting. Tonya Clayton, PhD and a certified interpretive guide, shared findings from some recent research and her book entitled *How to Read a Florida Gulf Coast Beach: A Guide to Shadow Dunes, Ghost Forests, and Other Telltale Clues from an Ever Changing Coast* (ISBN 978-0-8078-7218-5), published by the University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill). Her approach to the Gulf coast shoreline begins with looking for the major clues. Some of these can be found in the wrack, among the animals seen and unseen at the shore, within nearby habitats, and along the landscape. We all read beaches in some fashion but not to the extent that Tonya has due to her extensive travel along our Gulf coast.

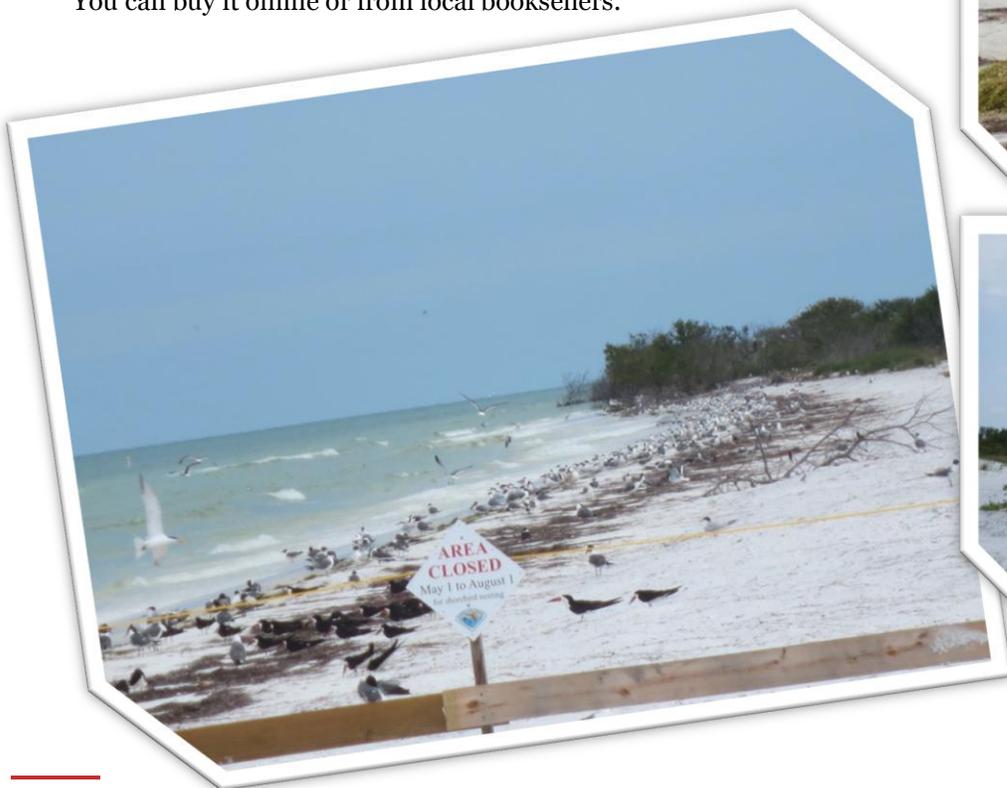
The beach is a dynamic landscape and is always changing due to constructive and destructive energy. The way Tonya explains it, the beach is a sand sharing system. A quote from beach ecologists, summing up what happens where the land meets the water, is that “Beaches are resilient as long as they remain unconstrained”. Ecologists also say the number one threat to sandy beach ecosystems worldwide is coastal squeeze. That includes sea level change not just retaining walls, jetties, and resorts.

Want to increase your vocabulary? Tonya’s book provides numerous beach terms that are interesting and very descriptive; such as ephemera, fulgurites, swash zone, and leabensspuren.

We can all work on beach challenges and opportunities by following the recommendations of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection under the Rules of Green-Thumb at the Coast, an information rich site; [www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/publications/pdf/rule-grn.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/beaches/publications/pdf/rule-grn.pdf). These rules apply to coastal homeowners and visitors alike.

1. Do nothing. Do not disturb any native vegetation.
2. Destroy, safely, any invasive exotic plants.
3. If you plant, plant coastal natives.

There is a wealth of information and new ways of looking at the seaside world of the Florida Gulf Coast in Tonya’s book. Want Tonya’s book? You can buy it online or from local booksellers.





## CAS Programs (cont.)

### What to Do at the Beach If You Encounter an Injured Animal

The April, 2015 Clearwater Audubon Society (CAS) meeting was honored to present Dan Larremore, environmental specialist at Honeymoon Island State Park, as our guide to managing an encounter with a snagged animal at the beach, causeway, or other waterfront location. Dan shared his experiences and expertise with marine mammals, turtles, and shorebirds that needed rescuing.

Dan's recommendations include following these steps: 1. have a plan, 2. take a photo, 3. secure a location with global positioning satellite (GPS) coordinates if available, and 4. call for help. More specifically for:

**marine mammals**, in our area that will be dolphins: call Florida Wildlife Commission (FWC) Hotline: 1-888-404-3922 (better yet have the FWC number on speed dial) and Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) at 727-441-1790 extension 234, and follow the steps above 1. – 3.. If needed, try to shade and cool the dolphin's skin with water, keep clear of the dolphin's mouth and tail, avoid handling.

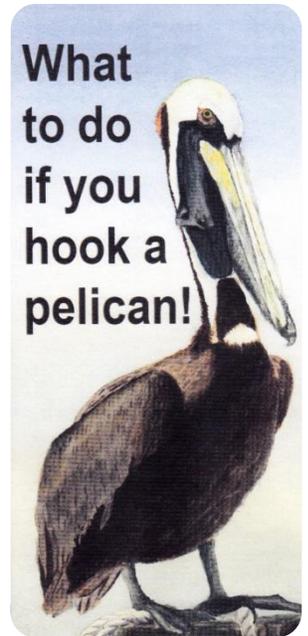
**birds**: the steps above 1. – 3. plus: call the FWC Hotline: 1-888-404-3922. For cases where a bird is dead: do not handle the bird, do report to FWC or <http://legacy/myfwc.com/bird>. A nesting bird needs space so back away slowly, take a photo, secure location coordinates, inform the landowner, and join the local bird steward group. A banded bird has a story to tell so take a photo, record the bands, secure coordinates, and report to [www.bandedbirds.org](http://www.bandedbirds.org).

**turtles**: the steps above 1. – 3., call FWC 1-888-404-3922, you can also call CMA at 727-441-1790 extension 234. For cases where a turtle is dead: do not handle the turtle, call FWC, take a photo, secure a location, and notify the landowner.

Remember to protect yourself should you decide to get hands-on involved. One of the first rules in rescue work is do not become in need of rescue yourself. Have a plan on what to do. Personal protective gear is a must: eye protection (sunglasses, eye shield), gloves, body armor (sweatshirt, towel, jacket). Capture equipment for those with animal handling experience include having a plan. Know what you will do with the animal, if you can secure it safely using net, catchpole, towel, and crate.

You can share your experiences and photos with the CAS membership at a meeting or in a Wing Beat article.

Thank you to the hospitality crew for their time and talent in providing refreshments to the CAS members and guests during the March and April meetings.



**CAS Summer Film Festival**  
 Viewer's choice of David Attenborough's Life of Birds!  
 June 1, July 6, & Aug 3 @ 6:30 PM  
 Yes, there will be cartoons and free popcorn & soda.

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# Officers of Clearwater Audubon Society

## Membership

[Membership Application](#)

Size : 141.717 Kb

Type : pdf

## 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)

**First meeting is October 6**

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**LEGAL COUNSEL: R. BRUCE McMANUS**

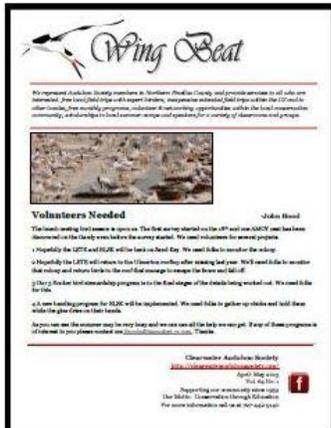
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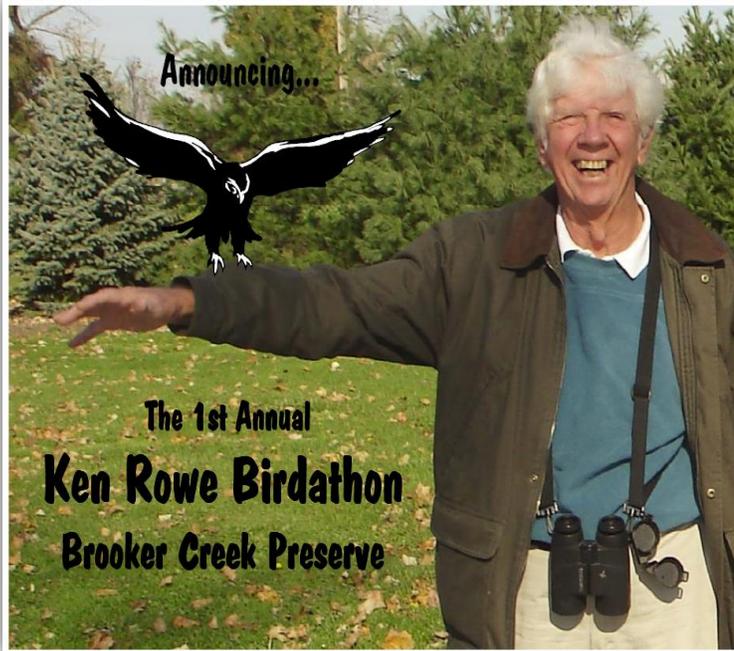


Did you miss the last WingBeat?  
Click above to read it online.

**"A Boater's Guide to Clearwater Harbor & St. Joseph's Sound including Three Rooker Island, the Anclote Keys and Anclote Bar" is now available online.**



*click picture to view*



**June 6, 2015**

5:30 am - 11:00 am Birding

11:00-12:30 Lunch & Prizes

Birders of all levels are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Teams of 2-4 people, \$10/person, includes lunch. Prizes will be awarded in a variety of categories including most species per team and many more...

Birding will take place by teams at their own pace at a choice of several areas within the Brooker Creek Preserve boundary, most not open to the public. Maps indicating entry/parking sites, including "hot spot" locations, will be provided to participants. Data collected will be used to help monitor breeding bird populations. Team leaders must RSVP by June 5.

For questions and to sign up:

[fobcp@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:fobcp@tampabay.rr.com) or (727) 934-2680

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# Beach Birds- Courtney Campbell Causeway

-Lynn Sumerson



Red-breasted Merganser



Sandwich Tern and Forster's Tern beginning to molt into alternate plumage



Royal and Sandwich Terns



Royal Tern, Willet and Short-billed Dowitcher



Semipalmated Plover (up)



Royal Terns (above)

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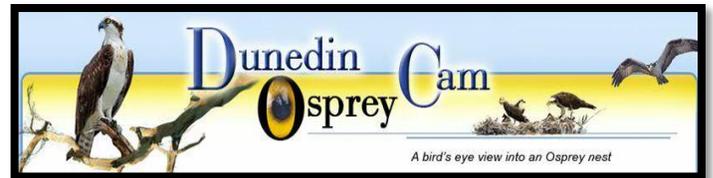
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