



The eSkimmer

Southeast Volusia Audubon Society, Inc.

Issue Vol. III- No. 5

September , 2008

The Southeast Volusia Audubon Society promotes the protection of birds, other wildlife and their habitat through education and activism.

Prez Sez

Plan For An Exciting New Season

Welcome to the first edition of the 2008-2009 season's eSkimmer. Hopefully this will get you thinking about the first meeting on the 1st of October. We have a new set of programs and field trips lined up for you. For specific information, please check out our website at <http://www.SEVolusiaAudubon.org>.

I encourage you to check out the website often. It will keep you up-to-date on what we are doing and what we have been doing on the projects and issues on which we are working. It has been busy since we last met. We have been continuing our dialog with the city of Edgewater to maintain the scrub habitat at the YMCA. We have also been presenting against the Restoration development in Edgewater, and trying to get effective protection for the nesting and resting birds (especially Wilson's and Piping Plovers) at Smyrna Dunes Park.

This coming season we are hoping to continue work on the Myrtle Avenue Park butterfly garden. We also want to increase and energize our membership. We are thinking about doing a Birding 101 class in New Smyrna Beach. We could use some volunteers to help with this.

We are also considering a different time and place for the meetings. Would you be interested in daytime (rather than our usual nighttime) meetings during the week? Please send me an email at president@SEVolusiaAudubon.org with your comments.

Don't lose sight of the fact that this is your club and the officers want to satisfy your needs. But you have to let us know what those needs are. I have had few inputs for the website. If you have something that should be there, let me know. Gil is working on a new section called "Of-Interest" which will provide information on things we find out about that may be of interest to our members. Look for that in the near future.

Until we meet again,
Happy birding.

—Don

Meetings

Meetings are held the 1st Wednesdays
Oct. thru March at 7 P.M.

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

Next meeting is October 1, 2008

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!

Sat., Oct. 4 - Smyrna Dunes Park

See details p.3

Questions? Contact Gail Domroski 428-0447

Audubon members and guests are all welcome.

Editor's Note

A New Fall First Issue Date

We usually publish The eSkimmer year-round without the summer break we take with the hard-copy Skimmer. We would then start publishing the hard-copy (printed) in October.

This year, we took the summer off and didn't publish The eSkimmer. The break did us good, energized us a little and we're rarin' to go, to get started with the Fall season.

So, we're kicking it off with this September edition of The eSkimmer hoping to tickle and prod the membership a bit, get you rarin' to go too.

There are plenty of things to think about this new season not the least of which is attendance at meetings and participation on field trips.

Day-time meetings—maybe a noon lunch meeting—and field trips closer to home have been talked about. Bring your thoughts to the next meeting and tell us what you think

—Gil Miller

Conservation Notes

As we start another year, you will be glad to know SEVAS is very involved in local conservation issues. For background on all these conservation projects, see sevolusiaaudubon.org.

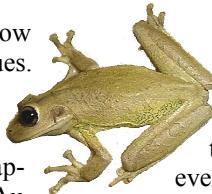
Although the Restoration development was just approved by the City of Edgewater Council Monday, August 25th, the project still has to pass other governmental hurdles, which gives us some time yet to continue to provide the common sense viewpoint as to why the development is harmful to our environment and future quality of life. Our primary concern is that Restoration sits on top of the Volusia sole source aquifer. The doubling of the population of Edgewater by this development alone will deplete and pollute our freshwater from the aquifer. We are concerned about where the wildlife will go as the land is “restored” from silviculture to wetlands. We have pointed out that the wildlife are using the “unrestored” land very well already as they are there in abundance. The development includes a conservation corridor on the west side. We have encouraged the developer to improve the intent for a conservation corridor by removing the plans for a “Conservation Village”. This is 500 homes, or ~ 1000 individuals, or ~1000 cars, *inside* of the conservation corridor. It is inevitable that wildlife, including bears, will be coming into yards of these homes, and probably causing some damage while searching for food. There will be no place to relocate “problem” wildlife, particularly bears, who will then be euthanized by the FWC. It will be necessary for prescribed burns to maintain the conservation corridor. It is unrealistic to expect support for prescribed burns from the residents of the Conservation Village, even if they agree to it when they buy their property.

A burn was attempted at the scrub jay habitat at the Edgewater YMCA in August but it was too wet and would not burn. Another attempt is planned in October. We are pleased that Mr. Tracy Barlow, interim City manager, is cognizant of the City’s responsibility for appropriate management of this property.

Volusia County will be responding to the recommendations from the Smyrna Dunes County Task Force in a meeting expected to be soon. In phone and written communication, we have pointed out to the County that the Task Force recommendations include no environmental protection for shorebirds on the Inlet Shore, and that in actuality, further recommendations are unnecessary because there are federal, state and county laws already in existence that provide protection for shorebirds. We are discouraging the Coast Guard from renewing the County lease in 2012 unless these environmental protections are enforced. Please be ready to attend evening meetings the County will have in the future addressing regulations within Smyrna Dunes Park. Meeting agendas are posted with only one week’s notice and members need to be ready to attend and speak.

If you have a conservation concern or need more information, please contact Kathy Booth, Conservation Chairperson @ 409-3091.

—Kathy Booth



Wandering Members

Summer in Alberta with Ken Gunn

We had a quiet summer this year, particularly as far as bird watching is concerned. We did have a lot of deer traffic through and in our yard with the consequent loss of everything we were trying to grow. We have had a 4-point buck and two or three does lying down within a few feet of the back or side door of the house. Also the more adventuresome of our resident twin fawns likes to hear the sound of his feet on the deck in front of my office.

We did combine a trip to a wedding with side trips each way. Going, we stopped at Chaplin, a salt lake area well known as a Piping Plover and Avocet nesting site. Unfortunately, during spring migration, it was so dry that these very shallow lakes were almost nonexistent. The birds apparently went on north to deeper waters. There were several Avocets and a few other shore birds but we only saw one Piping Plover. On our return, we detoured through the Cypress Hills for two days. Great birding! Totals for the trip were 17 new regional (Prairie Provinces) birds and two lifers plus great looks at bunches of other neat species. Also found a great winery and went on a tour of the first police fort in the Canadian west (Northwest Mounted Police, precursors to the Mounties).

I also got to make one birding/business trip. I first visited the banding operation in connection with the Lesser Slave Lake Boreal Bird Center. Alas, I was late! They start banding at 4:30 A.M. I didn’t get there until 7:00. Still got to see some interesting birds but missed the main rush. Did some more birding around Northern Alberta but most sloughs were low or dry so again my sightings were limited. The treat of the trip was seeing the morning sun on Red-necked Grebes on Sturgeon Lake. Spectacular! Totals for one full and two part days were 76 species and 7 new regional birds but no lifers.

We are on the migration route for raptors and eagles, and nesting grounds for bald eagles and at least four species of raptors, so we see several on our way to town every day. Yesterday, I saw the first Golden Eagle of the season circling to locate a draft heading south. When he did, he was out of sight in minutes.

My other birding has been in our yard. We have a family each of Blue Jays, (very) red-shafted Northern Flickers, Robins, Red-breasted Nuthatches and two pair of Evening Grosbeaks – although I fear that neither of their two babies survived. Transients were a Hairy Woodpecker, a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches, several Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees, a Clark’s Nutcracker, Goldfinch, Brown-headed Cowbirds, the odd sparrow and junco and one unidentified flycatcher. Our disappointment was that we had only 50 Pine Siskin compared to some 200 last year. The interesting thing about them is the range of colors – from essentially no yellow to a few southwest-class yellows. The latter almost looks like a Goldfinch when it flushes.

Finally, our hummingbird feeder was visited by all four Alberta species – Ruby-throated, Black-chinned, Rufous and Calliope. The latter was a lifer for me and made it a great summer.

K.G.

Fall Migration Count

This year's Fall Migration will be conducted Saturday September 20th. Our chapter does the Southeast part of Volusia County from Spruce Creek to the South County line and from the ocean West to Samsula. Please call or e-mail Gail Domroski if you can help. 428-0447, r_domroski@bellsouth.net.

See the article below on how and why we conduct this important survey.

—Gail Domroski

North American Fall Migration Count In Florida

The North American Migration Count in Florida is sponsored by Florida Ornithological Society, and is supported by local Audubon Societies, local bird clubs, and other interested organizations.

PURPOSE: The mission of the North American Migration Count (NAMC) is to:

- ❖ Obtain a “snapshot” of the progress and “shape” of spring and fall Migration.
- ❖ Obtain information on the abundance & distribution of each species.
- ❖ Initiate more participation among birders within a state and between states.
- ❖ Create challenges and goals among birders while collecting useful information.
- ❖ Aid in organization and centralization of date.
- ❖ HAVE FUN.

AREA OF COUNT: The area of a count is not a circle, but the boundaries of a County. The idea is to have a contiguous interlocking set of non-overlapping counts across North America. It is desirable to get as much of each county surveyed as resources permit.

TIMING OF THE COUNT: Each spring and fall another picture will be acquired of the migration pattern. From these we may discover the shape of migration particular to each species. The date of NAMC has been chosen to capture as many migrants as possible before they reach the final destination. It will not be peak migration everywhere. The Southern areas will have the lingerers and the northern areas will still await many of the breeding species when the spring count takes place.

COUNT DATES: The NAMC takes place across North America on the third Saturday of September and the second Saturday of May each year. The near-term counts are September 20, 2008, May 9, 2009.

COORDINATION: Each state has a state coordinator who is responsible for working with county coordinators, providing tally sheets and instructions, and giving assistance as needed. When the counts have been completed, the state coordinator combines the county counts into a statewide count. The data will be displayed on the FOS web site.

County coordinators recruit participants, frequently

through the local Audubon chapter or other bird clubs, assign teams to areas within the county, provide tally sheets to the teams, and collect the count information after the count has been completed. The county coordinators compile the results from all of the teams into a single count for the county and submit the results to the state coordinator.

LOGISTICS OF THE COUNT: The County coordinator should segment the county and assign teams in such a way that there is no overlap between the sectors and the sectors should cover as much of the county as resources permit. Some teams will begin before dawn and will finish at dusk. Other teams will not contribute as much time to the count. The county coordinator needs to adjust the size of a sector to meet the contribution of each team.

There may be teams that spend part of the count day on a feeder watch and others that may count from a stationary point. The only precautionary remark is to insure that these teams and roving teams do not double count; and count tallies for feeder watch/stationary counts should be reported along with the day counts. Before dawn counts should be submitted separately.

Teams can be of any size; so county coordinators can subdivide their people power to maximize the area covered by the count. It is beneficial to have at least one experienced birder in each team. Team members should stay together and not casually form two teams while in the field. County coordinators will find that it is beneficial to assign team members to the same sector in subsequent counts to maintain consistency in the approach to the count.

Over time, count routes should be done consistently. It may be beneficial to keep a log of count routes so consistency is maintained. This is particularly important if new teams need to be assigned to a sector in future counts.

TALLY SHEETS: Tally sheets will be provided to each of the teams. At the end of the count day, one tally sheet should be completed for the county combining the counts from each of the teams. An electronic file is sent to those using email so an electronic file can be completed and sent to the State coordinator. Electronic filing reduces errors in the overall count.

The tally sheet also includes information about weather conditions, hours and miles spent in various modes of transportation, and other identification data.

UNUSUAL BIRD REPORTS: It is important to document, in detail, unusual birds that are seen during the count. Unusual birds are those that are not normally found in the count area, i.e. vagrants, eruptive species, feral birds, et cetera. The state coordinator will provide reporting sheets to assist in capturing data observed concerning unusual sightings.

RESULTS OF NAMC: Florida NAMC data will be posted to the FOS web side with current and prior years' data being presented.

There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds... There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter...

—Rachel Carson

Donnadine Tree

We Lost a Good Friend

As you all know, we lost our dear friend, Donnadine, in April. She was the most giving person in every way. Everyone who knew her was touched spiritually by her dedication to her many projects and interests.

Because of Donnadine's love of nature and of all things living, I felt it was appropriate to make a lasting memorial to her in the form of a tree to be planted in Riverside Park, New Smyrna Beach. In fact, it was she who initiated the drive, this past December, to have a tree planted for Lee and Catherine Bidgood who left the area last summer.

So, in the next two months, I will be collecting donations toward the purchase of the tree and plaque to honor Donnadine. We will have the planting early November. The NSB parks will handle the actual planting, but we will gather to enjoy the new tree life at Riverside Park. We will contact you again with the actual date and time of the planting.

If you know of anyone whom we may not have contacted and who would like to be included, please contact me, or pass the information along to them. kreinhart@hotmail.com. We know many of you have already donated to one of Donnadine's charities, so we ask that you not feel obligated, but to please join us for the planting.

I have made arrangements with Riverside Bank and have an account set up in my name and Donnadine Miller Memorial Tree Fund. The address is below.

Make checks payable to: Kathleen Reinhart for Donnadine Miller

In the memo section: TREE FUND

The address: Riverside Bank

2130 S. Ridgewood Ave.

Edgewater, FL 32141

Thank you all.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

—Kathy Reinhart

Our Email Address

the.skimmer@yahoo.com

If you'd like to have The eSkimmer emailed monthly, contact us at the above address. Type Subscribe in the subject line.

Our Website

<http://sevolusiaaudubon.org/>

Please forward this **eSkimmer** to friends.

October Field Trip

Our first field trip of the year will be **Saturday October 4th** to **Smyrna Dunes Park**. Along the 1.5 mile boardwalk we hope to see migrating Fall Warblers. Along the beaches we also hope to see lots of shore birds. One day during the last week of August, we saw 20 species along the Inlet shoreline. There were many Royal Terns and Sandwich Terns, several Black-bellied Plovers, (still showing some breeding plumage) a few Semipalmated Plovers, Wilson's Plovers, 1 Piping Plover, Dowitchers, and the usual Sandpipers & Gulls. Along the dunes, the beautiful Barn Swallows were doing aerial acrobatics above and among the Sea Oats. Near the foot of the dunes on the Inlet shoreline, one Yellow-crowned Night Heron was stalking and catching Ghost Crabs. Come join us for this first trip of the season.

Meet at the Market Square parking lot at 8 A.M., US 1 & 442, Edgewater, between Dunkin Donuts & Chik-Fil-A. Bring water, mosquito repellent, and lunch if you want to stay and visit awhile. There is a \$3.50 per car fee so car-pooling is recommended. Call Gail @ 428-0447 if you have any questions.

—Gail Domroski

Of Interest

We're Moving

Usually this column appears, on an irregular basis, somewhere on these pages, sometimes to fill unused space and other times because the mood strikes the editor.

Now that we have our web-site, we feel it fits better there. So: we're moving it.

We'll use this space as a tease, giving you a hint and a link.

Here's one now:

http://sevolusiaaudubon.org/of_interest/of_interest1.htm



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