

2018 Post-Season Space Coast Shorebird Partnership Meeting Notes

Location: Kiwanis Island Park, 951 Kiwanis Island Park Road, Merritt Island, FL 32952

Date: October 25, 2018

Time: 10:00am – 12:30pm

Meeting Participants:

- *Please be prepared to give a 5 minute summary of shorebird sightings, conservation issues, or challenges you'd like to talk about from the 2018 season*

AGENDA

10:00-10:10 Introductions – All

In Attendance: *Michael Cooper (NP-CNS), Anna Deyle (FWC), Tracy Frampton (Volunteer), Anne Hicks (Volunteer, Space Coast Audubon), Ariam Jimenez (FWC), Michael Lee (Volunteer), Mary McAuliffe (BSE Consultants), Logan McDonald (FWC), Jean Olbert (FWC), RuthEllen Peipert (Volunteer), Lisa Ruckman (Volunteer), Doug Southerland (Volunteer), Tyler Turner (FWC), Catherine Vecchio (Volunteer), Matthew Anderson (DEP), Kirk Fusco (DEP), and Mark Nathan (Volunteer)*

10:10-10:20 Preliminary Data Summaries for 2018 –Jean Olbert, FWC

- Presentation created by Florida Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) with statewide shorebird/seabird distribution maps and survey frequency charts
- Data pulled from FSD from end of September
- American Oystercatchers (AMOY) ground nesting: SC makes up less than 5%
- Wilsons Plovers (WIPL): SC makes up less than 5%
- Snowy Plovers (SNPL): No Atlantic coast nests
- Black Skimmer (BLSK) ground nesting: SC makes up 0%
- Rooftop distribution: **11% of all active rooftops are in Brevard County**
- Route Summary: Space Coast hit all count windows.

**See attached presentation for more information (2018 Season Summary)*

10:20-10:50 2018 Rooftop monitoring/WIPL monitoring updates: presentation and Q & A—FWRI

Rooftop Monitoring

- Goal: Establish statewide breeding populations (specifically LETE and BLSK), determine flush count confidence, develop a monitoring strategy
- Assumptions: Two metrics must be correlated (adults with nests), subsamples have to be representative of the whole. Must be accurate to true count (number of nests)
- Summary:
 - ✓ Using flush counts alone provides a good minimum population estimate.
 - ✓ For LETE, high correlation between flush counts and nests. This is used to create a correction factor which can be used to predict the nest number
 - ✓ 2018: 1185 rooftop visits over 141 rooftops
 - ✓ FSA data was critical for this project. Thank you! Flush counts will be used to assess statewide populations of LETE.

- ✓ Flush count approach does not work equally well for BLSK due to behavioral differences.
- Moving Forward: Based on the results of the rooftop study FWRI will be providing recommendations for best times of day to survey, survey frequency, etc.

Wilson's Plover Monitoring

- Goal: To refine the state population estimates and trends for WIPL. Most partnerships located more WIPL nests this season than in 2017 (approximately 40 new nests statewide). A total of 356 WIPL nests were recorded in the FSD in 2018 (*it is important to note that this data includes renesting attempts and does not represent the population of WIPL for the state*).
- Next Steps: Document nesting in FL Keys, develop a strategy for estimating the statewide population

**See attached presentation for more information (2018 Post-breeding Season Results)*

10:50-11:00 FSD Custom Search Function Tutorial – Anna Deyle, FWC

- Partners are encouraged to explore and utilize the Custom Search function located on the Florida Shorebird Database (FSD).

FSD > Explore Data (tab) > Custom Search > select options

- The tutorial (attached) was created by FWRI.

**See attached presentation for more information (FSD Custom Search Tutorial)*

11:00-11:10 Break

11:10-11:20 MBTA and HB631 update – Tyler Turner, FWC

- The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) was reinterpreted in December 2017 (Memo 37050).
- The reinterpretation concluded that no federal authorization is required for “incidental take” of non-listed birds, active nests, eggs, or young.
- Incidental take = take that is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity.
- FWC Rule 68A-4.001: a state rule that protects birds, eggs, young, and other wildlife. This means that take of birds, their eggs, or young is prohibited without a state permit. FWC does not typically issue permits for take of active nests.

**See attached presentation for more information (Migratory Bird Treaty Act Update)*

11:20-11:30 Update on Law Enforcement Patrols in Brevard County—Jean Olbert, FWC

- Proactive patrols in addition to reactive
- BC49 and Stick Mash CWAs protected in Brevard County
- Statewide patrols: 50% in NE region.
- Over 1,057 hours spent patrolling CWAs and shorebird nesting sites
- Add sites next year for more patrols

**See attached presentation for more information (FWC Law Enforcement Summary)*

11:30-11:40 Predation Management and Monitoring—Jean Olbert, FWC

- Predation management is not always about lethal management, it can include habitat modifications and deterrents as well.
- Data show need for management. Overwhelming predation can cause low shorebird recruitment in some areas.
- FWC Predation management efforts are currently focused on gulf coast due to funding.

- FWRI is working towards creating a better interface to monitor predator presence on routes in the FSD.
- **Data Needs:** continued documentation of tracks/scat/predators within shorebird nesting sites. If you have questions about the type of predator based on the tracks, please don't hesitate to send us photographs of prints. We recommend including a size reference next to the track (ruler, pen, coin, etc.) and taking photographs of the stride.
- It is important to note that any management efforts need to be data driven leading to mindful and purposeful actions directly benefiting shorebirds.
- Removal must be strategic due to the high complexity of the systems.
- Predator transects as a potential data collection tool.
 - 4 times per year min, count within transects to note what predators are out
- Increase in game cameras to ID predators
 - Discuss with FWC, need landowner permission and reason to set up
 - Use correctly, set up properly

See attached presentation for more information (Predator Management Presentation**)*

11:40-12:20 Round Robin of 2018 Space Coast Nesting Season – All

- **Canaveral National Seashore:** Good year, predator control was implemented, WIPLs are increasing. Got a boat to survey the lagoon better. Recent feral hogs on the beach are causing predation and habitat issues.
- **Hightower to Paradise Route (Satellite Beach):** Nothing going on. Recent beach renourishment may help eventually.
- **Bells and Belks (Rockledge and Viera):** Nothing on those rooftops.
- **Viera:** LETE ground nesting on active construction site. Started in 2014, developer was cooperative. 2015 moved south, discovered by surveyor. Large colony. Contractors avoided the colony. 2018 two colonies reported. Crow predation, caracara predation (likely killdeer, not LETE).
- **IRL aquatic preserve:** Two Melbourne rooftops (LA Fitness, LETE flushes, no chicks off roof, just flush counts) (Winn-Dixie off Eau Gallie, BLSK and LETE, flush counts, went on roof with Jean O. for full counts and to fix holes in parapet).
- **Best Western Rooftop:** Missed July survey. Active site, did not reach out to them due to issues last year (owner got upset about fencing). Monitor from across the street off property.
- **IRL Spoil Islands:**
 - Nesting AMOY, downy chick hatched but disappeared.
 - LETE came in to BC 36 to a sandy spit, but no nesting. Will try to make it more suitable for next year's season. Maybe platforms on the spit to protect from overwash.
 - Signage on Honeymoon Island for educating the public on recreation island. Honeymoon East full of listed birds roosting, basic signage keeping people out on this island. Maybe add to the "Local Knowledge" sign. DEP staff will be around more often to do active management.
- **Barrier Island Center to Sebastian Inlet Route:** Nothing, zero habitat in south beaches.
- **Publix (Melbourne Beach):** Had birds early, then nothing.
- **Sebastian Inlet:** Killdeer in campground only nesting.
- **NASA rooftops:** Logistics building at Canaveral had a few LETE nests, but roof is scheduled to be replaced next year.

- **Titusville Post Office:** Nothing, roof may be getting redone.
- **HealthFirst, Suntree Rooftops:** no activity, don't know if they have been re-roofed.
- **Suntree Healthplex:** might have put something on roof.
- **Pelican to Paradise Beach Route:** Nothing. Some LETE staging w/two fledglings at low tide across from Seashore Estates. Prohealth Building: predation issues, chicks regularly falling off of rooftop, owners will likely want to spray paint the roof before next season. Very low likelihood of success at this site.
- **Bounty St Rooftops:** had at least 150 LETE in a flush count. Disappeared after a rain, plus had conflict with a neighbor.
- **Honeymoon East and West:** not many counts, probably same as last year. Honeymoon east has the most birds.
- **CVS Indiatlantic:** No activity.

12:20–12:30 Wrap-up – Anna Deyle, FWC

- Future post-season meetings will be three hours, so we have enough time to go over everything.
- Ocean Reef Beach Festival- Dec 1st this year (a Saturday):
 - We will have an FSA table to recruit new volunteers for the partnership and provide info about shorebird conservation (brochures, etc.).
 - Anna Deyle and Logan McDonald will run the table, Ruth-Ellen Peipert will help with lunch relief.
 - **We could use help at the table that day from 10:00am-5:00pm. Please let Anna Deyle know if you'd like to volunteer (Anna.Deyle@MyFWC.com).**
- 22nd Annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival: January 23-29th, 2019 at Eastern Florida State College in Titusville, FL.
 - Anna Deyle is looking into getting us an FSA table at it.
- USFWS does winter shorebird surveys they organize in Jan/Feb, Anna will forward this info out via email when the time comes and there will be notices in the Wrackline.
- The pre-season meeting will probably be scheduled for early March.
- Thank you for all of your great shorebird monitoring work this nesting season!