



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES
Serving Palm Beach County, Florida
Volume 46, Number 5
February 2006

CALENDAR

Tues. Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m.

Monthly Program, Howard Park

Sat. Feb. 11, 8:00 a.m.

Everglades Day. See inside for details—volunteer opportunities still available!

Tues. Feb. 14, 8:00 a.m.

Okeehetee Nature Center, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, WPB. North side of road, 1 mile west of Jog (E of Turnpike). Meet at Nature Center. Leader: Ethel Kujanpaa

Sat. Feb. 18, 8:00 a.m.

Belle Glade Campground Meet at 7 a.m. at Kmart on NW corner of Southern Blvd/SR 80 and 441/SR 7; park next to garden center. Bring lunch. Leader: Chuck Weber

Feb. 17-20

Great Backyard Bird Count www.birdsource.org/gbbc

Sat. Feb. 25, 8:00 a.m.

STA-1. Meet at 7 a.m. at Kmart on NW corner of Southern Blvd/SR 80 and 441/SR 7; park next to garden center. Bring lunch. Leader: Gloria Hunter

Sun. Mar. 19

Sunset Cruise, Lake Worth Lagoon. \$25. Call Claudine for reservations (561-655-9779)

Tues. Apr. 4, 6:00 p.m.

Annual meeting, Green Cay Nature Center in Boynton Beach

Everglades Update

Nicholas Aumen, Ph.D.

The Everglades once covered the vast interior of South Florida. It has been ditched and drained and fragmented for over a century. Only 50% of the original Everglades still exists. Our program will track the progress of the South Florida ecosystem restoration. It will be a good way to prepare for **Everglades Day**.

Dr. Aumen is an aquatic ecologist for Everglades National Park (US Department of the Interior, National Park Service) and oversees an interagency team of scientists and engineers. His team is based at the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Palm Beach County to assess the potential impacts of restoration programs on Everglades National Park and other sensitive federal lands. He received his B.S. and M.S. in biology at the University of West Florida. He received his Ph.D. in microbial ecology at Oregon State University. He has been a professor at the University of Mississippi and FAU. He also was the Research Director at South Florida Water Management District before his present position.

Please join us to learn more about our Everglades at 7:30 PM on February 7 at the Howard Park Community Center.

President's Comments

Claudine Laabs

After Dr. Robert's wonderful program in January, 21 members and guests were inspired to visit the Fort Drum Crystal Mines in spite of the cold weather. Eddie Rucks, the owner, was a gracious host and explained the significance of the golden yellow crystals. It was a delightful experience to meet people from all over the country and dig for fossilized clam shells in the Tamiami formation, which is 3 million years old. Everyone found some crystals, which are unique in the world.

Dr. Roberts said we can e-mail him with any questions and information about his geographical history walks. (croberts@fau.edu)

Please remember to volunteer for **Everglades Day!**

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The Everglade Kite

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

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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.

The Audubon Society of the Everglades wishes to thank all who have responded to our Annual Appeal. As of this date (January 18, 2006) we have received \$4,220 from those listed below. Please remember you may still send your contribution...there is no deadline.

Cynthia A. Pearson	Marvin and Sheila	Jean Pecor
Hannah T. Gordon	Calderon	John S. Call Jr.
James Udell	Diane Hansen	Matthew J. Freund
Alan K. Parmalee	June Caroline Smith	James N. Shaw
Christine Schwartz	Meta Barton	Walter Hackenjoss
Helen Goldenberg	Judith Hill	Lucy Brown
Gerald Shortz	Beverly A. Tauberg	H. Lawrence Hess Jr.
Joan Balfour	Gerald B. Weiss	M. W. Riise
Nancy E. Stroud	Nicholas Campbell	Jackie Winchester
Susan and Roy Snyder	Frederick C. Lyman Jr.	Ellen Trout
Bruce E. Bryda	Allan J. Rosenberg	Kerstin Hersey
Cynthia Plockelman	Selma Menkes	James Arnold
Rosa Durando	John Thomas	Trudy Foster
Lesly Smith	Lester Nelinson	Louise W. Devine
Heidi Cauwer	Steven M. Dauber	Dean Surveying & Mapping Inc.
Bob Miller	Esther Goldstein	Elaine J. Wold
Beth Lyn Busch	Carol Edwards	Alan J. Swotes
Richard Cliggott	Patrick O'Brien	Irma & C. H. McCall
Barbara Connors	Ethel Huisking	Ted and Gertrude Winsberg
Bertha Beytes	Doris Milberg	Kenneth L. Groves
Terrie Bates	Glenn Boegershausen	E. J. Lovern, Jr.
Toni Studer	Rosa Romigosa	
Mary Louise Poisson	Elizabeth Prather	
Kenneth LeRoy	William Mannino	

Christmas Bird Count Preliminary Results

On December 31, twelve teams, 39 birders in all, fanned out over their assigned territories in the count circle, which stretches from the ocean to the Loxahatchee Refuge, from the south end of West Palm Beach to northern Delray Beach. This year the counters tallied at least 138 "countable" species. (There are potentially a couple more—rare species subject to approval of documentation.) That's below last year's 147. But given that, for some reason, there seem to be fewer birds here this winter, and we keep losing habitat, 138 is pretty good. And it's the product of what was truly a team effort. Nearly every group contributed at least one species not seen by any other. Although our compilers are still working on the actual numbers, here is some preliminary data, with previous count years for comparison:

American Robin	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Palm Warbler
2005- 4	2005- 195	2005- 415
2004- 3574	2004- 569	2004- 219
2003- 2	2003- 462	2003- 191
2002- 1557	2002- 2096	2002- 315

For more numbers, or to make your own table of historical data, visit the CBC website at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/

Photography Days at Wakodahatchee

The series continues this month with two more mornings at Wakodahatchee dedicated to the special needs of photographers. Activities will include individual photography opportunities, plus workshops presented by nationally recognized wildlife photographer John J. Lopinot. To prevent "camera shake," fitness walkers will be asked to exercise at different locations until after 11 a.m. on these days:

•Thurs., 2/9 (2 sessions):

6:30–9 a.m., John J. Lopinot, Deputy Director of Photography, *Palm Beach Post*, will present Photographing Birds on the boardwalk with a group of 15 participants. Participants must register.

9:30–11 a.m., John will continue his workshop at the SROC training room. Indoor session open to the public, no registration necessary.

9–11:30 a.m.: Karen Milstein on the boardwalk with a group of 15 participants. Participants must register separately for this session.

•Tues., 2/21 (2 sessions):

6:30–9 a.m., boardwalk session with Joanne Williams (limited to 15 participants).

9:30–11 a.m., Joanne will present a program at the SROC training room. Open to the public (no registration necessary).

9–10:30 a.m., Arlene Spagna will present Composition, Design Elements, and Lighting on the boardwalk with a group of 15 participants. Participants must register.

For more information or to register, please contact Karen Milstein at 561-776-9483 or gwegret@yahoo.com.

LEARN ABOUT THE EVERGLADES, FLORIDA'S RIVER OF LIFE

7th ANNUAL EVERGLADES DAY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

A. R. MARSHALL LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
U. S. 441/State Road #7 - 2 miles south of Boynton Beach Blvd.

- *Wondering about the latest news on Everglades Restoration?*
- *Trying to decipher the alphabet soup LNWR * STA * WCA * CERP?*
- *Thinking you might have to order flowers for Lake Okeechobee's funeral?*
- *Concerned about the degradation of our coral reefs?*
- *Wishing you could have met Marjory Stoneman Douglas?*
- *Longing to study Everglades ecosystems up close and personal?*

Then the seventh annual Everglades Day Festival is the place for you to be on Saturday, February 11.

This year's theme of "Conservation" will bring you up to speed on what is happening with south Florida's environmental challenges. Nathaniel Reed will be a guest speaker and moderator for an Everglades Conservation Panel at which expert presenters will enlighten you about different issues of concern affecting the Everglades. Hear Marjory Stoneman Douglas, reenacted by Joan Wolfberg, share the story of her fight for the 'River of Grass.' Meet with over 30 exhibitors who will be looking forward to talking with you. See live animal presentations throughout the day! Enjoy the speakers, nature walks, music, canoeing, food, exhibits, and storytelling. Buses, trolleys, and FREE admission will make your day more enjoyable. What could be more FUN and important? Come to EVERGLADES DAY and help us beat last year's attendance of 4,000. Show our public officials we care about the Everglades!

Volunteers call Susan, 627-7829

Audubon of Florida November Operations Report

Science and Sanctuaries

Hurricane Wilma raised the Lake Okeechobee water levels so much that a spring drawdown is no longer feasible. Instead, Audubon proposed a deviation to lower the lake to at least 13.5 feet, in an estuary-sensitive manner, to help prepare for the next hurricane season. Such a plan also might allow treatment of more than 10,000 acres of torpedo-grass that has invaded the marsh, which would yield some benefit to the lake this year.

Audubon submitted more comments to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) about negative effects of their herbicide-spraying activities on Lake Istokpoga (especially to birdlife). FWC is spraying native plant communities yet has no written document that describes why they are spraying native plants, or why this action is ecologically desirable. Audubon learned FWC also did not have a permit to spray the targeted plants. Audubon is recommending an outside review of the FWC spray program to ensure sound, and balanced, science is included.

Tavernier has ordered 10 satellite transmitter devices which will be attached to adult spoonbills in December, as the start of a tracking project, funded in part by the Wolfson Foundation.

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.

Name _____

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Make check payable to: National Audubon Society and send to:

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West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6914

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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 **March 2006** issue is **February 10th**

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