Apalachee Audubon Board Meeting Minutes 11-11-2020

In attendance: Kathleen Carr, Ben Rangel, Rob Williams, Donna Legare, Amelia Fusaro, Retired Backyard Birders, Harvey Goldman, Peter Goren, Peter Kleinhenz, Heather Levy, Chase, Nelson Ball, Dara Wilson, Peter Kelly, Norma Skaggs, Peter Goren

CLI students: Caroline Andrews, Tallulah Biletzskov

* Minutes from Oct. meeting were approved
* Harvey emailed out a treasurer’s report
* Kathleen - Birdability and two guests from Jefferson County
  + Guests were Shayndel Shofar and Yusef Leevy
  + The Audubon members who want to create more accessibility for birders with sight impairments
  + They have been working with Birdability.
  + They have been working on four-year project of a braille trail for a sensory park. Florida has none of these. Their project is with Monticello Ecological Park.
  + Helped put in audible signs with Tim Robbins and Associates.
  + Shayndel and Yusef are trying to open doors with us and other organizations to get onboard with the project.
  + Are interested in having a local (Jefferson Co.) Audubon representative.
  + Willing to have us out to their park to experience the amenities they have.
  + Peter suggested action steps
    - Establish relationship with Jefferson Co. Commission
    - Try to get Audubon in Action grant to get project going to get invasives removed while do the accessibility work
    - Make a subcommittee to handle this project?
  + Rob found out that the park was getting funding for changes, but the project has been plagued with problems from day one. There was an upgrade in 2014 but not complete.
    - Suggested that the city be contacted to see what is going on
  + Donna suggested we make a subcommittee and contact the City of Monticello. Try to get grants from Birdability and Audubon in Action.
  + Kathleen to look into our membership list for Jefferson Co. members and try to get a volunteer list going. Kathleen to be the contact for this.
* Chapter Annual Reporting due Jan. 30 (June 2019 - May 2020)
* Newsletters are coming out nicely. Peter, Ben and Chris are doing these.
* Christmas Bird Count and Volunteer Coordination
  + We don’t have a Christmas bird count. Should we address this. This is a way to get new birders into birding.
  + Marvin Colins is the coordinator for the local Christmas Bird Count.
    - Not accommodating to amateurs.
    - Kathleen suggested a public one or one for kids that is less intense. Put a good birder with some amateurs.
    - Won’t be able to do for this year, but we need to think about it for next year.
    - Look at Alachua Aubudon and their involvement with theirs.
* Ben - November Meeting details - eBird and January program (Leigh Davis)
  + Dara reported on attendance. She has given David Jones a program report. Zoom gives us a lot of control and allows us to see where attendants come from based on which link they used. Around 25 people showed up.
  + We expect better attendance at the next on.
  + Kathleen noted that we published the video from the Oct. meeting on YouTube and we have over 20 views from there.
  + Peter did a Facebook event for this coming up program. Suggests that we do these Facebook events earlier.
  + Ben to set up Program Committee meeting to try to get the blurbs/FB events set up for the rest of the year
  + Donna says it’s important to have article in the newspaper. Need to be published the Friday before the event. Peter has an article that is ready to go and will sent to Donna and Amelia.
  + Westminster published email events and we should push info to them. Amelia to contact them to see what the process.
  + Ben to contact Harvey about paying David Jones for the Oct. program.
  + Rob suggests a founder of the Black Birder Week for the April program. Her research is on seaside sparrows and impact of climate change. Could address our own seaside sparrow. Heather to contact her.
  + Liz Schold’s undergraduate advisor is a black birder/biologist and might be able to speak. Biked across the US.
  + No program meeting in Dec.
* Amelia - OGFN update
  + Will be in Feb. This is our Feb. Program.
  + Will be held via Zoom.
  + Because of restrictions, was decided to focus on Wakulla Co.
  + Wakulla Spring SP will hold a dedication.
  + There will be a panelist discussion. Tom Flanaghan has agreed to host. Should have a diverse panel and inspire people to visit these areas.
  + Joan Maloof will do the dedications.
  + Next meeting is:
* Rob - Conservation updates
  + Project 440
    - Donna and David spoke at the meeting about it. Seems like the corporation is going to win.
    - Welaunee Development like passed.
    - Rob has not heard more about the Bluffs of St. Teresa acquisition.
      * Norma asked if there is someone we should contact to get it in the hands of a state park over forest service.
* Heather - bat house update
  + Funding has been going really well. Most of the cost has been covered through donations and there is extra so we can probably do interpretive signage.
  + Likely to be install mid to late December
  + Need to find a way to thank the donors.
* Kathleen moved to pay the PayPal fee for processing, and it was approved.
* Boy Scouts have asked to have someone leading hike for them and would also like a training for leaders, so they are equipped to do themselves.
  + Hour long class that teaches basic ecology or birding.
  + Rob did a talk on beginning birding and volunteers for a walk that trains in that regard. Will contact the Boy Scouts himself.
* Wildlife-friendly Yard Tour
  + Should we cancel it?
    - Amelia says ATL Audubon did a virtual tour with four yards and prerecorded segments and Q and A. Audience engagement was really good. Amelia to try to get a link
    - This is big fundraiser for us.
    - Just do three yards and do a shorter video than the one that was done in Rob’s yard. Need to focus on content. Focus on a water feature, or restoration, or fall food for the bird. Good to have a focus.
    - Donna will talk to Tammy and Kathleen. Email Donna if you’d like to help with it.
* No board meeting in Dec. Next one is in January.
* Peter reported that a Southwest GA Audubon is possibly going to be founded. Would have great benefit to us to partner. If anyone wants to help, please contact Peter.