



<http://www.santafeaudubon.org>

Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL

**MAY 2025
NEWSLETTER**

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PROGRAM TUESDAY-MAY 13

HOW TO BECOME A RECIPIENT PROPERTY AND WHY GOPHER TORTOISES ARE SO IMPORTANT AND FUN TO HAVE AROUND

Speaker Aaryn Tarver

6:45 PM at Trinity Episcopal Parish Hall
204 SR 26 downtown Melrose
All are welcome!



Photos courtesy of
Jacqueline Williamson



The safety of our membership is of utmost importance. We encourage everyone to, please, wear a mask. Our in-person Speaker Series may be postponed or canceled on short notice due to health related concerns.

A Message from the President

Dear SFAS Members and Friends,

Tuesday, May 13, please join us for our last program of the 2024-2025 season "How To Become A Recipient Property And Why Gopher Tortoises Are So Important And Fun To Have Around" with speaker Aaryn Tarver.

Over the summer we will be planning for our 2025 - 2026 Programs and Field Trips, which will begin October 2025 thru May 2026. We will keep you up-to-date throughout the summer in The Kite.

Have a great summer, stay hydrated and use sunscreen.

Sincerely,

Celina Rohman

President,
Santa Fe Audubon Society



FLORIDA WILDLIFE EXTENSION Wildlife Happenings

Click on the link below to check out the
"Wildlife Happenings" in our area.

https://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/happenings/

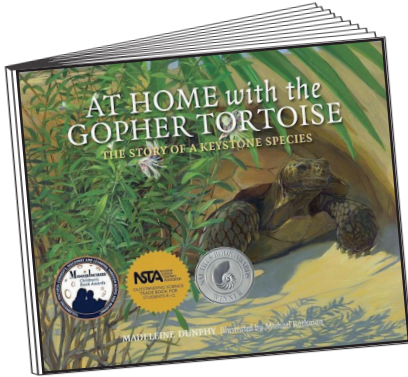
RECOMMENDED READING

from Jacqueline Williamson

AT HOME WITH THE GOPHER TORTOISE

A Story of a Keystone Species

by Madeleine Dunphy



Did you know that more than 360 different kinds of animals and plants depend upon gopher tortoise burrows for survival?

Glorious illustrations reveal the gopher tortoise's world both

below and above ground while

inviting text introduces children to the pivotal role the gopher tortoise plays as a keystone species. In this fascinating tale of ecological interdependency, children will discover how the fate of one species can affect the fate of so many others. (Reading age 5-9 years.)

GOOD NEWS

by Jacqueline Williamson

BLACK LAKE PRESERVE UPDATE

The preserve is planning a timber harvest with the goal to reduce the overall density to historically natural levels and let more light reach the ground to encourage native plants and wildflowers.

Once complete, staff will be moving forward with plans to open the site to the public, hopefully by the end of this calendar year.

This will be a wonderful natural resource for Melrose and surrounding communities.



Three Kestrel boxes with nesting Kestrels now have recording cameras watching and photographing all movement inside the box.

Box 26 has had an operational camera since April 8th, there were 4 eggs when the camera was installed. The first thing we learned is the eggs in box 26 started hatching on April 16 at noon. Going through the pictures, the next thing we learned was that these Kestrels like dining on Anoles

As of April 23rd, this box has four healthy nestlings with very attentive parents who hung around watching us as we checked the camera installation. We now have confirmed five different boxes have nesting Kestrels; the one with nestlings 8 days old and the other four with eggs laid. There is still a small possibility of one or two more late nesters.



BIRD OF THE MONTH

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)
band code "SUTA"



The only completely red bird in North America, the strawberry-colored male Summer Tanager is an eye-catching sight against the green leaves of the forest canopy.

The mustard-yellow female is harder to spot (below), though both sexes have a very distinctive chuckling call note.



Fairly common during the summer, these birds migrate as far as the middle of South America each winter. All year long they specialize in catching bees and wasps on the wing, somehow avoiding being stung by their catches.

For such a bright-red bird, Summer Tanagers can be hard to see in the tops of leafy green trees. As with many forest songbirds, the best way to find them is to listen, both for the robin-like song and for their very distinctive, muttering pit-ti-tuck call note. Look for them in open woodlands (particularly of oaks and other deciduous trees) where they are usually in the mid-canopy and above.

For more information about Summer Tanagers click on the link below.

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Summer_Tanager/overview

Fun Fact: A group of Tanager's are collectively known as a "season" of Tanagers.

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION



The Mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

Visit the Florida Native Plant Society website:
<https://www.fnps.org>



Add wildflowers to your landscape now to help birds thrive!

To bring birds into your landscape, plant a variety of Florida native wildflowers that provide food and habitat. Include species that produce nectar and seeds, attract insects, and offer shelter.

Visit the Florida Wildflower Foundation website:
<https://www.flawildflowers.org>

For additional information on native plants for birds:
<https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>