



The Buzzard Bulletin

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

December, 2022-January, 2023

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Notepad

Sweeping up

Sweeps are still needed for walks, education programs, members-only events, and Strolling Science Seminars. Sign up in Track-it-Forward in the Events section.

Events in blue need volunteers. Those in gray are filled, and green indicates those you have already volunteered to help.

Just for volunteers

Three Hike & Learn walks, just for volunteers, are coming up. Reserve a spot in Track-it-Forward.

- Dec. 10: Bug Theater—CMT
- Feb. 13: Scat, tracks & more—CDT
- Mar. 31: Birding ID—FPS

Volunteer milestones

Bruce Bunch passed the 1,000 service hour milestone and Dick Brewer passed the 4,000 service hour milestone.

Volunteers are asked to log their hours in Track-it-Forward as soon as possible after finishing a task.

Holiday shopping?

When shopping for holiday gifts at AmazonSmile, be sure to list the CREW Land & Water Trust as a preferred charity.

As of the end of October, Amazon had donated over \$1,200 to the CREW Trust.

Hunting dates

- Dec. 3-Jan. 1: Small game
- Mar. 4-12: Spring turkey

Restoration works for wildlife

Snail Kite populations expanding in CMT

Two confirmed staff sightings of Snail Kites have been made in the 5,000-acre CREW marsh since the completion of the marsh restoration by SFWMD and FWC.

One sighting was before Hurricane Ian and one sighting was after. While they have not been observed from the CMT trails before, land managers have seen them out farther in the marsh.

The reason behind the new Snail Kite observations is a combination of two things: first, water levels are just right in this foraging area for apple snails; and two, the marsh restoration included the removal of willows and restored the area's natural vegetation.

This allowed Apple Snails to increase population numbers which improved the marsh as a foraging site for the Snail Kites.



Observations may vary due to water levels, but this area is now more suitable for Snail Kites to forage.

Visitor, volunteer photos document changes

A new addition to the CREW trails this season are Chronolog stations which allow visitors to insert their cell phones into a set holder to take photos.

All of those photos are automatically uploaded to a web site, creating a time-lapse of the scene and illustrating seasonal and hydrological changes.

Four of the new Chronologs and usage signs have already been installed and initialized at CMT.



The time lapse collection of the photos can be viewed online at the CREW dashboard ([link below](#)).

Once at the site, scroll down to the photo showing the different stations and click on one of them to see the series of all of the photos.

Two more stations are being installed at BRS, one on the boardwalk and one at Ida's Pond. The remaining four will be installed at the other CREW trails in the near future.

CREW dashboard: <https://www.chronolog.io/project/CRW>

ID tips: Distinguishing between similar looking birds

Mourning Dove – Common Ground Dove

The Mourning Dove is almost twice as large. Its bill is dark gray and it has a long pointed tail. When it flies, it is usually fast and in a straight line.

The Common Ground Dove has a pinkish-orange bill and a short rounded tail. When it flies, the wings have a noticeable russet color and it is up and back down very quickly.



Staying connected

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The Buzzard Bulletin contains notes and information for CREW volunteers and is emailed six times a year (September, November, January, March, May, July). Dick Brewer, editor.

Osprey – Short-tailed Hawk

Coloration is very similar, so look for differences in shapes.

In flight, the front edges of an Osprey's wings form a graceful arc. The front edges of a Short-tailed Hawk's wings are almost a straight line.

A thick black stripe on the Osprey's head goes through the eye and straight back. A rounded black patch on a Short-tailed Hawk is on the front of the shoulder and below the eyes.

An Osprey's wing span is nearly five feet while a Short-tailed Hawk's wing span is about three feet. The Osprey weighs over three times as much as the hawk.



Double-crested Cormorant

The bill of the Double-crested Cormorant has a hook at the end which enables it to catch fish with its open bill and the fish can't slip out.

In flight, its tail is shorter than that of the Anhinga.



Anhinga

The bill of the Anhinga is straight and comes to a point. This enables it to spear fish with its bill.

It must then flip its bill upward to dislodge the fish and then catch the fish before it falls back into the water.

