

Cedar Keys Audubon

CHAPTER CODE: E-53

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Advocating for Birds and Conservation

The Avocet Newsletter

April 2017

Welcome to Cedar Keys Audubon. The chapter encompasses all of Levy County FL. With summer approaching we are suspending our monthly membership meetings starting in May. That does not mean we will not have a presence the next few months. There will be movie nights, a boat trip, bird walks, work days, and maybe some other surprises. When we get a schedule firmed up you will be the first to know.

Friend us on Facebook for updates. Pass this newsletter along to folks you think might be interested in learning, helping, and contributing. An application is attached to this email for those interested in joining.

Happy Birthday to Us. - Before Jacqui Sulek's presentation on "Planting for Birds", Co-presidents Deborah Anderson and Crosby Hunt cut our bird shaped cake to start the celebration of our first year. The artistic treat was provided by our treasurer, Nancy Hanson. A couple of days later we learned that our probationary period is up and we are officially a chapter of National Audubon. We also have our 501(c)3 status so any donations made directly to Cedar Keys Audubon are now tax deductible.



International Migratory Bird Day

Sixty entries from students at Cedar Key school were on display at our booth during the Arts Festival showing some of the birds found in Cedar



Keys National Wildlife Refuge. This was a collaborative effort with the Friends of the Refuges. Maureen Magee did all the planning and leg work. This was a great opportunity to introduce local birds to our young folk in hopes that they will take notice of the abundance around them and work to protect them and their habitat. Each entrant was given a gift packet and an honorary membership.

Arts Festival

With over 400 visitors our booth was the most popular non-profit at the Old Florida Celebration of the Arts in Cedar Key.

There was great interest in the live owls we had both days. Thanks

go to Mike and Staci Hedge from Nature World Wildlife Rescue in Homosassa for taking time on Saturday to bring a screech owl and a great horned owl.

On Sunday, Dr. Dawn Miller, DVM of Newberry had her great horned owl along with two others. One of her goals was to let folks know that trying to care for a rescued animal without the proper training is dangerously unhealthy for the animals. If you find a critter in need of help it is best to call the professionals.

These folks deserve recognition for all they do rescuing birds and other wildlife.

That was just what was going on in the front of the booth. In the back



were fifteen newborn, orphan possums that needed feeding every three hours. They were taken back to Nature World Wildlife Rescue Center and will eventually be released into the wild.

Among the items on display at the Audubon booth, next to the T-shirts, pamphlets, children's art, and the two live owls, was the poster explaining who to call for injured birds. Fortuitous, as well as prophetic, since an injured osprey had been sighted on Atsena Otie by a kayaker who used this information and called it in.

Our own bird rescuer extraordinaire, Doug Maple, borrowed a boat, enlisted a volunteer, and headed out to the island. Initially unable to locate the osprey, Doug asked the kayaker who had called in the sighting to text a picture of where the bird had been seen-which turned out to be about twenty yards from the old dock, in some fairly thick underbrush. Using a net and a towel, Doug was finally able to secure the osprey, load her into a carrier, and motor back to the main marina, where they were met by Janie Veltkamp, a well-known raptor expert and CKA board member.

Janie determined that this osprey - a female - was a good candidate for rehabilitation, having suffered no serious damage to wings or head. Since Staci and Mike Hedge, the Nature World Wildlife Rescue volunteers who were displaying the two owls were heading back to their facility, they transported the osprey, who could then be examined and treated. The Cedar Key Bird Rescue Program, slightly more than a year old, has responded to over thirty calls, rescued numerous injured water fowl, and continues to recruit and train volunteers. Although not all calls result in successful outcomes, the diligence and persistence of the volunteers, make this fledgling program one of Cedar Keys Audubon's most worthwhile endeavors.



Bird Rescue Program -

Volunteers please submit incident reports any way you can if you participate in the program in any way - even if the rescue is not a "success".

If anyone has rescue reports or photos to submit - please send them! Even if the rescue was "unsuccessful" (e.g., if you went looking for a bird but could not find it or could not catch it) we need to keep track. A text, email, or phone call (804-305-6014) to Dr. Barry with the info about the rescue would suffice if the paper form is too inconvenient. She needs the species, type of injury, volunteers that helped, approximate amount of time spent (including transport to rehab, if any), and outcome of rescue (if known). Even if you cannot remember all details, please send anything you can remember about rescue activities.



Shorebird alliance - Attention Kayakers & Boaters!

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) would like your help in spotting nesting shore- and seabirds! While FWC and partners survey most areas of known nesting habitat, it is nearly impossible for us to survey all of the Nature Coast's shoreline. This is where you come in. If you spot any shorebirds exhibiting nesting behavior please report it to the FWC. If it is a site we're not aware of, we'll add it to our monitoring sites for the season. We use this information to make informed management decisions about our imperiled beach nesting birds.

Observing the birds' behavior can help you distinguish summer flocks from breeding pairs/colonies. Below are some nesting behaviors to be on the



lookout for:

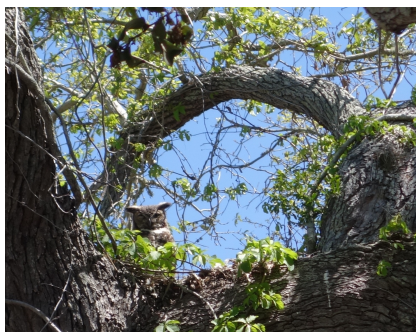
- ☒ 1-2 birds sticking to a particular area
- ☒ Faking an injury (e.g. broken wing display)
- ☒ Alarm calls
- ☒ Engaging in mobbing behavior in the presence of a threat

Remember while you are observing breeding birds to respect their space. If possible, give them a 300ft buffer, and if birds appear agitated, you're too close. Always try to look out for nesting birds before beaching your boat on an island or sandbar.



We are particularly interested in reports of nesting least terns, American oystercatchers, Wilson's plovers, and eastern willets. Email the date, time, location (GPS if possible), and a brief description of what you observed to Megan.Wallrichs@MyFWC.com

Additionally, a joint project between FWC and USFWS is currently underway at the old dock at Atsena Otie Key. A nesting platform with a call broadcast system was built to encourage least tern nesting. If you are near the dock and see any interesting activity (least terns checking it out, human disturbance, or predators perching near), we'd like to know! If you are interested in becoming a member of the Nature Coast's shorebird partnership please email megan.wallrichs@myfwc.com



[Come take a look](#)

Cedar Key has some new residents. These great horned owls are nesting in a heritage oak tree on 3rd Street near E St.



[Bird Feeders](#) - Keep your eyes peeled on the Cemetery Point Park for the new bird feeders that will be there soon. We received a grant from Audubon Florida and the City of Cedar Key has agreed to let us place the feeders. Now we just have to figure out how to keep them from becoming squirrel and raccoon feeders.

Events relating to birds and conservation

[Osprey Survey](#)

April - June

We are conducting our 2nd Annual Cedar Key Osprey Survey of active osprey nests in the Cedar Key area, terminating at the #4 Bridge.

We have a combined total of nearly 50 active and inactive nests this year. We are calling for volunteers to assist in our survey to determine which of these nests are active and producing young April through June 2017.

If you are interested please contact: Janie Veltkamp, Raptor Biologist at janie@bopnw.org or call (208) 582-0797 for more information. This information will help us establish baseline data to determine the health of our local osprey population.





[March for Science](#)

22 April

Use this link to find the closest place. For those of us in Levy County, that is Gainesville at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium (The Swamp).

<https://www.marchforscience.com/satellite-marches/>

[Sanctuaries - Ann Paul Tampa Bay Regional Coordinator for Audubon Florida](#)

Monday April 24 5 p.m.

Cedar Key Library

Ann Paul, Regional Coordinator for Audubon's Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries, will present a brief history and discuss the current programs and projects of the Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries. The Sanctuaries include waterbird nesting and habitat islands in the west central Florida estuaries, including St. Joseph Sound, Clearwater Harbor, Tampa Bay, Sarasota Bay, and north Charlotte Harbor and Estero Bay. Pelicans, herons, egrets, ibis, spoonbills, storks, oystercatchers, gulls, terns, and skimmers nest on these sites. Ann will discuss Sanctuary staff activities to protect the birds from disturbance by boaters and the management of the islands' habitats. Check this web site for more details on the sanctuaries -

<http://fl.audubon.org/conservation/florida-coastal-islands-sanctuaries>



[Nature World Wildlife Rescue Center Work Day](#)

Saturday, April 29

We are looking for volunteers to go to Homosassa to help rebuild some of their cages recently damaged in a windstorm. We need lumber, tools, folks with carpentry skills, and folks who just want to help. If you are able to help us in this worthwhile project, please contact Crosby Hunt at: crosby.hunt@mtsu.edu (615-944-3714). This is an opportunity to see their facility and your assistance will be greatly appreciated by injured wildlife throughout Citrus and Levy County. This is where we take all of the birds we rescue for evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation.

[County Road 347 Friends](#)

May 1 (and the first Monday of each month) - 9 to 10 a.m.

Every little bit helps

Meet at "Adopt-A-Highway" sign near SW 77th Place for gloves, vest, and bags. We never know what we will find. Last month's treasures were an unscratched lottery ticket, a pair of leather flip flops, and a set of Fiskar garden clippers. Be sure to wear appropriate clothes — long pants, good walking shoes or boots, hat, etc.

[Sunset Cruise to Snake Key](#)

May 19

Join us for a Tidewater Tour trip to watch as hundreds of nesting birds come to roost for the night. Connie and Mike O'Dell have agreed to a special rate of \$20 for this Audubon sponsored excursion. We need at least 15 people and no more than 25 so sign up early. Captain Doug Maple will be on board to add to the narrative and bird identifications. Use our cedarkeysaudubon@gmail.com address to let us know you are interested and we will get back to you for your payment. Or, send us a check and a note to PO Box 96, Cedar Key, FL 32625

[Nature's Best 2016 Photography at the Smithsonian](#)

(featuring 2016 Audubon Photography Awards winners)

Washington, D.C.; through September 2017

Take a journey through the wild within the walls of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History by visiting the Nature's Best Photography exhibition. Head to the second floor to see the 82 winning photos, chosen from 25,000 entries. The exhibit includes five winning photographs from the 2016 Audubon Photography Awards, along with video features highlighting the photographers and the stories behind each image. Once you've taken a look at last year's winners, see if you've got the chops to be featured in the gallery next year.

More information: <http://naturalhistory.si.edu/exhibits/natures-best-2016>

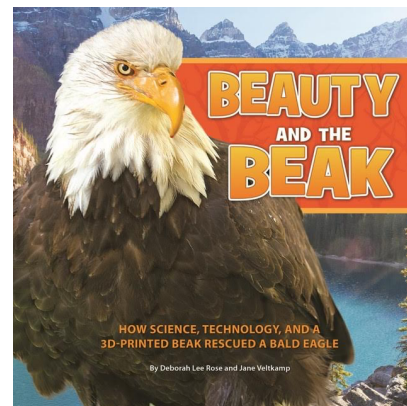
[Author Event](#)

October 26, 2017 by Janie Veltkamp at Cedar Key Elementary School

The Cedar Key middle elementary (3rd-5th graders) students will learn about a new nonfiction children's book entitled Beauty and the Beak published by Persnickety Press, a sister arm of Cornell Lab Publishing Group, due out in August of 2017.

This breathtaking, nonfiction picture book tells the full story of Beauty the bald eagle who was shot, rescued and received a pioneering 3D printed prosthetic beak. The story follows Beauty as a baby eagle using her beak to emerge from her eggshell, through her hunt when she uses her powerful beak to feed herself, to the day she is shot and left helpless. This truly heart-lifting story continues through her rescue, into months of engineering her prosthetic beak and intense hours of surgery, to the moment she takes her first drink with her new beak.

Beauty was featured on Nat Geo WILD's "Unlikely Animal Friends"; the National Wildlife Federation's *Ranger Rick*; as a Green STEM Resource on the NWF Eco Schools website; and on the National Academy of Engineering's EngineerGirl. The Junior Library Guild also selected Beauty and the Beak to their reading list in April 2017.



About the authors: Deborah Lee Rose is an internationally published and award-winning author of 15 children's books. Janie Veltkamp is the raptor biologist that led the team who developed Beauty the Bald Eagle's prosthetic beak. She is the founding director of Birds of Prey North West.

The educational guide to Beauty and the Beak is available to download free at www.birdsofpreynorthwest.org

Numbers to call for

Bird Rescue Help

615 337 3213

352 949 1995

352 262 6665

208 582 0797 (Jan-May only)

Your officers

Co-Presidents	Deborah Anderson & Crosby Hunt	deborah.anderson@mtsu.edu crosby.hunt@mtsu.edu
Vice President	Doug Maple	captaindoug758@gmail.com
Treasurer	Nancy Hanson	0412nancy@live.ca
Secretary	Libby Cagle	libbysart@netscape.net