



Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL



www.santafeaudubon.org

and



Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

SFAS NEWS

Santa Fe Audubon Society was sad to learn of the passing of an icon of Florida birding and our Melrose Christmas Bird Count founder, Bill Bolte. He started our area CBC more than 20 years ago and participated for many years. Bill had wonderful stories to tell about his birding adventures. He passed away in Melrose, earlier in June.



Bill on SFAS Wildflower Field Trip at Santa Fe Swamp
March 28, 2015



We have begun planning for our October 2023 - May 2024 Speaker Series Programs, Field Trips and Activities.

Speaker Series topics under consideration:

Bats, Backyard Birds, Springs, Fire, Indigo Snakes, White-tailed Deer.....

Field Trips under consideration:

Fall Wildflowers at Morningside, a Springs Paddle... as well as local favorites like La Chua Trail, Sweetwater Wetlands Park, etc.

If you have any suggestions for a program or field trip please email us at santafeaudubonfl@aol.com



FLORIDA WILDLIFE EXTENSION Wildlife Happenings

Click on the link below to check out the "Wildlife Happenings" in our area.

https://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/



BIRDING APPS FOR YOUR SMART PHONE find them in the App Store



MERLIN BIRD ID
by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Who's singing????? Merlin Bird ID can tell you!!! The free Merlin Bird ID app from the Lab of Ornithology helps identify birds by sound, with a photo, or when users answer a few simple questions.

For more information go to:

<https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2022/04/merlin-bird-id-app-identifies-more-450-bird-species-sound>

THE AUDUBON BIRD GUIDE

The Audubon Bird Guide is a free and complete field guide to over 800 species of North American birds, right in your pocket. Built for all experience levels, it will help you identify the birds around you, keep track of the birds you've seen, and get outside to find new birds near you.



For more information go to:

<https://www.audubon.org/app>



eBIRD
by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Find more birds! Explore birds and hotspots near you and wherever you go, all based on the latest sightings from around the world.

Share your sightings! Join the world's largest birding community. Every sighting matters, contribute yours.

Track your lists! What's your latest life bird? What bird lists do you care about? eBird tallies them for you and archives your photos and sounds—all for free.

For more information go to: <https://ebird.org/home>

SEEK by iNaturalist

Take your nature knowledge up a notch with Seek! Use the power of image recognition technology to identify the plants and animals all around you. Earn badges for seeing different types of birds, amphibians, plants, and fungi and participate in monthly observation challenges.



For more information go to:

https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app

GOOD NEWS

by Jacqueline Williamson

HERTZ AND MAYOR DYER LAUNCH “HERTZ ELECTRIFIES ORLANDO”

A partnership between car rental giant Hertz and the city of Orlando will provide 6,000 electric vehicles for tourists, business customers and rideshare drivers. Hertz will also support the installation of up to 50 public fast chargers in the Greater Orlando area.

For the complete article visit the link below

<https://newsroom.hertz.com/news-releases/news-release-details/hertz-and-mayor-dyer-launch-hertz-electrifies-orlando>

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION



FIREBUSH

(*Hamelia patens*)

This native plant blooms for months, attracting both birds and butterflies, and is practically bullet-proof once established.

Firebush is a perennial or semi woody shrub that is known scientifically as *Hamelia patens*. Gardeners love firebush because it produces flowers from late spring until the first frost, and the bright red flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies,

including the zebra longwing and gulf fritillary. Song birds also like to feed on the berries.

The plant's mature size will depend on where it is grown.

In South Florida it may reach fifteen feet tall, though it can easily be kept to five or eight feet tall. It works well in hedges, mixed borders, or as a stand-alone shrub. In North Florida, it will die back after the first freeze but will re-grow in the spring, making it what some people call a “root-hardy perennial.”

It is also a great plant because it is heat and drought tolerant once established, can grow in a range of soils, and has no serious insect or disease problems.

For additional information on native plants for birds:

www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds

www.fnps.org/plant/hamelia-patens

Florida Native Plant Society for info and plant lists and sources.

<https://www.fnps.org>

BIRD OF THE MONTH

NORTHERN BOBWHITE (*Colinus virginianus*)
band code "NOBO"



An emphatic, whistled Bob-white ringing from a grassy field or piney woods has long been a characteristic sound of summers in the Eastern countryside. It's quite a bit harder to spot a Northern Bobwhite, as the bird's elegantly dappled plumage offers excellent camouflage. They forage in groups, scurrying between cover

or bursting into flight if alarmed. Bobwhites have been in sharp decline throughout the past half-century, likely owing to habitat loss and changes in agriculture, and they are an increasingly high priority for conservation.

COOL FACTS:

The bobwhite genus is represented by more than 700 known fossils, dug up in sites ranging from Florida to Arizona to the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. Some of these fossils are at least 2.5 million years old.

The oldest Northern Bobwhite on record was 6 years, 5 months old. They have short lifespans but make up for it with prolific breeding abilities. In a single breeding season under good conditions, a bobwhite pair can produce 2 or 3 broods, totaling 25 offspring or more.

For more information about Northern Bobwhites go to:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Bobwhite/overview

Fun Fact: A group of Bobwhites are collectively known as a "bevy", "covey", and "name dropping" of Bobwhites.



May, 2023

All seventeen of the kestrels born and raised in Santa Fe Audubon nest boxes in Etoniah Creek State Forest have successfully fledged from the nest. All were banded before fledging and we outfitted eight females with phone tracking systems and six males with radio transmitters. So we will be out in the area for the next several months at least, tracking where the young kestrels go. With luck, we may be able to follow some of them well into 2024.



The last of our kestrels to fledge, from box 24. Mom left a nice meal the night before we got there.

Fitted this young male with a radio, just days before fledging.



Posing for Dr. Meyer from Box 17

Kiersten holds a young male while Dr. Meyer checks for the radios proper fit.



The last female fledgling from box 26 on May 18th

Again, thank you to Dr. Ken Meyer and the Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) for their collaboration on banding and attaching radio telemetry devices on our Kestrels.

To learn more about ARCI visit their website:

www.arcinst.org

Sweetwater Wetlands Park Field Trip May 6, 2023



Participants

photos courtesy of
Marta Hicks



*Purple Martin
(sub-adult male)*

photo courtesy of
Michael Drummond

Anastasia State Park Field Trip May 27, 2023



Participants



*Gaillardia
Passion Vine*



*Black
Skimmers*



Least Tern