



DIPpings

from
The Friends of
Deerfield Island Park

June 2022

FoDIP Calendar

Happy Summer !!!!!

There will be no meeting in June. Watch for notice of our July Meeting and program.



News and Events

We are both sad and happy to announce that shuttle driver, Holly Goldberg, will be leaving the Parks Department for a new full-time job. Holly has been a knowledgeable and friendly face on the shuttle on Fridays and while we will miss her on the shuttle, we expect that she will continue as a valuable member of Friends of Deerfield Island Park . Good luck Holly, in your new career !!!!



Carlos and Holly on Tony and Tino

Ambassador
Kiosk is still
open during



fred.kraske@gmail.com

To sign up for an open slot, contact Fred Kraske :
text: 610-716-3761 or email at

FLORA and FAUNA



The Brown Pelican

by Diana R. Lopez

As common and familiar the Brown Pelican is to most Florida residents, it possesses many surprising characteristics and behaviors of which most people are unaware. The Brown Pelican is a coastal bird that migrates south for the winter from northern climes but *how* it migrates is an interesting aspect of its behavior. Migrating in flocks, the Brown Pelican is able to avoid an arduous and time-consuming migration by following ocean coastlines at extremely low altitudes where it can be seen gliding over the tops of waves. This positioning pattern enables it to utilize most efficiently the constantly occurring coastal wind currents that literally help “push” the flock along thereby saving energy consumption. In addition, the purposeful positioning of its migratory route along the coastline keeps its food source nearby and easily accessible, another time saving feature.



There is a myth that because the pelican has a pouch, it doesn't need to dive for fish; it can simply scoop fish up in its gular pouch as it paddles along while floating on the surface of the water. This myth is false. It has been seen diving for fish from spectacular heights of up to sixty feet. Another unfounded myth is that the Brown Pelican may go blind over time due to its repeated impact with the water from plunging headfirst when diving for its meal. But pelagic birds (such as pelicans, gulls and cormorants) that dive for fish must position themselves to be facing the wind (like an airplane) upon resurfacing if they hope to be able to lift off and take flight, especially if its gular pouch is weighted down with fish. But how do they know in which direction to face when they're underwater at the time that the decision must be made? Perhaps they possess the ability while underwater to get a sense or “feel” of the current and associate it with wind direction. Real food for thought.

Curiously enough, upon resurfacing, a pelican does not initially become airborne by flapping its wings as one might think, but rather by taking a series

of leaps and thrusts with its large, broad, webbed feet until its body is clear of the water at which time its powerful wings take over.

A pelican's beak is composed of keratin, and like a fingernail in composition, it grows constantly. The length of its beak is in direct proportion to the growth of the pelican itself. The beak of a male Brown Pelican is longer than that of the female. When being banded for identification and tracking purposes, the length of the pelican's top beak from tip to base is carefully measured and documented. It uses its beak not only as a defense mechanism, but also as a means to preen itself. Preening is essential in maintaining good feather condition and to rid the pelican of parasites such as sea lice.



Eggs and Hatchling



Babies

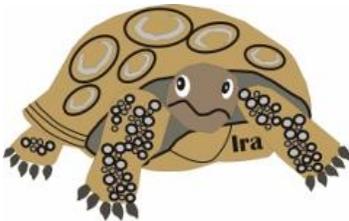


Immature Pelican

Its clutch size varies from 2-4 eggs and its young are born helpless with bare, pink skin and open eyes looking very prehistoric. The wingspan of an adult Brown Pelican averages 6' and its weight averages between 11 and 20 pounds. Its diet consists primarily of fish such as herring, anchovy, menhaden, sheepshead and other small and medium-sized fish species. In captivity, the Brown Pelican has been known to be a fussy eater and reject fish such as the google eye (a fresh water fish and member of the bass family) preferring herring when afforded a choice. Many pelicans die each year from entanglement in sport-fishing gear and from lead poisoning derived from sinkers attached to fishing lines. While this bird is a common sight in our area, it is surprising how very little most of us know about it.

You can now view the past 2021,2022 newsletters on our website.

[Click here](#)



Friends of Deerfield Island Park (FODIP)

Formed in March 2015

We are dedicated to preserving and protecting our unique green island as a natural habitat for native plants and for the island's animal inhabitants. We have been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for this purpose.

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