



# 4 The Birds

***FAS Mission Statement:*** “connecting and educating people about birds and other wildlife in their habitats and taking a leadership role in preservation and restoration of diverse eco-systems”

**A Quarterly Newsletter**

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**Field Trips**

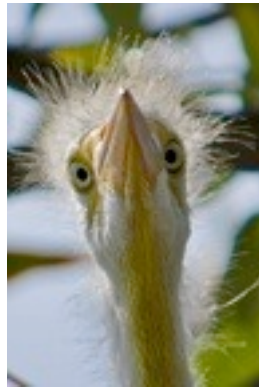
**Programs and Bird Walks**

*A list of our trips with details for the quarter.*

*A list of our programs and bird walks.*

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**Birding and Environmental News**

*Articles on local, state and national issues.*

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**Education and Birding News**

*Information on birding with useful tips for improving your birding skills.*

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## Field Trips

We have had some exciting trips so far this year; If you’ve missed them, you have two more chances to enjoy our beautiful state for birding

**March 19th, 2011 --- Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.**

This trip replaces our bird-a thon. The economy killed this event since we can not secure the corporate sponsors to ensure its success. We did not go to Merritt Island in January because it was so dry. Recent rains should make this trip as enjoyable as it has been in the past.



This birding hot spot is especially attractive to migrating waterfowl during the winter months. Impossible to take it all in during one visit we will do our best to see as much as we can; plan on a full day with some members staying until dusk. We’ll break for lunch with an option to picnic or go to a local restaurant.

**April 23rd --- Mt. Dora/ Lake Dora/ Canal guided boat trip**

This will be our last field trip for this year and it promises to be one to remember. You’ll want to make this a full day affair and take advantage of this cute town with its wonderful shops.... oh yea, the birding is supposed to be good on the lake at this time of year too.

# MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Our FAS meetings are held at Flagler Hospital at 6:30 PM, come and learn more about birds and our environment.



**March 3** ---- We'll learn how to take care of exotic birds using eco-friendly practices as shared by J.G. Paterjak.

Google: "J. Pasterjak Parrots in the Park, Palm Coast", and you can see some of his birds, and videos on You Tube. You'll then get a better idea what the program will be. We'll also get to see some birds up close.

**April 7** ---- Gen Anderson will share a behind the scenes view of the Rookery at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm.

**May 7** ---- We'll end our year with a pot luck luncheon at the St. Joe Walkway Trailhead at 10:30 AM

## Local Bird Walks

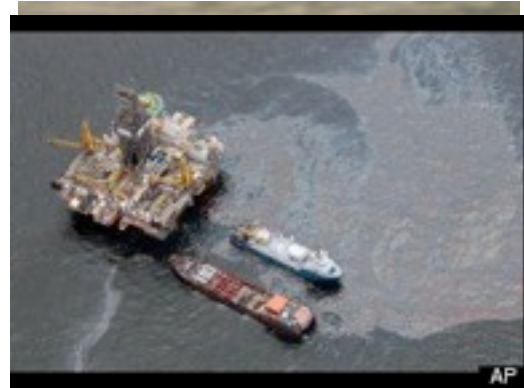
These are local trips that start at 8:00 AM at the locations listed

**March 5** ---- We will conduct two "walks" this month. you can choose to hike the trail at Bulow Ruins State Park or kayak/canoe along Bulow Creek (canoe rentals available).

**April 9** ---- Check out the many wading birds at Gable Rodgers State Park. See how a marsh can be restored to its natural state.

**May 7** ---- At 9:30 AM, just prior to our picnic, we'll explore St. Joe Walkway starting at the trailhead off of Colbert Lane.





## Gulf oil spill: short- and long-term effects\*

Whenever the April 20 explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig off the coast of Louisiana is referred to as a tragic event, everyone within earshot nods in agreement. But use the word "catastrophe," especially as we get farther from the July 15 capping of the well, and you may hear murmurings from some quarters that the environmental impact may not be quite on the scale that was forecast back in May, June, or July.

For the duration of the spill, birds received a significant share of the media coverage; images of pelicans floundering in pools of toxic sludge gave us a visceral connection with the events occurring hundreds or thousands of miles away. But now that those images are no longer prime fodder for the evening

news, and 1,245 rescued birds have been cleaned and released, what do we really know about the toll on the birds and the full spectrum of environmental impacts? One would think we could turn to science to assess the damage. In this case, however, the science is lacking, and the range of opinion on how to interpret what little data we have is as wide as the Mississippi River and about as clear as its famously muddy waters.

Data as of October 2010 from the gulf show that 8,184 dead birds had been collected, with more than 6,000 identified to species. Coastal seabirds such as gulls, pelicans, skimmers, and terns were hardest hit, with 4,514 dead birds collected. Among pelagic sea-birds such as shearwaters, gannets, boobies, cormorants, storm-petrels, sooty terns, and frigatebirds, 1,408 are known to have died.

Coastal and pelagic seabirds caught the worst of it because they dive for food in open water. This summer, thousands of them

would have been diving through heavily oiled waters.

Observations by those that journeyed to the Gulf of Mexico in July seem to confirm these figures, with many sightings of oiled brown pelicans, roseate spoonbills, least terns, cattle and great egrets, and royal terns.

Certainly, the weather conditions played a role in keeping oil away from sensitive wetlands, and the wide use of dispersants helped prevent oiling of significant numbers of birds.

The long term effects of oil spills, especially in deep waters, will need to be studied and documented lest we rush to conclusions that will doom us to repeat our mistakes and do irreparable harm to the environment.

\* Material taken from Bob Jones recent article in Bird Watchers Digest Magazine