



THE BROWN PELICAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SARASOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2024



Hello Sarasota Auduboners,

I hope everyone had a wonderful summer. Since Tropical Storm Debby, we have been working hard to ready the Nature Center for another great year of birding. The building was unaffected, and the gardens are taking shape again after being flooded.

Smith Farm Update: We have doubled down on our efforts to prevent the rezoning of the Smith Farm. The flooding made it plain for all to see that developing on a property that sat under 3 feet of water during the storm is completely irresponsible. The value of open lands, whether they be for farming, ranching or simply natural open space, has long been overlooked. The ability of these spaces to filter and slowly absorb storm waters and provide critically needed pathways for wildlife in an ever-developing world is crucial to the well-being of all residents of Sarasota – human and animal alike.

I want to personally thank everyone who has supported our efforts to hire experts to fight this rezoning.

**Smith Farms Is Moving Forward With
the Rezone Process!**

Dates will be announced soon for public hearings. We will be sending email updates as soon as we have firm dates. Sarasota Audubon will need a big turnout and people who are willing to speak. Sarasota Audubon can provide talking points for all speakers. [Contact us](#) if you are interested in speaking at these hearings.

Yes, I will speak up!



Above: Smith Farm, Raymond Road, the day after TS Debby

The Next Generation of Birders: As development has come more to the forefront in recent months across the state, I find it more important than ever to educate and involve young people. Children quite literally are the future. Educating them and instilling in them a passion for the natural world around them will pay dividends for years to come.

We have many programs in the works to support this endeavor, including monthly toddler music days at the Nature Center, a focused effort on youth volunteer days, an art day in fall to build hanging natural nesting materials that are both beautiful and functional for children's yards, and a "Build a Better Birdhouse" Festival in spring, where we will work with local schools to design and engineer birdhouses.

As always, I encourage everyone to support the John Ginaven

Educational Fund and the Jeanne Dubi Scholarship Fund. These are remarkable resources that encourage youth to stay engaged with birding, ecology and the outdoors.

Activity Schedule

The New Activity Schedule for 2024/2025 is available...

Once again, our board members and volunteers have come up with a fab list of activities, field trips, lectures and more. It's going to be another record-breaking year for SAS. Click the button above to print or find it on our website on the Activities tab.

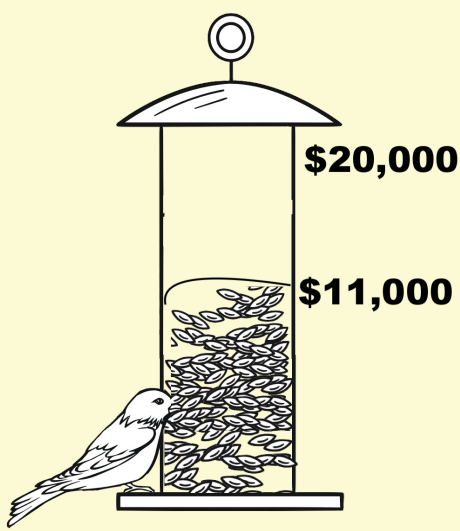
We are looking forward to the Nature Center opening on Oct. 1st and seeing you all soon!

Sara Reisinger, President
and the SAS Board of Directors

Help Us Financially to Fight Development



Sarasota Audubon is working diligently preparing our opposition to the proposed rezone (Sarasota County RZ 23-30) that would convert the Smith Farm, lands historically used for agriculture, into a residential development of 170 dwelling units on 49+ acres of land on Raymond Road.



The DR Horton development that would be allowed under this proposed rezone will have significant damaging impacts to the wildlife and birds of the Celery Fields.

We need your financial support now. To mount a convincing opposition to the rezone, Sarasota Audubon needs assistance from experts to testify at the public hearings and submit written testimony. We need to have expert testimony to counter experts that the applicant will parade before the County Commission. Our experts will cost money, and your support and contributions are essential to protecting the Celery Fields and the wildlife and birds that call it home.

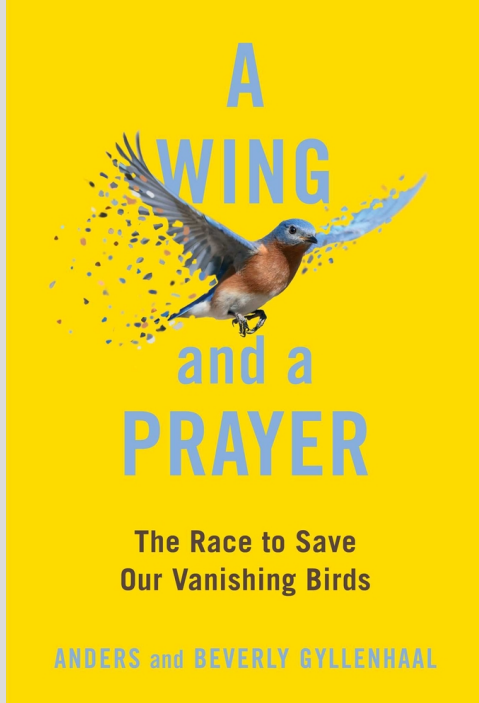
[Donate Now for Expert Witness Testimony](#)

MONTHLY MEETING INFORMATION

Monday, Oct. 14 7:00 p.m. Zoom

A Wing and a Prayer with Anders & Beverly Gyllenhaal

Anders & Beverly Gyllenhaal talk about their extensively researched book *A Wing and a Prayer: The Race to Save Our Vanishing Birds*.



Veteran journalists, the Gyllenhaals traveled more than 25,000 miles across the Americas, chronicling ways to save our beloved birds from the brink of extinction.

***A Wing and a Prayer* offers hope and an urgent call to action: Birds are dying at an unprecedented pace. But there are encouraging breakthroughs across the hemisphere and still time to change course, if we act quickly.**

[Register](#)



Beverly and Anders Gyllenhaal,
Journalists, Authors

Notes from the Nature Center



Above: Volunteers from IFAS Sarasota County Extension

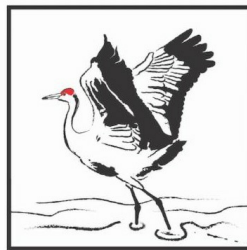
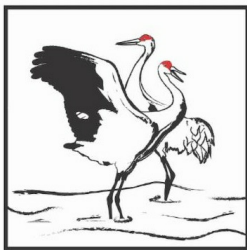
Welcome! We here at the Nature Center are eager to welcome our members and visitors back for another season! For those of us who stayed around Sarasota over the summer, it was an exciting few months. The best news was that we welcomed new SAS president Sara Reisinger to succeed retiring Jeanne Dubi. Sara brings many fresh ideas to our organization, along with connections to area schools and neighborhoods.

Tropical Storm Debby: We're pleased to report that the Nature Center building survived Debby, standing strong and staying dry. It was shocking how quickly weeds took over our gardens when inches of rain were combined with Florida's summer heat. Many thanks to our tireless volunteers who turned out in force after the flood waters receded.

Sarasota County Extension Retreat: When Sarasota County's Extension Office asked if they could use our Nature Center for their retreat, we were pleased to say yes. When their meeting was over, the retreat attendees cleaned the Nature Center, weeded the gardens and overall left the facility better than they had found it. That's the definition of perfect guests!

"I Climbed Mt. Celery" t-shirts: Tell the world about your accomplishment by wearing our brand new t-shirt! Mt. Celery is pure cardio, rising up from the Celery Fields to a dizzying summit of 70 feet. If you've reached the peak, then you've earned the right to brag.





SARASOTA AUDUBON NATURE CENTER at the Celery Fields

Sandhill crane shirts are back: Our classic short-sleeve sandhill crane t-shirts are back by popular demand in the Gift Shop. These beautiful shirts have three images of sandhill cranes on a light gray background. Come get yours while they last!

Mark your calendars for Oct. 1st! We will throw open the doors of the Nature Center and get back to birding, gardening and providing Sarasota County with a world-class resource for outdoor recreation and education. See you soon!

Kim Sullivan, Building Manager

[There's more: Read Full Text of Kim's NOTES](#)



Volunteer Spotlight: All Call!



Volunteers Needed!

Have you ever thought about volunteering at the Nature Center? This is the perfect time to fill out an application so you can get trained in time for our opening on Oct. 1! We have opportunities for:

- Spruce-up Crew Sept. 14 -- Tidy Gardens & Feeders 8-11 a.m.
- Spruce-up Crew Sept. 21 -- Tidy Gardens & Feeders 8-11 a.m.

- Docents in the Nature Center
- Gardeners in our Native Plant Gardens
- Naturalists on our Boardwalks and in the Gardens
- Feeder Team for the Gardens Gazebo Feeders

Volunteers receive a volunteer t-shirt along with the satisfaction of being an integral part of our Celery Fields team.

Shifts are already online for current volunteers to schedule themselves. All shifts for docents, naturalists and bird feeder fillers are available starting Oct. 1.

Gardeners don't have to sign up in advance.

--> If you're a brand new volunteer, please start by filling out the application on the [Volunteer Portal](#) page of our website. If you have questions, email our Volunteer Coordinator at the button below.

[Volunteer Portal](#)

[Volunteer Coordinator](#)

Volunteer for the Big Sit on Oct. 13, Raymond Road Boardwalk



The Big Sit
Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024
Celery Fields Raymond Road Boardwalk: Looking for people to volunteer in four-hour shifts between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

- First shift 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- Second shift 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Third shift 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

We are looking for birders with knowledge of the birds in the area of Celery Fields and ability to create a checklist on the eBird App.

many tables to set up!

Upcoming Birding Events



Florida Birding & Nature Festival

Oct. 17–20, 2024
6650 Dickman Rd,
Apollo Beach, FL

Four days of field and boat trips, expert seminars, keynote speakers, and a great free nature expo!



Audubon Assembly: Celebrating 125 Years of Audubon in Florida

Nov. 7–9, 2024
Hilton Daytona Beach
Oceanfront

Florida's premier conservation gathering, where grassroots leaders from around the state join Audubon's professional staff and partners to grow their networks and increase knowledge and skills to protect Florida's precious natural resources. Field trips, keynote speakers and learning sessions.

**Conservation: Our Changing Environment
Radio Show with Steve Suau
Stormwater in the Wake of TS Debby**

As flood waters swallow neighborhoods, frustrated Sarasota residents blame development



Derek Gilliam

Sarasota Herald-Tribune

Published 4:01 a.m. ET Aug. 11, 2024 | Updated 4:01 a.m. ET Aug. 11, 2024



Our Changing Environment on WSLR

Hosts: Julie Morris & Jono Miller

Guest: Steve Suau

Steve Suau, the former director of Sarasota County's Stormwater Environmental Utility and partner at Progressive Water Resources, joins Jono Miller and Julie Morris on "Our Changing Environment" to discuss flooding in all its forms, what happened in the wake of Tropical Storm/Hurricane Debby and what can be done.

**Listen to the Radio Show with Steve Suau
talking Stormwater**

**The Last Word Is Graphic:
Cornell Labs BirdWord - Anting
by Rosemary Mosco**

anting

verb

Using ants, either by allowing them to run through feathers or deliberately rubbing them on feathers, presumably to deter ectoparasites.

See, there are two kinds of anting.

You can sit passively and let the ants crawl through your feathers...



Or, you can pick up the ants and smear their anty goodness all over you.

Got it?



Mom, I don't want to be a bird anymore.

Ooh, look at that big juicy one!



SARASOTA
AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Contact the
Editor

Activity Schedule



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