

EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

Serving Palm Beach County, Florida

Volume 50, Number 10

September 2010

CALENDAR

- Sat Sep. 11, 8 a.m. Frenchman's Forest, Palm Beach Gardens.** W side of Prosperity Farms Rd. 1.5 miles north of PGA Blvd. Leader: Chuck Weber
- Sat Sep. 18, Fall Migration Count.** Compiler: Cynthia Plockelman, (561)585-1278
- Sun Sep. 19, 5 p.m. Green Cay Wetlands, Boynton Beach, 12800 Hagen Ranch Rd.** Meet outside Nature Center Main door, Leader: Valeri Brauer
- Sat Sep. 25, 8 a.m. Spanish River Pk. Boca Raton.** Meet at split fence on the south side of Spanish River Blvd, just W of A1A. Leader: Brian Hope
- Sat Sep. 25, Coastal Cleanup.** Call Claudine Laabs (561) 655-9779 to volunteer
- Sun Sept 26, Florida Bay Boat Trip.** Call Claudine Laabs to register 561-655-9779
- Tues Sept 28, 8:30 a.m. Boynton Inlet/Lantana Preserve.** Meet at Inlet playground/picnic area. Leader: Dorothy Brindle
- Sat Oct 2, 8 a.m. Frenchman's Forest, Palm Beach Gardens.** Meet as above. Leader: Chuck Weber
- Sat Oct 2, 8 a.m. Spanish River Pk.** Meet as above. Leader: Ray Buchholz
- Sat Oct 2, 8 a.m. JW Corbett WMA, WPB.** Buggy Ride. Leader: Mike Baranski, to register call Linda 561-742-7791. Space limited.
- Mon Oct 4, 7:30 a.m. Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Delray Beach, 13026 Jog Rd.** Meet at top of boardwalk, Leader: Paton White/Linda Humphries
- Sat Oct 9, 8 a.m. Juno Pier/Juno Dunes, 14775 S.R. A1A, Juno Beach.** Cost \$1.00. Meet at entrance to pier. Leader: Clive Pinnock

Moved Recently?

If you have moved and no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact Linda by email (hlinda@aol.com) or phone (561-742-7791). If you would rather receive this newsletter via email instead of regular mail contact Ben Kolstad, ben@kolstad.com. Thanks for helping us reduce our environmental impact and our printing/postage costs.

Tuesday, September 7, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Understanding the Everglades and the Challenges of Its Restoration

Tom Lodge, PhD

Our September meeting features a presentation by Tom Lodge, PhD, author of the newly updated (in its third edition now) handbook to the 'glades. It is the author's intent that *The Everglades Handbook: Understanding the Ecosystem* (3rd edition) bridge the gap between popular and scientific literature. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Lodge started his fascination with the Everglades in 1966, choosing to spend a day in the heart of our National Park while awaiting housing to start graduate studies at the University of Miami's Department of Biology. Through his studies, his interest in wildlife photography, and his ecological-consulting career, he developed a knack for explaining detailed science in lay terms—the book's hallmark. Among activities outside of consulting, he serves on the Board of the Tropical Audubon Society and has taught South Florida Ecology at Florida International University, where the book has been a course text since 1994. The 3rd edition (April 2010) continues the tradition as a college and high school text as well as a manual for those interested in Everglades natural history and restoration.

Please join us the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, 6301 W. Summit Blvd., in West Palm Beach. Doors open at 7:00.

SPECIAL EVENT! Guided Garden Tour

6:45PM September 7, 2010

FAU/Pine Jog Courtyard

Join us for a guided walk through the native plant garden prior to the September general meeting. ASE and Pine Jog installed this garden to educate the public on the importance of native plants which conserve water and provide food and shelter for birds and butterflies. When the garden was installed in May 2009, there was no wildlife to be seen. Now several species of birds and many butterflies frequent the garden.

Rob Hopper will be our guide. Rob is a registered landscape architect and native plant expert. Grant funding came from two sources: National Audubon with funding from Toyota and Audubon of Florida. ASE thanks the generous donors!

COASTAL CLEANUP - Southern Blvd. Causeway - September 25 - 8 AM

This year the Coastal Cleanup on the Sanctuary Islands is scheduled for the fourth Saturday of the month to coincide with the 25th Anniversary of this international effort. Please help us clean up Fisherman's Island on the north side of the causeway at 8 AM on Saturday, September 25th. Wear old sneakers and comfortable clothes - sun screen and a hat are recommended. Bring your own reusable water bottle. To sign up, call Claudine (561)655-9779.

The Everglade Kite

is the newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Everglades, published 10 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.

Bird of the Month:

September: Black Vulture

Coragyps atratus, our Black Vulture, is cousin to last month's BOM, the Turkey Vulture. Although both birds are "black," only *C. atratus* is the Black Vulture. A gregarious bird, the Black Vulture can often be found roosting, feeding, and soaring in company with its cousin, but separating the two is fairly easy. Come to the September meeting to find out how!

President's Column

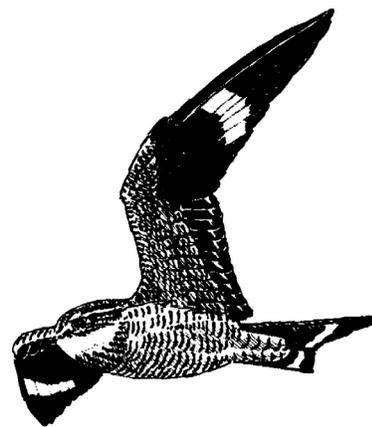
Linda Humphries

Here it is, September already. Time seems to pass so quickly. I spent 6 weeks in Michigan. I went up to be with my parents as I usually do, but my Dad ended up having surgery so I stayed longer than I had planned. It is so enjoyable watching the different variety of birds that come to the feeders and hang out in Dad's big oak trees. I watched as a crow landed in the bird bath and proceeded to get wet. He was so large he almost didn't fit and splashed water everywhere. The starlings and grackles have found the bird seed and have been having a feast. My dad doesn't mind—he says they deserve to eat too. I am amazed at how the birds move over and share the feeders. My Dad uses suet so we have a lot of woodpeckers, nuthatches, and chickadees. I have always loved watching birds. At times there isn't a bird around and you can't help but wonder where they all went. Then, before a storm, there are so many birds at the feeders eating like it might be their last meal.

As you can see the new brochure is in this edition of the *Kite*. We have a lot of great trips planned for this year. Thank you to everyone who helped plan the trips and speakers, and a big thanks to the people who are leading these trips. There is a wide variety from beginning birding to overnight trips. We are offering a special trip this year, "Adventures in Panama," led by Claudine Laabs. We also have great programs scheduled for the upcoming months. I hope you can find time to come out and enjoy the fun. Sorry if I missed any of your calls this summer; unfortunately a storm destroyed my answering machine while I was in Michigan, but it is working now. Please continue with your ideas and suggestions, I really enjoy hearing from you.

Duda Farms Report

Favorable water levels throughout the Everglades Agricultural Area in mid-August prevented the concentrations of shorebirds that we've come to expect on the first of our annual trips to the flooded fields



Common Nighthawk by Steven d'Amato

of Duda Farms. Nevertheless, we had 14 cars and nearly 50 birders brave the heat on August 14, and while there were (just barely) more birders than bird species, we still managed to have a good time. We got some good looks at Common Nighthawk and American White Pelican, 5 species of terns, dozens of species of shorebirds, and more large waders (Roseate Spoonbill, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Wood Stork, Ibises, etc.) than you could shake a stick at, even if you'd wanted to. We're all hoping that the conditions are more favorable (from our point of view) for the second trip at the end of the month. As always, our thanks to the management for allowing us access to this wonderful site!

Florida and Migrating Birds

Cynthia Plockelman

Did you see the July 26, 2010, issue of *The New Yorker*? It had a horrifying tale by Jonathan Franzen, “Emptying the Skies,” on what happens to migrating birds in the Mediterranean. Focus was on the Island of Cyprus, but could have been anywhere around the Mediterranean Sea. Teams of rescuers worked around Cyprus to “rescue” warblers and many other of songbirds from sticks coated with glue and a wide variety of other traps. Many of these were destined for food, as well as the caged bird trade.

The birds migrating in the USA and Florida have similar type problems. In March, 2009, the US Dept. of the Interior released a report on habitat loss and climate change affecting 800 species. Also contributing are “invasive predators” and invasive plants, wind farms, domestic and feral cats. Breeding bird surveys are documenting problems across a wide variety of terrains and habitats. “The U.S. State of the Birds” covered 40 years, with data from a wide variety of sources, including National Audubon’s Christmas Bird counts, on 120 species of birds wintering in the USA.

Two of the species most birders are looking for are our fabulous Painted and Indigo Buntings. Both species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act but are frequently trapped and sold. In April 2010, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Comm. (FWC) documented charges against 4 men from Dade County for possessing migratory birds. These caged birds sometimes show up in flea markets or farmers markets, backyard sales of used goods.

Charges pressed by FWC included possession of bird traps and 20 captive buntings and a cardinal were released. “The public is asked to call the FWC’s Wildlife Alert hotline – 888-808-FWCC (3922) if they witness any suspicious activity of any people with small, wooden bird traps.”

So, please be alert and do your share to prevent such human predation on our native birds. Be careful of those persons asking to find buntings and other popular singing birds. During spring, the singing females are targeted to lure the brightly colored males for the caged bird trade.

Book Review: *The Last Egret*

Ben Kolstad

An exciting account of life in 19th-century Florida, told by Harvey E. Oyer III, a descendant of the barefoot mailman himself, *The Last Egret* is the second installment of a series, “The Adventures of Charlie Pierce,” written to get young people interested in the history, both natural and cultural, of Florida. The author served for many years as the chairman of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County; many of the stories in this volume and the previous one (*Seminoles, Spanish Treasure, and the American Jungle*) come from diaries and tales that have been passed down through five generations of his family.

The story begins when Charlie’s sister Lillie returns home unexpectedly from the expensive school away up north (250 miles north, that is) that her parents had sent her to—having walked by herself all the way, finding food as she went! Unfortunately, Lillie’s return from school doesn’t return the tuition and fees her parents paid, and the lean economic times might force them to sell the island (Hypoluxo Island) on which they had made their home. Charlie resolves to find a way to make the money that will allow them to remain, and teams up with his Seminole friend Tiger Bowlegs and Guy and Louis Bradley on an expedition to obtain snowy egret plumes, worth \$40 an ounce at the time.

This story-based history is a great way to bring home to children the motivations of, and problems faced by, the pioneer families of Florida as they wrestled with the problems of making a living while respecting and maintaining the world around them. The choice Charlie eventually makes is a hard one, but one that he and his family can live with.

The telling of history is difficult, and to the author’s credit, *The Last Egret* is both entertaining and engaging for younger and older readers alike.

ADVENTURES IN PANAMA - March 2-9, 2011

We are planning another tropical adventure in Panama which has the reputation of the “best rainforest birding in the world”! The first three days will be in Amador, the causeway near the Pacific entrance to the canal and will include a visit to the new Frank Gehry Museum of Bio-diversity. Then we will spend two nights at Gamboa in the rainforest with the aerial tram ride and boat ride to islands in the canal. This five day, six night trip will cost approx. \$1600. Then, for the more adventurous traveler there will be a three day, two night extension to Volcan in the highlands to see the Resplendent Quetzal (approx. \$450). There will be more information in next month’s KITE. Call Claudine for details (561)655-9779.

Audubon Society of the Everglades
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33416-6914

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Articles NEEDED! Send to ben@kolstad.com by the 10th of the month.

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 10 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: _____

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Audubon Society of the Everglades general meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. (refreshments at 7) 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.