

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society Meeting

February 11, 2016

Financial Report: Beginning Balance	\$ 2125.61
Donation:	\$ + 50.00
Room rental fee:	\$ - 50.00
Tomoka Science fair:	\$ -100.00
501c3 license fee:	\$ - 61.25
Ending Balance:	\$ 1964.61

50/50 raffle raised \$30.00 in January
50/50 raffle raised \$26.00 in February

Conservation report:

There is a move afoot that FDEP would like to sell park land and conservation land. Bills look good on the surface but call for self regulation and self monitoring which is usually not a good idea.

The big issue is HB 191 which will allow fracking in Florida and disallow home rule. This is stalled in the senate appropriations committee. They are waiting for scientific testimony. The science is out there from water faucets that have flames to a multitude of earthquakes in Oklahoma. This bill may or may not get out of committee. 63 municipalities including Hillsborough county voted to ban fracking.

Field Trip Report:

The Merritt island field trip was beautiful. Lots of birds and feeding frenzies were observed. In total 80 species were seen. We also went to Blue Heron where 43 species were spotted. Included in our sightings were caracara, yellow bellied sapsuckers and warblers.

February 13th will be a field trip to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive where a lot of fresh water species can be observed. Meet for a 730am departure just south of Dunkin Donuts in Edgewater. Bring lunch, insect spray, and a raincoat.

March 11/12 Orlando field trip in the planning stages.

March meeting speaker will be Gina Kent from ARCI

February 13th is also a Volusia-Flagler Sierra Club Save our Parks Event held at Blue Spring Park starting at 10am. Say NO to hunting, commercial harvesting, timbering, grazing, well fields, and mining activities that will harm the Florida state park system. This is short notice but if you need further information Linda Carlton can be contacted at tess@desoto.net or by phone at 386 740-8368

The Great Backyard Bird Count is this weekend. Count the birds and enter the information at Cornell's website www.birdsource.org

Guest Speaker:

Our very own club President Don Picard will share his and Maureen's expedition to the Galapagos Islands. He shared wonderful photos of the endemic bird species and other wildlife seen in this remote area. The geology is fascinating as these islands are in the area of 4 tectonic plates moving in opposite directions. These Islands are an Ecuadorian National Park and a United Nations World Heritage Site.

Some of the endemic bird species are:

Lava Gull, Swallowtail Gull

Galapagos Flycatcher

White cheeked pintail

Blue footed Booby, red footed booby, and the nasca booby

Also seen were the Giant Tortoises, marine lizard iguanas, and sea lions and fur seals.

Franklin Gulls, Galapagos Hawk and a barn owl were seen. None of the species exhibited any fear so there were many close up photo opportunities.

These unique volcanic islands were discovered in 1535 by accident. Charles Darwin spent 19 days on land. Islands visited are listed below:

Seymour and Rabida both have red sand due to the iron oxide found in lava.

Many sea lions congregate there. 2 frigates were spotted: The Great frigate and the Magnificent Frigate. The birds have no enemies therefore they had no fear of humans.

Blue footed booby birds were spotted. 5 species of mocking birds that are endemic to the particular Island that they are on.

Fernandina is the western most island and the youngest of the islands. It has 5 active volcanos. An uplift in 1954 caused part of island to lift up 15 feet and causing the 6th volcano to fall into the water. Lava lizards and marine iguanas all over. Oyster catcher was spotted there. This is the only nesting site for flightless cormorants.

Equatorial penguins were spotted on the way back to the ship.

Isabella is the most volcanically active. Ropey lava is called Pothoho just like Hawaii. Land iguana was spotted here.

Santiago is the 4th largest island and has the only colony of fur seals. Blue footed booby and a green sea turtle were spotted.

Santa Cruz is the largest island where the Charles Darwin Research Center is located. All vegetation zones are on this island. They have a captive breeding program for the giant tortoise. They take the eggs from other islands to protect them from rats. They are incubated and the turtles are raised for 5 years before returning them to their correct island.

San Cristobal is the oldest island (4.5 million years old) and the most eastern of the islands. It is known for it's wild landscapes.