



THE BUZZARD BULLETIN

Notes & Information for CREW Trust Volunteers

October-November, 2026

Volume 11, Issue 1

NOTEPAD

volunteer socials

Volunteer appreciation socials are scheduled in concert with member socials at Riptide Brewing in Bonita Springs. Reserve a spot in TiF.

- Nov. 12
- Feb. 11

volunteer training

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

- Nov. 9 - Flora & Fauna at CMT
- Nov. 16 - Flora & Fauna at FPS
- Nov. 17 - First aid at FPS
- Jan. 7 - Flora & Fauna at CDT
- Jan. 14 - Flora & Fauna at FPS
- Jan. 19 - First aid at FPS

Adopt-a-road

Two Adopt-a-road clean-up days are planned for Corkscrew Road by CMT. Bring gloves; all other equipment will be provided. Information and sign up are in TiF.

- Nov. 3
- Mar. 9

Hunting dates

Hunting by permit is allowed at the Cypress Dome trails and the northern portion of Flint Pen Strand. Volunteers should be aware during the following dates.

- Nov. 21-29: General gun
- Dec. 5-Jan. 3: Small game
- Feb. 2-Mar. 1: Youth turkey
- Mar. 6-14: Turkey

Birding walks

The guided birding walks listed at the right are limited to 12 people who purchase tickets in Event Bright. For free bird walks, attend Audubon birding hikes listed under "Specialty hikes & programs."

2026-2027 program schedules released

Volunteer assistance is needed at each of the following programs. Assistance can range from photography and leading or sweeping walks to set-up/take down. Additional programs once BRS fully opens may be added during the season. Information, updates, and sign-up are posted in Track-it-Forward

Strolling Science Seminar

- Oct. 23: Fall blooms at sunset, CMT
- Nov. 21: Ferns of the Forest, CMT
- Dec. 5: Geocaching, CMT
- Jan. 16: Edible & Medicinal Plants, FPS
- Feb. 5: Ferns of the Forest, CMT
- Feb. 27: Connections in Nature, CMT
- Mar. 19: Beyond Butterflies, FPS
- Mar. 20: Reptile/Amphibian Diversity, CMT
- Mar. 21: Geocaching, CMT
- Apr. 10: Spring blooms at sunset, CDT

Golf Tournament fund raiser

- Oct. 16: Bonita Bay East

Guided hikes, November-April

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

Guided hikes, January-April

- Every other Wednesday starting January 13 - BRS
- 1st Saturdays - BRS

Butterfly counts

- Oct. 14: FPS (*see page 2*)
- Apr. 14: FPS

Guided birding walks

- 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

Specialty hikes & programs

- Nov. 11: Audubon birding, FPS
- Nov. 14: Photography workshop, FPS
- Jan. 23: Hike the Loop, FPS purple
- Feb. 10: Audubon birding, BRS
- Feb. 20: Hike the Loop, BRS
- Mar. 10: Audubon birding, CMT
- Mar. 27: Hike the Loop, BRS

Help at member programs

- Oct. 8: Sunrise Stroll, CDT
- Dec. 10: New Moon Hike, CMT
- Mar. 18: Sunset Stroll, FPS

Two members-only arts programs offered

Volunteer assistance is not needed at the following member programs, but volunteers who are also CREW Trust members are invited to participate.

Member socials at Riptide Brewing coincide with volunteer socials.

- Jan. 14: Painting in Nature, CMT
- Apr. 8: Watercolors at Sunset, FPS

Autumn intern combines music, nature ecology

Iris Brown is a senior at Florida Gulf Coast University majoring in Musical Performance with a concentration in harp and a minor in Environmental Education.

She is a fifth generation Floridian who grew up homeschooled in Southwest Florida. That background created a deep rooted connection and passion for the flora and fauna of Florida.



Brown plans to pursue a Master's degree in Ecomusicology and further extend her current research project on sound ecology and the music of the natural world. Another goal is earning certification as a Florida Master Naturalist.

During her internship, she wants to instill a sense of joy and curiosity in the hearts and minds of the people on the field trips that she will lead.

Help mentor young scientists at CREW Marsh, Cypress Dome trails

As the 2026-2027 school year begins, CREW Trust is excited to welcome over 50 classrooms to the trails for field trips.

The fall field trip; Walk Through a Watershed, takes third graders into the world of water quality and plant diversity by hiking the CREW Marsh Trails and dip netting for macro-invertebrates to test for the biological health of the watershed.

The spring field trip; Soil Rocks, lets second graders become soil scientists for the day by hiking through all the habitats within CREW Cypress Dome Trails comparing water levels and soil composition.

Education Director Piper Jones is always in need of extra hands to help out at field trips and would love to work with any volunteers interested in helping in the education realm.

Field trips run weekdays from 9AM to 1PM. Volunteer helpers would receive adequate prep/training days to help prepare beforehand. Volunteers can help as many or as few days as they wish.

To learn more or to volunteer with any of the field trips, email Piper at education@crewtrust.org.

Staying connected

People

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Piper Jones
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Web sites

www.crewtrust.org
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.

Animals' eerie eye shine is twice-seen light

Most animals with eye shine are active at night and their ability to use the available light twice, once on the way in and then again on the way out, gives them an edge in finding food and avoiding predators.

Eye shine occurs when light enters the eye, passes through the rods (light receptors) and cones (color receptors) of the retina and strikes a special membrane behind the retina called the tapetum lucidum. The light bounces back so more of it can be absorbed and used by the retina.

Light that is not used exits through the pupil causing the "glow" of the eyes often seen when car headlights or flashlights shine on the animal.

Animals that display the brightest eye shine have more rods and fewer cones in their retinas than animals with no eye shine. That contributes to excellent low light vision but it makes them mostly color blind.

Some night birds also have eyes that glow in the dark, but their eyes do not have a tapetum layer. Scientists are still trying to solve the mystery of their source of eye shine.

At the left, a camera flash captured Barred Owl eye shine in Flint Pen Strand

Eye shine color can vary slightly with the angle at which it is seen, the minerals in the tapetum crystals, and even the type or source



of light.

The special mirror-like membrane is not present in the human eye. Dark-colored cells behind our retinas absorb light rather than reflect it.

"Red eye" in flash photography of people happens when the light from the flash occurs so fast that the pupil can't close fast enough. Light from the flash passes into the eye through the pupil, reflects off the back of the eyeball, and comes back out through the pupil. The camera records this reflected light.

October's fall butterfly count coming to FPS

Volunteers are invited to take part in a citizen science program to learn more about butterflies in Collier County. The program includes a butterfly identification training course and a field trip.

The field trip is on Wednesday, October 14, starting at the FPS

Pinewoods trailhead and will last from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

An optional identification training session will held over Zoom on Wednesday, October 7. A link will be emailed to those who have signed up.

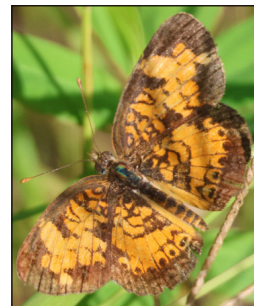
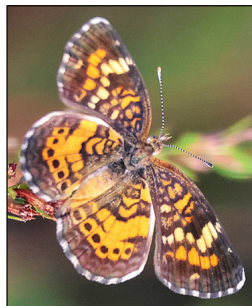
Information and sign-up are posted in Track-it-Forward

Quick ID guide

Phaon Crescent vs. Pearl Crescent

Both butterflies are found low to the ground and in mostly open areas. They are the same size with wingspans of just over one inch.

Although there are many minor differences, the easiest way to tell them apart is look at the colors on the forewings.



The Pearl Crescent's forewings are a solid orange and brown.

The orange and brown forewings of the Phaon Crescent have a bright, light-

colored band at the leading edge of the forewing which is visible from both above and from below.

Index of Buzzard Bulletin articles (available at www.dickbrewer.org/CREWguides.html)

INFORMATION TO ANSWER VISITOR QUESTIONS

Amphibians

Frog, toad & treefrog calls (2024-Apr)

Birds

Why do Anhingas spread their wings (2026-Feb)

Barred Owl & Great Horned Owl (2020-Feb)

Bird color vision (2026-Jun)

Birds and hurricanes (2024-Aug)

Bluebirds aren't blue (2025-Aug)

CREW's four falcons (2023-Nov)

General bird trivia (2020-Feb, 2025-Apr)

Why are bird wings & tails black? (2025-Apr)

Why do some birds hop while others walk? (2026-Aug)

Why do Sapsuckers drill holes in rows? (2025-Dec)

When do birds sleep? (2025-Jun)

CREW's summer warblers (2025-Jun)

General

Dry-downs & wildlife (2019-Dec)

Eyeshine (2026-Oct)

Grassland importance (2019-Apr)

How long can a ___?___ stay under water (2024-Oct)

Hunting on CREW lands (2020-Dec)

Are fungi plant or animal? (2025-Oct)

Habitat

Glossary of wetland terms (2022-Oct)

How high is the water during the wet season (2026-Feb)

Wet prairie vs. marsh (2022-Oct)

Insects

Pine bark beetles (2021-Jun)

Mammals

River Otters (2019-Aug)

Myth busted

Praying Mantis mating (2025-Feb)

Handling baby birds (2025-Apr)

Woolly Bears predict winter weather (2026-Aug)

Plants

Coastal Plain Willow (2021-Apr)

CREW's carnivorous plants (2025-Dec)

Cypress knees (2025-Jun)

Fungi - plants or animals? (2025-Oct)

Holes in Alligator Flag leaves (2024-Aug)

Lichens (2025-Oct)

Monoecious vs. dioecious (2025-Feb)

Natural plant succession (2021-Dec)

Plant galls: cypress-oak-bay-poison ivy (2021-Oct)

Pollen, especially pines (2021-Apr)

Things with thorns: Hog Plum & Smilax (2022-Apr)

Reptiles

Alligator questions (2019-Apr)

Do alligators and turtles shed skin (2025-Aug)

Why do anoles eat shed skin (2025-Aug)

Identifying pond turtles (2025-Feb)

Are snakes territorial (2024-Jun)

Identifying three common pond turtles (2024-Feb)

Why do basking turtles stretch legs (2025-Aug)

Gender is temperature reliant (2025-Aug)

Spiders

Zipper web weavers (2021-Apr)

How can spiders walk on water (2025-Aug)

MISCELLANEOUS

Bird eyesight/ultra violet vision (2026-Jun)

Bird Rookery Swamp construction (2026-Jun)

Book review: Mirage (Florida water history) (2021-Feb)

CREW Numbers (2026-Jun)

MISCELLANEOUS continued

Lessons from an experience trail guide (2020-Dec)

Mortenson trail cam photos (2021-Oct)

Mosquitoes (2024-Jun)

New species on CREW lands (2023-Feb, Jun, Nov)

Trail gear (2018-Aug, Oct, Dec)

Volunteer jobs (2016-Oct-Dec, 2017-Feb-Oct)

QUICK ID TIPS

Amphibians

Green Treefrog vs. Squirrel Treefrog (2021-Aug)

Southern Leopard Frog vs. Pig Frog (2024-Apr)

Birds

Anhinga vs. Double-crested Cormorant (2022-Dec)

Bald Eagle: how to age juveniles (2021-Feb)

CREW's four falcons (2023-Dec)

Common Grackle vs. Boat-tailed Grackle (2024-Aug)

Dove vs. Pigeon (2024-Oct)

Dove: Mourning vs. Common Ground (2022-Dec)

Juvenile night herons (2020-Aug)

Little Blue Heron vs. Tricolored Heron (2024-Feb)

Short tailed Hawk

White phase vs. Osprey (2022-Dec)

Dark phase vs. Black Vulture (2023-Feb)

Small white wading birds (2021-Apr)

Woodpeckers: Downy vs. Hairy (2020-Dec)

Woodpeckers: male vs. female (2022-Aug)

Butterflies

Monarch vs. Viceroy (2021-Oct)

Dark swallowtails (2023-Aug)

Phaon Crescent vs. Pearl Crescent (2026-Oct)

Queen vs. Soldier (2026-Aug)

Skipper: Long-tailed vs. Dorantes (2026-Aug)

Frogs

Southern Leopard Frog vs. Pig Frog (2024-Apr)

General

Holes in the ground: Ant Lion vs. Fire Ant (2020-Jun)

Lichen types (2025-Oct)

Scat (2023-Oct)

Snails: Florida Apple vs Island Apple (2022-Oct)

Tracks (2022-Oct)

Mammals

Cottontail Rabbit vs. Marsh Rabbit (2022-Apr)

Plants

Scarlet Hibiscus vs. Marijuana (2024-Jun)

Reptiles

Common black snakes (2020-Oct)

Large black snakes (2020-Apr & 2020-Oct)

Red-bellied Turtle vs. Peninsula Cooter (2021-Jun)

SAFETY ON THE TRAILS

Biting flies (2021-Aug)

Fire Ants (2020-Apr)

First Aid Tip: Bee stings (2026-Jun)

First Aid Tip: Removing splinters (2025-Oct)

Heat exhaustion (2024-Aug)

Heat & dehydration (2020-Jun)

Heat index (2021-Jun)

Heat related illnesses (2022-Jun)

How to cool down fast (2023-Aug)

Lightning (2019-Jun, 2025-Jun)

Poison Ivy (2019-Oct, 2025-Jun)

Stinging caterpillars (2021-Aug)

Sunscreens (2020-Aug)