

Life and Times of Marco Island Burrowing Owl Population

Nancy Richie, City of Marco Island

January 14 (11 am – 12 pm)

DESCRIPTION OF LECTURE

While most birders are scanning the sky and treelines with their binoculars to find that one special species on their list, on Marco Island, one should always take a look at that hole in the ground! Marco Island hosts one of the largest populations of Burrowing Owl in the state, which, for over a decade, has been monitored and protected by Nancy Richie, Environmental Specialist for the City of Marco Island. She will describe this charismatic owl, its natural history, biology, etiquette for viewing in an urban environment, conservation efforts, and its future on this barrier island.

BIOGRAPHY

Richie is an Environmental Specialist for the City of Marco Island. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology from Texas A&M University at Galveston. She became an Environmental Specialist for the City of Marco Island in 1999. During Richie's 1999 inventory of the protected species on Marco Island she discovered the one Florida Burrowing Owl burrow posted on the Island was not the only burrowing owl site. Richie surveyed the entire Island and found many more burrow locations. Currently, there are approximately 90 burrow locations that are monitored and maintained by Nancy and volunteers to help protect this dwindling species. In 2005, she received the Guy Bradley Award from the Collier County Audubon Society for her stewardship of Marco Island's environment.

Richie's other duties include permitting, lawn and landscape registrations, protected species monitoring and conservation, water quality monitoring, serving as staff representative for the Beach Advisory Committee, and a liaison with federal, state, county and local environmental agencies and groups.

