



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES
Serving Palm Beach County, Florida
Volume 46, Number 4
January 2006

CALENDAR

Tues. Jan. 3, 7:30 p.m.

Monthly Program, Howard Park

Sat. Jan. 7, 8:00 a.m.

Wakodahatchee Wetlands (pending reopening). Meet at the parking lot on the E side of Jog Road, S of Boynton Beach Blvd. Leader: TBA.

Sat. Jan. 7, 9:00 a.m.

Special Field Trip to Ft. Drum. See article for details. Call Claudine (561) 655-9779.

Tues. Jan. 10, 8:00 a.m.

John Prince Park, Lake Worth. Use Congress Ave. entrance. Follow sign to campground. Meet across from camp office. Leader: Dorothy Brindle

Sat. Jan. 14, 8:00 a.m.

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Naples. Dedication of Corkscrew as entrance to southern section of the Great Florida Birding Trail. No ASE trip, just FYI.

Sat. Jan. 21, 8:00 a.m.

Riverbend Park, Jupiter. S side of Indiantown Road, 1/2 mi W of I-95. Leaders: Ed Kaweck and Walt Hackenjos

Jan. 27-29

Merritt Island NWR. Holiday Inn Titusville group rate: \$79/night. Call 321-269-2121. Slide show at the hotel Sat. night. Meet at 8 a.m. Saturday morning. Leaders: Phil and Ann Weinrich

40 Million Years of the Everglades: Reconstructing Past Habitats

*Dr. Edward Petuch and Dr. Charles Roberts
FAU Geography Department*

Imagine being able to time travel through millions of years while keeping an eye on the Everglades—emerging and submerging with inland seas through eons. We will have an opportunity to see our Everglades from the perspective of geographers who have researched our peninsula layer by layer.

Dr. Petuch received his Ph.D. in Oceanography from the Rosenstiel School at the University of Miami and Dr. Roberts received his Ph.D. from the Geography Department of Penn State University.

Please join us for this exciting program on January 3 at 7:30 PM at the Howard Park Community Center.

President's Comments

Claudine Laabs

As the New Year approaches, I would like to look back and thank all the volunteers who helped make our meetings and events a success. Special thanks to those who donated the silent auction items... and those who purchased them. Please remember that this is an all volunteer organization and all your help is appreciated. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Special Field Trip Saturday

January 7: Ft. Drum

Departs at 9:00 a.m. from Howard Park.

See Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles and Crested Caracara along the way to see Florida formations millions of years old!

The cost is \$45 per person (includes \$20 admission and van ride). Bring lunch. For more information, call Claudine (561) 655-9779

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The Everglade Kite

is the newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Everglades, published 12 times a year.

President

Claudine Laabs 655-9779

1st Vice President

Carol Shields 964-1522

2nd Vice President

Cynthia Plockelman 585-1278

Secretary

Rick Byrnes 798-6566

Treasurer

Leah Schad 848-9984

Field Trips

Gloria Hunter 585-7714
Marcella Munson
fieldtrips@auduboneverglades.org

Bird ID

Gloria Hunter 585-7714

Conservation

Rosa (Cissie) Durando 965-2420

Education

Susan Snyder 627-7829
roysuesnyder@aol.com

Membership

Debbie Smith 712-1100

Sales

Stella Rossi 732-4786

Library

Gloria Hunter 585-7714

Hospitality

Sheila Reiss 627-0510

Grants

Esther Zaresky 689-6689

Kite Editor

Ben Kolstad
newsletter@auduboneverglades.org

Webmaster

Bob Srdoch
webmaster@auduboneverglades.org

ASE on the Internet

Audubon@auduboneverglades.org
<http://www.auduboneverglades.org>

Audubon Society of the Everglades, incorporated in 1966, serves communities from Jupiter and Tequesta south to Boca Raton; in other words all Palm Beach County. Our purpose is to promote the conservation of wildlife and the natural environment and to advance human understanding of our place in the total ecological system.

Conservation Report

Rosa Durando

We have usurped wildlife habitat for living people and dead people. We have moved west of the Turnpike in north county, into former wildlife habitat for a resting place for all the garbage we generate. You should know the county Solid Waste Authority with its huge incinerator and landfill is out there. The location includes stormwater lakes, excavation pits, and a protected Everglades Kite rookery. A survey in the 90s documented more species of birds there than in Everglades National Park. There are seasonal species of vultures. The landfill also attracts a couple of species of gulls. Oh yes—there is also an eagle nesting site very close. You can be sure the eagles also scavenge between the lakes and the landfill. There were complaints by some (?) motorists on that stretch of the Turnpike immediately to the east. Drivers were unnerved by low-flying vultures (at 80 mph I'm sure it is unnerving!). The vultures congregated on the roadside, probably looking to clean up road kill.

In response, the USDA has issued a kill permit to the SWA, mostly for vultures, but also for gulls, blackbirds, crows, etc—ten species in all.

A couple of us objected at the last monthly SWA board meeting, December 14. The killing was postponed until further discussion, set for the January board meeting, January 11. Staff will arrange a meeting for all interested in this problem early in January with the USDA and the Wildlife Service.

We need people, voices to protest this unfair persecution of birds after we attract them. These killings cannot be justified. Signs warning of the bird flights could be posted north and south of the landfill. But I do think vultures are just as prevalent on any road in Florida where there are frequent road kills.

It would be great if you would plan to attend the meetings. If that is not possible, please get in touch with as many county commissioners as you can.

Call if you would like more information.

Big "O" Birding Festival January 27–29, 2006

All birders, and friends of birding, are invited to participate in the festival events at the Big "O" Birding Festival in Glades and Hendry counties from January 27 through January 29. The workshops, lectures, and tours are offered on an a la carte basis.

All lectures take place at the Doyle Conner building, 900 SW Hwy U.S. 27 in Moore Haven; lectures are included in registration fee; non-registrants pay \$5 at the door. The keynote speaker is Dr. Jerome Jackson: "In Search of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker."

For more information or for a registration form visit their web site at www.bigobirdingfestival.com, call 863-946-0300, or email info@bigobirdingfestival.com.

Photography Days at Wakodahatchee

During the upcoming winter season, three mornings at Wakodahatchee will be dedicated to the special needs of photographers. Activities will include individual photography opportunities, plus workshops presented by two nationally recognized wildlife photographers, Claudine Laabs and John J. Lopinot. To prevent "camera shake," fitness walkers will be asked to exercise at different locations until after 11 a.m. on these three days:

- Tuesday, January 24, 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. (Workshop leader: Claudine Laabs)
- Thursday, February 9, 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. (Workshop leader: John J. Lopinot, Deputy Director of Photography, Palm Beach Post)
- Tuesday, February 21, 6 a.m. to 11 a.m.

For more information, please contact the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department at 561-493-6000.

Birding at Riverbend Park

**Thursday, January 12, 7–9 p.m.
Let's Get Technical (about
birding)**

For the novice who wants to do it right. Learn about the equipment and books that will help you take flight to birding. Leader: Ed Kawecki

**Sunday, January 22, 8–10 a.m.
Let's Get Technical (two)**

Use your newly learned knowledge of birding to accompany local birding enthusiasts on a walk through Riverbend Park. Leader: Ed Kawecki.

Directions to Riverbend Park 1.25 mi W of I-95 or the Turnpike on Indiantown Rd. Watch for the park entrance sign on the south side of Indiantown Road.

Everglades Day 2006

Susan Snyder

The 7th Everglades Day Festival will be held Saturday, February 11, at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** Audubon Society of the Everglades (ASE) is the original founder of this great festival that drew 4,000 people last year. The purpose of the festival is to teach about our south Florida Everglades and promote the refuge. Some of the best experts are presenting and all the pertinent agencies and clubs exhibit. ASE needs to provide more volunteers this year. It is a great day to support ASE and your local wildlife refuge. Hope you can help!

Many jobs are available. They include exhibit tent assistant, children's activity monitor, leaders for walks, speaker tent host/hostess, information table, etc. Work schedule is flexible. Please contact Susan Snyder at 627-7829 or roysue@bellsouth.net for details.

Audubon of Florida October Operations Report

Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery (LOER)

Governor Bush, Senator Pruitt, Representative Negron, Agriculture Commissioner Bronson, elected officials and senior agency staff gathered on the shores of Lake Okeechobee to announce the "Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery" (LOER) plans to help accelerate restoration of Lake Okeechobee and the estuaries. Along with plans for \$200 million in spending over the next four years, the plan includes a review of key programs including fertilizer management, growth management, environmental permitting, increased water storage on private land and keeping the lake lower.

Forward pumps in Lake Okeechobee

Forward pumps that could supply water from Okeechobee during extreme drought are under consideration. Although beneficial to water supply, they carry a risk to the lake from excessively low water. Science staff prepared a brief position paper explaining the trade-offs.

Audubon was successful in efforts to persuade the SFWMD's Governing Board to pass a resolution to work with the Corps of Engineers to revise the Lake Okeechobee management plan and schedule for a healthier Lake. We were successful in ensuring language that will critically review the use of temporary or permanent forward pumps used for water supply.

Loxahatchee River Restoration

Audubon was successful in advocating for ecological targets for the *Restoration Plan Alternatives for the Northwest Fork Loxahatchee River*. This plan, developed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), will play an important role in the North Palm Beach County CERP Project. Audubon advocated for minimum flows over Lainhart Dam and within tributaries that would prioritize freshwater community restoration over maintaining current saltwater communities in non-historic locations.

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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The Audubon Society of the Everglades General Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at Howard Park Community Center in West Palm Beach. The phone number for the Community Center is (561) 835-7055. The public is welcome to attend.

Deadline for submissions for the **February 2006** issue is **January 10th**

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West Palm Beach, FL
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