



The Mission of Audubon of Southwest Florida is to protect plants, animals and their habitats and to promote environmental education and a greater community involvement with the natural world.

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Audubon of Southwest Florida, Inc. is an affiliated chapter of the National Audubon Society and Audubon of Florida. This chapter is 501c3. Donations are tax deductible.

<http://www.audubonswfl.org>
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Help conserve chapter resources by receiving *Flyways* via email. Write info@audubon.org to be added to our newsletter email-delivery list. ASWF does not share or sell addresses.

Audubon of Southwest Florida's Environmentalist of the Year Award goes to...



Carol Newcomb-Jones and Rhonda Roff

It is our pleasure to announce this year's Audubon of Southwest Florida's Environmentalist of the Year Award to Rhonda Roff. For those who engage in energy and Climate Change issues in Florida, and/or read the Environmental Voice of Southwest Florida – Eco-Voice.org -- you, no doubt, have run into Rhonda. She serves as Energy co-chair for the Sierra Calusa group, is the Conservation chair of Hendry Glades Audubon, and chair of the Everglades Coalition Energy and Climate Team representing Save It Now Glades. Save it Now Glades, also known as SING is a coalition of environmental activists and groups working to maintain and promote the environmental and political integ-

egrity of the Glades region including Fisheating Creek and the Caloosahatchee River. Rhonda has coordinated sustainable development symposia for the Seminole Tribe of Florida and has almost completed construction of a green, solar powered home on Big Cypress Reservation where she lives. The home will serve as a demonstration project in energy and other resource efficiency by having real-time data posted on a website and offering tours to people interested in building their own "green" home. Besides raising her two children, ages 6 and 14, she spends her free time monitoring state and federal policy development on energy and climate issues, and sharing her findings with the advocacy community, policy makers, and anyone else who will listen. Rhonda does this all on her own time and on her own dime and that is why this year's award goes to one of the most passionate, hardworking women we know who gives of herself so unselfishly to tackle the defining environmental challenge of our age.

Hawk Watch at the Sanibel Lighthouse by Vince McGrath



Photo by Gerri Reaves

The recent cold front started the brave dozen birders off to a cool, breezy, and clear morning on October 18. As usual for the season, few passerines were moving. But about 10 a.m., like clockwork, the raptor procession began: a couple of Sharp-shinned Hawks, a Kestrel here and there, and pugnacious Merlins assaulting everything they saw. Within an hour we tallied 43 "Sharpies," 22 Kestrels, 4 Merlins, 6 Broad-winged Hawks and some swallows and swifts.

Urban Birding—A New ASWF Tradition



Photo by Gerri Reaves

Urban Birding with Roger Clark attracted 43 people—and that's off-season! Highlights were 20+ Gray Kingbirds, chimney swifts, Cooper's Hawks in action, and, of course, the glorious large flocks of Purple Martins.

The Purple Martin Conservation Association (which monitors the birds nationwide) sent ASWF 75

booklets (for free), which were distributed during the program. Thank you all for making this event a success!

Brenda Thomas and C.R.E.W.'s Wildflowers



Brenda Thomas and Carol

Brenda Thomas the Environmental Education Specialist at Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) came to speak to Audubon of Southwest Florida about the and flora of the watershed preserve.

C.R.E.W. is located off of Corkscrew Road and encompasses over 60,000 acres. The watershed provides aquifer recharge, natural flood protection, water purification, preservation of wildlife habitat, and public recreation.

Thank you Brenda!

Upcoming Programs and Events! Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming Speaker Programs at Rutenberg's Eco Living Center: 6490 South Pointe Blvd., Fort Myers, 33919

(Come early at 6:00pm to join us for our board meeting!)

Directions: The building is between Cypress Lake Drive and College Parkway on South Pointe, which is one block east of McGregor.

January 21, 2010 7:00pm: Norm Dillman - Owls and Night Flyers of Florida

Feb. 18, 2010 7:00pm: Mark "Bird" Westall - Sanibel Ospreys

Sanibel Ospreys by Mark "Bird" Westall February 18th, 2010, 7:00pm

Mark "Bird" Westall, owner of Canoe Adventures & Wilderness Tours, began his ecotour business on Sanibel in the mid-1970s. As an avid birder, Mark became involved in monitoring Osprey and Bald Eagle populations on Sanibel in the late 1970's.

He will be sharing with Audubon of Southwest Florida some of his many experiences engaged in raptor research, as founder of The International Osprey Foundation, along with serving as a Sanibel city council member and mayor.

Visit the Audubon website at <http://www.audubonswfl.org> to view the calendar for the meetings, activities and more! Click on "Activities"

Birdathon is BACK!

Get your binoculars ready! Birdathon is back! Birdathon is an important fundraiser for ASWF. Teams of birders of all levels of experience prepare for the event by securing monetary pledges from the community and then head outside to identify and count birds. This fun event is followed by a delicious dinner to celebrate the day! Save the date for **March 20th** for Birdathon!

For more information or to register your team to participate in Birdathon please contact us at info@audubonswfl.org.

We need your help!!

Our chapter needs volunteers to help with fundraising ideas, as well as various tasks involved with maintaining our chapter, including event organization, publicity, newsletter preparation, and helping with festival displays. If you can volunteer a few hours per month, please contact Rebecca Austin 239-841-5340 raustin@fgcu.edu, or Carol Newcomb Jones newcombjones@aol.com.

Environmental Breakfast Keynote Speaker - Dell Jones

Dell Jones, the VP of Renewable Project Development for Regenesis Power was the keynote speaker at Audubon of Southwest Florida's Environmental Breakfast this year. Dell's current work includes development and management of renewable energy projects. Current projects include a 17 acre/2 MW solar field at FGCU, an 85 MW solar water heating project in Lakeland Florida, and solar thermal installations on 6,000 buildings for the State of Wisconsin. Dell has worked in both Utility and private industry during his 30 years in the solar business and has been involved in manufacturing, distribution, project management, project finance and development internationally.

Thank You!

Audubon of Southwest Florida Environmental Breakfast Sponsors:

Southwest Florida Watershed Council

Ding Darling

CRCA

Tarpon Bay Explorers

FPL

Regenesis Solar

FAFCO Solar

Matt Smith

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College of Life Foundation, Inc

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Co-Hosts: Audubon of SWFL and Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation

Scholarship Award Recipient - Jason Almcrantz



Gene Csonka and Jason Almcrantz

Audubon of Southwest Florida is proud to have awarded the Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) Tuition Scholarship to a sophomore Environmental and Civil Engineering major at FGCU, Jason Almcrantz. Audubon members were introduced to Jason earlier this year when he came to one of our evening programs as a speaker to tell us about his summer experience in the Pantanal wetlands of Brazil.

Jason has been on the President's list for four consecutive semesters!

Congratulations Jason! Keep up the good work!

For information on ASWF scholarships go to <http://www.audubonswfl.org/Scholarships.htm>

Festivals



Connie Spurfeld represented Audubon of Southwest Florida at the annual Ding Darling Days at Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in October.

If you are interested in helping out with festivals please contact us at info@audubonswfl.org.

The Great Backyard Bird Count

Every year birders of all ages commute to their own backyards to participate in a popular four-day birding event called the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). The birders then report their bird counts online at the GBBC website. This year's GBBC will take place on **February 12th - 15th, 2010**.

Counting birds is important to birders and scientists to gain knowledge about the distribution and movements of birds.

To learn more or to get involved in the GBBC visit: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>

Please consider a donation towards our efforts to provide bird guides to local medical facilities for use by their patients.

Reading Recommendations

Pete Quasius recommends: ***Legacy on the Land*** by Audrey and Frank Peterman

Mari Hanley recommends: ***This Moment on Earth*** by John & Theresa Kerry and ***The Weather Makers*** by Tim Flannery

Kelly Williamson recommends: The Owl Pages: <http://www.owlpages.com>

Please consider ASWF's "chapter-only" calendar-year membership to focus your financial support on chapter activities. You do not have to be a resident of Southwest Florida or a member of National Audubon to be a chapter member. Please include our chapter code when renewing or joining: C9ZE330Z.

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Newsletter: Kelly Williamson (editor), Carol Newcomb-Jones, Gerri Reaves
Festivals: Conny Spurfeld **Education:** Rebecca Austin, Tina Csonka, Gene Csonka, Kelly Williamson **Membership:** Maria Quasius **Birdathon:** Toby Clark **Conservation:** Carol Newcomb—Jones, Pete Quasius, Tony Miller, Brad Cornell – Audubon of Florida staff*
Parliamentarian: vacant **Field Trips:** vacant **Hospitality:** vacant

Join us as we discuss local conservation issues, activities, and opportunities. The meetings are at 6pm on the third Thursday of the month at the Eco Living Center in Rutenberg Park, 6490 South Pointe Drive (between Cypress Lake Drive and College Parkway). All our meetings are free and open to the public.

Join Audubon of Southwest Florida online at
<https://www.audubonswfl.org/Membership.htm>