

THE Skimmer



SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA AUDUBON SOCIETY (SEVAS) NEWSLETTER | PUBLISHED OCT-APRIL

Greta and Birdgirl

Our Champions of Conservation series highlights environmental heroes to inspire us all. *Marsha Cox*

This month's Champions of Conservation segment focuses on two young environmental activists who first made their mark while still children. They are Greta Thunberg from Sweden and Mya-Rose Craig from the UK. Here, briefly, are their stories.

Born in 2003, [Greta Thunberg](#) was 8 years old when she first heard about "climate change" and wondered why no one was doing anything about it. At 15 she began her first campaign of climate activism known as a Climate Strike where she left school and sat outside Swedish Parliament to protest their lack of action. Soon other students followed suit - not only in Sweden but in other countries as well. In September, 2019, when the UN Climate Action summit was taking place in NYC, people across the world joined in [Fridays for Future](#), to support Thunberg's initiative. Greta also addressed the UN delivering her famous "how dare you" speech berating world leaders for "failing young people" by "stealing my dreams and my childhood by your empty words." [Time Magazine](#) named Thunberg Person of the Year that year - the youngest person ever to have received this award.



Greta Thunberg



Mya-Rose Craig

How Dare You!



Ms. Thunberg has become the face of youth climate change activism throughout the world. When asked if there was hope for our she stated, "Once we start to act, hope is everywhere. So instead of looking for hope, look for action". Indeed Greta, indeed.

Our second champion of conservation is British-Bangladeshi activist, author, and environmentalist, [Dr. Mya-Rose Craig](#). A birder since childhood, Craig started blogging as [Birdgirl](#) at 11 ears old, using it as an inclusive platform for ALL in nature. *continued on page 8*



SPECIAL EVENT!

End of Season Celebration Potluck April 16, 5-7:30pm

Jeepers - it's April already and this month ends our regular SEVAS season. We are grateful for our volunteers who make it all happen, and we hope you have enjoyed our programs, trips, and events.

We look forward to October when we start it all up again! Please join us - community is everything and we do make a difference.

"I have learned you are never too small to make a difference."

Greta Thunberg

INSIDE

- Presidents' Post 2
- Monthly Meetings 3
- SEVAS in the Field 3
- Recent Happenings 4
- Upcoming Events 5
- End of Year Celebration 5
- First BioBlitz 6
- Travels with Jane 6
- The BirdWord Puzzle 7
- Become a Member 8

Pioneer Trail Interchange Moves Forward



Permit Approved Despite Judge's Ruling-- Threat to Spruce Creek Conservation Area Remains

Sadly, the I-95/Pioneer Trail Interchange is on again, despite community opposition, and after it was legally deemed "not in the public interest" earlier this year. That January decision had been a temporary win for the environmentally sensitive wet- and woodlands nearby at [Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve](#). Bryon White from [Save Don't Pave Spruce Creek](#) says, "They're going to destroy nearly 70 acres of wetlands."



Our mission: Protecting birds and their habitats through Education, Advocacy, and Action.

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society (SEVAS) was started in the early 1970s as the New Smyrna Beach Audubon Society by a group of neighbors who sought to protect the local birds and wildlife around Smyrna Dunes Park. We are now one of three Audubon Florida chapters in Volusia County, each with its own identity and focus.

BOARD MEMBERS

Presidents Bill and Marsha Cox
president.sevas@gmail.com

Vice-President Vacant

Secretary Jane Talbot

Treasurer Jenifer Russell

Programs Trish Wheeler

Field Trips Don Chalfant

Education Vacant

Conservation Robert Chew

Membership Dean Spears

Webmaster Jane Talbot

Plants for Birds Susan Dayer

Purple Martin Project Richard Fasse

Communications Vacant

Newsletter Editor Liz Payne Merideth

Tabling Events Gail Rogers

Members at Large

Ed Carlson, Traci Hershberger,

John Kendall, Rachel Smith

sevolusiaaudubon.org
president.sevas@gmail.com



Southeast Volusia Audubon
 PO Box 46
 New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170

design and layout
 Liz Payne Merideth
 anthill design



PRESIDENTS' POST

Migrations

Spring happened this week!

Up north we wait for the return of the Red-winged Blackbirds and the music of the Peepers at night before we declare that Spring has arrived, though there might be a few more snow storms to come. In Florida it's the songbird migration and the return of the oak catkins.

Migration means many things. For birds it is finding a place to nest, following the food, doing what they are programmed to do. For snowbirds it's finding cooler climates or "going home." Here at SEVAS many of our members and friends will migrate soon, so our regular events are put on hold until October. But the work of our projects continues. Our bird-friendly gardens need maintenance, and the Purple Martin gourds need to come down and be stored. Many wonderful members fill these roles, and we are thankful for our volunteers who handle this work over the summer. So, for those who stay, keep cool and hydrated! Enjoy the cooler mornings and the glorious sunsets. We snowbirds will be back soon.

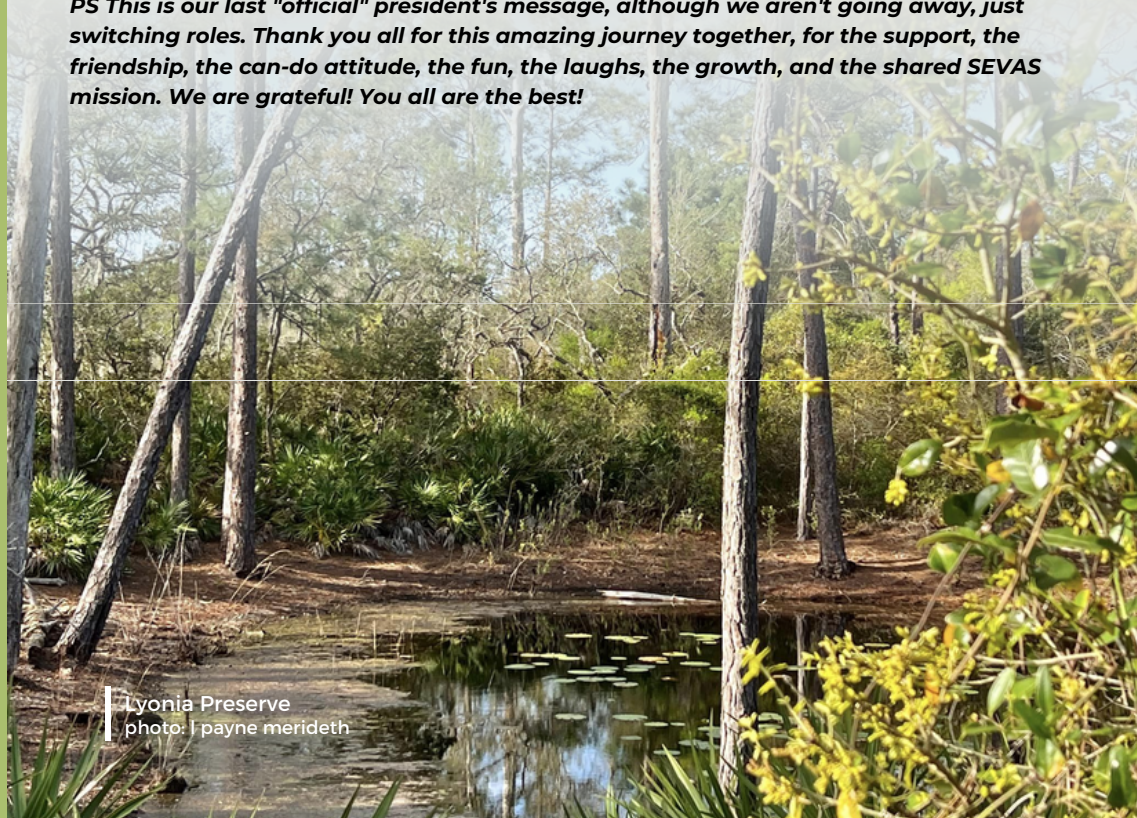
Don't miss the Potluck! We have several other April outings before we close out the season, and in fact, SEVAS is already planning our fall programs for October. There are grants being written, gardens being planned, programs being discussed, new birding opportunities on the horizon and gatherings to build community. So snowbirds, stay tuned and stay connected. Be well, enjoy cooler birding and safe travels until we reconvene.

Bill & Marsha Cox
president.sevas@gmail.com

PS This is our last "official" president's message, although we aren't going away, just switching roles. Thank you all for this amazing journey together, for the support, the friendship, the can-do attitude, the fun, the laughs, the growth, and the shared SEVAS mission. We are grateful! You all are the best!



Swallow-tailed Kite
 photo: cephas



Tyonia Preserve
 photo: Liz Payne Merideth

Monthly Meetings

Next Season's dates on FB soon - stay tuned!



Palm Warbler

Last Meeting is April 16
End of Year Celebration Potluck
See details on page 5.

October-April, SEVAS meets at 7PM on the 2nd Thursday of the month in NSB at the Marine Discovery Center. We are honored to have speakers who touch on myriad topics close to our hearts. Open to everyone - please join us!

Young activists are changing the conversation on the climate crisis! According to this United Nations page, [#YouthStats: Environment and Climate Change:](#)

"Youth constitute the majority of the population in many countries and have an increasingly strong social and environmental awareness"

"About 73% of surveyed youth (worldwide) say they currently feel the effects of climate change"

"89% of youth respondents say that young people can make a difference on climate change"

"Close to half a million youth around the world have taken action on climate change"

Turn, Turn, Turn Answers

Thanks all, it's good to get responses.

Last month we asked about the song "Turn, Turn, Turn", and you answered.

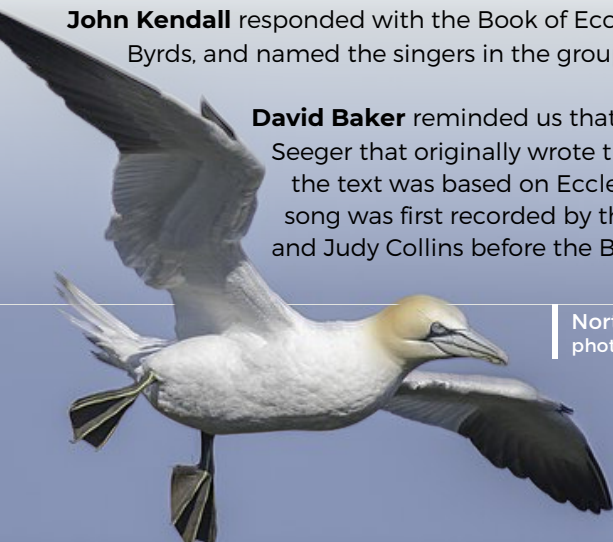
Jacqui Sulek from Florida Audubon was first to respond that The Byrds was the group that recorded the hit and the original text is from the Book of Ecclesiastes.



John Kendall responded with the Book of Ecclesiastes, The Byrds, and named the singers in the group.

David Baker reminded us that it was Pete Seeger that originally wrote the song in 1959, the text was based on Ecclesiastes and the song was first recorded by the Limelighters and Judy Collins before the Byrds in 1965!

Northern Gannet
 photo: c legg



SEVAS in the Field

OUTINGS & TRIPS

Stay up to date!

Check our [Facebook](#) and [MeetUp](#) pages for changes, additions, or cancellations.

TUESDAY MORNING BIRDERS

TMB walks are essentially leaderless, but several experienced birders are always available to help. Meet at the site at 8am and plan to spend about two hours:

April 2: Sugar Mill Botanical Gardens, Port Orange

April 9: El Dora, Canaveral National Seashore

April 16: Indian River Lagoon Preserve, Beachside, NSB

BIRDS & BREWS

Third Thursday of the month. B&B walks provide an end-of-day birding jaunt and a libation of choice at a local pub or restaurant. We bird different sites, and enjoy time to relax and connect afterwards.

April 18 5:30pm: Lighthouse Point Park and Jetty

5000 S Atlantic Ave, Ponce Inlet. After birding, we'll gather for libations at Our Deck Down Under, 78 Dunlawton Ave. Port Orange.

FIELD TRIPS

SEVAS field trips are longer outings to farther-out areas. Overnights will have additional costs. We usually meet locally to carpool. Stay tuned!

Complete for the Season.

CANAVERAL WALKS

CNS Walks are led by a SEVAS member on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month, through April 12. Meet at the Apollo Visitor Center at 8am. Walks are free, though CNS park entry fees are required unless you have a pass.

April 12 8am: Apollo Visitor Center LAST OF THE SEASON!

SEVAS birding events are free and open to all. Some locations require an entrance fee, but most do not.

Amazon Wish List

We now have a "wish list" of needed items if you'd like to contribute. Right now, we need to update and stabilize our table for community outreach events, so we need table cloths, hangers for our posters, and wind weights to secure our tent. We'll add items as we need, so check our Wish List often! We appreciate you!

Recent Happenings

Lyonia Nature Preserve EcoBuggy Tour! Thank You Volusia County

Twenty one SEVAS friends spent the morning on a Volusia County eco-buggy tour of the [Lyonia Nature Preserve](#)!



Thanks to our VC host Tommy Nordmann who gave us the scoop about the jays, the preserve, and the challenges they face.

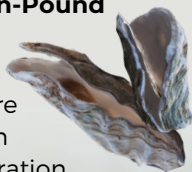
The weather was perfect to see what was in bloom, and yes, we saw a sentinel Florida Scrub Jay.

Delighted to have new folks who attended their first SEVAS outing! Welcome!



MDC's Shuck & Share Shoreline Restoration Reaches Million-Pound Milestone!

Organizers say they are even more focused on future shoreline restoration possibilities throughout the state. More on [Shuck & Share here](#).



SEVAS Inspires Kids at MDC's Spring Break Adventure Camp



Thanks to SEVAS, bird life and plants were hot topics last month at Marine Discovery Center's popular [Spring Break Adventure Camp](#).

Joyce Riddell, Richard Fasse, and Susan Dayer volunteered to inspire two camp groups and spoke to the youngsters about Plants 4 Birds amidst the gardens and plantings. They watched and learned about the Purple Martin colony, and scoped out the new bluebird houses.

The older group used binoculars to look at a Loggerhead Shrike in a tree!

March Birds & Brew Turns Valuable to Researchers

Even a Birds & Brew gathering can be a citizen science event. We spotted a young banded Herring Gull, and Kim Ramos reported the sighting. Here's the response:



NOT 47E
photo: c matthews

This gull is part of a long term research project to map out their migration routes, wintering areas and change in plumage over time. When it was banded at a large colony near Sandusky, Ohio it was about 4 weeks old. 47E was seen at Daytona Beach on 1-24-24 and it looks like it will be spending some time on the coast.

The young spend their first 2 years traveling all over the map and by the 3rd year they start looking for an area to nest. Only 53% come back to the colony where they were raised.

By chance did you get a picture of this gull? If it is seen again later we can check how the plumage has changed over time. Thanks again for being a valuable part of this research.

Bruce Buckingham
Lake Erie Herring Gull Researcher



The SEVAS **End of Year Celebration Potluck** is upon us! Join us in NSB at the Marine Discovery Center for a casual evening of fun, kudos, and community.

We'll kick it off at 5PM sharp under the Purple Martin Colony with the weekly lowering of the gourds and nest check. Please be prompt, the birds are used to this routine, and it doesn't take long but it's a fascinating way to increase your knowledge and enjoyment of our Martins.

Next, we'll tour the SEVAS Demonstration Garden and then head across the lawn for an informal shared meal. Expect friends, food, a recap of our 2024 season, brief presentations about our accomplishments, plus we'll elect officers, and, there may be awards! This is a potluck so bring a dish to pass.

[Sign up here](#) so we can plan. Dessert, tea, lemonade will be provided.



Speaking with the Land at the Atlantic Arts Center
April 27 1-5PM ACA Main Campus & Gallery
 1414 Art Center Ave NSB

Join ACA and [Stetson University Institute for Water and Environmental Resilience](#) for a fun, educational event on the 69 acres surrounding the [Atlantic Center for the Arts](#). In the spirit of Doc Leeper, this event will celebrate these unique lands with hands-on creative family activities of poetry, drawings, and paintings. Listen to enchanting music, all inspired by the land.. Listen to enchanting music, all inspired by the land. More info: [Speaking with the Land](#).

Upcoming Events

Local P4B Gardens Are Thriving Thanks to Volunteers

Weeding work at the garden this morning. Thanks everyone! Also a pre-shoutout to [Lindley's Nursery](#) for fixing the irrigation at Chisolm Elementary soon.

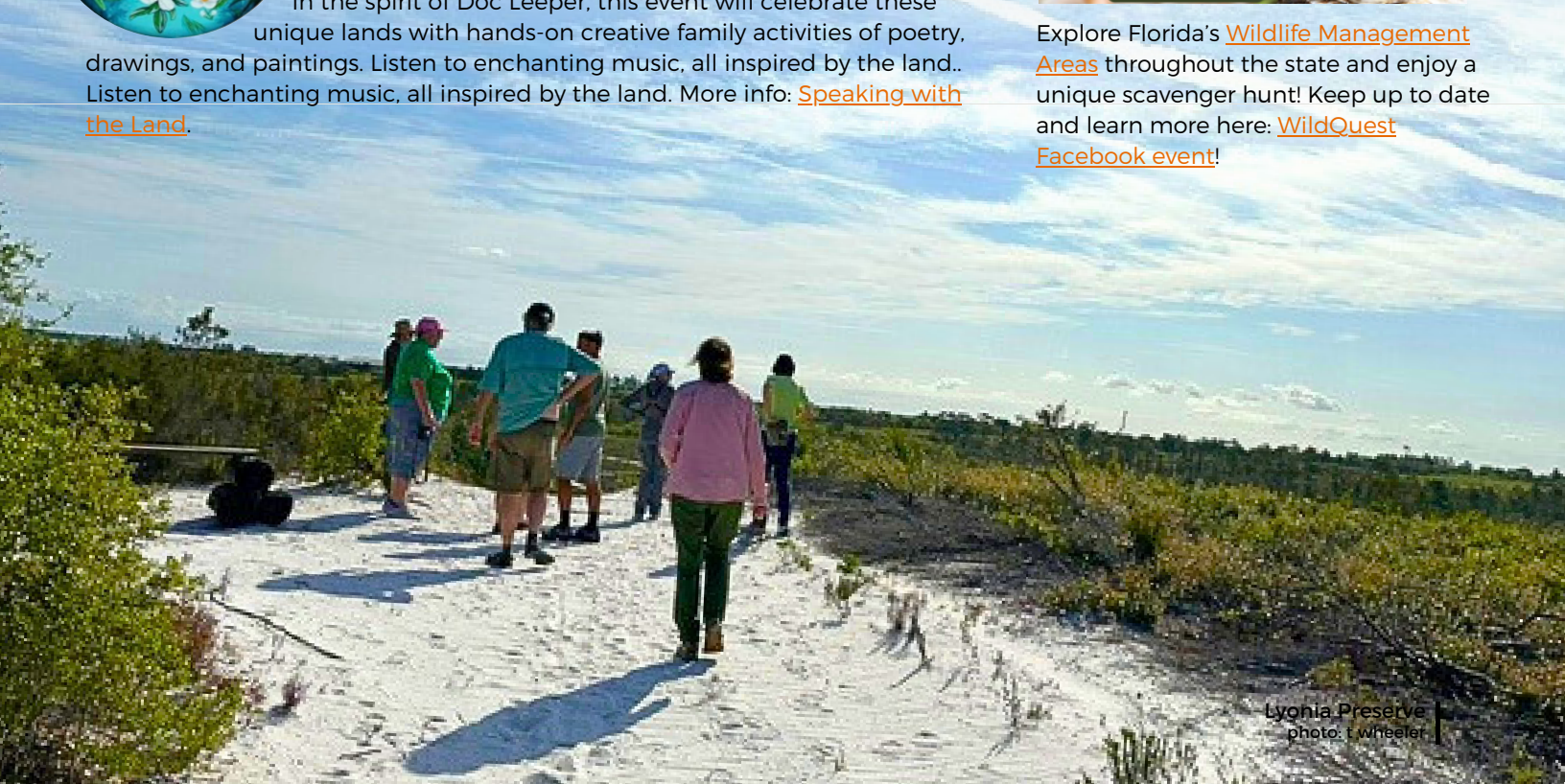


FWC hosts annual 2024 Florida WildQuest April 27 - May 5

Before it gets too, too hot, here's a great way to discover some of Florida's best spots to enjoy the outdoors see wildlife.



Explore Florida's [Wildlife Management Areas](#) throughout the state and enjoy a unique scavenger hunt! Keep up to date and learn more here: [WildQuest Facebook event!](#)



First BioBlitz a Success

Don Chalfant

SEVAS Surveys the Indian River Lagoon Preserve (IRLP)

On March 7, fourteen eager naturalists conducted our first ever SEVAS BioBlitz. Just what is a BioBlitz, you ask? It's an effort to find and identify as many biological species as possible in a certain area during a set amount of time. IRLP was the chosen area, the time was pre-sunrise to noon, and what a elevating time it was!



Three souls set up moth attracting sheets and lights at 04:00, and others arrived throughout the morning. Several were first-timers.

The day was surprising, educational, exhausting, thrilling, exciting — how 'bout all of the above. Surprising to find as many species as we did. Educational to find species we'd never seen before (in fact, never even heard of). Exhausting to be very active from pre-sunrise to noon. Thrilling and exciting to be part of such an endeavor.

The event was organized by SEVAS Field Trip Coordinator Don Chalfant and timed to coincide with two of his ace all-round naturalist friends visiting from Michigan, Susan and Michael Kielb. Who but Susan could find a spider and a caterpillar—before sunrise!

The most enchanting find of the day was Susan's discovery of a Bifurcate Trashline Orbweaver Spider. The webs of these spiders are more conspicuous than the creatures themselves. These spiders spin small, orbs that they decorate with a line of debris. This debris includes dry husks of insects they've consumed, mixed with other detritus. This "trash" line is wrapped loosely with silk and usually forms a straight line within the web. The spider often rests at the hub of her web, camouflaged indeed.



Trashline Orbweaver
photo: s kielb

Michael's interest and expertise in lichens added thirteen lichens to our list and he and Susan found over twenty miscellaneous insect species, many of which some of us had never seen! We will definitely schedule another BioBlitz next season.

Special thanks to the Kielb's, and also to Susan, Sheryl, Paula, and others who helped make this a special event. **Did I mention that we identified 140 species of plants and animals?**

Travels with Jane

Jane Talbot

Cactus and Canyons and Hummers, Oh My!

In March I traveled to southeastern Arizona. A truly wonderful adventure - this birding mecca did not disappoint. I even added 30 new species to my life list! One morning started with seven new birds at Madera Canyon, and after we continued the short trek to Patagonia, I spotted an additional seven species at the celebrated [Paton House!](#)

Rivoli's Hummingbird
photo: wildreturn



The [Tucson Audubon](#) volunteer there was particularly keen, and got me on more locals, including Green-tailed Towhee, Canyon Towhee, and Inca Dove.

Violet-crowned Hummingbird
photo: wildreturn

I delighted in Arizona's special birds, such as the Rivoli's (formerly Magnificent) Hummingbird, who flashed a spectacular (dare I say magnificent?) green gorget and the Violet-crowned Hummingbird with that bright purple hat. The clown-like Acorn Woodpecker was also a personal favorite. They drill small holes in trees, then fill each one with a single acorn. They adjust, turn, and reposition each acorn to ensure security. I also saw Gila, Ladder-backed and Arizona Woodpeckers.

Acorn Woodpecker
photo: I tanner



Birding travel is a great way to see the backroads up close, and add birds to your life list. Even something as common as those parking lot grackles can surprise: Arizona grackles are Great-tailed while Florida are Boat-tailed and Common- never assume, right?

The timing worked out and I was lucky to join a walk led by [Friends of the San Pedro River](#), where I learned how to distinguish Meadowlarks (Chihuahuan have more white on the tail, the Western Meadowlark has less). The leaders also pointed out a Mexican Duck, which I would have mistaken for our Mottled Duck here in Florida.

My advice for anyone birding a new area is ... do your research! Ask friends who are familiar with the locale (thanks Liz and Robert!), look for regional Audubon chapters, and watch for locally led bird walks. Check eBird for hotspots, and seek out local publications such as [Finding Birds in Southeast Arizona](#). These things can make for a more productive and enjoyable trip. We loved Arizona and plan to return in November!

(above) Saguaro Cactus blooms
photo: r baranow

Cave Creek Canyon, AZ
photo: slowbirdr



Thank You SEVAS Volunteers!

The BirdWord Puzzle

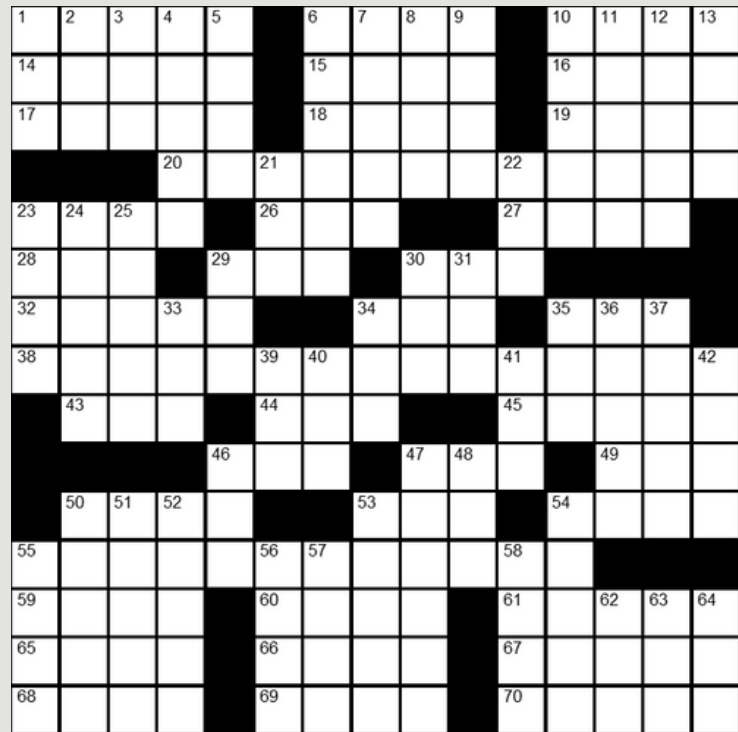
Robert Merideth

Get Reddy!

**theme word clues
answers can be found [online here](#)

Across

1. One of the Shearwaters
6. Eurasian diving duck
10. Stilt Sandpiper (bird code)
14. Tooth-billed Pigeon is this island nation's national bird
15. Townsend's Solitaire (bird code)
16. Helper at the Dutton Ranch
17. *Lorem* ____
18. Canyon comeback
19. Cactus Wren state (abbr.)
- **20. Shorebird with female in brighter breeding plumage (tomato-juice red) than male and pointed yellow bill with dark tip
23. Rental units (abbr.)
26. Watchdog for clean air and water, in brief
27. Cape May birder Dunne
28. ____ alai
29. Opposite west southwest
30. USDA's Cons. Reserve Prog.
32. *Ohio Breeding Bird* ____
34. ____ tai
35. Loud thud
- **38. Small Southwestern songbird that some might say looks a bit "embarrassed"
43. Western Meadowlark is this state's state bird (abbr.)
44. Ponce Inlet's Marine Science Center (abbr.)
45. Southwestern woodpecker
46. Baking meas.
47. Pigs' digs
49. Not square
50. Pileated Woodpecker (bird code)
53. North Atlantic's Great ____ (now extinct)
54. Trail
- **55. REVI (reverse bird code)
59. Purple smoothie ingredient
60. Six in Havana
61. Halawi and Medjool
65. Danish physicist Niels ____
66. Tyrrhenian and Caribbean
67. Fla. Keys coral reef restoration found.
68. Those in Puerto Rico
69. Department in Normandy
70. Between two and four



Robert Merideth

Down

1. Forensic drama on CBS
2. Old-age pensioner, in brief
3. Real estate ad abbr.
4. Goes with truly
5. Identical
6. ____ Eagle of Central Asia
7. Coffee order
8. Oregon-based nutrition data & research service
9. Winter wear
10. Portion
11. Fortuneteller's card
12. Marsh bird
13. Axlike tool
21. Animal house
22. Merlin or iphone eBird, e.g.
23. When a door's not a door it's this
24. ____ Center for Hummingbirds in Patagonia, AZ
25. Sao Paulo has one
29. Endangered Species Act, briefly
30. Crow's call
31. ____ Lagartos Biosphere Reserve on the Yucutan coast, a flamingo enclave
33. Tyndall or MacDill in Florida
34. NSB's Marine Discovery Center (abbr.)
35. Broadcaster of *The Life of Birds*
36. Greeting heard while birding for Nene
37. Worth
39. Metric ruler units, for short
40. Clairvoyance, e.g.
41. Manta ____
42. Red-necked Phalarope (bird code)
46. Cracker Jack bonus
47. Credit ____
48. Joint relief, in brief
50. River to the Rio Grande
51. Mountain Bluebird state
52. Dams in streams
53. For the birds?
54. Take illegally
55. Broccoli ____ (leafy vegetable)
56. Earlier brand for ExxonMobil
57. Does and bucks
58. Cut, maybe
62. ____ Heels of UNC
63. Before, in poetry
64. Envision



Greta and BirdGirl

Champions of Conservation from page 1

Another young, international Force of Nature, she says, "Birdwatching has never felt like a hobby: it's not a pastime I can pick up and put down but a thread running through the pattern of my life, so tightly woven that there's no way of pulling it free and leaving the rest of my life intact."

Unsurprisingly, Ms. Craig was nominated Blogger of the Year at 13.

This passion led her to bird the globe and deepen her bond with the natural world. At 14, she noticed that birding lacked people of color, so she founded a non-profit organization to campaign for equal access to nature for all.

[Black2Nature](#) is a progressive Visible Minority Ethnic (VME)-led group that runs nature camps and activities to make the nature conservation and environmental sectors ethnically diverse. B2N also champions race equality in nature conferences and campaigns worldwide.

In 2019 she was nominated for Conservationist of the Year (Greta Thunberg won), and speaks alongside David Attenborough and others in the conservation arena. Today at 21 Mya-Rose Craig remains an active birder, researcher, writer, blogger and speaker for Nature as she continues to advocate for birds and the environment.

Her her moving memoir [Birdgirl](#) is a wonderful read.



Somerset Maugham Award winner
photo: creative commons



2019 Santa Rosa Climate Strike
photo: creative commons

In 2023 Audubon Florida named SEVAS "Small Chapter of the Year".

Your dues are the foundation for continued success of this totally volunteer organization, and we appreciate it.

Please make it a priority to keep current with your annual dues, gifts and participation

so we can continue to make a difference for our feathered friends and our environment. Thank you!

Yes! BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

I want to protect and conserve habitat and wildlife in Volusia County.

Annual Memberships benefit you, the birds and our shared environments.

Join here, or securely ONLINE at sevolusiaaudubon.org.

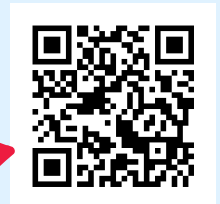
Single \$20 Family \$25

Complete this form, make your check out to **SEVAS**, and mail to:

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society

PO Box 46 New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170

Scan this code!



Your membership includes our digital newsletter, *The Skimmer*, October to April, as well as member emails with announcements and event reminders.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Year-round resident Snowbird Volunteer I'd like to add an additional contribution \$ _____