

CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY WOOD STORK NESTING UPDATE

April 2018

Our fifth flight of the 2018 nesting season was conducted Monday April 9th (observers: Kelsie Buxbaum (Conservation Intern) & Lee Martin (Field Technician)). This season most of the nesting effort was in one large, dispersed sub-colony in a north-northeast area of the cypress that surround Corkscrew's horseshoe marsh. There were also two small sub-colonies west of this large sub-colony. All nests were far enough from Corkscrew's boardwalk that they were not visible to visitors. This month we saw significantly fewer birds than the peak of approximately 400 active nests that were seen on our early February flight. This month we observed approximately 150 active nests remaining with one of the two small sub-colonies no longer active (nearly all birds had fledged from this sub-colony last month). Most remaining nests had full-sized fledglings with only a handful of nests in earlier stages of nesting (incubating eggs or with small chicks present).



Wood Storks nesting at Corkscrew on 4/9/2018. Most visible chicks are nearly ready to fledge.



Wood Storks of varying age/size classes observed at Corkscrew on 4/9/2018 (youngest chicks in lower left, oldest in upper right of photo).

This interim summary is intended for Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary staff and volunteers only. Please do not share widely. Questions should be directed to Dr. Shawn Clem: sclem@audubon.org

We expect most of the Wood Storks observed within the Corkscrew colony on this month's flight will successfully fledge and leave the colony in the coming weeks. Once fledged, typically these birds will move east and north where food is more available this time of year. With the early rainy season rains expected to begin in the next 4-6 weeks or so, we expect the few nests still in early stages will likely fail (when rain begins and water levels rise, fish will become very difficult to capture).

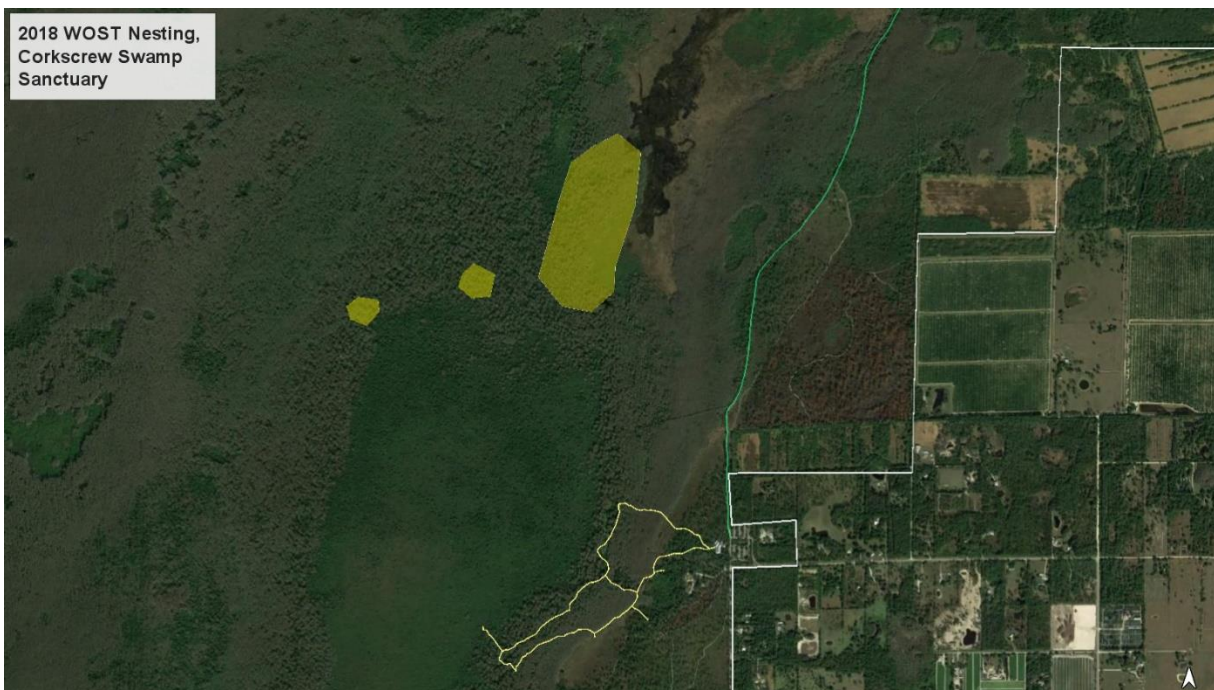


Wood Storks observed nesting on Lenore Island (Caloosahatchee River) on 4/9/2018.

We also observed a number of active Great Egret and at least one Roseate Spoonbill nest within the Corkscrew colony on this month's flight.

A considerable Wood Stork nesting effort continues on Lenore Island (Caloosahatchee River) and at the BC29 site (west of SR-29, north of the Panther Refuge).

Our next flight is scheduled for early May.



Approximate location of Wood Stork sub-colonies (yellow polygons) at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary during the 2018 nesting season.

This interim summary is intended for Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary staff and volunteers only. Please do not share widely. Questions should be directed to Dr. Shawn Clem: sclem@audubon.org