

## SEVAS Meeting January 9 2020

### Marine Discovery Center

Introduction to new attendees

Special birds from members

Minutes of meetings

Gail Domrowski presented information on upcoming field trips, January 11<sup>th</sup> Merritt Island; January 24<sup>th</sup> Lake Apopka, meet at 7:00 am. She also provided a brief update on the Christmas Bird Count results.

Birds and brews will be January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Marine Discovery Center. Meet at 4. Birding to be followed by brews at then NSB Brewery on Canal Street. February B&B will be early in month and combine with information about great backyard bird count. Birding will be in a neighborhood.

### Treasurer reports

Jan. '20

Income: 12/12 - \$94
12/06 - <del>\$296.88</del>
\$390.88
Checking Bal. \$4,448.88
Pending exp. -\$ 100.00 - rent/ speaker
- \$ 2,500. - P4B contract
Available balance : \$1828.24

### Grant report

FPL grant has been received, planning of garden in process, mapping done, still working on water source. Goal to establish a place for birds and teach folks how to create a place in their yards that is bird friendly. Two other grants still pending. Ed Carlson is taking the lead on the site.

National park service wants SEVAS to work on programs. To volunteer, contact John Pierce.

### Speaker Stephen Kintner, Florida Scrub-jay and Scrub habitat

Mr. Kintner started by describing scrub as hard to define but you know it when you see it. The land at the Lyonia Environmental Center is 98% silica. Habitat is sand pine scrub which is defined as having is myrtle oak, Chapmans oak, sand live oak and sand pine. Naturally fire occurs every 5 to 20 years which would maintain the scrub habitat. Without fire the forest grows too much. Scrub jays need a lot of open space with less than 10 - 20% canopy. In the Lyonia preserve they are using mechanical restoration in place of fire because of the surrounding houses. They use a tractor with a field aerator to grind up the trees combined with a small amount of controlled burning. Within 2 weeks after a fire, vegetation starts to regrow. 90% of scrub habitat in Florida is lost to developers, and the population is fragmented.

There are only 5,000 to 8,000 jays left. They are Florida's only endemic bird. Scrub Jay's never migrate and never move more than 6 miles from their birthplace. Juveniles stay with their parents for a few years, then go hunting for territory. Only the dominant male and female can mate. Young males find a mate from another family and new territory. They never mate within their family. If they fail in nesting, they can go back to their parents' territory. The female will hold "training classes" for the young. Mr. Kintner's group is moving birds to new areas to increase the population and biodiversity. They have found that they must move the whole family or the birds will spend the rest of their lives searching for their families. Every family has a sentinel bird on duty at all times.

Scrub jays will cache 6,000 to 8,000 red acorns during the fall, and they remember where they are stored. They will check on the hidden acorns during the winter. Red color comes from high tannins. Once the insects start to eat the acorns, the birds know that the tannins have leached out and it is time to eat the acorns.

Help scrub jays by joining Jay Watch. Training is provided, and during the last 2 weeks of June the jays are counted.

Mr. Kintner suggested to support the SEVAS pollinator garden project, buy native seeds and make up packets to give out at events. He suggested refrigerating the seeds for 2 weeks before packing to expedite growth.