

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society Meeting

March 10, 2016

Financial Report: Beginning Balance \$ 1964.36
Donation: \$ + 20.00
Room rental fee: \$ - 50.00
Ending Balance: \$ 1934.36

Conservation report: The Florida Bill on fracking died in the Senate with a vote of 10-9. The state will try and bring this up again. Florida's argument is that more energy sources are needed. We must remain vigilant. There are also fracking lawsuits in Louisiana which lost their appeal so now the affected parishes will get them heard by the Supreme court. Louisiana has been producing oil and gas since 1901.

Stetson University hosted a Water/Climate Change Panel last month and discussed the recent Paris Climate Change Accords (COP21).

Clay Henderson is the director for Stetson's new Institute for Water and Environmental Resilience. He organized this panel discussion and stated, "that it's time to start a local discussion about the effects of sea level rise. It is not just a coastal issue; scientists project this will raise water levels in the St. Johns River as well."

The Water Climate Change Panel was made up of 4 experts who spoke of sea level rise and it's impact on Florida. They are trying to draw attention to the consequences of climate change and why our leaders need to address these issues. South Florida officials are organizing to address these issues as they are already seeing the effects of flooding. Areas like the Florida Keys realize that citizens may have to prepare to migrate in the future. Sea Level rise will have huge impacts on the Florida economy and home insurance industry. This cannot be ignored. Please keep calling your representatives and share your concerns.

Field Trips: Lake Apopka Trip: A record amount of 24 people with 11 cars went on this trip. There were 59 species observed including Krider's Hawk, Bald Eagles and Sora.

Audubon Park Trip: Eli Schaperow led us on a nice walk. This park is a water runoff retention area. There were 45 species observed including RT, RS, Cooper's Hawks, Harrier and a Bald Eagle.

The March 18th trip will be at Peacock's Park at MINWR.

There will be an additional trip on April 19th to the Orlando Wetlands Park. This will be a guided buggy ride with a maximum limit of 14 people. Please reserve your space with Don if interested.

Our next meeting at the MDC will be a pot luck dinner and the election of new officers. The date and time are April 14th at 530pm. Please bring a dish. We need volunteers to keep this club going.

Guest Speaker: Gina Kent has been working with Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) since 2000. Whether conducting bird surveys from small planes, boating around the keys, or climbing 100 ft trees, Gina has worked with many Florida specialty birds including Short-tailed hawks, Snail Kites, Reddish Egrets, White crowned Pigeons and others. She is based in FLorida but travels throughout the southeast US and Internationally researching birds. Gina received an undergraduate degree in Wildlife from University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, and her Masters in Biology from Georgia Southern University.

Gina gave a wonderful presentation about the Swallow-tail Kite and the satellite tracking program that provides scientists with more knowledge regarding the challenges of a 5,000 mile one way migration to Brazil. If you want to help, donate, or to report sightings there is more information on their website arcinst.org

Sadly we have been informed that the bird we sponsored has most likely died. Two researchers from the organization were sent to Brazil to see if they could find out what happened to the Swallowtail Kite named "Day". Unfortunately they could not come up with anything concrete, however there was evidence of pesticide spraying in a giant agricultural soybean crop which was the same area where Day's tracking device stopped working.

Some interesting facts about the Swallowtail Kite:

They are a species of special concern previously found in 21 states but now only in parts of 7 states. They primarily nest in FL/GA/SC

Very social and tend to create nesting neighborhoods on the edge of forests.

Tiny feet compared to other raptors.

Spanish moss is used to hold their nest together.

Chicks have a 30% survival rate.

Rat snakes eat their eggs and chicks. Great horned owls and eagles have been known to eat Kites.

Their diet consists of mainly insects, small tree frogs and an occasional anole.

The male Sallow tail Kite will give an anole or ribbon snake food gift to a potential mate.

Their Migration route to Brazil totals 10,000 miles round trip.