

- The Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral



# History of the Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral





# HOW OLD ARE MODERN BIRDS?



75-160

## CLOCKS

Molecular clocks estimate modern birds arose 75–160 million years ago



62-66

## ROCKS

Fossils tell us birds are at least 62–66 million years old



Beginning of the Age of Dinosaurs



250 200

TRIASSIC

JURASSIC

145

(millions of years ago)

CRETACEOUS

Asteroid impact kills all dinosaurs except birds, known as the K-Pg Event



66

PALEOGENE

Age of Humans



23

2.5

NEOGENE  
QUATERNARY

## 48-Million-Year-Old Fossil Owl Is Almost Perfectly Preserved

By Laura Geggel published October 23, 2018



*Ogygoptynx*, the oldest owl on record, lived in what is now Colorado about 61 million years ago, just a few million years after the [nonavian dinosaurs went extinct](#) about 65 million years ago.

The skeleton of **Primoptynx poliotauros** is the oldest fossil of an owl preserved in such a state of completeness. The discovery provides unique insights into the lifestyle of the earliest owls. Unlike modern owls, the large extinct owl presumably did not kill its prey with its beak but with its talons, similar to goshawks and eagles.

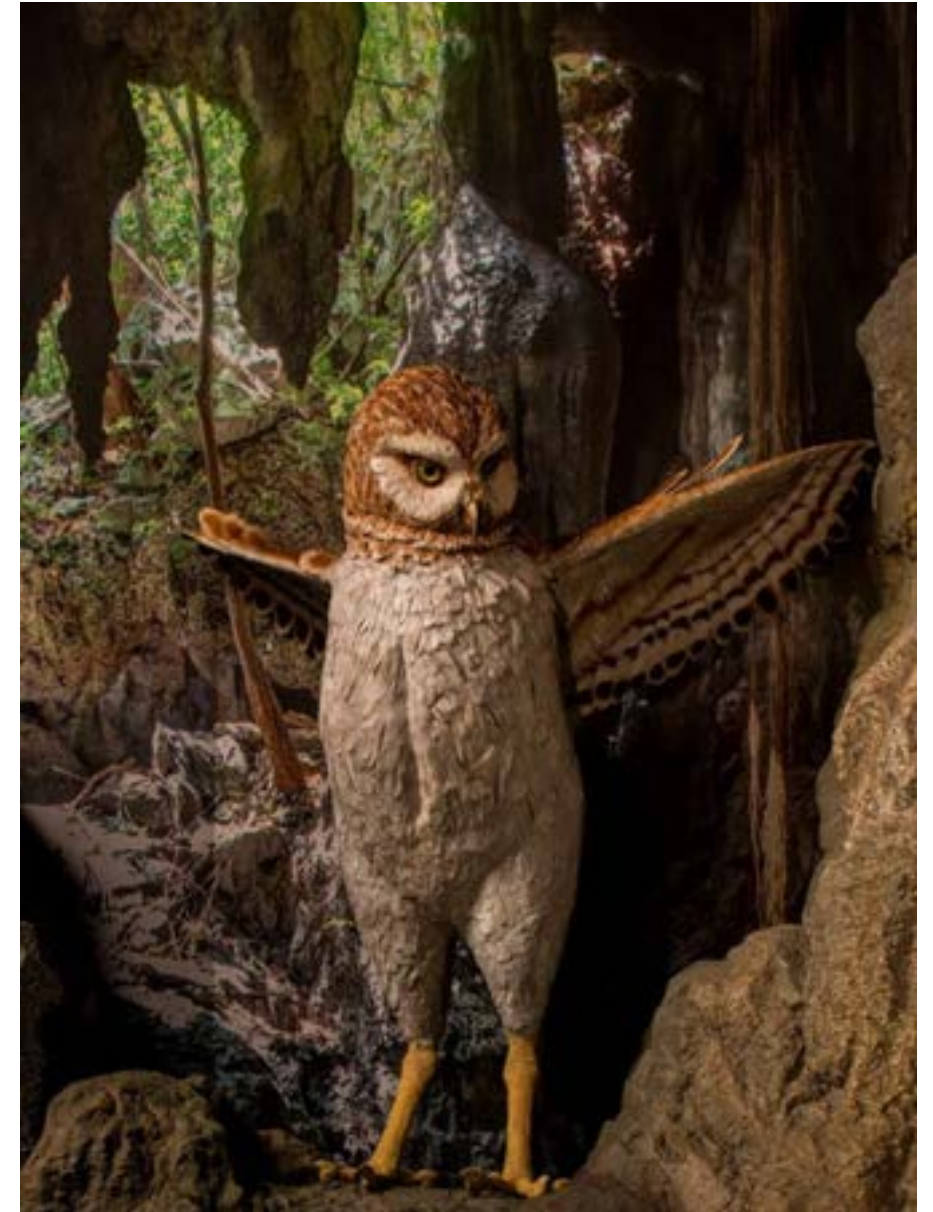


The rocky chunk holding the fragile fossilized bones of the ancient owl, next to a quarter for size comparison. (Image credit: John Alexander)

The largest owl on record is Cuba's extinct giant owl (*Ornimegalonyx*), modeled here at the American Museum of Natural History's "Cuba!" exhibition.

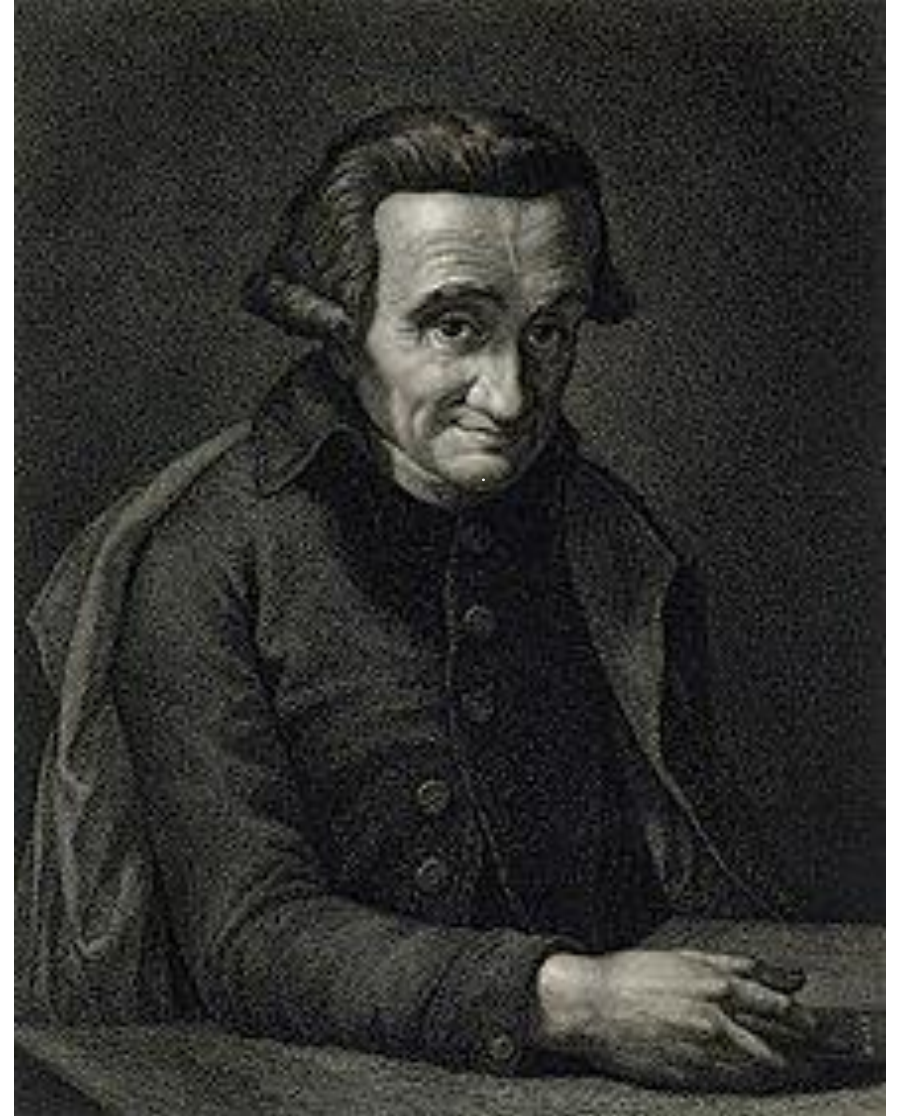
Experts aren't sure whether the 3.6-foot-tall (1.1 meters) owl could fly, but its powerful, long legs indicate that it was a gold-medal runner. If it could fly or glide, it would have been one of the largest flighted birds the world has ever known.

Researchers have found (*Ornimegalonyx*) remains in Cuban caves, usually surrounded by the remnants of the bird's prey, including [sloths](#) and now-extinct rodents known as hutias.



# Burrowing Owls in the Americas

- The burrowing owl was formally described by Spanish naturalist Juan Ignacio Molina in 1782 from a specimen collected in Chile.





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We earnestly request all our contributors to adopt the plan in regard to the use of scientific names which some of them have already adopted, viz: to PRINT all such names lightly in the manuscript, as this will prevent error by giving the compositor plain copy to follow. Above all things we say, do not venture upon the use of scientific names at all unless certain of their accuracy.

CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

Table with 2 columns: Page and Article Title. Includes items like 'The Rocky Mountain Sheep', 'Fishing and Shooting', 'Mr. Teasdale Beckoff's Reply to Mr. Macdonald', 'A Model Combination', 'Discovery of a Burrowing Owl in Florida', and 'An afternoon at the Wash'.

A MODEL COMBINATION.

An association has been formed among the farmers and landowners of northern New Jersey, of a new and

personal feelings are allowed to influence the verdict. The form of the permit is as follows:

FARMER'S MUTUAL PROTECTIVE UNION.

N. J., 187-

Permit Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ to fish or shoot on the lands of the Union.

F. N. F. U.

Please pin this to the left side of your coat.

Furnished with one of these permits, the sportsman can now range at liberty over nearly fifteen thousand acres of land or water. Without lot or hindrance, he is regarded as the guest of the society, and at every farm house is welcomed as a friend, and should he arrive at meal time is frequently invited to take pot luck with the family. Cases in which the privileges of the permit have been abused are rare, though a few have occurred. One came under the notice of the club in January last. A gentleman (?) from a neighboring city came provided with a letter of introduction to an officer of the Union, a permit was furnished him, and he started upon his day's shooting. Passing a farm house at noon he was invited to dinner, an invitation which he readily accepted. During dinner a youngster of the family, childlike, began investigating the contents of his game bag, and to the dismay of the cockney sportsman, extracted from its depths four domestic fowls, which were the result of the morning's sport. For the benefit of such men is the black list kept.

As far as possible a list of members of sportsmen's clubs of the neighboring cities is kept, and these are furnished permits at once upon application.

Should any infraction of the game laws take place, it is reported to the Union, and the offender prosecuted by persons elected for that special purpose.

The members of this Union do not flatter themselves that their by-laws, of which we have mentioned the most prominent points, are as yet perfect, but believe that it is a step in the right direction.

We most cordially and heartily endorse the above society, and recommend the farmers and landowners in other States to follow the liberal and wise example of this combination. We have viewed with much anxiety the growing strife between the landlord and the sporting interests of the country, and have striven to reconcile it by pointing out that the representatives of each have their peculiar, individual rights, which are equitably entitled to respect and regard. We can fully appreciate the annoyance to which farmers are often subjected, and consider them perfectly right in protecting their property by all means the law allows. We do not mean by this that we urge the landowners in excluding sportsmen entirely from their lands, (for we have spoken to the point on that matter), but we do mean that there is no reason why property holders should not have some method of deciding by practical test who are, and who are not worthy to be favored with the right of entry, and we are certain that when such liberality is displayed, as in the case before us, an

rooms of the Board of Trade, where the business meetings of the Convention were held, are in this building, and are well adapted for their purpose.

A GRAND shooting festival and opening of a new shooting park, will take place at Newark, N. J., on July 2th, 5th, 7th and 8th. Two thousand dollars in prizes and premiums will be awarded and a general invitation is extended to riflemen. The shooting will be at a ring target, man target, stick target and bulls-eye targets. Tickets for three shots will be sold on the three first targets at \$3 each. On the bulls-eye targets the charge will be \$1 for ten shots. Good rules to govern the shooting have been selected and every care has been taken to ensure the success of the meeting.

By an issue in our last weeks report of the Convention at Oswego, wrong delegates were credited to the Mohawk Game Club of West Troy. Corrected, the list would read Dr. Bows, Henry O. Koboy, E. R. Barker and H. P. Schuyler.

LARGE ELK ANTLERS.

There is an unusually large pair of elk horns here in St. Paul. They were collected by the Chippeway Indians, and were exchanged by them to a trader who sold them to Mr. M. T. Kennedy and Brother, of this city. Their dimensions are as follows: Circumference at base, 12.25 inches; length, 55 inches. Originally there were twenty-two prongs on the antlers, but two of them have been broken off. The horns are very massive and heavy, and are the finest pair I have observed.

Mr. Kennedy also has other antlers, such as those of Caribou, deer, &c., and can furnish guns, rifles, &c., of his own make, which are beautifully gotten up, and stand hard use, besides shooting well, as many of the Minnesota sportsmen can testify. H. J. BATT.

Discovery of a Burrowing Owl in Florida.

BY ROBERT RIDGWAY.

One of the most important results of the ornithological researches of Mr. N. B. Moore, of Manatee, Florida, a very diligent and trustworthy observer and a strenuous supporter of the Ornithological Institution, is the discovery in Florida, of a burrowing owl. In this not only is an entirely new element added to the bird-fauna of the Eastern Region of North America, but the geographical range of the genus is extended to a country far distant from any of which it has been considered specially characteristic; while besides the bird under consideration proves to be new to science.

The genus *Speotyto*, of which the burrowing owls of America are the sole representatives, embraces but a single species as far as known, which extends from Chilo, Buenos Ayres and Paraguay northward across the pampas and llanos of South America and over the plateaux of Mexico to the dry plains of the western countries of North America. In the United States its



# Burrowing Owls Were Recorded

1  
9  
6  
8



No, They Are Not Native  
to  
Cape Coral

*(Athene cunicularia  
floridana)*



Then the bulldozers came ....



# Who Told the Burrowing Owls About Cape Coral?





Ideal Habitat

10 9:13 AM

# The Lot Mowers



# Cape Coral



VS



# Florida Fish and Wildlife

# Typical burrows

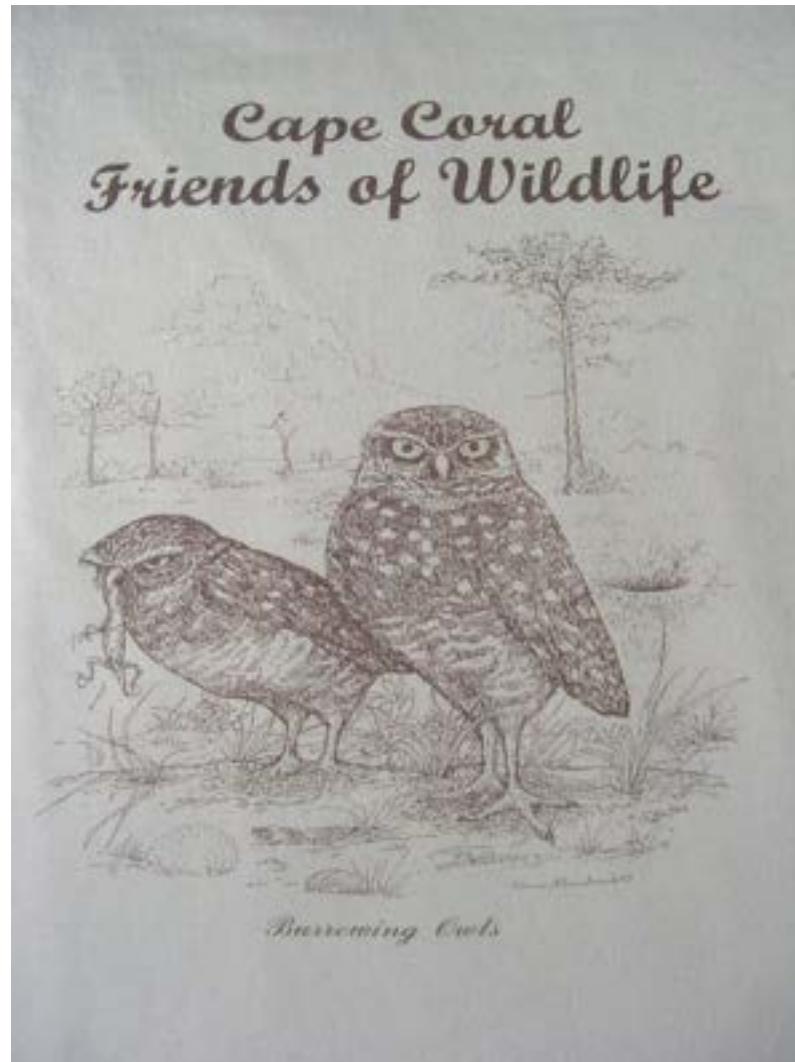




# Overgrown Active Burrow



# Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife



# What is so special about the Burrowing Owl?



Photogenic



Tolerant of humans

Diurnal



Cape Coral, Florida Worlds Largest  
Population of the Florida sub-species of  
the Burrowing Owl





Official  
City Bird

Out of 171-222 species of owls worldwide, the Burrowing Owl is the only one that lives underground in burrows.



# Burrowing Owl Status

It is **endangered** in Canada, Mexico, and the US in the states of Minnesota and Iowa. The burrowing owl is designated as a Species of Special Concern in California and is listed as threatened in Florida.



# About the Burrowing Owls





As you most know they are not found in the forest up in a tree but rather in wide open expanses of North Central and South America. In most of the range of these birds the population is migratory, but here in Florida they are year-round residents.

As Big as a Soda Can





- The burrowing owl is most often seen on the ground which is pretty rare for owls. They have very long legs which again is rare for owls. These long legs allow them to run to catch their prey. They have a wingspan that is over twice their height, which makes them silent flyers, but they are less efficient fliers than other owls. Their ability to run has weakened their ability to fly.

# Kodak Moment







# Burrowing Owl Food





Lunch?



# Eyes



# Black Eyes







# Eye Color Related to Hunting

- Yellow eyes point to day-active species, such as burrowing owl.
- Orange eyes indicate that the species is active at dusk and dawn, such as the Great Horned Owl
- Black eyes are for night-active species, such as Barred Owl



?





Decoration

# Threats to Burrowing Owls

1. Hawks
2. Cars
3. Cats
4. Loss of Habitat





Drive Slowly



# Keep Your Cat Indoors



- [FeLV \(Feline Leukemia\)](#)
- [FIP \(Feline Infectious Peritonitis\)](#)
- [Panleukopenia \(Feline Distemper\)](#)
- [FIV \(Feline Immunodeficiency Virus\)](#)

# Cat vs bird vs cat



Cats are fantastic predators. It is estimated that outdoor cats kill around 2.4 billion birds in the United States alone. A large number of these victims are killed not for food, but for fun. Cats are stimulated by the chase and even if not hungry, they will still kill.



# Loss of Habitat



# Dispelling Myths



**YES**

YOU

**CAN**



**BUILD!**

# Building a Home





# Head Tilt

Parallax



270°



# Attacks by Owls



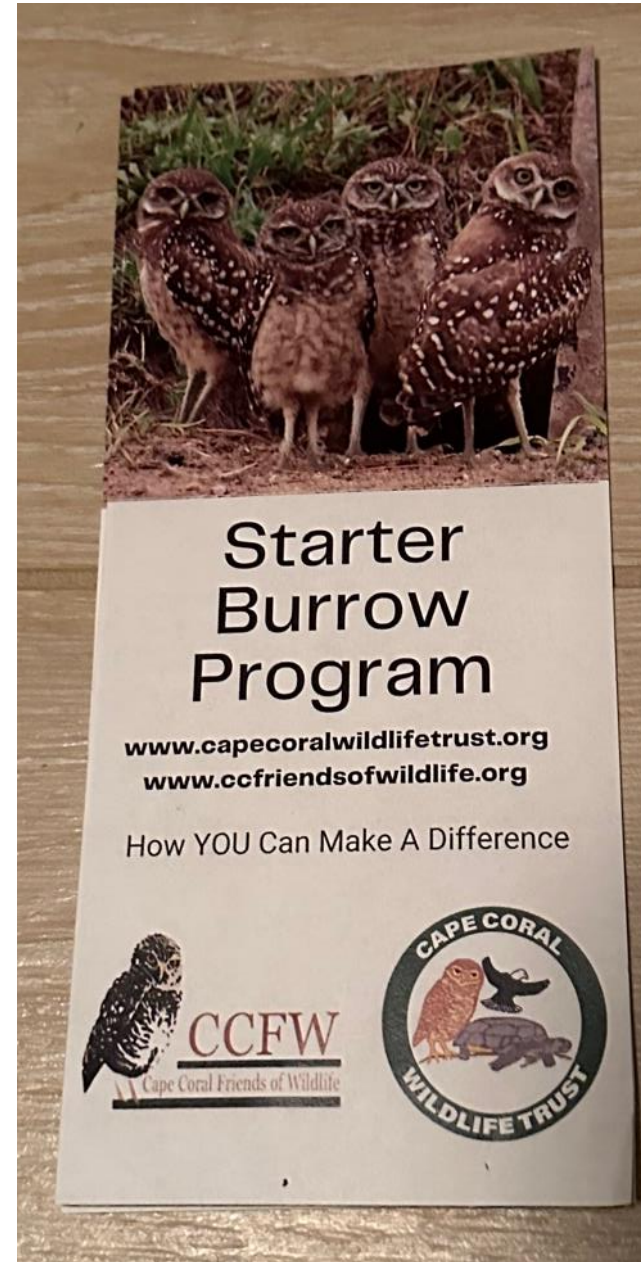


What Can  
You Do to  
Help?

# Starter Burrow Program



# Starter Burrow Program







Report  
Harassment

City of Cape Coral  
Code Compliance



# Limit Pesticides & Fertilizers



# Rat Poison

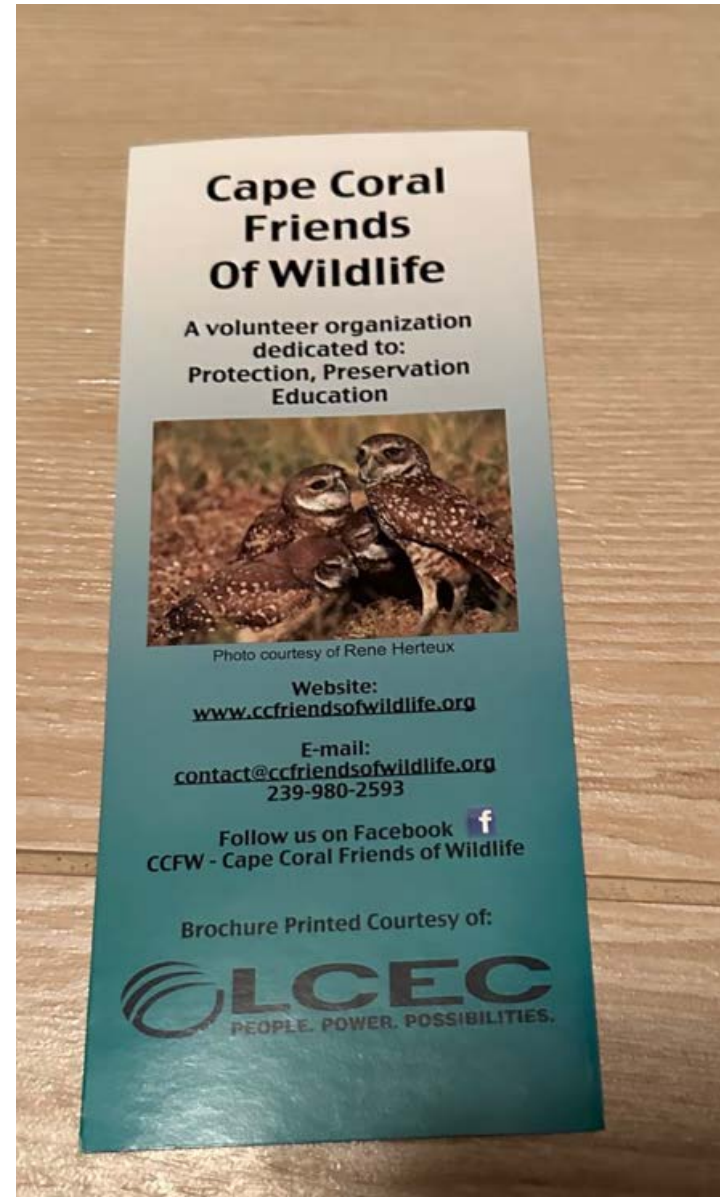




# Report Harassment



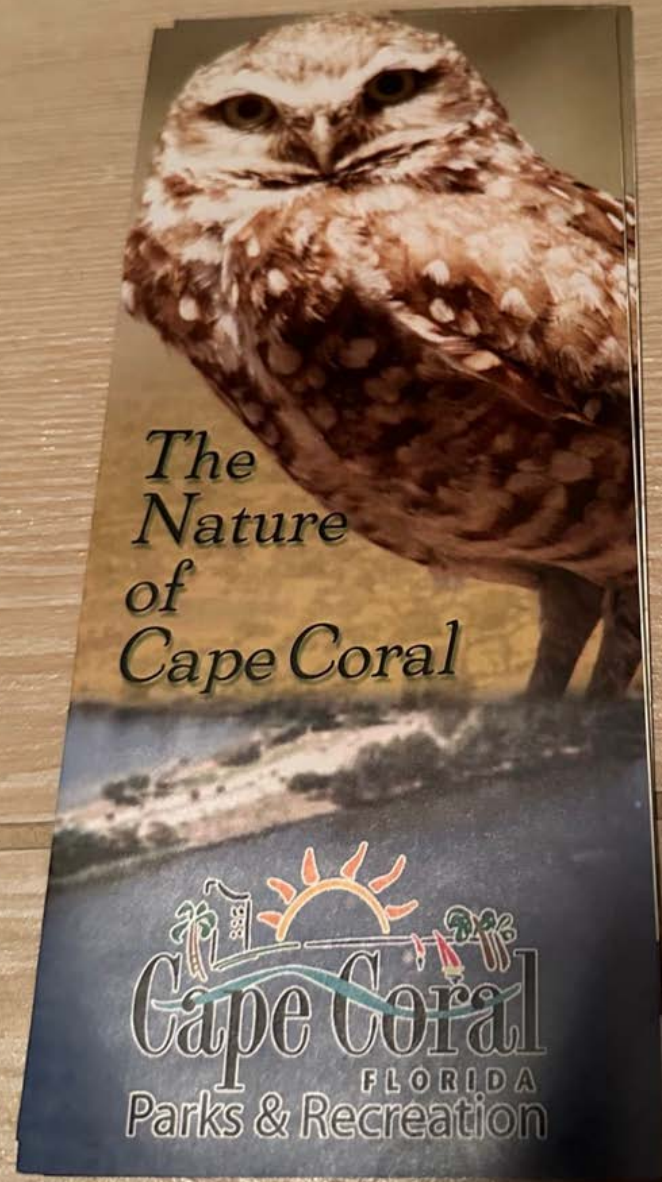
# Join Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife



# What is CCFW Doing to Help?

- Legislative Activists
- Burrowing Owl Festival
- Butterfly House
- Purple Martin Housing
- Butterfly Garden at Sirenia Vista Park
- Ground Owl Day
- Public Outreach
- Burrow Maintenance
- Adopt an Owl

# Nature of Cape Coral Bus Tour



# Cape Coral Wildlife Trust





# Burrowing Owl Festival

February  
24,  
2024



# CCFW Online Auction



CAPE CORAL  
BURROWING  
OWLS  
DON'T HOOT

Cape Coral  
Burrowing Owls  
Don't Hoot



Come explore the wonderful and quirky world of the famous Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral, Florida.

BEVERLY AHLERNG SALTONSTALE

hopefully  
and they ^ lived happily ever after ...



Photo by Dan Tudor

The End

