



Sun City Center Audubon Club

January 2023

Prez Ponderings

Happy New Year!

Our January 7th Audubon Club meeting is *another Open Meeting*. While non-member residents of Sun City Center and Freedom Plaza are always welcome, **guests from any other town may attend** for a \$3.00 donation, which will assist with SCC Nature Trail projects.

DATE: Saturday, January 7, 2023

PLACE: COMMUNITY HALL,

TIME: 9:15 AM Social – 10 AM Meeting & Program

Our tradition: **Bring your *reusable* cup, mug, or water container** to the meeting.

During the Social Time, enjoy the artwork displayed at our Bird and Nature Art Festival. Highlighted will be several original paintings by noted artists Archibald Thorburn (1860-1935) and Alfred Marcus Hughes (1900-91). Three books containing hundreds of their illustrations will also be available to look at. The Audubon Club is honored to be able to display these paintings.

The speaker-of-the-day will be our Audubon Club's John Lampkin, whose program is "Defend Yourself – Insect Micro-Photography". John is an award-winning nature photographer, and author of the monthly Trail Blazing column in The News of Sun City Center.

Attendance was 122 at our December 3rd meeting, with 34 membership registrations submitted at the meeting. The volunteers at the check-in table can confirm your membership status. Over 50% of you have already paid your 2023 dues. Thank You!

Our Audubon Club ended 2022 with 190 members, compared to 150 members in 2021, a 27% increase! WOW! This increase is a result of YOU telling your friends and neighbors about our Audubon Club. Keep up the good work!

Our new Audubon Club address is working well:

_____ (Officer, Committee, Purpose, etc.)

SCC Audubon Club

PO Box 5133

Sun City Center, FL 33571

Looking forward to seeing you at the January 7th meeting!

Dennis Morris, President

SCC Audubon Club

5w3d15h80y@gmail.com

570-814-2803





Trail Blazing

John Lampkin

This is the time of year to take a lovely walk through our Nature trail.

John Lampkin leads walks on the first Tuesday of each month at 9 am on the Nature Trail. Join us as we marvel at the macro and micro wonders of Nature.

JohnLampkin@JohnLampkin.com



Field Trip Schedule 2022-2023

01/12/23	Felts Audubon Preserve Palmetto, FL
02/17/23	TECO Restoration Area Sarasota County, FL
03/15/23	Sweet Bay Nursery Parrish, FL
04/19/23	Fort Desoto County Park Pinellas County, FL

To sign up for our field trips, please visit our website:

www.sccaudubonclub.com

Program Schedule

1/07/23	Defend Yourself, insect Micro-photography John Lampkin
2/04/23	Woodpecker, Nature's Wood-worker Reiner Munguia
3/04/23	Mermaid, Manatees, and Other Marine Life Dr Buddy Powell
4/01/23	Garden to Attract Bird/ Butterflies Terry Brockway
4/22/23	EARTH DAY CELEBRATION AT THE NATURE TRAILS

News from our Master Birder

Ray Webb

Our numbers were drastically reduced by the threat of severe weather and thunderstorms (which never materialized), but 19 hardy souls met in the drizzle at 4 PM on December 20 for **Captain Tom's Christmas Cruise**. Operated by Riverside Tours, our captain took us out to the mouth of the Manatee River, where we could see the Skyway Bridge lit up. We then returned to Bradenton, where we saw the Riverwalk and Marina all lit up.

After our two-hour cruise, eleven of us went "next door" to the Riverhouse Waterfront Restaurant, for an evening meal and camaraderie.

Our next trip will be to **Felts Audubon Preserve**, a small parcel of land in Palmetto, which features walking trails and an observation building. Here we will look for wintering indigo and painted buntings at the feeders there. Lunch will be at Popi's Place, on US 41 just north of Moccasin Wallow Rd.

On March 15 we will visit our longtime friend Tom Heitzman at his Sweet Bay Nursery, in Parrish. Neither of these trips has a fee.

You may sign up for these trips either online at sccaudubonclub.com, or at our meetings.



BYOM

In an endeavor to support our conservation beliefs, please bring your own mug to our Saturday morning meetings. We appreciate your cooperation.

For those of you who use the recycle water bottles, the CA has installed water fountains in the atrium to conveniently refill your water bottles.

Audubon Visitors & Members Enjoying Refreshments at the December Meeting



Caracara



*Richard Robillard
Sign in Table*



Nancy Murrah displays a Caracara



Screech owl

Thank You to Bob Sanchez from The News of Sun City Center & South County for these amazing photos from our December Meeting.

Presenters:





Great Blue Heron Retreat

Photos by Tom Bredesen

*Whistler Ducks Watching the Kids
(Below)*



Attracting Purple Martins

Purple Martins are native songbirds in the swallow family. East of the Rocky Mountains, Purple Martins nest almost exclusively in human-supplied housing. They are dependent on us for their survival. They are one of America's most well-loved songbirds for many reasons: their iridescent beauty, their chattering song, aerial acrobatics, insect-eating habits and their tolerance of humans.

Purple Martins are highly desirable backyard birds and attracting purple martins can be easy. Because they eat thousands of insects each day, do not require bird feeders, and can nest in compact colonies, birders only have to take a few steps to make their yard suitable as prime purple martin habitat.

They are dependent on 'human landlords' who provide nesting houses on tall poles. The pole should be about 10 feet tall and have plenty of space around it (great especially if facing a golf course or lake). There are two types of "houses" – the apartment building and individual gourds. Natural gourds would be nice but plastic ones are made especially for their preferences and seem to be preferred over apartment building. The gourds that were donated to us are "jumbo" as the birds seem to like spacious nesting areas.

The poles can be purchased from Purple Martin Conservancy Store or S&K Enterprises. Yes, the poles and houses are not cheap but wait till you see the Purple Martins swirling around. Once they find a house and nest, the babies will come back next year to nest and your community will grow. The houses donated to us should give you a good start at only \$5 apiece.

We are becoming known for bluebirds, why not for Purple Martins as well?



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

January 2023



Irene Brogan
Mary Buccilli
Kimball Cleveland
Patsie Ginley
H. Frankie Greise
Michael Laferriere
John Lampkin
Donna Machmer
Phillip Price
Pat Prisbe
Nancy Renfrow
Kyle Rollins
Robin Weber
Joann Wilkinson

Officers & Committee Chairs 2022-2023

<i>President</i>	<i>Dennis Morris</i>
<i>Vice-President & Programs</i>	<i>Patsie Ginley</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Betty Giles</i>
<i>Co-Treasurers</i>	<i>Pam & George Viner</i>
<i>Immediate Past</i>	<i>Mary Duncan</i>
<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Linda Floyd</i>
<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Pat Dean</i>
<i>Membership</i>	<i>Dennis Morris</i>
<i>Name Tags</i>	<i>Jo Ann Wilkinson</i>
<i>Historian</i>	<i>Clara Clancy</i>
<i>Master Birder & Field Trips</i>	<i>Ray Webb</i>
<i>Newsletter</i>	<i>Denise Rosen</i>
<i>Conservation</i>	<i>TBD</i>
<i>Publicity</i>	<i>TBD</i>

SCC Audubon Board Meetings

Board meetings are held in the heritage room at 7:00pm on the third Monday of every month.

All Members are invited.