



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

Serving Palm Beach County, Florida

Volume 49, Number 4

January 2009

CALENDAR

Sat., Jan. 3 Christmas Bird Count.
Coordinator: Chuck Weber.

Tue., Jan. 6 General Membership Meeting, Pine Jog.

Sat., Jan. 10 Blue Cypress Lake. Leave WPB at 6:30 a.m. Space is limited; call Claudine Laabs to register.

Sat./Sun., Jan 17/18 Everglades (Shark Valley), then Corkscrew or Ding Darling, depending on hotel. Costs: \$25/car for entry to Shark Valley (bring your Golden Eagle or NPS pass!). Hotel expected to be \$85+ tax. Leader: Chuck Weber, 561-602-1069.

Sat., Jan 17, 8:00 a.m. YOUNG NATURALISTS Mangrove Ecology for Kids at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, north end of Singer Island, 10900 Jack Nicklaus Drive. The program will include seining for marine life. Clive Pinnock will be the leader. \$3 per person. Call Linda at 561-742-7791 to register.

Tue., Jan 20, 2:00 p.m. Special meeting/presentation at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Boca Raton. GL's director, Jim Duquesnel, will present a lecture on Florida's invasive exotic plants.

Wed., Jan 21, 8:30 a.m. Boynton Inlet, Boynton Beach. Meet at playground/picnic area. Leader: Dorothy Brindle.

Sat., Jan 24, 8 a.m. Riverbend Park, Jupiter. Entrance on Indiantown Road, just west of the turnpike. Leader: Ed Kawecki.

Fri., Jan 30, 4:30 p.m. Owl walk, UF/IFAS EREC, Belle Glade. Leader: Richard Raid. Meet at Kmart parking lot on 441 and Southern at 3:30 if you want to carpool.

SWFMD accepts US Sugar Land Deal Contract

On December 16, the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District voted 4-3 to accept the terms of the US Sugar land buyout, "subject to amendment." The board's "amendment" clause would let them back out of the deal if the massive expense threatens to cripple either their budget or their ability to fulfill their core mission of water management and flood control. One thing, though, is clear: with this vote to acquire nearly 181,000 acres of land south of the Lake, the possibility of recreating sheet flow to the Everglades is still alive.

This land deal, while not enabling restoration of sheet flow, is a necessary precursor to it. Without this land, sheet flow is impossible. With it, and with the proper care and attention to detail in future swaps and acquisitions, it just might be possible for agriculture and the Everglades to come to a peaceful coexistence. And wouldn't that be a great Christmas present for south Florida?

For the record: Shannon Estenez, Eric Buermann, Melissa Meeker, and Jerry Montgomery were the yes votes. Patrick Rooney Jr., Mike Collins, and Charles Dauray voted no. Paul Huck recused himself, according to the Post, because of his firm's involvement in a lawsuit against U.S. Sugar.

Congratulations to those members of the board who had the courage and vision to create the possibility of a restored Everglades.

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Can Florida's Coral Reefs Survive?

Our speaker for the January meeting is Ed Tichenor. A retired environmental scientist and co-founder and director of Palm Beach County Reef Rescue, Ed has 30 years of experience conducting environmental investigations and developing evidence in responsible party actions. In 1991 Ed retired from the environmental field and moved to south Florida. He is currently the owner of a manufacturing business in Boynton Beach and an avid scuba diver and underwater photographer who has logged more than 1,400 dives.

In 2002 Ed began to notice the beginning of a Red Algae bloom on Gulf Stream Reef. Diving the area every week, Ed and a group of local divers documented the spread of the bloom. In 2004 Ed and local divers formed Palm Beach County Reef Rescue (www.reef-rescue.org) to help defray the cost of report preparation and to involve and educate the local scuba diving community in protecting the coral reef ecosystem of south Palm Beach County.

In 2007 Ed was invited to join the National Marine Fisheries Service, Acropora Recovery Team, the group charged under the Endangered Species Act with developing the recovery plan for recently listed Staghorn and Elkhorn corals. And in 2008, after six years of fighting to curtail the discharge of partially treated sewage onto Southeast Florida's coral reefs, Reef Rescue along with other environmental groups succeeded in having the Florida legislature pass a bill outlawing ocean dumping.

The Everglade Kite

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

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<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:

Painted Bunting

January's bird of the month is the Painted Bunting; there will be a short presentation on them at the beginning of the meeting. Bring in your pictures to share during the meeting—we have purchased a special board to hang them: no tape or staples!

Help choose a bird of the month by sending me emails at hlinda@aol.com or calling me at 561-742-7791.

President's Perspective

Linda Humphries

I am so excited!! The smooth-billed Anis are back at Arthur R Marshall, Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. Ethel Kujanpaa took a picture on October 16, 2008 of a Smooth-billed Ani. She said after she took the picture two more anis flew in. I knew that there had been Anis at the far southern end of the refuge in past years but this is the first year I am aware that they are back at the main headquarters.

I first saw them 10 years ago when I started birding. I took a special trip with Audubon of Michigan to Florida and the ARM Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge was one of our stops. I remember how odd looking they appeared, but at that time it was hard for me to appreciate the beauty of all of the different birds I was seeing; I was overwhelmed.

A couple of years later I learned how difficult and rare it was to see them and how lucky I was to be able to observe them again near the Fort Lauderdale Airport. I understand birds have wings and can live and nest wherever they choose, but I feel it is exciting to have them choose to come back to their former habitat. Maybe this is a sign that everything is not being destroyed and we are helping to improve part of the Everglades, at least in the refuge.

This summer's snail kite nest where people were able to observe and watch the young grow was another positive birding experience at the refuge. I believe in hope and feel the return of the anis is a good sign.

Come join our bird walks! There is always some stunning image that is hard to forget—such as the mommy, daddy, and baby sandhill cranes flying through the sky the day we visited Okeehetee. Hope to see you on our next bird walk.

Happy New Year from ASE!

As the New Year approaches we start to make new goals for the coming year. We all know how important exercise is in helping us lose those couple extra pounds and staying fit. Remember all the bird list forms we accumulate and mean to fill out sometime when we are birding? Find one of them or purchase a new one at our January meeting and start taking short walks around your neighborhood or a favorite park. Mark which birds you have seen that day or week or month. As you are having fun noticing and recording the birds you will also be accomplishing your goal to become more fit. I know many of you do this on a daily basis, but there are a lot of people like me who say "tomorrow" or "next week." Make it your New Year's Resolution to stay fit by taking walks and observing the birds. Don't forget: our bird walks are an excellent way to increase your bird lists.

Happy New Year and Good Birding!

New ASE Afternoon programs

We have been listening to your thoughts and wishes and the board came up with an exciting new program. We are going to have a total of three afternoon programs at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center on A1A in Boca Raton. These will be in addition to our monthly evening meeting. The first meeting is going to be January 20, 2009 at 2 p.m. The speaker is going to be Jim Duquesnel, Manager of Gumbo Limbo. Our next two programs will be on February 17 and March 17. I hope you can come and join in the fun. If we have enough interest maybe we can add additional dates. See you there.

10th Annual Everglades Day Celebration

February 7, 2009

Come join the fun February 7, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at our 10th Annual Everglades Day. This event is held at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge at 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach. Since this is the 10th annual Event the theme this year is "Celebrating the Everglades." Everglades Day is for people of all ages and cultures.

As Florida continues to grow, it is important to bring people from all cultures into the Everglades to experience and see one of our most valuable national treasures first hand. This experience will help people realize the importance of preserving the Everglades for all of our children to enjoy. People will be able to pick and choose from an all-day fun-filled lineup including presentations and exhibits, programs with live animals, birds, and reptiles along with a variety of nature walks. There will be bus trips out to a critical marsh area of the Everglades and special tours will also be available to the study areas 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 and live music. See you there!

Painted Bunting Monitoring Project

Dr. James Rotenberg with the Department of Environmental Studies at the University of North Carolina Wilmington is participating in the NC component of a range-wide project monitoring wintering Painted Buntings and would like to expand his winter feeder watch program to include Florida. He has about 2000 Painted Buntings color banded and re-sightings would contribute to information on survival. His website for this effort is already established (www.paintedbuntings.org) and can be modified to include data from Florida. Information on the feeder watch program, sign up directions, and instructions for observations and data entry are provided at the website.

If you are interested in helping Dr. Rotenberg with this project please contact him at rotenbergj@uncw.edu or call 910 962-7549.

Michael Delany
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352 955 2081 x 114

More Judges Needed

The Greening Our Schools (ourgreenschools.com) Recognition Program is seeking judges to score portfolios submitted by participating schools. Greening Our Schools was initiated to encourage cultures of sustainability within school communities. This program will recognize schools for taking a holistic approach to going GREEN. Requirements to be included in the portfolio will focus on school grounds, resource conservation, curriculum connections and community involvement. Call Susan at 627-7829 or email roysue@bellsouth.net.

ASE Receives Pine Jog Award

FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center presented ASE a certificate of appreciation plaque at their recognition event. The award was given to ASE for being "a partner in support of educational programs for children and adults to foster appreciation of the natural world." ASE supports Schoolyard Inquiry programs at several Glades schools. A \$15,000 Together Green National Audubon Society grant was awarded to ASE for collaborating with Pine Jog to install a native plant landscape to be used for educational purposes.

Science Fair

Fantastic Audubon volunteers headed to the PBC Science and Engineering Fair last month to judge PBC middle and high school students' science fair projects. PBC routinely has students who advance to state and national competitions. Top high school students participate in programs of research at universities or research centers such as Scripps.

Do you know what type of commercial detergent might clean the feathers of birds caught in oil spills? One student dipped gull feathers in oil, washed each in three kinds of detergent, and then held the feather over a towel to drip. The diameter of the oil drip was measured to find the most effective detergent.

'Effects of Salinity on Fresh Aquatic Biomes', 'Biodiversity of Local Estuaries', 'Photosensitivity of Echinoderms', 'Diurnal and Nocturnal Feeding Activity of Blue Crabs' are just a sample of the phenomenal projects entered in the Biology category. *ASE sends a big thank you to the wonderful people who volunteered to judge:*

Ralph Bacchus
John Bunnell
Debra Hazelwood
Barbara Kane
Joseph Krois

Creighton Lederer
Susie Orsenigo
Jim Ostrander
Steve Seftenberg
Jack Wright

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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.