



Audubon
of Southwest Florida

When birds thrive, people prosper

Flyways / October 2026

Join Us For Hawk Watch and Other Field Trips!

Join us for our annual Hawk Watch field trip on October 14, led by elite birder Vince McGrath. This excursion to Sanibel at the peak of migration season never fails to delight.

Whether you're new to birding or a big-List birder, our field trips offer you the best birding and nature locations in Southwest Florida. Better yet, you will get to meet others in our community who love birding and nature and who are engaged in environmental issues in Lee County and beyond.

You'll be guided by one of our esteemed birding volunteers, Vince McGrath or Robin Serne. All chapter-sponsored field trips are free, but donations are always appreciated. Parking or rental fees sometimes apply.



2026-2027 Birding Field Trips

All trips are 8 -10:30 am
Free, All Are Welcome
RSVP at AudubonSWFL.org

2026

Sept 9	Rotary Park, Cape Coral
Oct 14	Sanibel Lighthouse, Hawk Watch
Nov 11	CREW Flint Pen Strand
Dec 26	Barefoot Beach County Preserve Christmas Bird Count

2027

Jan 13	Prairie Pines Preserve
Feb 10	CREW Bird Rookery Swamp
Mar 10	CREW Marsh Trails
Apr 18	Bunche Beach

More information, including times, maps, and sign-up, is available on our website's [Field Trips page](#).

Stop Bird Collisions!



BIRD COLLISION PREVENTION

Over 1 billion birds are killed in glass collisions in the U.S annually.

PREVENTING COLLISIONS IS INEXPENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE.
WWW.STOPBIRDCOLLISIONS.ORG

DIM LIGHTS AT NIGHT

- **Turn Off Unnecessary Lights –**
Switch off outdoor and indoor lights, especially during migration.
- **Use Motion Sensors and Timers –**
Light only when needed.
- **Shield and Direct Lights Downward –**
Prevent light from spilling into the sky.
Draw curtains to dim indoor light.
- **Use Warm, Low-Intensity Lighting –**
Choose bulbs under 3000K to reduce bird disruption.





Fall migration is underway! Countless birds are streaming south through our area, which reaches peak numbers in October. Light pollution, which disorients and attracts birds into urban landscapes, coupled with glass, presents a major hazard to birds year 'round, but particularly now.

Review these reminders above from the [Bird Collision Prevention Alliance](#) and help to ensure that birds complete their migration and rather than become another bird-window collision fatality.

Announcing Updated Schedule for our Shorebird Stewardship Program

Audubon of Southwest Florida

Winter '26 Shorebird Stewarding

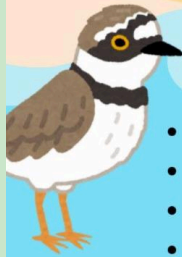
(8:00 - 10:00 AM)

Free!

Oct. 4: Lover's Key SP
Oct. 11: Bunche Beach
Oct. 18: Lover's Key SP
Oct. 25: Bunche Beach

Nov. 1: Lover's Key SP
Nov. 8: Bunche Beach
Nov. 15: Lover's Key SP
Nov. 22: Bunche Beach

Dec. 6: Lover's Key SP
Dec. 13: Bunche Beach
Dec. 20: Lover's Key SP



- **Contribute to conservation science!**
- **Learn shorebird ID!**
- **Meet cool people!**
- **Become a community scientist!**

It's that time of the year, again, where we engage in community science and assist our local shorebirds through the migration seasons. We invite you to join us!

As the Fall temperatures arrive, bringing us cooler and less humid months, so too are our shorebird friends prepared to make their debuts on the Florida coastlines after plenty have bred in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions over the summer. Some of our plover and sandpiper friends will have already arrived in their usual numbers by the time you read this. They'll be our neighbors until the springtime, which then they'll receive environmental cues to head back to their northern breeding grounds for the spring and summer months, but not before they fatten up on marine invertebrates and soak up some Florida sun.

A great way to enjoy their presence is by joining our stewarding sessions!

Each session is completely free and will take place every Sunday beginning October 4th and lasting through the last Sunday in March. Here you can learn how to identify shorebirds, all the while participating in surveys to document their numbers on the beach. This community science data is then fed into the National Audubon Society's efforts to better protect our shorebirds. Remember to bring water, sunscreen, binoculars, and maybe a friend! If you do not have binoculars, some pairs may be available to be borrowed for the day.

Now, please allow this year's Shorebird Stewards to introduce themselves.

Lead Steward, Ani Dues

I'll be your lead steward once again this year! I am currently a senior at FGCU, double majoring in Philosophy and Marine Science. I am working under Ornithologist Dr. Oscar Johnson, to better understand how the windows and light pollution on the FGCU campus impact local and migratory birds. I also do research on herbicide use under Benthic Ecologist Dr. James Douglass and some philosophy work under Epistemologist and Feminist Philosopher Dr. Carolyn Culbertson. I am very excited to be leading this conservation effort again and can't wait to see you all out there!

Assistant Steward Dylan Luu

I will be the assistant steward this season! I am a senior at FGCU studying biology with a minor in chemistry. I took the Ornithology course taught by assistant professor Dr. Oscar Johnson in Fall of 2025 and subsequently fell in love with birds and community science. I joined his lab and currently conduct research on Vireos, while also being one of the learning assistants for his ornithology course. I also conduct cell biology-related medical research under assistant professor Dr. Steven Fiester. I am excited to be the assistant steward and participate with you all in this amazing conservation effort!

You can find all updates, recaps, and relevant shorebird stewarding and chapter information on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) socials, which is also listed below. For direct communication with stewards and to RSVP for shorebird walks, please email leeshorebirdsteward@gmail.com with your name and phone number.

We encourage all birders, regardless of skill level, to participate! Everyone is welcome!



Bluebird Nesting Season Is Over

The 2026 Bluebird nesting season has come to an end. Typically the nesting season begins as early as February and ends in late August.

Our board member Lona Philpot reports that for the Babcock Ranch area, of the twelve boxes our chapter monitored, two boxes were used three times each. Our total successful fledglings count for the season was 22! Two nesting attempts failed, and one egg failed to mature. The causes of the nest failures were unknown, but could have been due to a predator such as a snake.

These nest boxes, designed specifically for the protection of Eastern Bluebirds, help ensure the continued presence of this important native species as they must compete for nesting cavities against aggressive European Starlings and various woodpeckers. Follow us on our website about our chapter's involvement with Bluebird and Purple Martin nesting.



A Word From Audubon Florida On Amendment 3

Drastically lowering property taxes will have a catastrophic impact on Florida's quality of life, water quality, and available wildlife habitat. The Amendment 3 proposal will significantly reduce the budgets of both cities and counties *while* limiting where they can spend the money they do have. Such strains will make it difficult for them to serve communities – and nearly impossible to protect things like parks, stormwater infrastructure, and more. Wildlife habitat in parks

is critical for birds, panthers, and more – and many of these parks are managed and restored at the local level.

Development proposals require county and city staff to review projects – planners, engineers, environmental specialists, and more. Cuts to municipal budgets will lead to cuts in these departments – reviewing rapidly expanding proposals will become impossible. Moreover, water management district budgets will shrink, further shrinking their ability to safeguard water supplies and water quality. Algal blooms could become an every-year occurrence, while restoration will become an impossibility.

Florida is facing ever greater threats to our economy, quality of life, future resilience, and environment. Now is *not* the time to hamstring our ability to meet these challenges.

Vote No on Amendment 3 this November.

A graphic for Audubon Florida's Advocate Newsletter. It features a Great Egret standing on a wooden post against a blue sky and water background. The text is overlaid on a dark blue rectangular area.

 Audubon | FLORIDA

Sign up for
The Advocate Newsletter

Stay up-to-date on the legislative session to learn when you can use your voice for birds!

audubon.org/florida/advocate



**Join or renew
your calendar
year chapter
membership
today**



\$15 student / teacher

\$15 senior (over 65)

\$20 individual

\$30 household

\$100 organization

\$1,000 lifetime

**www.Audubonswfl.org
select Join Us- Membership**

Join Us!

Please support our chapter's work by joining or renewing your membership today on our [website](http://www.Audubonswfl.org). You may also send us a check directly to:

Audubon of Southwest Florida, INC.

Post Office Box 61041

Fort Myers, Florida 33906-1041

Or consider an end-of-year donation to the chapter.

Your support enables us to fulfill our mission of protecting birds and their habitats.

Audubon of Southwest Florida, as an affiliated local chapter (E33) of the National Audubon Society and an all-volunteer 501(c)3 organization, so donations and memberships are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Bookmark Our Website

Visit [our website](#) regularly for chapter news and updates, shorebird stewardship reports, and information about window collisions and other matters of local and national interest. And follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for regular updates as well.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

THE FLORIDA REGISTRATION NUMBER FOR AUDUBON OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA IS CH30193.

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