



THE BUZZARD BULLETIN

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

August-September, 2026

Volume 10, Issue 6

NOTEPAD

Welcome

Welcome to new CREW Trust volunteers **Dave Darrah** and **Tim Denger**.

Wet walks

Depending on suitable (wet) trail conditions, planned dates for guided volunteer wet walks are below. All begin at 8 AM.

- Aug. 19: CDT
- Sept. 2: FPS purple trail
- Sept. 16: CDT
- Sept. 30: FPS purple trail

Volunteer socials

Volunteer appreciation socials are scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 12, and Thursday, Feb. 11, at Riptide Brewing in Bonita Springs.

Herp help

Volunteers have three more opportunities to assist with the CREW reptile/amphibian research.

The checks are daily during the weeks of Aug. 3-9, Sept. 1-7, and Dec. 1-7. Volunteers don't have to be there each day.

For information, contact Joe Bozzo at joebozzo1963@gmail.com.

volunteer learning

Learning opportunities for volunteers are planned for each of the CREW trails.

- Nov. 5 - CMT Flora & Fauna
- Nov 12 - FPS Flora & Fauna
- Nov. 17 - First aid at FPS
- Jan. 7 - CDT Flora & Fauna
- Jan. 14 - FPS Flora & Fauna
- Jan. 19 - First aid at FPS

CREW adopt-a-road

Adopt-a-road clean-up days on Corkscrew Road by CMT are planned for Monday, Nov. 10, and Tuesday, Mar. 9. Sign up in TiF.

Summer learning

The final three volunteer learning presentations this summer are at the Estero Recreation Center. Reserve a spot (they're free) in Track-it-Forward.

Wed., Aug. 5: Fire in Florida. Learn about Florida's history of fire, impacts and restrictions from development, and the necessity of prescribed fire. (3:30-5 PM)

Thurs., Aug. 20: Life of an Alligator Biologist. Discover the ecology and biology of alligators and the different research topics and techniques that have been used to study alligators. (10:30 AM-noon)

Sat., Sept. 12: Nature: Medicine for the Mind. Three researchers from FGCU will highlight the diverse ways natural environments can support psychological health, promote restoration, and strengthen human-nature connections. (10:30 AM-noon)

In case a visitor asks

Why do some birds hop while others walk?

Size has a lot to do with the way birds move. Small birds tend to hop while large birds tend to walk.

Birds that spend most of their time in trees tend to hop because hopping is faster and easier on twigs and branches than walking like a tightrope acrobat. Hopping also enables a faster take-off in case a predator suddenly appears. These birds have evolved legs and feet that hop efficiently, so it makes sense to keep this up even when they are foraging on the ground.

Hopping works best for small, lightweight birds with short legs. Each hop takes them as far as several steps, so they use less energy. But hopping is slower than running, so hoppers in a



hurry usually break into a run.

Birds that belong to the same group often share the same way of moving, but not always. In the corvid family, for example, crows and ravens walk while

Preliminary dates

Program details for the 2026-2027 season are still being finalized, but some preliminary dates are already known.

Volunteers are needed as leaders, sweeps, photographers, and general set up and take down.

As more information becomes available, it will be posted in TiF.

Golf Tournament fund raiser

- Oct. 16, location TBD

Guided hikes, November-April

- 1st Wednesdays - CDT
- 2nd Wednesdays - FPS
- 3rd Wednesdays - CMT

Guided bird walks, November-April

- Nov. 16 - fall migration, FPS
- Dec. 14 - wintering birds, CMT
- Jan. 18 - shorebirds, FPS
- Feb. 15 - spring migration, FPS
- Mar. 15 - Swallow-tailed Kites, CMT
- Apr. 19 - spring migration, FPS

jays hop.

Birds that nest and forage on the ground are more likely to walk than hop. This includes game birds like doves as well as smaller birds that chase insects on the ground.

Birds that forage in water have often evolved long legs for wading that allow them to cover a lot of ground efficiently with each stride. Larger, heavier birds also tend to walk. It would be impractical for them to hop on those spindly legs.

Quick ID guide

Queen versus Soldier

Queen and Soldier butterflies are both milkweed butterflies and are about the same size and coloration. Look at the lower wings to tell them apart.

The lower wing of the Queen (*top photo*) is solid orange with black lines. The lower wing of the Soldier (*bottom photo*) is orange with black lines but also with a row of pale spots running along the edge.



Staying connected

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Web sites

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www.trackitforward.com
(hours & events)

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.

Myth busted

Can Woolly Bears predict winter severity?

CREW'S WOOLLY BEAR

Woolly Bears (Isabella Tiger Moth, *Phrrharcia isabella*) are mostly dark orange and black although some lighter versions do occur. All color forms are densely covered with stiff bristles of uniform length, and softer hairs extend from either end of the body.

MYTH

According to folklore, the width of black on a woolly bear caterpillar in autumn indicates the severity of the coming winter. The wider the black bands, the longer, colder, and more severe the winter would be. Conversely, a wider middle red-orange band meant a milder winter.

Two other versions to the lore exist. The first says that if the woolly bear's coat is very woolly, it will be a cold winter. The second says that if the caterpillar is moving in a northerly direction, the winter will be mild, but if it is moving in a southerly direction, it is trying to escape upcoming winter condition which will be colder.

HOW THE MYTH SPREAD

The myth has existed for a long time. According to the *Farmer's Almanac*, the myth was popularized

by entomologist Dr. Howard Curran, curator of insects at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

He decided to put the myth to the test in 1948 and headed to upstate New York to study the caterpillars. There he found over half of his test subjects had wide orange bands, meaning the winter would be milder than average. And it was. He relayed his findings to a reporter and the story was published in the *New York Herald Tribune*.

MYTH BUSTED

A woolly bear caterpillar's colors, its "woolliness" and size, and its direction of travel have nothing to do with the weather. Its coloring is based on how long it has been feeding and its age.

The caterpillar will be larger if it's had a good feeding season. A bigger size results in narrower red-orange bands in the middle, so the width of the bands shows the season's growth.

The band widths also show the age of the caterpillar. Woolly bears molt six times before reaching adult size. With each molt, the colors become less black and more reddish.



Quick ID guide

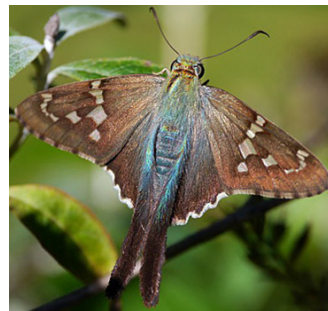
Long-tailed Skipper versus Dorantes Longtail

Identifying two common and related skipper butterflies found on CREW trails can be both challenging and easy.

The challenging part is when their wings are folded. The Long-tailed Skipper (*Urbanus proteus*)

and the Dorantes Longtail (*Urbanus dorantes*) both have long tails, are brown with yellowish-white spots, and are nearly identical.

However, when their wings are open, the difference is easy to spot by



looking at the bodies of the butterflies.

The Long-tailed Skipper has a bright blue-green iridescence on its body that spreads onto the inner edges of its wings. The body of the Dorantes Longtail is all brown.