



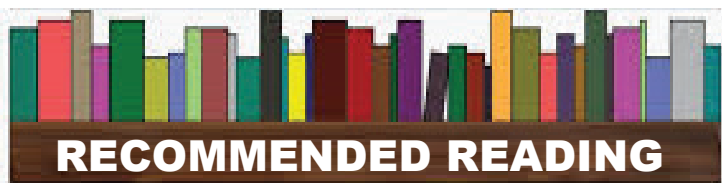
www.santafeaudubon.org and



Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

Santa Fe Audubon Society Melrose, FL

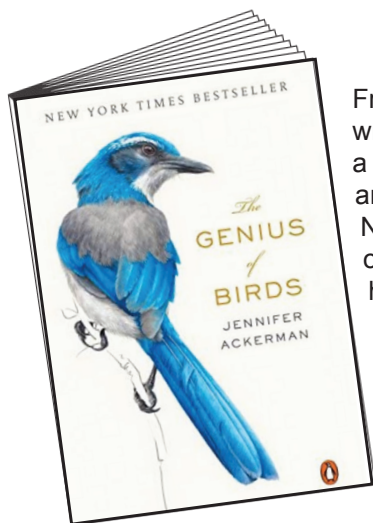
MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER



by Jacqueline Williamson

THE GENIUS OF BIRDS

Jennifer Ackerman



From award-winning science writer Jennifer Ackerman, comes a book that reveals birds are amazingly intelligent creatures. New research dispels the myth of the "bird brain" and shows how some birds rival primates in their remarkable forms of intelligence.

WARNING

FWC has put out the following warning and request for dead bird reports related to positive tests for avian flu in Florida:

Short version: do not handle dead wildlife, report dead birds online, and realize that rehabbers may not be taking in birds for a while.

<https://myfwc.com/research/wildlife/health/avian/influenza/>



Suspect a crime against wildlife or natural resources?
See an injured animal? Report incidents on line or call
888-404-FWCC (3922)
from cell phone call *FWC or #FWC, or
send a text to Tip@MyFWC.com

Florida Wildlife Care 24-hr. Help line:
(352) 371-4400

GOOD NEWS

WE DID IT!!!!

DESANTIS VETOES THE ANTI-ROOFTOP SOLAR NET METERING BILL (HB 741)



April 27, 2022

Thanks to the advocacy of thousands of Floridians, today, Governor Ron DeSantis vetoed the anti-rooftop solar net metering bill (HB 741). All credit to the people of Florida, who know a bad deal when they see it, and made their voices heard! Thank you to everyone who showed up and spoke up. You made this happen!

The statement from FCV's Deputy Director Jonathan Webber in response to the Governor's Veto:

"There is no way the Sunshine State would let the legislature take away our right to affordable rooftop solar panels without a fight. That's why tens of thousands of residents made their voices heard in opposition to HB 741 over the past few months. Rooftop solar is more popular than every politician in the state, which, no doubt, made the Governor's decision to veto this bill an easy one. And while we celebrate the Governor's veto, we must also keep our eye on the ultimate goal of dramatically reducing our state's reliance on dirty fossil fuels. We await his plan to increase rooftop solar and prevent the climate crisis from further harming the people of Florida."



by Bill Chitty

Santa Fe Audubon's American Kestrel nesting box project is in full swing. As of the first week of May, 17 of our 26 boxes are being used to raise young birds. We are excited to report that six of those are Kestrels; and we are still very pleased to provide housing for the four pairs of Screech Owls, two pairs of Great Crested Flycatchers, three pairs of Tufted Titmouse and two pairs of Eastern Bluebirds.



We have two locations with Kestrels where we have never had them before and one location which successfully fledged Kestrels for the last four years in a row is not being used by any birds this year. So far, we have not been able to determine if any of the parents are individuals banded last year. Speaking of which, Dr. Ken Meyer of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) will be assisting us once again, banding and radio tagging young Kestrels. As part of our ongoing research, we are hoping to be able to band a few adults also.

To learn more about ARCI visit their website:

www.arcinst.org



Tufted Titmice ready to fledge

BIRD OF THE MONTH

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

(Archilochus colubris) band code "RTHU"

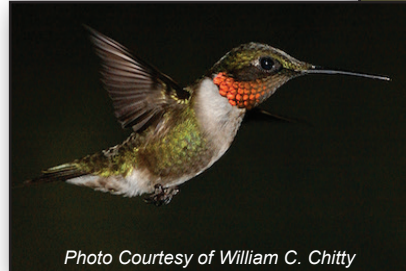


Photo Courtesy of William C. Chitty



Photo Courtesy of Michael Drummond

A flash of green and red, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is eastern North America's sole breeding hummingbird. These brilliant, tiny, precision-flying creatures glitter like jewels in the full sun, then vanish with a zip toward the next nectar source. Feeders and flower gardens are great ways to attract these birds; and some people turn their yards into buzzing clouds of hummingbirds each summer. Enjoy them while they're around; by early fall they're bound for Central America, with many crossing the Gulf of Mexico in a single flight.

FEEDING:

Please, make your own hummingbird food, it's simple... just a ¼ cup of table sugar per cup of water.

Do NOT use honey, raw sugar or brown sugar to make hummingbird food. When they are diluted with water, bacteria and fungi thrive in it. The standard 4 to 1 mix is especially ideal during hot or dry weather. If you mix up small quantities of sugar water every day or two, there is no need to boil the water. However, if you mix up larger batches and refrigerate part for later use, it is wise to make the mixture with boiling water.

Please do not add red food color to sugar water, or use red-colored commercial mixes. Nectar in flowers is clear, after all, and red food coloring may be harmful for hummingbirds. It's the flowers themselves that are brightly colored, not the nectar—and that's why hummingbird feeders typically are designed with red parts to attract the notice of hummingbirds.

Hummingbirds do not live on sugar water and nectar alone. They eat insects and tiny spiders to supply protein and also feed on tree sap.

COOL FACTS:

Like many birds, hummingbirds have good color vision and can see into the ultraviolet spectrum, which humans can't see. They are attracted to red, as well as other brightly colored objects, because they have learned to associate high-quality nectar with red flowers.

For more information about Ruby-throated Hummingbirds visit:

[HTTPS://WWW.ALLABOUTBIRDS.ORG/GUIDE/RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD/](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/ruby-throated-hummingbird/)

Fun Fact: Hummingbirds have many collective nouns including a "bouquet", "glittering", "hover", "shimmer" and "tune" of hummingbirds.

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION

CORAL BEAN or CHEROKEE BEAN

(*Erythrina herbacea*)



A native plant that can add interest to the landscape from spring until fall., Coral bean's red tubular flowers grow on tall stalks in the spring, drawing hummingbirds and butterflies. In the fall, as the rest of the summer garden starts to fade, coral bean's seed pods begin to mature and the show begins. What once looked a bit like English pea pods turn dark, almost black, and split open to reveal shiny, scarlet red seeds nestled inside. ***They're very pretty—and very poisonous, so be sure to keep them away from kids and pets.***

In North and Central Florida coral bean grows as a large perennial, reaching 6 feet tall before it freezes to the ground in winter. In South Florida it grows as a large deciduous shrub or small tree.

This Florida-Friendly plant is a great choice for the back of a mixed borders. While coral bean is a very attractive plant when in flower, it can appear somewhat sparse and ragged the rest of the year.

Excellent for a natural landscape, it grows in a wide range of soil, but does best in fertile, well-drained, sandy soil. It flowers best in full sun or light shade. Water it well when planting, but once established, coral bean actually does better with infrequent irrigation. It's very salt-tolerant, so it's a good choice for coastal landscapes as well.

source:

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/coral-bean.html>

For additional information on native plants for birds:

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

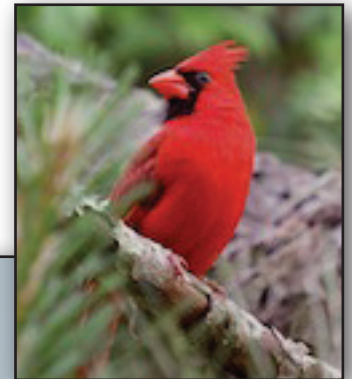
Florida Native Plant Society for info and plant lists and sources.

<https://www.fnps.org>

GET TO KNOW 20 COMMON BIRDS

Click on the link below and get to know these birds. Most are year round residents, some are migratory visitors and a few are in other parts of the US.

https://www.audubon.org/news/get-know-these-20-common-birds?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement-eng-email-supporter-series&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement-eng-email&utm_content=supporter-series



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/