

SWFAEP Luncheon

Utilizing an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)
to Determine Abundance and Species Richness
of Wading Bird Nesting Sites

August 17th, 2017



**At The Newly Completed
Nathan Benderson Park: Finish Tower (5th Floor)
5851 Nathan Benderson Circle, Sarasota, FL
Lunch Served at 11:30am, Presentation 12:00pm to 1:00pm**



Presented By Matt Miller & Danielle Clooney

In southwest Florida, there's an ongoing conflict between population growth and environmental protection. This pressure results in an emphasis on environmental policies to protect, restore and enhance high functioning aquatic resources (wetlands/surface waters) within the landscape. The City of Northport (Sarasota County, Florida) contains 80+ miles of a linear canal system with banks consisting of either vertical seawalls or shrubby vegetation such as mangroves, buttonwood or Brazilian pepper which provide nesting habitat for tree nesting wading birds. The most recent published wading bird nest survey was performed in the 1990s using fixed wing aircraft. WRA surveyed this canal system to identify active nesting wading birds during the 2017 nesting season using an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). WRA worked to develop a survey methodology to navigate numerous technical and logistical concerns. One FAA licensed pilot was responsible for tracking the UAV flight path and another observer utilized the UAV camera to identify nesting wading birds. Georeferenced pictures were taken to determine species type and abundance and the nesting tree species. This study found that wading bird species type and abundance and vegetation type were observable using a UAV flying approximately 200 feet overhead.

Cost

\$10.00 FAEP Members, \$20.00 Non Members

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