



Gator Gazette

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Florida Legislature Cuts FOREVER FLORIDA Budget

Just two years ago Solivita Wildlife Advocates applauded a commitment by the legislature and Governor DeSantis to spend \$400 million for the acquisition of wild lands to maintain and promote the Wildlife Corridor.

As part of that effort a commitment was made by the state with the continuously funded **Florida Forever** conservation and recreation land acquisition program, to spend \$100 million each year going forward. But this year's budget cut that amount to only \$18 million. A year in which the governor touts a budget surplus and a dramatic reduction in state debt. Why are our leaders letting us down?

The reduced level of funding undermines the state's ability to continue to protect land for conservation and public access. This is not what Florida resident's voted for when we overwhelmingly voted YES in 2014 for more funding.



It is clear that there is still much work to be done in the cause of protecting our natural lands from abusive and irresponsible development and destruction. about 4,050 in the wild statewide.

Perhaps it is time that our club formally organized an effort to communicate clearly with our legislators to ensure that they understand our great passion for this effort. If you are interested in being part of a subcommittee whose role it will be to track activities related to wildlife preservation and conservation here in

Florida, and contact those who control the purse strings affecting that work, reach out to our club president, Bob Monica. If there is sufficient energy the club will support and assist with an official program.

Clearly this allocated budget does not fit the moment. As seniors we have the time, energy and experience to lend our voice in support of a more demonstrative effort. We must move forward showing our state's political leaders the critical need to fund the conservation efforts provided by the FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM.

WINE GUY BOB



WINE & WILD THING!
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- February 2, 2026
- 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
- Solivita Ballroom

"Love, love, love Wine Guy Bob! He makes a wine tasting so educational and fun, all without being a wine snob!" Joy Aronson, Solivita Guest

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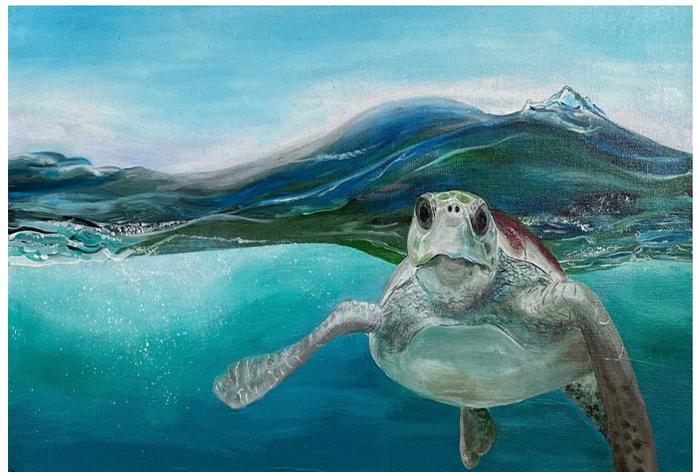
MINUTES FROM JULY CLUB MEETING

President, Bob Monica called meeting to order at 5:00 pm at Palms. BOD present: Leo Mills, Vivian Aber, Barbara McDonald, Rick McKelvey and Joanne Bodziony.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

- Minutes of last meeting were approved. We now have 226 members.
- Future meeting date is - August 4, 2025. Future dates are available on the website.
- The gator report for the end of June 2025 indicates that one gator has been removed.
- Leo Mills, Treasurer gave a review of finances.

Income \$60.36	YTD \$5,111.00
Expenses \$276.95	YTD \$2,749.00
Total \$120.36	YTD \$2361.00
Cash on Hand	\$5,323.00
- Program Committee - September 10th at 10 am Lori Lindsay will speak on the topic of Living Safely with Bears in the Ballroom. All residents are invited. October 6th meeting will be our annual Halloween Pot Luck Dinner. They are working on a program about Florida Panthers. More information will be forthcoming.
- Vice President McKelvey – PCDD is working on a program for enhancing nutrients in the ponds to discourage algae growth. Also helps with feeding small fish. Continuing efforts regarding the development of Fishing Rules.
- Joanne discouraged any feeding of animals anywhere if Solivita.
- Meeting adjourned at 5:57 pm.



BACKYARD FEEDERS ARE RESHAPING HUMMINGBIRDS

REPRINTED FROM THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY - JULY 2025

Researchers link rapid range expansion and bill changes in Anna’s hummingbirds to decades of feeder use.

The key to sharper beaks and a push northward for Anna’s hummingbirds may be hanging in the backyards across the West: the classic feeder. “If you ever see these feeders, sometimes you have 30 hummingbirds jostling for position, so it’s a hyper-competitive environment,” said Faye Romero, PhD student at University of Rochester. In a study published in *Global Change Biology*, scientists from the University of California, Berkeley, revealed that supplemental feeding, alongside urban development and the introduction of plants, has fueled the dramatic range expansion of Anna’s hummingbirds, (*Calpte anna*) and altered their bill shape.

Once limited to sun drenched Baja California, Anna’s hummingbirds have surged northward as far as southeast Alaska over the past 150 years. For years, scientists believed Anna’s hummingbirds expanded their range thanks to the introduction of eucalyptus plantations in the 1930s, which provided winter blooms in an otherwise food-scarce season and urbanization.

However, new research reveals more to the story by weaving together a rich tapestry of interdisciplinary evidence spanning six years, from dusty museum drawers and digitized newspapers to community science sightings and thermal video footage to test the drivers together. By tracing the rise of hummingbird feeders, urban development, and eucalyptus plantations, the researchers uncovered a more complex story behind the bird’s dramatic expansion and its changing physical form.

“We recapitulated that eucalyptus was probably an early driver of the expansion out of Southern California, but the effect of the feeders far outweighed the effects of the eucalyptus,” Romero, who worked on the project as an undergraduate researcher at UC Berkeley, said.

Most hummingbird beaks have adapted over eons to specifically match the stems of the flowers whose nectar they feed on. But some Anna’s hummingbirds have become freed from the evolutionary constraints of flower shape. The birds appear to be rapidly changing to fit a new kind of battleground—one shaped not by petals but by fierce competition at sugar-filled feeders where their main goal is to slurp up as much sugar as fast as possible.

In response to these new survival challenges, male Anna’s hummingbirds are showing sleeker, sharper beaks, likely giving them an edge against the bird-feeder competition.

However, the shifts in beaks are not uniform across the range. Beaks in the northern part of the range tend to be shorter and smaller than those in the southern part of the range. This study was the first to demonstrate that Anna’s hummingbirds release heat through their bills while perched. Researchers hypothesize they do this to conserve warmth because smaller beaks limit heat loss, helping them survive in much colder environments than their original range.

By combining interdisciplinary research with out-of-the-box thinking, the researchers explored how the sugar-rich chaos of backyard feeders actively shapes both the life and bills of Anna’s hummingbirds. The findings document rapid, measurable changes in bill shape over the last century, providing a striking example of evolution in action and revealing how human choices can impact wildlife.





LET'S DISCUSS... THE BEAR NECESSITIES.

Lori Lindsay

Lori has spent the last 10 years as a Bear Response Contractor for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, assessing animal and human behavior regarding human-bear conflict. Ms. Lindsey has a Masters degree in Biology from the University of Miami. She is a recognized expert, and sought after speaker, on the topic of bears.



DATE: September 10, 2025

TIME: 10:00 AM

PLACE: Starlite Ballroom

PRICE: Admission **FREE**

OPEN TO ALL SOLIVITA RESIDENTS

