



November 2025 Newsletter

PASCO AUDUBON

Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 1st
8am Bird walk in Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park. Meet in the Education Center parking lot

11am Feature Presentation:
iNaturalist with Don Fraser

Saturday, November 8th
8am Field Trip to Honeymoon Island - p2

Sunday, November 9th
8am Birding-by-Bike - on The Pinellas Trail. Details p. 3

Saturday, November 22nd
8am Field Trip - Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive - p.4

Our web address is:
www.pascoaudubon.com

Our Facebook Page is:

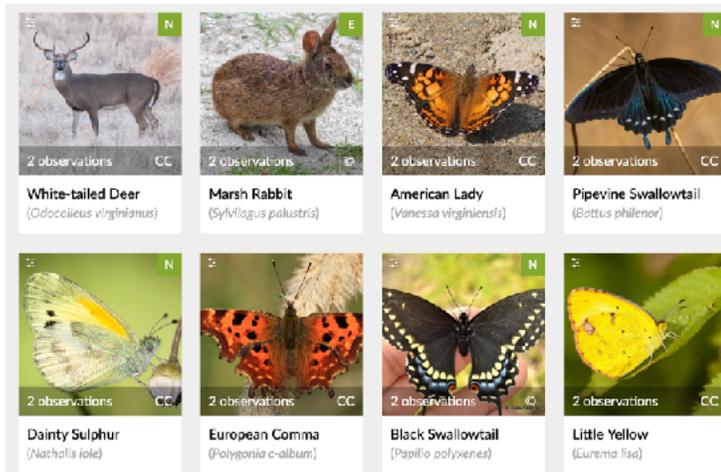
Pasco Audubon

Share interesting sightings via Facebook on

Pasco Bird Board

And our mailing address is:

Pasco Audubon
PO Box 1456
Elfers, FL 34680



November 1st: Featuring Don Fraser on iNaturalist: An Introduction

This month our feature presentation is on iNaturalist, and will be presented by Don Fraser. For those not in the know, iNaturalist will help you identify anything living that you come across, flora or fauna. Not only will it help you solve the mysteries of what things are, but its also a useful way to keep a record of what you are seeing, whether your interest is plants, mammals, birds or all of the above. And it will work anywhere in the world! Simple to use, Don will show us some tips and tricks for getting the most out of this program.

iNaturalist can be used as an app on your phone or as a web-based program on your computer, and can work with photographs from your phone or a digital camera. This presentation will be held at our usual time and location - 11am at the Starkey Environmental Education Center. This is a free event and all are welcome. Light refreshments will be available.

Before the event we will have our monthly bird walk in Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park. We will leave from the Education Center parking lot at 8am. We'll be back at the center in plenty of time for Don's presentation!

First Pasco Audubon Camera Club Meeting with Noriko Buckles



Great Horned Owl by Noriko Buckles

I am very excited to announce that the Pasco Audubon Camera Club will have its first informational meeting on Nov 1st from 10 am to 10:45 am. The meeting will be held between the bird walk (8 am) and the monthly Audubon meeting (11 am) at Starkey Environmental Center. We will cover our goals, outings and meeting schedules. All interested people are welcome to attend. If you would like me to add you to the list so that you will receive up to date information on outings and such please drop me a note at Nbucklesphoto@gmail.com. Looking forward to seeing everyone,

November 9th - Birding-by-Bike Outing on The Pinellas Trail by Bob Burkard

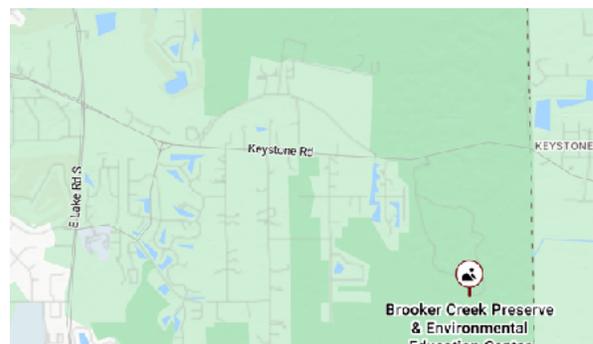
For our Sunday, November 9th Pasco Audubon Birding-by-Bike outing, we will meet at the Brooker Creek Preserve parking lot and travel across Keystone Road continuing north on the Pinellas Trail. I plan to bike a little further than our usual ride so that we can check out the trail between Trinity and SR 54. eBird reports that 66 species were identified in this area over the last 30 days.

Fall has arrived and I love this outing location for Eastern Meadowlarks.

We will meet at 8:00 AM at the parking area at Brooker Creek Preserve and travel north up the Pinellas Trail.



Eastern Meadowlark by Bob Burkard



Starting location



Great Horned Owl



Piping Plover

November 8th Field Trip: Honeymoon Island State Park

Honeymoon Island is always a popular field trip, and we haven't been in a couple of years as a result of closure due to hurricane damage following last year's hurricanes. Early birders can check out the Dunedin Causeway for shorebirds. I'll plan to be there by 7:30am for a quick look before the park opens at 8am. Entry to the park is \$8 per vehicle. We'll enjoy a wide range of shorebirds, and will plan to walk the Osprey trail for upland birds as well. Do come prepared with footwear for both beach and trails.

I will be scouting the park before the big day to try to ensure that our timing is optimal and that we make the most of our experience, so please register for this trip so that I can send you last minute details of our meet up plans. RSVP to president@pascoaudubon.com.

Also of note is that Noriko Buckles and a group of our newly formed camera club will be with us. They'll be making the most of the great photo ops that Honeymoon affords, while our main birding party will be looking to see a full range of the species on offer. Hope you're able to join us!

The photos here were taken on our last visit to Honeymoon in November 2023.



Wilson's Plover



Osprey



Fulvous Whistling-Ducks



Gray-headed Swamphen

November 22nd Field Trip: Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive

This is another fan favorite field trip that we were unable to make last year as a result of hurricane closures. So that makes it extra exciting to get out there and experience it once again. With Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, Gray-headed Swamphens and a wide variety of ducks, shorebirds, wading birds, sparrows, raptors and others, its always a great place to experience nature. Its notable for the opportunities to see species up close and makes for a great place to observe species that are often challenging to see. Here's our list with photographs from the last trip - 2 years ago <https://ebird.org/checklist/S154725063>.

The drive itself will take us on an 11 mile trail. Its a one-way track and we are limited to 12mph. That said, we will be pulling over and stopping MANY times to observe and photograph birds and other wildlife (the drive has numerous alligators, some raccoons, bobcats etc.). There is little walking involved. The address of the drive is 2850 Lust Road, Apopka. For those of us coming from the New Port Richey area, that's a trip of about 2 hours. You may want to connect with friends to drive together. Also - do bring plenty of water and a packed lunch and/or snacks - there is no place to purchase food on the property and it is a long day. We will likely take 4-5 hours to get around, and we'll stop at the pump house for a lunch break. Portable facilities are available at the beginning of the trail and at the pump house.

Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive is a very popular wildlife viewing area and is only open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. As the day wears on it will become quite busy, so we treasure the early hours as our optimal opportunity for viewing. Our start time along the trail will officially be 8am. But, as those with past experience know, the area between the gate and the kiosk/restroom can be very active early, and those who are able may wish to aim to arrive at 7:30, allowing time to bird that productive area before we set out along the trail at 8am in convoy. If you are late, please observe the trail speed limit and just look out for us - you won't be able to miss us.

Join the 2025 BioBlitz at Heartwood Preserve on November 15th!

by **Laura Starkey and Nicolle Meeke**

Nature lovers, birders, botanists, and photographers – join us for a full day of biodiversity exploration at Heartwood Preserve!

The 2025 BioBlitz at Heartwood Preserve is a community science event dedicated to documenting the rich plant and animal life of our 41-acre area. The event brings together scientists, educators, naturalists, and nature enthusiasts to explore, observe, and record the biological inventory of our preserve using the iNaturalist app.

This year's event features two exciting components.

The Birders BioBlitz, led by Christine Rowland, will explore throughout the nature preserve and cemetery grounds. Christine will take participants on a sunrise walk through longleaf pine flatwoods, cypress wetlands, and oak hammock. The early light and quiet surroundings create ideal conditions for birdwatching and photography.

Participants will document bird species by uploading their images to Heartwood Preserve's BioBlitz Project on the iNaturalist website. To register for the Birders BioBlitz on November 15th, email Christine at president@pascoaudubon.com.

We are actively recruiting Team Leaders, as well as Field explorers for the botany segment of the BioBlitz.

Field Team Leaders will be familiar with BioBlitzes and the iNaturalist app, lead explorers within a designated natural area, and provide overall support and guidance.

Field Explorers – Document as many species as possible during the BioBlitz window.

(Continued on p. 6)

Schedule:

6:30 am- Early Morning Birders BioBlitz

9:00 am - Welcome Breakfast and Orientation for non-birders

9:30am - Field explorer teams begin to observe and catalog species in designated survey areas.

9:30am - Birders convene, have breakfast, and complete documentation with iNaturalist

12:30 - Lunch

1:00 wrap-up - Sharing of species, stories, and fun prizes!

Whether you are building your photograph portfolio or simply enthusiastic about nature, your contributions will help enrich the BioBlitz species inventory and support conservation efforts.



Scan this image to register for the bioBlitz

Report: Field Trip to Lake Dan Preserve, October 11, 2025

We had very comfortable temperatures for our trip, and 15 of us enjoyed a walk out to Lake Dan and back, seeing 46 species of birds along the way. Our birding highlights included brief glimpses of a Northern Harrier, a Marsh Wren, our first Eastern Phoebe of the season, an Indigo Bunting and 3 migrating Blackburnian Warblers!

Thanks to all for making this a lovely trip. Our list can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S278635745> .



Gray Catbird by Phil Duncan



Birders of the Future - Cameron and Colin



Eastern Bluebird by Bob Burkard



Northern Mockingbird by Bob Burkard

Our October 19th Birding-by-Bike Outing at Chassahowitzka WMA

Our October Pasco Birding-by-Bike outing was at the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area. The day was bright and sunny, and the temperature perfect for a bike ride. We identified 33 species of birds and biked 7 miles around the trail. They are resurfacing the trail, and it was a very dusty ride for the first 1 ½ miles.

We saw and heard Eastern Bluebirds and Red-Bellied Woodpeckers throughout the outing, and Palm Warblers have arrived in large numbers. My favorites from the outing were a juvenile Red-headed Woodpecker, family of Brown-headed Nuthatches, a Cooper’s Hawk, and a Savannah Sparrow.



Red-bellied Woodpecker by Bob Burkard



Downy Woodpecker by Bob Burkard

Our Birding-by-Bike outings that are scheduled for the remainder of 2025.

Month	Date	Location	Time
November	Sunday, November 9, 2025	Pinellas Trail - Meet at Brooker Creek Preserve Parking lot	8:00 AM
December	Sunday, December 14, 2025	Good Neighbor Trail, Brooksville - Carpool to area	8:00 AM



Red-tailed Hawk by Anthony Marella



Burrowing Owl by Anthony Marella

Report: October 25th Field Trip to Cross Bar Ranch

Our morning began at the gate to the ranch with an unexpected sighting - Dave Bowman saw an American Bittern rise into the air, and all of us there early had the treat of watching it fly over our group and away. It was definitely a good omen for the morning.

Once we were all assembled, the 22 of us condensed down into 7 vehicles and convoyed through the property. The initial drive gave us Eastern Phoebe, American Kestrels and Wild Turkeys. We made a brief stop at a marsh before heading over to the Florida Scrub-Jay habitat. Our host, Dave Adams, explained that there are currently 2 families sometimes seen on the property with a couple of additional birds who occasionally visit. We didn't have much luck at first, but did sight a pair of adult Bald Eagles along with a juvenile, a Red-tailed Hawk, some saw a Northern Harrier, along with Wilson's Snipe, Eastern Towhee, Eastern Meadowlarks and several other species. Just as we were returning to our cars to move to the next stop we caught a distant look at a Florida Scrub-Jay in a shrub. It was joined briefly by two others. While this wasn't the type of look we had hoped for, we were happy to have seen them.

After a couple of additional stops and a fortuitous pick-up of a Sedge Wren by Pamela Graber, we moved on to the Burrowing Owls. By this time it was quite breezy. We were fortunate enough to see a pair of Burrowing Owls in the very first burrow in the field - one I normally think of as the demonstration burrow. Dave Adams had not seen this burrow used in years, but that's exactly where they were on this occasion. In order not to flush them we remained outside the field, and they seemed content to sit there and look at us with all of our cameras while we admired them.

As of writing this article the list from the trip is still being formed and photos will be added, but it can be found at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S281300865> .



Bald Eagles by Anthony Marella



Wild Turkeys by Paige Ely

Pasco Audubon Bluebird Project: 2025 Results

by Bob Burkard

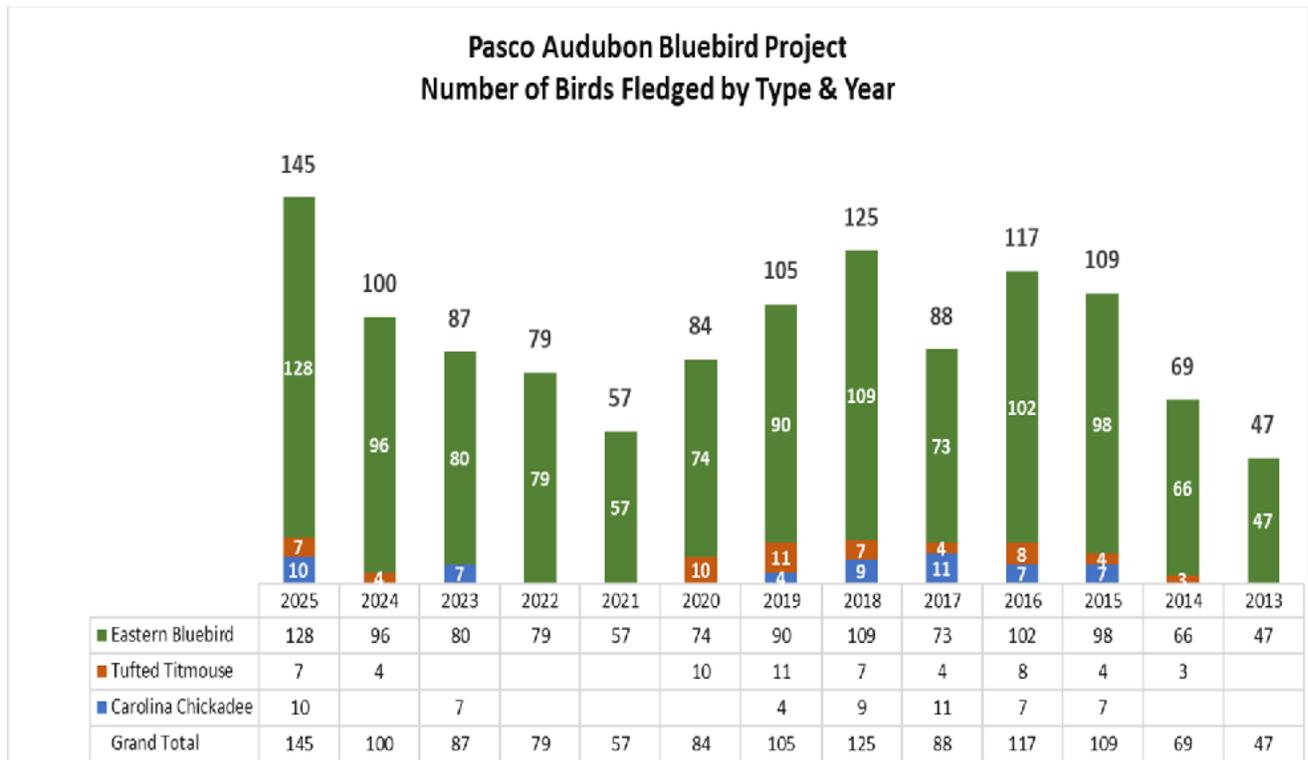
2025 was a very successful nesting season for the birds nesting in the boxes managed by Pasco Audubon in our Eastern Bluebird Conservation Project. 145 birds successfully fledged in our 42 nesting boxes at 12 locations across Pasco County.

Historical results of our Pasco Audubon Bluebird Conservation Project: 1,212 birds have fledged in our boxes since Mike Kell started keeping detailed records over a dozen years ago.

Link to our interactive map that shows where our Pasco Audubon Bluebird Boxes are located:

[Bluebird Box Locations Map](#)

I am excited for the opportunity to share more information on Eastern Bluebirds and our Pasco Audubon Bluebird Conservation project at our December 4th meeting.



Board Elections

This year we have 2 Board members up for re-election - Patricia Goldberg and Christine Rowland - and we are looking to add 2 additional Board members.

As of now, our nominees are as follows:

Bob Burkard (First-time Nominee)

Bob has now been leading our Birding-by-Bike program for 2 years and has been coordinating our Eastern Bluebird Project for a couple of years too. With a strong record of service in two different programs, he will make a great addition to our Board if elected.

Patricia Goldberg (re-election)

Patricia has been a Board member since 2018 and has helped us with all things photography, including teaching a Wildlife Photography course for several years, founding the Nature and Wildlife of Tampa Bay Photography Competition, along with working on various special projects, most recently the Black Rail Project, spearheading the data analysis and moving the remote listening device through the marsh every few days.

Christine Rowland (re-election)

Christine compiles the newsletter, runs the Facebook page, coordinates the Birding 102 program, coordinates the monthly talks and field trips, co-organizes the Christmas Bird Count, coordinates the Winter Shorebird Count, conducts rooftop nesting checks, monitors the Eastern Bluebird boxes in Heartwood Preserve, etc.

In addition to these three nominees, we do need an additional Board member who will step into the role of Secretary in January when the new term begins. A candidate for this position needs to be computer literate, comfortable with Zoom, organized and able to make our monthly Board meetings, which take place via Zoom one evening a month. Additionally, the Secretary keeps our chapter's records including meeting minutes, and sets and distributes our Board agendas, etc. Anyone stepping up would receive tons of support and appreciation! Want to discuss it a bit further or have your questions answered? Contact either Christine at president@pascoaudubon.com or our outgoing Secretary, Kimberly Snaric, at pascoaudubon@gmail.com. We'll set up a call with you to discuss it.

To nominate someone (or yourself) as a Board member with a view to becoming Secretary, please reach out to our Nominating Committee.

Joanne Chamberlain - treasurer@pascoaudubon.com (Chair)

Joe Colantonio - jcolantonio@verizon.net

Pamela Graber - pamela.graber@gmail.com

Looking Ahead to December..

December 6th - 8am - Monthly walk in Starkey Park

11am - How to Become a Good Eastern Bluebird Landlord with Bob
Burkard

Our December Meeting will include a pot-luck brunch and our
annual membership meeting, when we elect our Board of Directors

December 14th - Birding-by-Bike trip to Good Neighbor Trail in Hernando County

December 15th - Christmas Bird Count

Pasco Audubon Board of Directors

Christine Rowland, President - president@pascoaudubon.com

Don Fraser, Vice President and Conservation Chair dmfraser31@gmail.com

Joanne Chamberlain, Treasurer - treasurer@pascoaudubon.com

Kimberly Snaric, Secretary - pascoaudubon@gmail.com

Mike Kell, Web Master jmike65@gmail.com

Patricia Goldberg, Special Projects projects@westpascoaudubon.com

JoAnn Sinatra, At-Large

Ken Landry, At-Large

Other Important Contacts:

Fran Sigurdson, Membership Chair fsigurds@gmail.com

Bob Burkard, Birding-by-Bike and The Eastern Bluebird Project robertburkard9@gmail.com

Hal Sigurdson, Photography Competition Coordinator PascoAudubonPhotos@gmail.com

Noriko Buckles, Pasco Audubon Camera Club Coordinator nbucklesphoto@gmail.com