



# EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES  
Serving Palm Beach County, Florida  
Volume 47, Number 6  
March 2007

## CALENDAR

### **SAT. March 10**

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Naples. Carpool trip. Meet at 7 a.m. at Kmart on NW corner of Southern Blvd (SR80) and 441/SR7; park next to Garden Center. Bring lunch.

### **TUES. March 13, 9:00 a.m.**

Grassy Waters Preserve, 8264 Northlake Blvd., West Palm Beach. Meet at parking lot, south side of Northlake Blvd, 1 mile west of Beeline Hwy. Leader: Barbara Liberman

### **Fri-Sun. March 23-25**

St. Petersburg. Audubon Academy.

### **SUN. April 1**

Sunset Cruise, Lake Worth Lagoon. Call Claudine Laabs, 561-655-9779.

### **TUES. April 10, 6:00 p.m.**

ANNUAL MEETING and Dinner, Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park, West Palm Beach. \$50 per ticket.

### **TUES. April 10, 4:00 p.m.**

#### **SUNSET WALK**

ARM Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, Boyton Beach. Lee Rd., west side of 441, south of Boynton Beach Blvd. Admission, \$5 per car. Meet at Marsh Trail. Leader: Dorothy Brindle.

### **SAT. April 14, 8:00 a.m.**

Spanish River Park, Boca Raton. Meet at SW corner of Spanish River Blvd. and A1A. Leader: Chuck Weber.

### **SAT. April 28, 8:00 a.m.**

Frenchman's Forest Preserve and other areas, Palm Beach Gardens. Leader: Marvin Greenberg.

## **Program for Tuesday, March 6th Penni Redford, Grassy Waters Preserve**

Ms. Penni Redford, Manager of Grassy Waters Preserve (GWP) will be our featured speaker at our March 6th program. Also known as the West Palm Beach Water Catchment Area, this park is managed by the City of West Palm Beach Public Utilities Department. GWP provides fresh drinking water to over 130,000 people in West Palm Beach, the Town of Palm Beach, Town of South Palm Beach, and surrounding areas. The preserve includes nature center pavilions, meandering boardwalk trails, hiking, canoeing, programs, entertainment, and more! Eighteen federally listed plant and wildlife species occur within the project area, two of which, the Everglade snail kite and the eastern indigo snake, are species of special concern because little is known about their life histories within this project region. Come join us at the Howard Park Community Center, March 6 at 7:30 p.m. to learn more about this valuable asset to Palm Beach County.

*--Alan Parmalee, Programs Chair*

*Annual Meeting Program Alert:* The location of our annual meeting on April 10th is the Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park. As usual, we will have a dinner banquet; the price this year is \$50, wine is extra. For those not attending the fundraiser/dinner banquet, please join us for the meeting and elections, scheduled to begin at approximately 7:30 p.m. We will have an exciting speaker; please join us for the full program!

### **President's Comments**

*Marcella Munson*

Thanks to all who joined us out at Loxahatchee for a marvelous 8th Annual Everglades Day. What a treat to wander through the Refuge under a cloudless blue sky. Participants enjoyed spotting newly-hatched alligators, preening Purple Gallinules, and even a sleepy Great Horned Owl. They also were treated to bird, butterfly, and binocular walks. But for many, the signature event was the panel featuring Janet Reno and Maggie Hurchalla reminiscing about their adventures and misadventures in the Everglades.

Janet and Maggy are excellent storytellers with a compelling message of Everglades preservation and restoration. These sisters painted an extremely vivid picture for the standing-room only audience—so vivid, in fact, that at one point, one of the Refuge's resident Red-Shouldered Hawks even chimed in! The piercing cries of the hawk served as a reminder to each of us that only by acting together can we protect what's left of this national treasure, and restore what has been lost. This month, therefore, I repeat Janet and Maggie's central message to each of you: Please get involved in Everglades restoration however you can! One of the most effective ways to do so is by writing, calling, faxing, or emailing your elected officials, regardless of political affiliation. And when you do contact them, remind them that the time has come to put differences aside, and put the Everglades first.

## **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 in 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**

*Cissie Durando*

After a day spent attending the monthly board meeting of the South Florida Water Management District, I have a problem facing reality. Witnessing the fairy tales the board spins, one wonders: what are they really about?

### **Refuge update**

Listening to the criticism heaped on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service over their cleaning up the Refuge of exotics and their own admission no one is really managing the Strazulla Marsh (in another era it was managed by the superintendent of the refuge) and is now in limbo. No money.

### **Lake Okeechobee update**

Listening to the diversionary tactics of criticism heaped on Paul Gray of Audubon of Florida because he accurately expounded (or tried to) on the lack of progress and viable statistics acknowledged by the district as to expanding phosphorus pollution into Lake Okeechobee, escalating costs to clean up, and basically we really don't have the money or ability to do any better. Also, at certain times of the year, the lake gets twice as much water as it can handle. And did we say the Fourth Estate is guilty of stirring up controversy?

### **Development in the "wedge" SE of the Refuge**

I am in good company (with Dr. Gray) as I was also publicly reprimanded for asking the loaded question, "Why is the district supporting a purely political/development move like endorsing the annexation of almost 2000 acres critically west of U.S. 441/SR7, no urban service, 1 unit/10 acres, agriculture, will need WATER (and Broward County is out) adjacent to site one water storage area, east of the Refuge?"

The chairman contradicted me while his info was right there and he was wrong and surely knew he was, but he pulled the rank of his title and cut me off with no answer.

Those in charge complain constantly over the escalating costs of land for storage and cleansing and do everything in their power to assure investors that they will have their "road to riches paved" (pun intended) at public expense.

The bone they threw the public: they will develop a rule that will ensure environmental water needs will be met over the future public demand for water. Also a commitment from the interdistrict transfer of water; does this rule apply there?—Well, not yet.

### **Peak Birding Time in Panama!**

Covering both coasts, the Canal Zone, rain forest and cloud forest, this field trip is planned for maximum species! Boat rides and hikes will take us to prime habitats in the canal, Panama Bay, Bocas del Toro and the high mountains near Costa Rica. The March 2–14 dates are prime time for migratory birds as well as nesting for resident birds.

We leave Miami Airport at 3:30 PM and go right to the Gamboa Rainforest for the first three days, the next three days are spent in Amador, a park-like area of Panama City near the Pacific Ocean with a view of the Bridge of the Americas. After that we fly to Bocas del Toro in search of the Red-billed Tropic Birds and then go into the mountains near Volcan to observe the Resplendent Quetzal.

The cost for the 12 night trip is \$2800; the first six days, \$1850. Please call Claudine (561)655-9779 for more information.

### **Fourth Annual Sunset/Moonrise Boatride April 1 (no joke)**

The annual boat ride in the Lake Worth Lagoon to view the Sanctuary Islands and the Snook Islands is scheduled for a Sunday evening, 6-8 PM. We will meet at the Banyan Street dock at 5:45 PM. The cost is \$25 per person. Please bring binoculars and a picnic dinner. Call Claudine for reservations (561) 655-9779.

## Pathfinder Scholarship Winner

ASE was pleased to have Stephen McLaughlin and his father attend our January meeting.

Stephen McLaughlin was awarded the \$2500 Audubon Society of the Everglades (ASE) Ruth and Seymour Miller Memorial Scholarship at the 2006 Pathfinders of Palm Beach/Martin County Scholarship Awards. John I. Leonard High School (JILHS) nominated Stephen for his scholarship, leadership and science achievement. "Stephen is one of the most well-rounded young men I have encountered in my 30 years as an educator," said Cindy Culp, JILHS Computer Academy guidance counselor.

Stephen received first place at the 2006 PBC Science Fair for the Environmental category.

"Effects of Hurricanes on Populations of Tillandsia Species in Exotic, Cypress, and Hydric Hammocks" was a timely project. Volunteering at Grassy Waters Preserve, Stephen established a transect a half mile long. Going one meter on either side of the transect he identified each tree and counted tillandsia (epiphytes) by species on the tree. It took many hours in the field. Originally the project was to determine effects of effluent being pumped, but the opportunity afforded by hurricanes was just too good to pass up. Using the count made the first summer as a baseline, he returned to the transect after Frances and Jeanne and resurveyed. Stephen used the chi square method to extrapolate his data. He found that melaleuca had fewer tillandsia. On the cypress trees, some lost and some gained tillandsias. There was some variation in the species.

The project was hard work, the area was thick and off the walkways. The count was tedious. None of that was a challenge for Stephen. As drum major, captain of volleyball and soccer teams, treasurer of his senior class, and 11<sup>th</sup> in his class, Stephen has succeeded at many things!

"Whichever path I follow, I will be involved in my lifelong commitment of having an environmentally friendly world," said Stephen.

Donations to the Audubon Society of the Everglades Ruth and Seymour Miller Memorial Pathfinder Scholarship are welcome!

## Volunteers Needed at Gumbo Limbo Turtle Day

South County Volunteers needed to help with the exhibit table at Turtle Day. This festival will be held on March 10 at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton. Contact Susan Snyder 627-7829 or roysue@bellsouth.net.

## Everglades Day 2007

*Susan Snyder*

Everglades Day was a huge success this year. Attendance was over 3500! The weather was perfect. Janet Reno and Maggy Hurchalla drew an enthusiastic audience that delighted in the adventures of growing up near the Everglades. Special thanks go to Maggie and Janet for taking time to be a part of this 8<sup>th</sup> Everglades Day festival.

In keeping with the theme, Explore the Everglades, many special walks were planned for the levees and trails. Everywhere you looked people were walking around discovering new things about the Everglades and the wildlife refuge.

The refuge staff worked hard to make the day a success. Serena Rinker, the coordinator, had all the details covered! Coordinating the event were Audubon volunteers Susan Snyder, Cynthia Plockelman, Duffy Murphy, Carol Shields, Judy Johnson and Linda Humphries along with Friends of the Loxahatchee Refuge volunteers Ruth Levow and Les Nelison.

Thanks go to these volunteers, too.

Rick Byrnes	Stella Rossi
Marvin & Sheila Calderon	Dana Smith
Dick & Verna Freshley	Debbie Smith
Ben Kolstad	Joanne Snyder
Marcella Munson	Roy Snyder
Stan & Freda Rosenberg	Kathy Stambaugh

## ASE Member Volunteers as Judge at County Science Fair

Creighton Lederer volunteered as an ASE representative to judge the Palm Beach County High School Science and Engineering Fair held in December. "I was awestruck by the sophistication of the projects. The projects were innovative and impressive. It was inspiring to meet so many dedicated young people, who were available for explanations and questions." said Creighton.

Since it was Creighton's first time judging, he had no idea about what to expect. What he discovered were science projects on every subject you could think of from stem cell research to nuclear experiments in terms of energy sources throughout the main South Florida Fairground building. After receiving some training, he was assigned to the physics projects and spent the whole day judging. "There were lots of judges and lots of exhibits, but the science fair was very well organized with a relaxed atmosphere. Even the teachers attending were impressed with the quality of the projects. I worked hard and had a good time!" said Creighton enthusiastically.

THANK YOU, CREIGHTON!

We hope you will inspire more of our members with a science background to volunteer next year.

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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.

**Reminder: Deadline** for submissions for the **April 2007** issue is **March 10th**

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