

SSP Fall 2018 Meeting Minutes

Oct 4th, 2018, 12-2, Pelican Room, CEC

In attendance: Holley Short (moderator) Lorraine Margeson, Dan Larremore, Maggie Long, John Hood, Wendy Meehan, Lillian Kenney, Pam Leasure, Janell Brush, Jeff Leighty, Peter Plage, Brendan O'Connor, Amy Clifton, Mark Rachal, Beth Forys (note taker)

Key- BLSK: Black Skimmer, FICR: Fish Crow, LETE: Least Tern, SNPL: Snowy Plover, WIPL: Wilson's Plover.

11:30-12:00 Bag lunch, meet & greet with partners (this went well, will likely do in the future)

12:00-12:10 FSD Overview. Morgan Parks, FWC

- AMOY nests, we have 18% in SSP
- WIPL nests, we have 4% in SSP
- SNPL nests, we have 6%

86% of monitored colonies reported impacts

Number of known colony impacts by overwash/weather = 20%, animal 13%

Overall SSP monitored well through the summer, and hit the major survey dates

12:15- What worked, what didn't

- Honeymoon Island and northern islands (Dan Larremore):
Overall productivity good. Did more searching for WIPL than in previous years.
Issues: stewarding was very important and helpful but there was very little law enforcement.
>150 dogs were seen during the summer. People were approached and if there were issues stewards/Dan call FWC. Ultralights were also an issue.
- Pinellas Co municipal beaches (Holley Short), BLSK: Clearwater point did better this year, Sand Key: raccoon and coyote ate all eggs/chicks, no productivity (issue was well documented with cameras, tracks). Indian Shores (35 fledges) & St. Pete Beach, early setbacks due to TS Alberto and other issues, smaller numbers of nests and productivity. Some crow and gull issues at SPB, crows are nesting just east of the colony on intracoastal in Australian Pine, gulls were be harder to deal with. People driving on the beach is a major issue on SPB, Morgan will organize a training.
- Outback Key (Lorraine Margeson), one on one education good, but more volunteers would be better. Two huge posted areas. LETE fledged, 8 WIPL, 3 WIPL, 13 BLSK, AMOY did not fledge. Pre-posting was very effective, Morgan Parks suggested doing the Feb. 26 date again. Seaturtle tracker group was very helpful
- Pinellas County Parks, Ft. De Soto & Shell Key (Pam Leasure), Shell Key: 1 WIPL nest, 1 AMOY pair, 2 chicks 1 fledge. Sea turtle trackers were helpful as was County LE. The main issue is disturbance from people walking from Tierra Verde. Perhaps pre-posting would be helpful. Ft. De Soto: attempted nesting WIPL, AMOY, LETE, BLSK. Fish Crows and coyotes were major deterrents to nesting. Predation by Fish Crows on AMOY was documented with a game camera. Coyote tracks were seen and coyotes were seen at sun rise by rangers on many occasions.

- Egmont Key, Passage Key (Maggie Long), Most of the seabird did well, BLSK abandoned due to FICR. AMOY nesting, lost of FICR. Passage Key: productivity unknown, but FICR issues
- Anna Maria (Morgan Parks), SNPL nests had chicks, not sure about any fledges, BLSK tried to nest, but were disturbed and eventually abandoned because of disgruntled land owner. Officers were unable to find the woman who was disturbing them.
- Longboat Key (Holley Short), LETE were successful, SNPL 1 fledge (chicks did not survive, perhaps LAGU)
- Lido Key (Holley Short), BLSK nested very early and were very successful.
- Siesta Key (Holley Short), 100% of SNPL nests were taken by FICR. Looking at doing a potential FICR aversion study. County SNPL management plan could be looked at or revised.
- Wading Bird Sanctuaries (Mark Rachal), Alafia Banks: Some birds moved to Fantasy Island, but overall productivity was good (a little lower). No AMOY. One problematic raccoon. 2D a few AMOY fledge, 3D a few more AMOY fledged, relatively low predation from the FICR. Clearwater Harbor (mainly wading birds, lots of White Ibis), 3 AMOY pair did not produce any chicks.
- Rooftops (Jeff Leighty), Volunteers were good. Avian predators (primarily Fish Crows, but also gulls, Cooper's Hawks, Great Horned Owl) were problematic as was cooperation from building managers. Flooding was an issue at some of the rooftops. AMOY: 8 pair, 3 nests fledged a chick.

1:35-1:45: WIPL Statewide Survey and Rooftop Nesting Updates (Janell Brush, FWC).

- Goals and Objectives: monitoring strategy (flush counts) to be able to inform monitoring productivity. Did regular flush counts (# adults) and then counts from below.
- 141 rooftops, more effort from 2017 to 2018, which was good
- Flush counts: 2,798 adults (flush counts), staff direct counts 1,964 nests (0-177)
- Relationship between flush numbers and number of nests is very correlated. Just need a correction factor. (need to do a flush count even if you survey on the rooftop)
- Results are being finalized and a final estimate of LETE numbers will be made soon
- Not much info for BLSK and it does not seem as accurate.
- This past year volunteers were asked to visit WIPL more frequently and look harder for LETE (and this occurred). In some areas the posting was larger.

1:45-1:55: Predator Biology, Habits, and Tracking (Morgan Parks, FWC)

- Where is FWC with predator management?
- More predators, fewer birds hatch.
- Currently 1 FWC predator biologist in the panhandle. Plan in next few years is to get a peninsula biologist and 2 more in panhandle.

1:55-2:00: Date for Spring Meeting: Thursday, March 7 (11:30 lunch) official meeting 12-2.