

EVERGLADE KITE

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

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Ruth Trumpower, Editor

JANUARY 1981

FISHERY RESEARCHER WILL PRESENT FILMS

The January 6th meeting of the Audubon Society of the Everglades is featuring Ed Irby, a fishery biologist with the Florida Department of Natural Resources for 11 years and now acting supervisor of the department's West Palm Beach Field Laboratory.

He will present two short films, "Drop by Drop to the Sea" by Jim Dutcher and "Sailfish Balling the Bait." With a brief slide show, he will also summarize past, present and future research at the field laboratory.

Mr. Irby has been ship's biologist aboard the R/V Hernan Cortez, headed a field laboratory in Ft. Walton Beach and traveled to every coastal city in the state. The main emphasis of his research has been the recreational fisheries of Florida which support a multi-million dollar industry.

In 1974 he was transferred to West Palm Beach to continue this research and to assist John Jolley in sailfish research. During the past several years Mr. Irby, in cooperation with the University of Miami, has been conducting swordfish life history and fishery description work. He is also chairman of the Palm Beach County Sea Grant Advisory Committee, advisor on swordfish to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

and a member of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists.

Bring your friends and join us on Tuesday, January 6, at 7:30 p.m. at the West Palm Beach Garden Club Center, Dreher Trail North.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 8 A.M., Jonathan Dickenson State Park. Meet at entrance parking lot, bring lunch. Tom McElroy, leader.

JANUARY 24, 25 - Cocoa Beach Weekend
Group will meet at Captain Ed's Restaurant parking lot at Cocoa Beach Inlet on Saturday, the 24th, at 7:00 A.M. Ken Bennett, of Indian River Audubon, will guide the two-day trip. The trip will consist of two ½ day sessions in the Cocoa Beach area on Saturday and a ½ day session on Sunday in the Merritt Island Refuge.

Bring binoculars, scopes, bird books, etc. Due to the early start on Saturday, it is suggested that participants secure reservations for Friday night at one of the following motels or campground.

Econo Travel, 5500 N. Atlantic
(A1A), (305) 784-2550
Howard Johnson's, 2088 N. Atlantic,
783-9481

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BIRDING IN THE LAND OF THE MAYA

There is an aura of mystique that drifts across the land of the Maya. The ominous rain forests, the dark limestone caves and beautiful cenotes, the array of colorful wildlife, the ruins of past cultures - all these constantly challenge man's investigative mind.

And so it was with the ASE-sponsored trip to the Yucatan this past November. The mystery and beauty of present and past had to be squeezed into 10 short days. In reality, the tour turned out to be mostly an archaeological one with birding somewhat incidental. Yet, how could it have been otherwise? As first-time visitors, we could not ignore the immensity and great architectural beauty of the Mayan ruins. And it so happened that much of the better birding was in the vicinity of the ruins. Also, the extensive gardens around some of the motels were quite productive.

Many of the birds were the same as those found here, particularly among the warblers and water birds. Flycatchers were constantly challenging, with tropical and thick-billed kingbirds, boat-billed and social flycatchers being the most common. Laughing falcons and roadside hawks were quite numerous. Two species of kites were observed: the hook-billed and the plumbeous. Mexico has many tanagers, but we found only three: summer, rose-throated, and yellow-winged. Hooded orioles were common, but the orange oriole was the most brilliant. Groove-billed anis and great-tailed grackles were the most abundant roadside birds.

Surely, some of the most exciting birds observed would include the toucans, motmots, jacamar, king vulture, lesser greenlet, jacana, jabiru, Yucatan jay, black catbird, saltators, oropendulas, white-fronted parrots, squirrel cuckoo, and cinnamon hummingbirds.

Approximately 60 species were identified, with many others being seen too fleetingly for positive identification. This may seem like a modest number, but remember: the count was incidental to an archaeological expedition and, ornithologically speaking, for the most part we were our own leaders in a strange land for the first time. (Tom McElroy)

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS IN JANUARY

January 14, Wednesday Frank Heimans
"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH MY COUNTRY"

For 200 years, Australia has been changing at the hands of western man. The complexities of modern life have served to ravage the land, displace the aborigines, and needlessly destroy the native wildlife. This award-winning film is a tribute to Australia and an appraisal of its destruction.

January 28, Wednesday John Wilson
"GALAPAGOS"

The Galapagos Islands are an irresistible temptation for wildlife photographers and cinematographers. Scattered over some 23,000 square miles of Pacific Ocean, the islands are known

for their variety of wildlife. Amid the assemblage of albatrosses, iguanas, flamingoes, sea lions, et al, John Wilson chronicled the adventures he and his assistants experienced while filming on several of the islands.

SHOW TIME: 8:00 P.M.
PLACE: JOHN I. LEONARD AUDITORIUM
TICKETS/INFORMATION: LARRY AT 582-8275

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As the KITE should (hopefully) arrive between Christmas and New Year's, I sincerely hope that all of you had a joyous Christmas and that the New Year will indeed be prosperous and rewarding for each and every one of you.

I'm sure that most of you would like to know about our recent involvement with the Department of Energy (DOE) and its awarding of a 4.9 million dollar grant to Palm Beach Junior College to research using cattails as an energy source. Several people became aware of this proposal in mid-August, when the Regional Energy Action Committee X (REAC X) was asked to write a letter of support for the "concept" of the project. Several questions were raised then about the language of the proposal, such as "unproductive marshes" and marginal lands. The projected yields were also suspect. Because REAC could not review the whole proposal before supporting it, the matter was dropped.

After the grant was awarded, I requested and received through Congressman Mica's office a copy (two parts) of the proposal. After reviewing it, Leah Schad, Dr. Dwight Goforth and myself wrote a three-page letter to DOE asking that the funding be withheld until the proposal could undergo an open and thorough review. Our review of the proposal raised a number of questions. As the letter stated, "We are concerned not only about the environmental feasibility and impact of the project, short and long range, but also the economics, qualifications of Palm Beach Junior College personnel, misleading or undefined language, and information which casts serious doubts on the viability of the project."

Let me also point out that our letter and concern is with the DOE, as it was the reviewing and funding organization. We have no quarrel with the Junior College.

Claims have been made that we are using outdated documents. The proposal in hand is dated August 5, 1980, and was received after the grant was awarded. I have stated publicly that should the most current copy of the proposal (which I have had to request through the Freedom of Information Act), when reviewed, satisfy our concerns and answer our questions, ASE will retract, with Board approval, the letter to DOE.

As of this writing (12/20), the DOE has referred our letter and the request for the proposal to the general council. Because our letter is based on facts which for the most part are inchangeable (research, curriculum vitae, experience of the proposers, etc.), the current proposal will probably differ little from the one we have in hand. For now, we can

only wait for the response from the DOE before taking any more action. By the January 6th meeting I hope to have more information.

Other matters: We have had some changes on the Board of Directors. Ruth Trumpower has been moved up to second vice president and Pat Orris, who is coordinating the Wildlife Film Series, has been placed on the Board. Also Ray Plockelman is now co-chairman for Sanctuaries. (Walt Gworek)

TRAIL GROUP VISITS ISLAND

Palm Beach County Naturalist John Street took a group of Friends of the Custard Apple Trail members to McMillen Island, also called the Arboretum, in John Prince Park. Back in 1963 Mr. Dreher had drawn plans for the planting of this man-made island but, except for some conifers at the entrance, the island is practically bare.

The Palm Springs Girl Scouts will start planting in January in an area assigned to them by Mr. Street. Likewise the Pack & Paddle Club and the Jupiter/Tequesta Woman's Club have indicated interest in this project.

This island offers an excellent opportunity to other groups who want to learn about ecology and work in the out-of-doors. If interested, please contact Mr. Street of the County Parks Department.

FEMALE RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS OBSERVED IN AUSTRALIA

(Some time ago the McCalls took a trip to Australia. Haven't had the space to publish his contribution until now - and it's an interesting side note to our Wildlife Film Series program for January 14th.)

A trip to the rain forests of Lamington National Park in Queensland, Australia, revealed significant social trends among the female of the species of satin bower birds and brush turkeys. Both kinds of birds live in high tropical rain forests.

First consider the male satin bower bird. He is a handsome bird the size of our flicker and is clothed in glossy violet-black. He clears a jungle floor area of some six feet in diameter. Then he builds a bower which has the sole purpose of courtship. The bower has two parallel walls 10 to 12 inches high, spaced 12 inches apart; is 30 inches long and leads to a nuptial couch 5 inches thick. The walls and chamber are profusely decorated with leaves, berries and saliva. Also, the cleared area is adorned not only with select leaves, flowers and berries, but also with colorful plastic and paper borrowed from man. He attracts an innocent young female to his house of love, woos her, then kicks her out of the nuptial bed and is out to woo the next victim. The jilted female wanders out into the jungle, builds herself a nest, hatches her eggs, and raises her family alone, alone, alone.

Near the bower a brushturkey, a dark brown bird the size of our limpkin, also clears

the forest floor. Using decaying leaves and twigs, he builds a ten-foot diameter mound to a three-foot height. After completion, a freely roaming hen finds and courts him. She lays her eggs on the mound and departs forever. The male, using his bright yellow and red wattle, measures temperatures, buries the eggs, turns them and uncovers as the heat of the mound and the weather indicate. He sees that the newly hatched chicks get out of the mound without suffocating. While he raises the chicks completely by himself, his ladybird is enjoying the ultimate of freedom by playing and making the rounds of the jungle, never burdened with the demands of the young. (Hank McCall)

OZONE DROP FEARED

(A recent issue of MEDICAL TRIBUNE reported on the projected rise in melanomas because of the ozone drop. Conservation Chairperson Leah Schad thought you would be interested and concerned.)

"Two National Research Council committees have warned of an increase of several hundred-thousand non-melanoma skin cancers and several thousand melanomas yearly unless the United States calls for international controls on ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons. A decrease in the ozone layer is associated with an increase in the amount of ultraviolet radiation reaching the earth.

"At current rates of chlorofluorocarbon use, 16.5% of atmospheric ozone will be depleted by late in the next century. Although the United States began banning non-essential uses of aerosol spray propellants in 1978, the non-propellant uses are growing so rapidly that, even with a world-wide ban on propellant use, total use of chlorofluorocarbons will match present levels in seven to ten years.

"The committees warn that unless there are international controls, the long-term effect of ozone depletion will be felt by all biological systems.

"The committees assert their belief that there are alternatives to chlorofluorocarbons, which are used in refrigeration and air-conditioning systems, in metal cleaning and drying, sterilization of medical supplies, liquid fast freezing of food, etc."

NEXT CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING -
Wednesday, January 14, at 7:30 p.m. at the
Science Museum.

KITE STRINGS

The seasonal guided Nature Trail Walks in John Prince Park will start on Saturday, January 3, at 3 p.m. Meet at the eastern entrance across from the Campground Office. Call Ye Ed., 585-3968, if you could serve as a leader or if you wish more information.

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Florida Conservation Foundation reports that a Florida Native Plant Society is being formed by individuals and organizations who wish to protect and restore these plants and their habitats. If interested, contact FNPS,

Florida Conservation Foundation, Inc.
935 Orange Ave., Winter Park, Fl.
32789, for application brochure.

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NAS reminds us that those who want a choice of the summer Audubon Ecology Camps and of dates for attending same should immediately contact Camp Department, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10002, and request brochures.

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Pine Jog's Winter/Spring program of courses will be available the 1st week in Jan. and will give details on bus trips, bird and native plant courses, etc. Call 686-6600 if interested in receiving same.

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For education and conservation organizations needing slides to expand their bird photograph collection - the Alabama Ornithological Society is offering copies of the pick of its collection which includes 317 species of southeastern birds. Price is \$1.50 per slide, with discount for large orders. For catalog, write Robert R. Reid, Jr., 1500 Brown-Marx Bldg., Birmingham, Ala. 35203.

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CHRISTMAS COUNT IN BRIEF

Howard Langridge, American Birds Compiler, reports that 58 observers in 17 parties spent 155 hours in the field and traveled 397 miles during the West Palm Beach Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 20.

The group tallied 154 species for another successful count, but Howard said no new birds were added to the list this year. There were several good sightings which he will tell us about in a more detailed article next month.

Cocoa Beach Weekend (cont'd.)

Holiday Inn, 1300 N. Atlantic,
783-2271

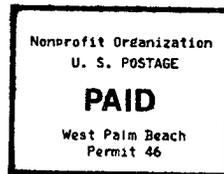
Ramada Inn, 1100 N. Atlantic,
783-9441

Atlantic Beach Lodge, 910 N.
Atlantic, 783-9430

Jetty Park Campground at Cocoa
Beach Inlet, 783-7222

This will be one of the best field trips of the year, so hope you can make it. (Steve Bollinger)

EVERGLADE KITE
P. O. Box 6762
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