



# The Skimmer

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society, Inc.

Vol. 32 - No.1

October, 2006

## October Meeting

Tuesday, October 4 - 7 P.M.

Linda Young, Director of the Clean Water Network of Florida, will speak on the challenges that citizens face today in protecting their communities' clean water.

Linda Young has been Director for the Clean Water Network of Florida since 1994. The Clean Water Network of Florida is a Coalition of more than 155 groups that are committed to full implementation, enforcement and strengthening of the Clean Water Act and other safeguards for our water resources. Ms. Young holds a B.A. in Communication Arts/Journalism and a M.A. in Political Science.

In 1989, she founded a statewide environmental newspaper called the Pro Earth Times. Ms. Young has since founded several of the most effective environmental organizations in the southeastern United States.

As a fifth generation Floridian, Linda has strong protective instincts about Florida's waters, and as a mother of three children, has serious concerns about the public health effects of the many toxic chemicals that Floridians are being exposed to in fish and drinking water.

Linda's environmental work for the past seventeen years has been focused on helping citizens to participate in decision-making processes, strengthening Florida's water quality standards, and fighting for more stringent permits for large polluters such as paper mills, chemical plants, and sewage treatment plants.

Linda has successfully challenged and brought enforcement actions against the Florida DEP and the U.S. EPA as well as large polluters like the Florida dairy industry, International Paper Company, Monsanto Chemical Company, Buckeye Pulp Mill, St. Joe Development Company and others.

Come join us for this, our first, meeting of the new season. Why not bring a friend? As always, our meetings are free and open to the public.

Enjoy what we're sure will be a motivational and informative presentation by an expert in the field.

Only after the last tree has been cut down, only after the last river has been poisoned, only after the last fish has been caught, only then you will find out that money cannot be eaten.

—Cree Indian Prophecy

## Skimming

This 'n' That

### Help Wanted

We're looking for a little help this year, some input from the members. If you have an idea for a guest speaker, a pet environmental project or an idea for a field trip let us know. Either bring it up from the floor during the business meeting or let the appropriate committee chair person know after the meeting. You can mail ideas to the address on this newsletter or email (or phone) the chairperson who would need to know. Officers and Committee chairs are listed on the last page

### Field Trip Idea

Gail Domroski, who heads up the field trips, has been contemplating an additional monthly (or bi-monthly) local-area field trip along with our regularly scheduled *first-Saturday-after-the-meeting* field trips. The local area field trip would be confined to, well . . . the local area, to see birds that are prevalent there. We could visit Canaveral National Seashore, New Smyrna Dunes Park, Spruce Creek Park in Port Orange and even the Volusia county landfill to name just a few. Finishing the mini-trip with lunch at a local restaurant could be an option. Let her know what you think of the idea.

### The Skimmer Places

Your newsletter, The Skimmer, placed third in the Under-200-Chapter Member category in this year's Audubon Biennial Newsletter Contest. Noted by the judges were the informative articles by many contributors.

We invite you to be a contributor to this award-winning publication. We'd love to print articles by the occasional contributor or if you have an idea for a monthly column, please let us know. Postal mail: Southeast Volusia Audubon Society, The Skimmer, PO Box 46, New Smyrna Beach, Fl. 32170 —Email [the.skimmer@yahoo.com](mailto:the.skimmer@yahoo.com)

It doesn't have to be a column or an article either. A letter would be welcome.

—Gil Miller



## EcoSpun™ Bags

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## Conservation Notes

### Power from the Sky



High in the heavens, Astronauts have been space walking to install new solar photoelectric (PV) panels on the International Space Station. Down here on earth in Volusia County, skilled workers have been installing solar panels on Deltona and New Smyrna Beach homes. After systems are installed, electric power from the sky is free!

Renewed interest and activity with solar energy has been stimulated by rebates offered in the Florida energy bill passed earlier this year. The legislation provides rebates for solar systems installed after June 30 of this year. Amounts are:

- For solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, \$4 per watt of capacity, limited to \$20,000 for residential systems and \$100,000 for commercial or public buildings.
- \$100 for a solar thermal swimming pool or sauna heater.
- \$500 for a residential solar water heating system.
- Rebates for solar water heating systems on commercial properties equal to \$15 per BTU (British Thermal Unit, a measure of heat) per day, with a maximum of \$5,000.

To fund these rebates the legislature appropriated a modest \$2.5 million. (I'm tempted to call it a measly sum.) The best thing that could happen is for the fund to be swiftly depleted. That would signal the next governor and the legislature that Floridians really do want solar and understand the need for it.

As soon as the \$2.5 million has been expended, new solar rebates would be first in line for funding next year.

After the fall elections we need to prod and challenge our new governor and the legislature to come up with a really bold and aggressive solar energy support bill.

Money is being lavished on space adventures, not only by government, but by private citizens as well. Perhaps this focus on outer space keeps us from paying enough attention to the damage we are inflicting upon planet earth.

One US citizen of Iranian birth is splurging about \$20 million to blast off in a Russian Soyuz spacecraft to visit the International Space Station for a few days. Anousheh Ansari will be the first woman in space as a tourist astronaut. Congratulations to her! In addition to undergoing rigorous pre-flight physical training, Mrs. Ansari has been learning Russian, her fourth language after English, French and her native Farsi. She and her husband, Hamid Ansari founded their own company, Telecom Technologies, and after it flourished, they sold it for hundreds of millions of dollars.

It would indeed be comforting to think that our wealthy state of Florida could afford to spend at least twice as much or more on solar energy as one US citizen is spending to become a space tourist.

Solar energy is Florida's best approach to help solve three critical problems: First and foremost is the need to restrain global heating, that if ignored will ultimately drown coastal Florida. Next, clean solar energy will help to maintain healthy air quality, under threat from existing and proposed new coal power plants. Third, but still important, solar energy helps to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and rising energy prices. As a bonus, expanding solar technology will create many new

high-paying jobs – jobs that cannot be farmed out overseas.

Meanwhile nature has been issuing repeated warnings that she is getting fed up with humans turning up her personal thermostat. Polar ice is melting ever faster and the weather is increasingly unruly and violent. Climate scientists such as James Hansen of NASA warn that we have perhaps a decade in which to begin drastic greenhouse emission cuts or be destined for an unavoidable climate catastrophe.

It would be great if people would recognize that all other current problems – terrorism, the cost of medical care and drugs, affordable housing, Iraq, illegal immigration and insurance costs, would all become immaterial if we fail to deal with global heating and sea level rise.

Florida should look at what other governments are doing to push solar energy. You cannot build a new house in Northern Ireland, effective April '08, without solar power, or in Spain today without solar panels. California, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and the Canadian Province of Ontario, all have very effective support programs and requirements for renewable energy.

We should be so smart.

—Lee Bidgood

## From the Field

We're kicking off this season's field trip schedule with a good one.

We'll start a little earlier (**7:30 A.M.**) than usual from Market Place Shopping Center,—U S 1 & 442 Edgewater. Meet between Dunkin Donuts & Chick-Fil-A—and travel south (about 90 mins) to Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay, Brevard County.

Turkey Creek (a Florida Audubon owned Sanctuary) is a good place to see **migrating warblers**. There is a 1/4-mile boardwalk through Sandpine Scrub and Hammock to Turkey Creek. Also there's a 1/2-mile grassy jogging trail that's good habitat for **Grosbeaks & Buntings**.

As is our practice, we'll finish off the trip with a picnic so don't forget to bring your lunch, drinks and ,the always important, *bug spray*.

—Gail Domroski

## Day Trips

*Or maybe two-day trips. . .*

The Florida Museum of Natural History, home of the award-winning Butterfly Rainforest exhibit, will be the host of the inaugural Florida Butterfly Festival October 14-15, 2006. Enjoy this destination festival which will feature lectures by world-renowned naturalists, expertly guided field trips, specialty vendors and a photography contest.

For more information visit [www.flmnh.ufl.edu/butterflyfest](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/butterflyfest) or call (352) 846-2000 x. 200.

## Fall Migration

Thanks to Lee & Catherine Bidgood, Charlie & Maritta Buchy, Helge Carlson, Roger & Andrea Peterson, Roger Cutler, Kathy Booth, Virginia Heidenreich, Jim & Helen Farrell, Jaynee Morgan and Ron Dreggors, for helping with this year's Fall Migration count. We were able to cover all areas from the beach to Lake Ashby and from Spruce Creek South to the Brevard County line.

We counted 87 species and saw over 6000 individual birds. Highlights include Piping Plovers, Several Eagles, Eastern Meadowlarks, Baltimore Orioles, Eastern Bluebirds, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and a Limpkin at lake Ashby.

—Richard & Gail Domroski



Scrub jay - Field trip to Lyonia Preserve

photo: Gil Miller

## Backyard Birding

### *Birds to look for in SE Volusia*

Over the past 2 weeks I have seen Baltimore Orioles, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Chipping Sparrow, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Prairie, Yellow, Black-throated Blue, American Redstart, Northern Parula, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow-throated Warblers in my back yard. Painted and Indigo Buntings should be showing up soon. Look for these birds and others now in your back yard or neighborhood parks and watch overhead for the beautiful Barn Swallows flying South.

Along our beaches look for Piping, Wilson's, Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plovers along with Sanderling, other small sandpipers, Red Knots, Terns, Gulls, Skimmers and Willets.

Many shorebirds have returned to our beaches, some just stopping to rest and eat while migrating South and others that will spend the winter with us. A Masked Booby has been seen on and around Disappearing Island near Ponce Inlet so you just never know what you might see.

—Gail Domroski

## Books for Kids Project

Last fall our Audubon chapter approved the donation of \$350 each to two area elementary school media centers: Coronado Beach and Burns-Oak Hill. A list of 108 books (and one video) appropriate for young readers was compiled by Donnadine Miller. The titles focused on birds, recycling, various habitats and environments, animal-plant communities, and ecology.

Each of the media specialists selected 23 books; Burns-Oak Hill also purchased the Florida bird identification video. Below is a sample of the titles ordered.

The Boy Who Drew Birds (John James Audubon)  
 Everglades Forever  
 The Ozone Layer  
 Hurricanes  
 Water Pollution  
 Birds and Their Nests  
 Endangered Animals  
 Tropical Rain Forest

We received enthusiastic "thank you" from both media specialists.

This is a great way to increase media center collections and to get quality materials that promote Audubon issues into the hands of children. In the coming year, we plan to offer two additional elementary schools in our area the same donation program.

—Donnadine Miller

## Bird Rescue Center

The Bird Rescue Center meets EVERY SECOND MONDAY each month - at 7:00 in the evening - at Venetian Villas recreation room - on Quai Assisi - off of the North Causeway in New Smyrna Beach.

If you wish to become a BRC volunteer, please send me an email at [plamborn@cfl.rr.com](mailto:plamborn@cfl.rr.com) or phone 386-423-1434

## New Members

We welcome these fine folks who have recently joined our ranks: Brenda Perry, Margaret Mulvaney, Dorothy Livingston, Sonya Jarret, Barbara Crego, Cherie Bentley, Karen Emerson, Emily Gross, Maxine Jefferson, Barbara Heizmann, Patrick Goodwin.

We're looking forward to meeting you in person at the monthly meetings and hope you'll participate in the excellent field trips.

SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 46  
New Smyrna Beach, FL. 32170



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**MISSION STATEMENT: THE SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA AUDUBON SOCIETY PROMOTES THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITAT THROUGH EDUCATION AND ACTIVISM.**

## Officers & Chairs



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Education/Outreach: Vacant		
Ways & Means: Vacant		
Hospitality: Vacant		

## Meetings

Meetings Meetings are held the 1st Wednesdays  
**Oct. thru March**

Edgewater Library 103 Indian River Blvd. 7: P.M.  
Smoke-free environment. Refreshments are served.  
Plenty of parking. Public welcome.

**October 4, 7 P.M.**

Speaker: **Linda Young, Director**  
**Clean Water Network of Florida, Inc.**

Programs & Field trips subject to change.

## Field Trips

Field trips begin at 8:00 A.M. unless otherwise noted\*. Meet in the Market Square parking lot Edgewater, Ridgewood Ave. & 442, between Dunkin Donuts & Chik-Fil-A.

Bring lunch & drinks. Don't forget bug-spray!

**Oct. 7 - Turkey Creek Sanctuary**

**\*7:30 A.M.** Start for this trip.

Questions? Contact Gail Domroski 428-0447

Audubon members and guests are all welcome.