



EVERGLADE KITE

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY
OF THE EVERGLADES
(serving Palm Beach County, Florida)

Volume 43, No. 10

July 2003

CALENDAR

Tues. July 1st – GENERAL MEETING

What's Happening in Lake Okechobee"
With Paul Gray, Ph.D.

Audubon Sanctuaries Manager

7:30 PM at the West Palm Beach Garden Club

Sat. July 26th – Swallow Tailed Kites

At Fisheating Creek

Coordinator:

Claudine Laabs (561) 655 - 9779

Tues. August 5th — GENERAL MEETING

Members' Slides Presentations

7:30 PM at the **NEW LOCATION**

► ► Howard Park Recreation Center ◀ ◀

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

NEW LOCATION:

Next month's General Meeting, and all following meetings, will take place at our new location, Howard Park. Please see the map on page 3 for directions. Full details will be in next month's KITE.

DONATIONS WANTED

ASE will be looking for donated items to sell at the upcoming "Giant Garage Sale" at the South Florida Fairgrounds on August 23rd. The chapter is planning on a boot this year for one of the largest non-profit fund raising events in the county.

So go through your closets and set aside any items you are willing to donate for this event. More details in the next newsletter.

TUESDAY, July 1st PROGRAM

Claudine Laabs, Program Chair

This Month's Presentation is:

by: **Paul Gray, Ph.D.**

What's Happening in Lake Okeechobee

One of Audubon's sanctuary managers will be our guest speaker in July. There have been a lot of ups and downs in Lake Okeechobee since Dr. Gray spoke to us in May 2001. Also since then, the Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary has been turned over to the State, so now the Sanctuary in Lake Okeechobee is his primary focus.

Paul Gray grew up in Kansas City, Missouri and received a B.S. from the U. of Missouri, an M.S. in Wildlife Management from Texas Tech University and his Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from U. of Florida with a dissertation on Florida's Mottled Ducks.

Please join us at 7:30 p.m. July 1st at the West Palm Beach Garden Club.

Thank You Volunteers!

June's Meeting Hospitality was provided by:

Sheila Reiss

With help from: Mary Lou Hall

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

— **Carol Shields**

Can you imagine how it will be when we have only mockingbirds, raccoons, blackbirds, blue jays, mourning doves, wild pigs, and perhaps a couple other mammals to enjoy in nature?

Pristine land is destroyed and redeveloped with only a handful of tree and shrub species replanted to replace what natural growth were lost. But in destroying that pristine land a whole ecosystem has been destroyed. Its a sacred part of nature that cannot be replaced no matter how many trees are replanted by man.

Many of us have heard the term biodiversity. In simple terms, it is the diversity of biology. Within a biome such as forests, tundras, or deserts exist unique ecosystems that are flawless. Plants depend on the wildlife and insects; wildlife depends on the plants and insects; insects depend on the wildlife and plants. A whole diverse world unto itself exists in a rotting log; in the shade of a rock, under the frozen earth. This is nature's glory that takes decades or centuries to establish and can be pushed out of existence in a single day with a bulldozer.

By destroying the biodiversity around us it limits what wildlife can survive on. Land for a predator to roam is lost. Certain birds, such as the snail kite, only survive on one food source--the apple snail. Plants species survive with certain soil balances. When these sources and balances are disrupted, the biodiversity becomes fractured and, in most cases, is destroyed.

We can hope that the development slows down or becomes environmentally conscious of what they are developing. Our voices can help by attending zoning meetings, land development meeting, and growth management meetings.

But what can we do to help nature in our own immediate world? Replanting native vegetation will help even if it's just in your own backyard. Removing exotics, such as Australian pine, Brazilian pepper or Acacia trees will help open the land to native growth. Become Johnny Appleseed and spread native seeds. Create a butterfly garden or bird-friendly yard by adding native plants to your yard or in your community.

I love blue jays, mourning doves, and mockingbirds, but I also love cardinals, pileated woodpeckers, and screech owls. Only by sustaining pristine lands and helping nature regain some of it's natural flora, can we hope not to loose our indigenous wildlife in this remarkable diverse state.

WEST NILE VIRUS INFORMATION

Summer time is Mosquito season and with Mosquito season comes West Nile Virus season. To report the finding of a dead bird, especially crows, contact the Health Department at:

(561)355-3022.

{Thanks goes to Kay Gattas for this updated phone number}

You can also visit the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission website to report the finding of a bird.

<http://wld.fwc.state.fl.us/bird/>

Al Liberman

Al Liberman died on May 31, 2003.

He served on the Board of Directors of Audubon Society of the Everglades for at least four years while I was president of the chapter. His knowledge was extensive regarding process and procedure and helped me tremendously during the seven years that I headed the chapter. What a resource he was for all of us.

We became friends prior to that time as I was assigned to do bird counts with Al and his wife, Barbara. We had many interesting trips and I learned a lot from both of them... Al and Barbara were excellent birders. They would think nothing of hopping in the car to go chase a rare bird alert in order to add another species to their life lists. After they both retired from the Palm Beach County School System they began a serious program of visiting each state to add to their U.S. Life List. At the end of 2000 Al's records showed a U.S. total of 685 species. "The last 3 years aren't included," says Barbara, but "I bet it would be at least 700." Their Florida list for the same time period listed 408 and their world list was 1,303 species.

Al and Barbara were involved with Eagle Watch, the Least Tern Survey for the Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, they did bird surveys at 20 Mile Bend ponds for the South Florida Water Management District and the Breeding Bird Atlas for National Fish & Wildlife. They conducted educational bird programs at schools and for community groups; supervised the Migratory Spring and Fall bird counts for a couple of years and helped Gloria Hunter computerize the Christmas Bird Count. Al had amassed a large collection of bird life photography at the Wakodahatchee Wetlands.

In the mid-eighties, I had done several birdathons and didn't feel like doing any more. Al approached me and said he would do the driving if I would raise the money. So we agreed. He would pick the best time for the birds on West coast of Florida and choose the route we would follow. We would leave for St. Petersburg as soon as Barbara and Al could get to my house after work on a Friday night. At dinner that evening we would go over the strategically mapped out plan to maximize the number of birds we wanted/needed to see to raise the most money. "How much money do you have per species?" Al would ask. Of course he would have made contacts with folks on the West coast and they would meet us at specific places to find a bird that we could not get anywhere else. Half way through the day we were exhausted but the adrenaline was flowing. We birded down I-75, across the State Road 80 and assorted side roads seeing meadowlarks and bluebirds, came home, heard Screech Owls at Pine Jog and finished on Hypoluxo Island the next day. It always proved profitable! But most of all we had fun.

I learned so much from Al. I will miss not being able to call him about one thing or another. He was a good friend.

By: Leah Schad

Conservation Corner – - *Cissie Durando*

It would appear that someone in Tallahassee has taken Orwell's "1984" to heart. First we destroy (or despise) history, Then we can re-write it! Who would be the worse?

For the time, the State Library will remain intact. This about-face happened only because there was a tremendous outpouring against the proposal to dismantle the library. Now, we learn, the same fate is proposed for the So. FL Water Mgmt. District's library. That should not happen! The whole history of the drainage district is there: publications, research, rules, and all of the FL. Water Laws. This must remain here and accessible to the public. This research tool is a necessity.

P. Bch. County's man on the board is Kevin McCarty, and chairman Nicholas Guterrez both can be sent mail at 3301 Gun Club Rd., W.P.B., FL 33408.

Wellington is still out there pumping dirty water into the Loxahatchee Refuge. There is still a possibility the Strazzulla Marsh will get converted into a reservoir. If one thinks the public shouldn't be footing the bill to clean up agriculture's (sugar) dirty discharges, how about mostly very comfortable urban run-off? What ever happened to, "Make the polluter pay?" That, as you might remember, was also a constitutional amendment.

Your legislators definitely need to be shaken-up. Most of them voted wrong on the infamous Everglades cop out bill. Just as potentially bad, they supported an evil Right-to-Farm bill in the House and Senate. It takes away all oversight from counties over any agriculture anywhere and gives the authority to the state. A *too little too late* out-cry has stalled it on the Gov.'s desk. My optimism is not great.

Despite the poor showing of El Paso Gas Co. after the ENRON Collapse, and despite that they have no contracts to sell gas, they are still pushing to come into this county. They are trying through reefs, Peanut Island, manatee congested areas, sensitive lands bought with bond money, and on into Martin County.

FLIGHT PATTERNS

By Hank McCall

Just as you can recognize friends a block away by their posture and walk, it is easy to identify birds by the way they fly. In a kettle of big birds soaring high the black vultures have choppy quick wing beats and then coast. The turkey vultures soar with fixed wings of high dihedral. Sometimes aningas float within the kettle with fat wings, wide tail, and outstretched neck.

Cormorants resemble aningas, but in flight their heavy bodies require vigorous flapping of their wings. Crows fly with a, "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" wing beat. If you see a small bird aggressively attacking a crow you can bet it is a mockingbird.

Limpkins are a good life bird for tourists. Their wings beat in a unique jerky mechanical manner. If you see a black cigar with fast moving wings overhead, that is a chimney swift.

Birds hovering over water are fairly easy to recognize. If it is big and plunges into the water feet first, it is an osprey. If it is small and white, and dives head first, it is a least tern.

Woodpeckers rise and fall in undulating flight. Redstarts flutter like butterflies. Big gray birds with slow steady wing beats are great blue herons if their head is tucked back to it's wings, or a sandhill crane if it's head and neck are extended.

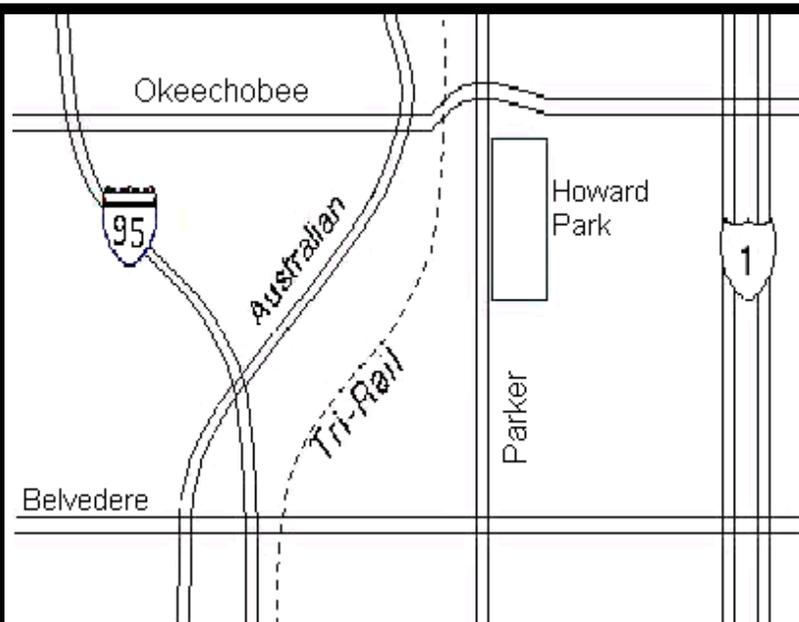
Skill in recognizing flight patterns is easy to acquire and it will enhance your joy

WE'RE MOVING

After a long and mutually beneficial stay at the West Palm Beach Garden Club the board of directors of the Audubon Society of the Everglades has found a new location to hold our membership meetings.

The primary reason for this move is financial. We are saving approximately \$80 a month and the facilities, parking, and location should be more convenient.

→ This move will take place next month ←
at our **August 5th meeting.**



Memberships in the National Audubon Society make great gifts!

In Florida, a special 3-way membership automatically makes you a member in the National Audubon Society, Audubon of Florida and Audubon Society of the Everglades. Your membership will include subscriptions to AUDUBON Magazine and the EVERGLADE KITE.

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PO Box 16914
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The Audubon Society of the Everglades General Meetings are held
the first Tuesday of every month, 7:30 p.m. at the West Palm Beach Garden Club Center,
Dreher Park Trail, West Palm Beach (opposite the Science Museum.)

Deadline for submissions for the July issue is July 14th

Audubon Society of the Everglades

PO Box 16914
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FL, 33416-6914

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President

Carol Shields - 561-964-1522

Kite Editor

Tammy Peeples
Audubontam@yahoo.com

Field Trips

Linda Most - 561-684-8693

Bird Identification

Gloria Hunter - 561-585-7714

ASE Internet Address

Audubon@auduboneverglades.org

Website

Auduboneverglades.org



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