



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES
Serving Palm Beach County, Florida
Volume 48, Number 9
June–July 2008

CALENDAR

*This year's field trips are over;
look for next year's calendar in
our September issue!*

**Tuesday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.,
Howard Park, West Palm Beach.**

General Meeting: Controlling the
Evil Weevil in Florida. Ronald
Cave, Ph.D.

**Tuesday, July 1, 7:30 p.m.,
Howard Park, West Palm Beach.**

General Meeting: Importing
Exotic Plants and Animals.
Shannon Wiyda, Florida
Fish & Wildlife Conservation
Commission

**East Section of the Great Florida
Birding Trail Updated**

The FWC reopened the East section of the Great Florida Birding Trail in Summer 2007 in order to add new birding sites (we are in the South section). As part of the Birding Trail's grassroots approach, land managers and the general public were asked to submit nomination forms for sites that were not included on the trail when it first opened in November 2000. A total of 53 sites were nominated. The nomination period closed July 31, 2007. Sites were inspected August 2007 through January 2008.

In March 2008, 46 locations were selected by the steering committee and the FWC to be part of the Great Florida Birding Trail. A new guide booklet for the East section of the Birding Trail should be available by the end of 2008. For more information, visit www.floridabirdingtrail.com.

Membership/Mailing Problems?

Address correspondence regarding Audubon magazine subscriptions and/or National Audubon Society Membership, to PO Box 52504, Boulder, Co. 80322. Or call 800-274-4201; or email CHADD@audubon.org

ASE Donates \$20,000 to Exhibits Fund at Refuge

On May 6, the Audubon Society of the Everglades (ASE) donated \$20,000 toward exhibits in the new visitor center at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Boynton Beach. ASE is the gatekeeper for the Refuge. ASE is also part sponsor of Everglades Day at the refuge. The original visitor center was damaged during the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005. We are sponsoring two exhibits: the Bird Silhouettes and the Benefits of Wetlands exhibits. The 147,000+ acre refuge is the northernmost remaining part of the Everglades ecosystem, and is an important part of the Northeast Everglades Natural Area. It is home to the American alligator and the endangered Snail Kite. The new visitor center will be a focal point for all who come to enjoy the walking trails, boardwalk, canoe trails, bike trails, and other recreational opportunities offered at the refuge. And ASE is proud to be a part of this great new visitor center.



Jay Brenner, President, Friends of ARM Loxahatchee NWR; Rolf Olson, Project Manager, Linda Humphries, President, Audubon Society of the Everglades

Have You Seen The Green Girl?

Pine Jog's Kristi Martin Moyer's weekly column in the *Palm Beach Post* is full of good advice on how to green up your life. Ideas like planting native vegetation and conserving water may seem like old hat to Auduboners, but every week Kristi manages to make these "old" ideas new. Her article last weekend (May 16) provided excellent information on how to stop junk mail from arriving at your door.

First, go to www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist to get started with the Direct Marketing Association. They handle the bulk of the bulk mail, and they offer advice on how to reduce the volume that comes from other sources. Then, when you sign up for anything at all where your name and address is required, make sure to write "No mailing lists" on the form. Credit card offers? (I get about 10 a week!) Call 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) to reduce that pile of junk mail.

For more, visit www.palmbeachpost.com, and enter "Green Girl" in the search box.

The Everglade Kite

is the newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Everglades, published 11 times a year.

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ASE on the Internet

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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.

Nature Notes

Have you noticed the smoke hanging over our area in the early mornings this May? That's from wildfires (some no doubt human-assisted), which have been fueled by all the wet weather we had this winter. That's right—rain leads directly to fires. As drydown occurs, all that vegetation that had grown wild with the wet weather become tinder dry, and a dangerous source of fire. Dangerous, but only if it comes too close to our homes. Wildfires typically have a restorative effect on the natural environment, although dry season fires are harder on the ecosystem than the natural, lightning-induced fires we get during the rainy season.

President's Comments

Linda Humphries

The North American Spring Migration Count (NAMC) was on Saturday, May 10. It was a wonderful experience for me. I had never been in charge of an area before, but I had participated in several Christmas bird counts. After the count ended, I found I was seeing more birds in surrounding areas and continuing to identify them in my mind. The migration count helped sharpen my awareness of the everyday birds around me. I don't believe that there is ever just another bird. Every bird is unique and entertaining if you take a moment to watch it's behavior. After looking at so many of the same species, I could definitely tell when a different bird joined the group. The purpose of the migration count is to obtain a "snapshot" of the birds in an area and note the distribution of each species. The final goal listed by the NAMC is to "have fun", which we absolutely did. The Fall Migration Count is on September 20, 2008; if you don't want to miss out on the experience, call Cynthia Plockelman at (561) 585-1278 and register now. It's also time to start planning the birding trips for 2008–2009. If you have any suggestions or ideas for places you would like to bird, please contact Ben at (561) 367-7689 or ben@kolstad.com. Our chapter also is looking for people interested in leading bird trips, please contact Ben. I was able to join Tropical Audubon Society from Miami for their annual trip to Fort DeSoto. Brian Rapoza and Paul Bithorn led an excellent three-day trip. We did not have the fallout of previous years, but it was wonderful to see the warblers and migrants flying through. The beauty of the summer and scarlet tanagers is unforgettable. On the way home, we stopped at the Celery Fields in Sarasota where I saw my first King Rails. I couldn't believe my eyes as two King Rails walked on the edge of the reeds. It was a thrilling experience.

Would you like to join in the fun next year?? Please let Ben or me know so we can plan some equally exciting trips for our members. And don't forget to check out the newly revised website at www.auduboneverglades.org. It changes weekly with constantly updated information to keep our members well informed. Finally, I welcome your thoughts and suggestions, so please contact me regarding any issues at 561-742-7791 or hlindaase@aol.com.

Conservation Notes

The South Florida Water Management District has halted construction on the massive reservoir projects in the middle of the Everglades restoration area pending resolution of a lawsuit brought by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Sierra Club. As anyone who drives along US 27 between Fort Lauderdale and Belle Glade knows, this is one giant project; the blasting required to complete it raised serious concerns about water quality, and the history of development in South Florida, combined with the lack of legal commitment by the SFWMD to actually use it for environmental purposes, rather than as water supply, raised questions about whether the water would be used for its funded, stated purpose—Everglades restoration—or whether it would be yet another taxpayer funded gift to developers building homes on lands needed for restoration.

The reservoir is designed to be one of the world's largest freestanding manmade reservoirs, and one of the largest water projects in the world—26 square miles in area, 27 feet deep, holding 62 billion gallons of water. (Lake O is bigger, but all we did was dam it—excuse me, dike it.) Imagine how hard it would be to keep South Florida's thirsty lawns and dirty cars from coveting all that water.

Audubon of Florida's Legislative Wrap-Up

Some good bills passed, some didn't

SB 542 Florida Forever – Sen. Burt Saunders – Extends \$300 million per year for ten more years, but reserves funds for capital improvements. Working ranch and timber lands will benefit from \$10 million annually that will be used for agricultural protection agreements authorized in the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act. A new Working Waterfronts program will attempt to preserve parts of some of Florida's historic fishing ports, which are under serious pressure from upscale development. The bill also allows public lands to be used for mitigating impacts to imperiled species.

SB 1094 Clean Oceans Act – Sen. Mike Haridopolous – The bill forces gambling vessels to treat rather than dump their onboard sewage.

SB 1302 Leah Schad Memorial Ocean Outfall Program – Bans new ocean outfalls and requires existing outfalls to first use advanced treatment and ultimately reuse wastewater in Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. Named after longtime Audubon leader and board member the late **Leah Schad**.

SB 1552 Everglades Bonds (and FL Keys Wastewater Bonds) – Sen. Burt Saunders – Extends by ten years the authority to use the sale of up to \$100 million a year in bonds to generate funds for Everglades restoration. Also adds \$50 million per year for four years starting in 2010 for the overdue Florida Keys wastewater program.

HB 5001 General Appropriations – Funds Florida Forever at \$300 million, Everglades at \$50 million (down from \$200 million) and holds other trust funds for water quality and land management at carryover levels. Alternative water supply was cut down to less than \$10 million. Sadly the appropriations process was used to wreck vengeance on the Department of Community Affairs, which will lose a major part of its planning staff in what was clearly retribution for Secretary Tom Pelham's courageous stands.

HB 7059 Seagrass Protection and Seagrass Mitigation Banks – Rep. Stan Mayfield – A last minute amendment to allow the Cabinet to authorize seagrass mitigation banks was opposed by Audubon. The language was changed from "shall" to "may" and the bill was passed securing a long-sought goal of allowing enforcement against intentional harm to seagrass in aquatic preserves.

HB 7135 Energy – by the ENRC, Rep. Paige Kreegel and Rep. Stan Mayfield – A top Audubon priority was achieved in this bill, requiring that electric power utilities work with their customers to reduce demand through conservation and efficiency. The bill also had Governor Crist's top priority – endorsement of a state cap and trade program for greenhouse gases. The bill made it easier to site and pay for nuclear power plants and powerlines. Audubon worked hard to minimize the effect of the transmission line language. Opponents of powerlines on public lands should know that the Cabinet routinely grants use of state lands for powerlines. The policies Audubon worked to secure were to avoid and minimize impacts and to secure adequate compensation.

Good Bills that Did Not Pass (Maybe Next Year)

SB 2394 Springs Protection – Sen. Burt Saunders – A proposed pilot project to clean up pollution in Rainbow and Silver Springs was opposed by builders and agricultural interests.

Bad Bills that Died

HB 761 by Pickens and **SB 1376** by Dean – Preemption of Local Environmental Laws

HB 1267 by Nelson and **SB 2352** by Aronberg – Preemption of Local Fertilizer Laws

HB 1173 by Mayfield and **SB 2242** by Baker – Preemption of Local Development Laws

HB 7143 by Mayfield and **SB 1296** by Saunders – Legislative Oversight of Water Management Districts

SB 774 by Baker and **HB 7135** by ENRC – Preemption of Local Mining Laws

SB 7129 by EEIC and Cannon (**SB 474** companion not viewed unfavorably)

August Yoga Retreat at

Maine's Hog Island Audubon Center

Hog Island Audubon Center in Muscongus Bay, is offering a spectacular four-day yoga retreat August 24-27. Set on Hog Island, a private 330-acre preserve off the coast of Bremen, Maine, Om on the Island: A Yoga Retreat is designed for all levels of yoga enthusiasts to deepen their connections to the natural world as they relax and renew body and spirit. Learn more about this and other opportunities at Hog Island http://www.maineaudubon.org/explore/camp/hi_overview.shtml

DEP ENCOURAGES CONSUMERS TO RECYCLE OLD TVs

Recycling electronics protects our environment, reduces waste in landfills

In preparation for the digital TV transition in 2009, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has produced an interactive web-based map that enables citizens to find out where to recycle old televisions. With the digital conversion just months away, DEP expects many unwanted analog televisions to be recycled as new digital televisions are purchased.

"Recycling your television, instead of throwing it away makes a lot of sense. It keeps waste out of landfills, and allows the recovery of electronic components that contain lead and other toxic materials," said DEP Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs Mimi Drew. "Conservation, reuse and recycling of all resources and wastes should be a key component of our lifestyles."

Some electronics recyclers estimate that as many as one in four households may discard at least one television as a result of the digital conversion. If that happens, Florida could see almost two million televisions recycled in the next few years.

The interactive map feature allows Floridians to identify where to recycle electronics with just one click. DEP's electronics recycling website also links to a frequently asked questions page that explains what the television broadcast signal conversion is, how to tell whether your television is "digital-ready" and how to get a \$40 coupon toward the purchase of a digital-to-analog converter box.

As the result of a recent federal law, all television broadcast signals in the U. S. after February 17, 2009, must be in a digital format. Any television that uses cable or satellite is already able to receive the new digital format signal (digital-ready). Older televisions that use "rabbit ears" or a roof top antenna can only receive the old analog format signal and might not be able to view digital television programming. Owners of older units must either purchase a new television with a digital tuner or a digital-to-analog converter box that allows older television sets to receive the new digital format signal.

If purchasing a new television, DEP encourages consumers to consider buying one that conserves energy. ENERGY STAR qualified televisions use about 30 percent less electricity than standard units, saving both energy and money on utility bills. For more information on ENERGY STAR televisions, visit <http://www.energystar.gov/>.

To use DEP's interactive electronics recycling map, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/electronics/pages/televisions.htm. For more information on recycling electronics, visit: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/electronics/default.htm>.

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Check out our redesigned website, www.auduboneverglades.org

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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.