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Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL

NOVEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



Alachua Audubon and William Cooper
invite you to join their December zoom program.

A CHEMIST'S VIEW OF BIRDS IN COSTA RICA

Tuesday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for a visual treat! William J. Cooper, Professor Emeritus, University of California, Irvine and now living in Florida will share his photographic treats with us. His videos were all taken at the Pierella Ecological Garden, Horquetas de Sarapiquí. This garden was the vision of William Camacho. Mr. Camacho started raising blue morpho butterflies in a 20 meter by 20 meter enclosure in 1995 and by selling them through the Costa Rica Entomological Supply he was able to buy more land for the present 3 hectares (7.5 acres) garden.



Red-legged Honey Creeper

The biodiversity of birds there is spectacular and provides a unique opportunity to study several species such as the White-tailed Manakin and the White-necked Jacobin Hummingbird.



Fasciated Tiger Heron



White-collared Manakin

HOW TO ID 20 COMMON BIRDS

Take a few minutes to brush up on some of the birds you're most likely to spot.

Whether you're a beginner or you simply want to know more about the birds you see on a regular basis, check out these helpful



tips for IDing 20 of the more common species around the country. You'll enjoy learning new facts about some familiar friends.



Here is the link for "How To ID 20 Common Birds"

https://www.audubon.org/news/get-know-these-20-common-birds?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement-20211111-id-backyard-birds-interested-and-bored&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement-20211111-id-backyard-birds&utm_content=interested-and-bored&emci=d02499b1-a141-ec11-9820-c896653b26c8&emdi=6b3c174a-1143-ec11-9820-c896653b26c8&ceid=3867616

CAUTION

ANNUAL YOUTH AND WOMEN'S DEER HUNT at Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve

Since Longleaf Flatwood Reserve was the suggested location for October's "Off The Main Trail" we thought we should share this important information:

The District is hosting the Gainesville chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for its annual youth and women's deer hunt on Dec. 3-5 in portions of the District's Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve and the Newnans Lake Conservation Area in Alachua County.

<https://www.sjrwmd.com/lands/recreation/longleaf-flatwoods/>

Here is your link to join:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89595642648?pwd=b-2wvYzQ5WUlycFIGSmIWQ3MvK1ZhUT09>

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THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION

(endemic) **ETONIAH ROSEMARY** (*Conradina etonia*)
Annual Survey October 26, 2021



The Etoniah Rosemary Survey is taken in Etoniah Creek State Forest every October. Santa Fe Audubon members and others were on three teams that volunteered this year.



Gulf Fritillary butterfly

What is that plant in the middle of the trail?

The green shrub you see growing in the middle of the hiking trail is Etoniah Rosemary. This fragrant plant is federally endangered and only occurs naturally in Putnam County. Etoniah Rosemary is a member of the mint family (Lamiaceae). This plant requires light, responds well to disturbance, and grows to a height of 5 feet.

Etoniah Rosemary is found in deep white-sand scrub dominated by sand pine and shrubby oaks. Plants of this genus are generally most abundant in natural openings or artificial clearings rather than in the scrub. The leaf of this plant has a uniformly lavender upper lip and a lower lip with an area of cream mottled with spots and streaks of deep purple. Flowering occurs from early spring to late fall. The pleasant minty smell is stronger when blooming.

Enjoy your visit to the forest!

ETONIAH ROSEMARY
Conradina etonia



The morning begins with learning to ID the Etoniah Rosemary plant, with or without blooms.



Flaggers mark the plants with pink survey flags.



Sleepy Orange butterfly



Counters collect the flags as they are counting. In this particular area over 900 plants, the 2020 count was only a little over 800.



Counters give their numbers to the Florida Forest Service leader.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*)

band code "SNKI"

The highly specialized Snail Kite flies on broad wings over tropical wetlands as it hunts large freshwater snails. These handsome gray-and-black raptors have a delicate, strongly curved bill that fits inside the snail shells to pull out the juicy prey inside. Unlike most other raptors, Snail Kites nest in colonies and roost communally, sometimes among other waterbirds such as herons and Anhingas. They are common in Central and South America but in the U.S. they occur only in Florida and are listed as Federally Endangered.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeff Smith, DDS



Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeff Smith, DDS

COOL FACTS:

Biologists in Florida have studied Snail Kite nest success very carefully since 1968. In drought years, such as 1974, as few as 17% of nests have been successful, whereas almost 90% have been successful in years with optimal conditions, meaning stable water levels conducive to apple snails. On average, over the decades, about 40% of nests produce fledglings in Florida.

The oldest recorded Snail Kite, lived in Florida, and was at least 14 years, 8 months old.

For more information about Snail Kites visit:

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

Fun Fact: A group of kites has many collective nouns, including a "brood", "kettle", "roost", "stooping", and "string" of kites.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeff Smith, DDS



Now officially known as simply a Snail Kite, the subspecies from Florida and Cuba (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*) formerly known as the Everglade Snail Kite was listed as endangered in 1967. The range of the Florida population of Snail Kites is restricted to watersheds in the central and southern part of the state. Because of a highly specific diet composed almost entirely of apple snails (*Pomacea paludosa*), survival of the Snail Kite depends directly on the hydrology and water quality of these watersheds, each of which has experienced pervasive degradation as a result of urban development and agricultural activities.

<https://www.nps.gov/ever/learn/nature/snailkite.htm>



Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeff Smith, DDS