
SUN CITY CENTER AUDUBON CLUB

May 2020

Ponderings from your prez

Mary Duncan

Staying at home and social distancing has been difficult for all of us. We all thought we would be meeting in May...and now we are hoping to start our normal meetings and field trips again in the fall. Let us hope that there is no second wave of this virus that prevents that! I certainly miss you all.

Some good news is that the CA is now opening outdoor events on a limited basis. They have reopened the Nature Trail. Many people have ducked under the yellow tape and walked the trail anyway – probably keeping more social distancing than walking the sidewalks.

It has actually been great to see so many people out walking and biking. It is healthy, good for the environment - and there are many ways to walk as you'll see elsewhere in the newsletter.

Because we had planned to really celebrate the Nature Trail for Earth Day and could not, I had thought up a challenge for all of us. I had to delete it when the Nature Trail was officially closed – but I would like to repeat it:

Why not take this opportunity to walk the Nature Trail. Easy to stay 6 feet apart and so good for us in a number of ways. **I challenge us to have 100% of the Audubon Club visit the Nature Trail during this time. (Just going the short distance to the first bench will count.)**

I know it is getting hot, but you have until October to take your walk. Early morning is nice (do not forget bug spray though).

And walking the Nature Trail will help all of our psyches. Can we get 100% of our club to take up this challenge?! The prize will have to be something for the whole club – any suggestions? (Champagne breakfast has been suggested!)

(And before anyone says anything – no, the club cannot serve or sell alcohol, but I can bring some for my friends. When we ask for donations or help on the trail – it would be great to say every member of our club has been on it).



Congratulations

**Officers Sun City Center
Audubon Club
2019-2020**

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| President | Mary Duncan |
| Vice Presidents/ Programs | Patsie Ginley |
| Secretary | Anne Fenimore |
| Treasurer | Betty Giles |
| | Rod Rodrigues |

Purple Martins

Mary Duncan

I have included a picture of a town that loves Purple Martins. I was amazed when I saw the Purple Martin skyscraper that had been erected. My husband loved Purple Martins and tried to attract them wherever we lived. We had a giant flock in Texas, but he could never attract any in northern Connecticut (a little too far for them). He put up a nesting box as soon as we got here and was finally able to get them to nest. They come back every year and he could even call them out of the sky and back to the nest boxes. A week after John died, I was bending down in the garden and the Martins suddenly swirled around me – even banging into the window as they did so. They took off into the sky and I could feel his spirit flying free right along with them.

Needless to say, it is now my job to take good care of the Martins and that means learning a little more about them. And, of course, as a former teacher, I have to pass a little of the basics along:

The first adult martins to arrive at their breeding grounds are termed scouts, the oldest birds, male or female, returning to their nesting site from the previous year. For us, this is usually in January. Sub-adults arrive about 4-12 weeks later. Subadults are birds that fledged the previous year and are now returning to North America to select a site and breed.

The Dawn song is a vocalization sung by adult males in the early morning hours to attract other martins to their colony site. Dawn singing coincides with adult egg-laying and lasts until the migration of subadults has ended. It can be heard for many miles during the pre-dawn hours. They are still chattering away now.

After fledging, juvenile Purple Martins, as well as adults and subadults will congregate at a roost. Large flocks of martins gather to spend the night at these roosts, which are usually situated near water or in trees. Martins will then form smaller groups and begin migration from these roosts. They then begin their long migration back to South America.

Most Purple Martins overwinter in Brazil, in large urban roosts. So soon, they will leave us, heading south when many of us are ready to head north.



Purple Martin



Happy
Mother's
Day!

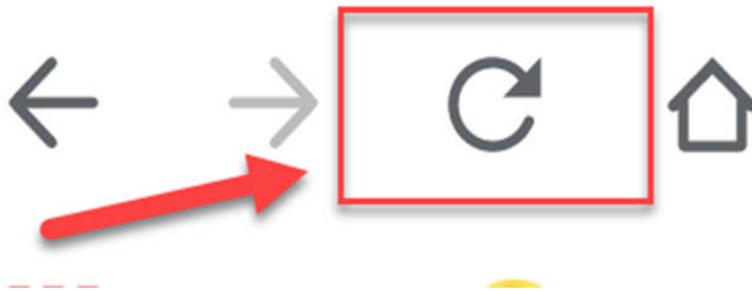
NEW AUDUBON WEBSITE

SCC Audubon Club Web News

We have been forced to change the hosting agency for our web site, and that has necessitated a redesign of the web site itself. There may be a period of instability. We need to ask, beg for patience as we adjust in getting all the information over to the new site accurately.

The address will be the same: www.sccaudubonclub.com

Please give it a day or two to stabilize. It looks a lot different. If your browser brings up the old site, you will need to click on the refresh button located near the upper left on your browser window.



When you visit, you may have to click on the three lines to the left of the logo somewhere, depending on which device you are using (computer, tablet, or phone) in order to **access the menu**.



Welcome Screen
(3).ppsx

Watch this brief Powerpoint slide show attached.

Rod Rodrigues
mrod1942@verizon.net

News from our Master Birder

Ray Webb

Last month, as you can guess, has been very uneventful. Along with the CA's closure of the Atrium and pretty much everything else, the West Campus Nature Trail has likewise been closed off. Also, pretty much like most of you, I have been spending most all of my time at home. I can report on some news, though.

The owl which was displaced from the osprey nest at the corner of La Jolla Ave. and N. Pebble Beach Blvd. has taken up residence in another osprey nest, at the corner of Valley Forge Blvd. and Danbury Ave, scarcely a stone's throw away! The attached photo of her in her new digs evidently caught her asleep; I hear her mate hangs out nearby. With the current situation being what it is, I don't know if we can rescue this year's owlet (if indeed there is one). The ospreys have continued to visit their reclaimed nest, and I am hopeful that next month I will be able to report on some new fledglings there

The nesting season proceeds on. My black oil sunflower feeder is now visited by no less than six house finches, as the current fledglings accompany their parents. Other birds can be seen carrying food to their nests as well.

Spring migration of course continues as well, but since the coastal parks I normally visit have been closed, I have not been able to observe this event.

Stay safe everyone; as they say, in time this too shall pass.

All Field Trips have been cancelled until further notice!



Bluebird Boxes in Sun City Center



It's a little crowded in here for nine bluebirds!



Feed Me!!! Please

Photos by

*Melissa LaVigne
&
Denise Rosen*



This is more like it, only five to a bed.

Healthy You

FITNESS

Walk This Way

Need fresh reasons or extra benefits to take a stroll? Consider these

By SARA ALTSHUL



The family-time walk

You talk, laugh, debate and sometimes just hold hands; all are healthy. So is engaging in outdoor activities together. Studies have found that a 20-minute walk can calm your overactive brain and restore your attention.



The tree hugger's walk

Researchers sent a group of walkers into a forested area, and another walkers group into a city, for an hour. After, the forest walkers had improved heart and lung function; the city walkers didn't. The message: Nature walks can be healing.



The meditation master's walk

If sitting on a pillow and chanting "om" isn't your thing, you can actually meditate while you walk. Numerous studies confirm meditation's ability to ease high blood pressure, digestive challenges, anxiety, depression and insomnia.



The memory-booster walk

Making walking a habit can preserve your memory. Researchers following up on 300 older adults after 13 years found that those who had walked six to nine miles a week lowered their risk of memory problems by 50 percent.



The philosopher's walk

Walking is great for deep thoughts, but it provides other brain perks (memory boost aside). Adults who walked for 40 minutes three times a week slowed age-related declines in brain function and improved their performance on cognitive tasks.



The socializer's walk

Taking walks with friends is not just fun; it's beneficial, too. One study showed that people who joined walking groups had lower blood pressure, reduced cholesterol, a lower resting heart rate and more effective weight loss. ■

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY BEN MOUNSEY