The article continues on the next page
* Get a good field guide and read a little each day
* Wear muted colors
* HAVE FUN!

Our next Beginning Birding Class starts on October 24th and runs through December 7th. It includes three classroom sessions and three outdoor workshops. See the announcement here on page 4 and if you wish, print it and register for the class. We hope to see you at our September meeting.

Melissa Lammers

Conservation Notes

Martin County, on Florida’s east coast just north of Palm Beach County, was ground zero for the massive algae blooms in the Indian River two years ago. Septic tanks, which leach nitrogen into ground water, are a major source of the nutrients feeding these algae blooms. So when debating the choice between eliminating the septic tanks or switching to a sewer system, guess what the Martin County Commission voted to do. That’s right, they voted to more than double the allowable size of septic tanks, from 2,000 gallons to 5,000 gallons. The reason for this incredibly dumb decision is so that development can continue paving over and covering what’s left of Martin County with more houses. The costs associated with switching to a sewer system are huge and tax payers and home owners will be saddled with footing the bill. But to continue the use of septic tanks is a myopic choice that assures continued pollution; fetid, smelly water unfit for human contact and loads of dead fish whose aroma is even worse than that of the water. Actions have consequences and the folks in Martin County and the other counties along what was once the nation’s most productive estuary will have to live with these consequences for a long time.

On the other side of the state there’s another threat brewing that needs our attention and if possible, a little bit of our money. Little Estero Island is a dedicated bird sanctuary that hosts nesting herons and egrets along with nesting shorebirds like Wilson’s and Snowy Plovers and Least Terns and Black Skimmers. An out of state corporation owns a large seasonal rental complex nearby and they asked the state for permission to build an elevated board walk out to the island from their development. This will allow the renters access to the island’s beach. If built, it will also allow predators like coyotes and raccoons access to the island’s nesting birds. This is such a stupid idea that the Town of Fort Myers Beach joined Audubon Florida in pleading with the state to deny the application. But the developers are well connected and the Department of Environmental Protection (in this case perhaps it should be called the Department of Environmental “Prostitution”) granted the permit. Audubon Florida has no choice but to seek redress in the courts and that’s not a decision they take lightly. Litigation is expensive and we always try to negotiate a compromise but this time that’s not an option. If you’d like to contribute to the legal fund for this cause, click on this link, Audubon Florida really needs the support. Thanks!

David Hartgrove

Curmudgeon Quote of the Month

“Anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that “My ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.”

Isaac Asimov

Help Out With The International Coastal Cleanup

On Saturday, September 16th, 9:00 am—11:30 am join volunteers from all over the county to help remove trash from beaches, rivers and parks during the 2017 International Coastal Cleanup and Halifax/Indian River Cleanup. Last year, 1,683 Volusia County residents came together to remove over 7,700 pounds of trash. We’re a bit late getting the word out and registration for this event closes September 1st. However you can simply show up at one of the collection sites listed below to do your part. Participants are asked to bring garden gloves, drinking water, and buckets for collecting trash. Wear a hat, sunscreen, comfortable clothing and outdoor footwear. Here’s a list of the places to show up at 9:00 am:

* Bicentennial Park, 1800 Oceanshore Blvd., Ormond-By-The-Sea
* Sanchez Park, 329 Sanchez Ave., Ormond Beach
* Cassen Park, 1 S. Beach Street, Ormond Beach
* Sunrise Park North, 1135 Riverside Drive, Holly Hill
* Daytona Beach City Island Park, 105 E. Magnolia Ave., Daytona Beach.

Audubon & The League of Women Voters

Partners For Sensible Solutions

The Volusia Solar Coop is coming soon. So what’s a solar coop you’re asking yourself? To quote from the LWV press release, “Solar co-ops consist of homeowners who are bundling their buying power to secure a discounted price for solar PV arrays on their respective homes.” PV stands for photo voltaic, the magical little panels that make electricity from sunshine and lower your electric bill. The League of Women Voters of Florida is partnering with FL SUN, a new statewide nonprofit bringing solar co-ops to communities across Florida. Local organizations, like Halifax River Audubon, will be invited to become local partners to help publicize and provide public support for the co-op. Here’s a chance to become a part of the solution to climate change and lower your monthly electric bill a lot. Nancy Vaughn, Co-Chair of LWV’s Solar and Water Action Team, will speak on this at our meeting on October 16th. A list of local workshop locations appears below.

Editor
Time for another in our continuing series “Everyday Birding”

A Bird Feeder and Apple Pie

When my mother made an apple pie, I think she took more pleasure in watching her young family dive into her delicious creation than she did in actually taking part in the gourmet feast. I guess my remembrance of those past apple pie treats can today apply to my backyard birding obsession. I really enjoy watching the antics of birds at my backyard bird feeder station. To the birds it is a necessary act of feeding, positioning and posturing, to me it is a wonderful feeling of satisfaction and delight. The effort is simple. Keep the feeder full, clean and standing.

However, first you must have a bird feeder and a window. A window to look out of and a feeder to look at. You can place your feeder anywhere outside. I prefer to have mine ten feet from my house and in front of a window and at least five feet off the ground.

There are many acceptable bird feeders in the market place that will attract birds to your window. Some are ready to go and some require minor assembly. All seem well designed and should bring you years of service and satisfaction. However, I prefer to make my own. I can be more creative and customize it as desired, for the seasons and avian migration. At the beginning of the winter season at my Connecticut home I would go to my friendly apple orchard, select a short section of an apple tree limb, drill holes in it, stuff it with suet and attach it to my self-made pipe feeder station. Throughout the winter season this arrangement would attract Hairy, Downy, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches and Yellow-shafted Flickers. An occasional European Starling would try it but the Copper’s and Sharp-shinned Hawks patrolling my yard would keep their numbers low.

In my Florida yard I now use two inch white PVC pipe to make my bird feeder station. I found that the steel water pipe rusted too fast and came down during heavy winds. I do not use glue to attach the various pieces together.

You have the freedom to design it as you please. Just adhere to my few recommendations and you will enjoy your own apple pie treat.

**Tools:** sledge hammer, block of wood, saw, phillips head screw driver, electric drill, step ladder.

**Material:** two 10 foot x2 inch PVC pipe, 2 inch fittings, stainless steel screws, bolts nuts, tray, 6 inch stove pipe with cap.

**To Proceed:** From the ladder pound the 10 foot pipe (cushioned by the wood block) 2 feet into the ground. Have someone sight the vertical position when pounding and use a carpenter level for vertical accuracy. Drill a 2 inch hole into cap and attach to the stove pipe with stainless steel sheet metal screws. Drill screws into the upright pipe to anchor the stove pipe (squirrel proof) in place. Slip it over upright pipe, then attach feeder assembly to top of pipe.

During the time that I have used this feeder station, I have been surprised, flabbergasted and charmed by the various birds appearing and the uniqueness of their individual behaviors. I observed that a Tufted titmouse will take one seed at a time, fly to a nearby branch, place the sunflower seed between its toes, rapidly peck at the seed and finally break away the husk to get to a well deserved treat. Whereas a mourning dove will stay at the feeder and just gobble down one seed at a time while protecting its position at the feeder ferociously. Lastly, suspend a flower pot tray below the large feeder to lessen fallen seeds, attach your feeders (your choice), add bird food and enjoy your hypothetical apple pie feast.

Ray Scory

The photos above show Ray’s feeder from two angles. The three birds in the second photo are male and female Northern Cardinals and a male Painted Bunting. *Photos by Ray Scory*

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Audubon Adventures

**Audubon Adventures**, is a wonderful program that helps engage kids in the natural world around them. Ranked as one of the most popular environmental education curricula in the country, our chapter has been donating to provide this valuable program to Volusia County school kids since its inception. Donations from members fund this program. Send your donation to Halifax River Audubon, P.O. Box 166, Daytona Beach FL 32115-0166. Please specify on your check check that your donation is for Audubon Adventures. And thank you!
HALIFAX RIVER AUDUBON

Presents

BEGINNER BIRD WATCHING CLASS

2017

Learn how to identify birds, how to find birds, how to develop birding skills, how to improve your binocular use and many other birding facts. Join our class for fun, information and fellowship.

Donation: $25.00 check, payable to Halifax River Audubon, noting “Bird Class” in the comment section. Mail to:

Halifax River Audubon
PO Box 166
Daytona Beach, FL 32115

Place: Port Orange Public Library Auditorium, 1005 City Center Circle, Port Orange.

Classroom instruction will be held on Tuesday October 24, November 14 and December 5 at 9:00 to 12:00 p.m. Sign up with a friend, or make a new one, and have lunch after the class.

Outdoor workshops to practice techniques learned in the classroom will be held on Thursday mornings following the Tuesday morning class; i.e.:

Thursday, October 26 – 8:00 a.m. at Port Orange Causeway Park*
Thursday, November 16 – 8:00 a.m. at Tomoka State Park*
Thursday, December 7 –7:00 a.m. at Merritt Island NWR*

* Outdoor workshop details are subject to change. Instructor will confirm time/location at the prior class. Students who miss the class should contact instructor for details. Outdoor workshops are limited to registered class members only.

Bring your binoculars to all classes, especially the first class, as well as to all outdoor workshops.

Contact David Hartgrove 386-788-2630 or birdman9@earthlink.net.

Class size is limited to 28, so sign up early. You do not have to be a member of Halifax River Audubon to attend.

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A Special Thanks To Our Sponsors

Florida Power & Light, Garden Club of the Halifax Country,
The Ormond Beach Garden Club, Spruce Creek Garden & Nature Club
and Colonial Colony

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Our mailing address is PO Box 166 Daytona Beach, FL 32115-0166
Our website is www.halifaxriveras.org For information on upcoming field trips, etc.

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