

## Southeast Volusia Audubon Society Meeting

December 10, 2015

Financial Report: \$2,200.61 presently in checking account, there was no new activity for the month.

Conservation Report: Lamont reiterated the importance of keeping current with the hydraulic fracturing legislation. The state is trying to pre-empt anti-fracking laws being passed by local communities. The fracking procedure is environmentally dangerous to the water supply and the surrounding wildlife habitat. It was noted that New Smyrna is discussing action on anti-fracking ordinances. The other issue of note was the discussion about seismic exploration in Big Cypress Preserve in south Florida. This is an environmentally sensitive area because of its location adjacent to the Everglades as well as being the home of the endangered Florida Panther. While the land is federally owned and is a National Park the mineral rights were maintained by the family at the time of the sale. This can allow the private exploration of oil and gas.

Field Trip Report: The schedule for field trips is on the SEVAS web site. The next scheduled trip is to Merritt Island on December 16. On the last trip to Doris Leeper Park 34 species were identified. These field trips are a great opportunity to both hone your birding skills and see the wonderful array of birds present in this area.

### New Business:

The Christmas Bird Count is January 2, Saturday. Please sign up with Gail or Richard

Tomoka Science Fair : January 30, 2016 at 8a.m. at the Atlantic High School. Lamont has volunteered to be a judge. Our organization provides money for the prizes as well as sets the criteria for judging the entries.

The PIPL Shorebird Count: the proposed dates are January 26-27. This year a Piping Plover survey has been added. They will both be done the same day and the date is yet to be determined. Volunteers are needed and you can sign up with Don. Of note, there have been two Piping Plovers seen recently at Smyrna Dunes Park.

The Audubon Field Guide to North American birds is now a free app for both Android and IOS. Just go to your app store and download it.

The Space Coast Birding Festival is January 20-25 in Titusville. To see the schedule and to register go to the website.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is February 12-15. This event is sponsored by Cornell University and is a great way to do some "arm chair" birding right in your own neighborhood. The Cornell website will provide further information.

Tonight's Speaker: Milton Heiberg a photographer, writer and naturalist who lives and works in Orlando gave a very interesting and informative talk on his work with banding and photographing Scrub Jays at Buck Lake in Mims. His objective is to inform the public of the connection between these birds, native to Florida, and the health of the aquifer. The population of these birds has decreased 90% since the early 1800s by the loss of habitat from building, area fragmentation and vegetation uncontrolled by naturally occurring fires. These same habitat issues are affecting the aquifer when Florida scrub is replaced by "rooftops, roads, and retention ponds". There are opportunities to become involved in banding and studying the Scrub Jay through Audubon of Florida. There are also Jay- watch training sessions for at the Lyonia Preserve again, through Audubon of Florida. For more information about Mr. Heiberg's plan he can be contacted at([photonat@cfl.rr.com](mailto:photonat@cfl.rr.com))

The next meeting is on January 14, 2016 at 7p.m. at the Marine Discovery Center.

Marsha