



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

Serving Palm Beach County, Florida

Volume 49, Number 5

February 2009

CALENDAR

Tue., Feb. 3, 7:00 p.m. (Note new time; refreshments at 7, meeting at 7:30!) General Membership Meeting, Pine Jog.

Sat. Feb. 7 Everglades Day Festival, Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Feb. 13-16, Location of your choice: Great Backyard Bird Count. See inside for details.

Sat., Feb. 14, 8:00 a.m. Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Boynton Beach. Children 7 and older. Leader: Clive Pinnock.

Sun. Feb 15, 8:30 am Birding Trip to STA-5. Car pool leaves the Kmart (441 and Southern) at 7 a.m. For more information contact Linda at 561-742-7791 or hlindaase@aol.com

Tues., Feb 17, 2:00 p.m. Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Boca Raton. The second in our new series of afternoon meetings in south County; Rick Newman to speak on the bird research and educational activities at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center.

Wed., Feb. 18, 7:30 a.m. Okeehchee Park, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd., West Palm Beach. Meet at Nature Center. Leader: Ethel Kujanpaa.

Sun. Feb 22, 4:30 p.m. Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Boynton Beach. Sunset bird walk, Leaders: Paton White and Linda Humphries

Newsletter mailing difficulties

We are continuing to update our membership list. If you are moving or have moved recently please contact us and make sure we have current information. The post office has started returning newsletters and charging a fee. We are going to start deleting addresses that have been returned undeliverable. We appreciate your help.

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, February 3, 2009, 7:30 p.m.

Refuge Update with Sylvia Pelizza, Manager ARM Loxahatchee NWR
Ms. Pelizza has worked for the USFWS for 27 years, in 5 different regions at 11 National Wildlife Refuges. She has been Project Leader at 4 stations over 17 years, and has served as a collateral duty law enforcement officer for 19 years, beginning in 1984. Her work with the Refuge system has taken her to many different environments including coastal wetlands, freshwater wetlands, native prairie, desert regimes, and tropical forests, and to many points on the map: East Coast, West Coast, Midwest, Southwest, and the Pacific Islands.

Sylvia has been looking forward to working at the ARM Loxahatchee NWR, a refuge that is facing many challenges, but also many opportunities. Come join us as she discusses where she's come from and where she hopes to go at the Refuge.

Meeting Update: Our general member meeting in January was a success. We had over 50 people attending. Several people brought in their pictures of the bird of the month and Virginia gave us fascinating facts about the Painted Bunting. Many people are enjoying talking to their friends after the meeting and there is always a rushed feeling because we have to clean up and leave the building. I would like to try something new. Our room at Pine Jog will be open at 7 p.m. and we will serve refreshments at 7:15. The meeting will continue to start at 7:30. After the speaker is done, there will be a short time left to socialize but no one will be rushed to eat and run and we won't have the problem of clean up. We will have a greeter where you can sign in and make yourself a name tag upon your arrival. Hopefully this change will add to your enjoyment. Let me know what you think of the changes and any suggestions you have on any issues. Thanks for your continued support.

Pathfinder Donations Needed

For many years Audubon Society of the Everglades, ASE, has awarded a Pathfinder Scholarship in the amount of \$2500. The new amount of the award is \$3000, which will require additional funds in the endowment account. Please consider helping us raise the additional funds by sending a check for any amount, payable to ASE, with the notation "Pathfinders" on the check. This scholarship goes to a graduating student, dedicated to the environmental field, to continue their education. Thank you for your continued support. This scholarship award would not be possible without your generous help.

The Everglade Kite

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

President

Linda Humphries 561-742-7791

1st Vice President

Cynthia Plockelmann 585-1278

2nd Vice President

Paton White 818-7574

Secretary

Marcella Munson 367-7689

Treasurer

Janet Schreiber 689-2530

Field Trips

Ben Kolstad 367-7689

ben@kolstad.com

Bird ID, Library

Gloria Hunter 585-7714

Conservation

Rosa (Cissie) Durando 965-2420

Education

Susan Snyder 627-7829

roysue@bellsouth.net

Membership

Debbie Smith 967-4879

Publicity

Sheila Hollihan-Elliot 845-304-6988

Sales

Stella Rossi 732-4786

Hospitality

Judy Hill 585-1344

Kite Editor

Ben Kolstad 367-7689

ASE on the Internet

<http://www.auduboneverglades.org>

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.

Bird of the Month: Belted Kingfisher

Members at our January meeting picked the Belted Kingfisher as the bird of the month for February. Come hear interesting facts and please bring any pictures of the Belted Kingfisher for our display board. They will be returned at the end of the meeting. Is there any special bird you have been wondering about? Call Linda or email hindaase@aol.com with your ideas.

President's Perspective

Linda Humphries

I went to the beach today with my grandchildren, Andrew (8) and Ava (7). Upon our arrival, Andrew saw a Ring-billed Gull and asked me the name of the bird. Later in the car on our way home my granddaughter, Ava, found the picture of the gull in one of my birding sheets and was very excited to see it was the same bird. Andrew's greatest desire is to fly like a bird. He takes a towel or blanket and runs up and down the beach trying to flap his wings. We brought a 14-year-old friend along and she marveled at how the birds tuck their legs up as they fly and how fast they can fly. The birds were very cooperative and hung out close by.

We all had a lot of time to study them and I continued to be amazed by what the children's observations were. It is exciting to try to see what children see and figure out what they are thinking. I see birds every day and forget to marvel at how they are designed and their ability to soar and fly through the skies. The children helped me to see things differently. They asked many questions and enjoyed learning how the Ring-billed Gull got its name. As we were leaving we became upset to see one of the gulls trying to eat a green bottle cap. We took a few minutes to pick up the area around us from all of the trash left by the unthinking beach visitors. We even threw away rope that had washed ashore. As I was telling the story of the bottle cap to my son he said "people need to be educated." To me it is common sense, but I will try to find a way to make people more aware of the dangers of leaving trash on the beach!! Thanks to all of you for taking the time to pick up trash as you see it and helping to save our wildlife.

TOGETHER GREEN GRANT UPDATE

It will soon be spring! The \$15,000 TOGETHER GREEN GRANT awarded to ASE is really getting underway. That means it is time to install the native plant landscape at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. BUT...first must come the planning! VOLUNTEERS are encouraged to join ASE as we plan the landscape and develop the concepts to communicate on the signage and brochures. We need good ideas and willing helpers. Then we can plant! Contact Susan at 627-7829 or roysue@bellsouth.net.

TOGETHER GREEN is an alliance between National Audubon Society and Toyota Corporation to connect people with nature, restore and protect habitat and encourage volunteerism.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Get ready for the 12th annual Great Backyard Bird Count occurring any day, every day between February 13-16. This event is sponsored by National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Individuals, families, classes, groups count birds wherever they choose, and then report counts online. Online maps and counts are updated throughout the count enabling the counter to see how birds fit into the big picture. What more fun could you have than to look for birds!!

For more information go to www.birdcount.org.

10th Annual Everglades Day Celebration February 7, 2009

Saturday February 7, from 8am to 4pm, marks the gala 10th Anniversary of Everglades Day at the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach. Palm Beach County turns 100 this year, and the Everglades Day Festival turns 10. It is fitting that the theme is Celebrating the Everglades. Come have birthday cake in the pavilion at noon. Meet the new refuge manager, Sylvia Pelizza, and explore the new Visitors' Center. See the special history, health, nature and children's strands. See the new director of the National Wildlife Refuge System, Greg Siekaniec, who will give the keynote address, "Celebrating Wildlife Successes." Come help us celebrate!

As Florida continues to grow and climate change and development threaten the balance of our natural systems, it is critical that we bring people from all cultures into the Everglades to experience and learn about South Florida's unique national treasure. The Audubon Society of the Everglades is a founding sponsor of this important outreach event and volunteers are active in making this a fun family-friendly day. Visitors can pick and choose from a lineup of presentations (some in Spanish) and exhibits, including live animals, birds, and reptiles, including the raptors of ASE's very own Clive Pinnock.

There will be a variety of guided nature walks to the areas where otters have been sighted again and the endangered Snail Kite's food, the apple snail, still thrives. There will be bus trips to a critical marsh area of the Everglades and special tours will be available to study LILA water impounds set up by the South Florida Water Management District to assess the best practices for saving our Everglades. We will also continue our tradition of canoeing in the Everglades, and don't forget to check out the food vendors and live music.

Cost is Free, including free off-site parking at Monte's Packing House 1/2 mile south of the refuge. Shuttle bus service and trolley service will be available.

Check www.auduboneverglades.org for scheduled events and speaker details.

Volunteers are still needed. Call Susan at 627-7829 or email roysue@bellsouth.net.

Trip Report: Behind the Scenes at the Okechee Nature Center

We had 18 people join our behind-the-scenes view of the raptor compound. Two Sandhill Cranes greeted the visitors upon their arrival at the nature center. On the veranda, Clive Pinnock, the manager, started with a live presentation of a Great Horned Owl, a Red-shouldered Hawk, and an American Kestrel. All of these birds have been injured or imprinted by humans and cannot be released into the wild. They are used for educational purposes, mostly with children.

We then walked over to the raptor compound and saw a Turkey Vulture, two Red-tailed Hawks, a Barred Owl and an Eastern Screech-Owl. Okechee Nature Center is raising money to make improvements to the Raptor Compound with hopes to be able to open it for the public to see. The injured birds are an important tool used to educate children about the importance of protecting the birds and what vital part the birds play in maintaining our ecosystems. As we were leaving the compound we got a brief look at the buck that resides out there with five females. He still had his 6 point antlers. The back feeder had two female Painted Buntings, a male Common Yellowthroat drinking the water, a cardinal, and a mockingbird. Everyone had a great time.

We are scheduling a second trip for those who missed this one; the date will be March 13, at 10:00 a.m. Come on out and join the fun!

Children's Bird Walk, February 14

There will be a Children's bird walk (ages 8 to 15) on Feb 14, 2009, 10:00 am at Wakodahatchee. Bring your children out for an experience they will never forget. The variety and number of birds are unbelievable. Call Linda Humphries, 561-742-7791 for questions.

NEW AFTERNOON MEETINGS

Tuesday, February 17, 2009 2:00 p.m., marks the second in our new series of afternoon meetings at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton. Come join the fun. Hear Rick Newman discuss the bird research and educational activities at the Center. Extra parking is available at the first driveway south of Gumbo Limbo on A1A: Red Reef West parking. Drive through gate, park on right hand side. Trail leads to the nature center.

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33416-6914
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AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES IS A 501(C)3 ORGANIZATION. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Check out our online community at www.auduboneverglades.org. Send us your thoughts!

Join Audubon Society of the Everglades

There are now two ways to join ASE: Chapter-only membership, and membership through the National Audubon Society.

Chapter-Only Membership

When you become a member of the Audubon Society of the Everglades by using the form at right, all of your membership fees are put to use supporting **local** projects: Everglades Day; Education Programs such as model schools and field trips; Scholarships; and Conservation activities. Audubon Society of the Everglades members also receive 11 issues of the *Everglade Kite* newsletter.

National Audubon Society Membership

When you join ASE through the National Audubon Society, you also receive 6 issues of *Audubon Magazine*, and membership in Audubon of Florida. For details, visit www.audubon.org. To join the National Society, send your information as above, but make your check out to **National Audubon Society**. NOTE: The annual fee is \$20 for regular NAS membership. In either case, send your check, payable to ASE (\$15/\$10) or NAS (\$20) as appropriate, along with this form to

Membership, Audubon Society of the Everglades
P.O. Box 16914
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6914

Audubon Society of the Everglades (ASE)

YES! I want to become a **chapter-only member** of ASE. Enclosed is my check made payable to Audubon Society of the Everglades for:

Regular \$15 Senior (62+)/Student \$10

I would like to save ASE postage and printing costs; please send my *Kite* via email

I would like to donate an additional

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$_____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

e-mail _____

I would like to volunteer for:

- Education
 Conservation
 Everglades Day
 Fundraising
 Other: _____

E00 7XCH

Audubon Society of the Everglades general meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, located on Summit Blvd, near the intersection of Summit and Jog, in West Palm Beach. The public is welcome to attend.