



EVERGLADE KITE

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

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Ruth Trumpower, Editor

JULY 1989

SOUTH FLORIDA GEOLOGY FEATURED AGAIN IN JULY

Steve Bass is returning! Continuing from the June meeting his fascinating talk on the geology of south Florida, Bass will be the focus of the program on Monday, July 3rd.

And once again his question and answer approach with the audience promises to make his presentation a real learning experience for us all.

In June, Bass' knowledge of local geological landmarks and his explanations of changes that have taken place in south Florida geologically somehow gave our area a prominence we too often deny. Indicative of his wide range of knowledge was his tendency to let the audience's questions direct the topics he covered.

If you were with us in June, no urging is necessary to insure your return. If you missed out in June, don't let it happen a second time.

Bring your friends, and bring a newcomer to the area, to the July 3rd meeting. . . on Monday night this month because of the Fourth of July holiday on Tuesday. Be there at 7:30 p.m. at the West Palm Beach Garden Club Center, Dreher Park. You'll be very glad you came.

(Rhonda Wilson)

AUDUBON ADVENTURES CLUBS

The 1988-89 school year has come to an end. For all of the 21 clubs involved with the Audubon Adventures Clubs, it was a great year - filled with fun and exciting learning experiences for both students and teacher sponsors. Some of the year's highlights are listed below:

Marine Gang visited nine schools with a dramatic presentation stressing the need for awareness of all our marine resources.

Schools participated in the beach clean-up.

Eagle Lady Doris Mager visited five schools, giving most impressive presentations relating to birds of prey.

ASE awarded prizes to eight students with outstanding science projects related to environmental concerns.

Seven club sponsors received scholarships to attend Project Wild at the Corbett Area. These teachers returned to their classrooms with some neat environmental activities to present to their students.

The Audubon Adventures walk at the Loxahatchee Refuge was a great success, with 150 people participating. Thanks again to Bill Van Meter for

organizing the event, and a big thank you to all the group leaders.

Many of the individual clubs had wonderful guest speakers who volunteered their time and knowledge to share with the students and sponsors. Topics such as birding, marine conservation, botanical topics and many more. A big thank you goes out to all those special people who volunteered. I would like to give an extra thank you to Ann Weinrich who presented many interesting lectures this year to our students.

As a closing event, I held a nature activity/picnic on my property for all club members, parents, principals and sponsors. About 80 people participated and enjoyed nature activities followed by a spaghetti dinner. Many thanks to the parents and teachers who helped out during the event. And a special thank you to Louise Morgan who conducted a botanical tour for the adults.

Once again ASE has provided scholarships for deserving students to attend Pine Jog for a week-long, day-long environmental camp. Twenty students attended the camp during the week of June 19th. Many exciting activities were planned by Coordinators Susie Palermo and Scott Sweet, and I would like to thank Pine Jog for developing a special camp for our Audubon Adventures Clubs.

Six students received scholarships from ASE to attend a week-long environmental camp at the Corbett Area during the week of July 16th.

For the 1989-90 school year, I expect approximately 30 clubs to be participating in the Audubon Adventures program. I would like to pilot a junior and senior high program. If you are a junior or senior high teacher and would like to form a club within your school, please contact me so that you can attend our Audubon Adventures sponsors' meeting. It will be held at my house during the teacher planning week in August. Please call me at 582-6913 early in August.

Once again I would like to thank

all the sponsors, students, parents and administration for participating in the Audubon Adventures Clubs this year. It was a great year and I'm hoping to make 1989-90 even better!!
(Diana Chester)

HISTORICAL BINOCULARS

ASE member Victor Muller has donated his old LEMAIRE 10x35 binoculars to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute where they will be put on permanent exhibit. These binoculars are historical as they are the only remaining pair of three units purchased by Roger for himself, Victor and Allan Cruickshank in 1928 through the American Museum of Natural History. The trio used to bird together in Van Cortland Park, New York City, as members of the Bronx County Bird Club.

The general public will now be able to see the type of equipment used in those early days of bird watching. For those interested in this birding period, reference is made to it in the biography, "The World of Roger Tory Peterson," by John C. Devlin, Times Books, 1977.
(Bill Van Meter)

LESSER PRARIE CHICKEN

What's the difference between a greater and a lesser prairie chicken? It's about an inch. The lesser is about 15 inches long and its range is more westerly than that of the greater. It is a tough bird for a life list, but it can be seen easily at its spring dances.

We booked a lesser prairie chicken weekend with Victor Emanuel and guided by Barry Zimmer. After a flight to El Paso, we birded that area for desert species. We had the good luck to see a crissal thrasher, a new lifer for me. It cut the cost of the trip from \$2000 per life bird to \$100

Roswell, New Mexico was our jump off spot. We rose at 3 a.m. to ride our van into the black, cold desert. After grinding through dark roads, we

parked for a mandatory rest stop, with the caution that the next chance would be after a cold two and a half hours later.

Barry drove on for another mile and we stopped on a one lane crossroads and peered into the darkness. The watchword was "silence." Slowly the light came and we could see ghostly forms skittering about the Lek. These movements gradually became dancing chickens moving within ten to fifty feet of us.

Long feathers on the nape were pulled straight up, making the head seem three times its size. Yellow patches puffed out on their necks as they blew their dance song. Their feet stamped into the dust, making little clouds. Thirteen males danced and pranced, sometimes alone and sometimes facing each other with beaks only one-fourth inch apart. Their bodies were quite rigid, with wings held stiffly to give the impression of bulk.

A few hens were seen, but they only peeked out of the brush to watch their gorgeous boy friends. Their endurance was a marvel. On and on they danced, only trying to impress each other. No attention was paid to the females.

As we sat in the van, the cold penetrated to our bones, but we didn't move for fear of scattering the dancers. After 90 minutes of this, we started crossing our legs, but the chickens danced in full light. Thirty more minutes and feet began to tap. Finally, some one surrendered and said. "Barry, I have to go."

As soon as the starter hit, the birds stopped their show, spread their wings, and flushed into the brush. (Hank McCall)

CONSERVATION REPORT

All are reruns on TV - and they weren't that good the first time around! So let's use the time to dash off some short notes to President Bush (The White House, Washington, DC 20500) and Senator Connie Mack (902 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510). Beg them, in your own words, to not allow exploratory oil drilling off the coast of Florida or on the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The reasons are endless: the systems involved are fragile and irreplaceable, the benefits unworthy and so short-lived, rules are broken and safeguards inadequate, the food chain suffers - from the very simplest to the most advanced plant or animal life, studies are inadequate and biased - and I haven't even mentioned the infamous Waldez spill.

Contact the same Senator Mack and Representative Clay Shaw (440 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20515) and urge them to please vote for the expansion of Everglades National Park. The 110,000 acres should be managed as an integral part of the park system. Hydrologically, politically and morally, it's the only way to go. The park and its ultimate purposes are severely endangered. Managing the additional land for consumptive, multipurpose (oil, hunting) uses will surely jeopardize the fragile, damaged ecosystem. You can send a mailgram (1-800-257-4900) or call Representative Shaw's Fort Lauderdale office (305/522-1800) immediately.

The week of June 12th gave us a couple of victories that hopefully will not be of the

30-day variety: (1) the South Florida Water Management District postponed a surface water permit for the controversial school site GGG in Palm Beach Gardens, which is in the heart of the county's Wilderness Islands Inventory; and (2) at three different public hearings on the proposed corridor for a new 500kv power line through the midportion of our county from one end to the other, the sentiment was overwhelmingly against Florida Power & Light. The SFWMD and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council voted to not certify the power company's proposal to slice through the Corbett Area, the Strazzula wetlands (previously purchased with Save Our Rivers funds) and the eastern margin of the Loxahatchee Refuge. Hopefully the Board of County Commissioners took the same action on June 20th.

If you have not, at least once, called Commission Chair Carol Elmquist, plus your own district commissioner, it would be great if you did so. Stress the importance of protecting NOW our environmentally sensitive native habitat. We cannot wait another year to just "consider" this. It will be lost forever by then. Planning and zoning protection is not good enough. That can change from year to year and is too politically dependent. The Conservation Foundation and other land trust mechanisms would come into play if we could show any local commitment.

On June 17th, representatives from the Everglades Coalition met at Fairchild Gardens. We discussed a three and a half day seminar that will be held January 18-21, 1990, in West Palm Beach. There will be many political figures there - motivated for various reasons obviously. I suppose one might say we are "using" them as much as they hope to "use" us. After all, we are on the side of the angels, but we need help in accomplishing our noble tasks. The topic will be the saving of the great, and greatly diminished, Everglades system, from the chain of lakes to Florida Bay.

Most of the June meeting was spent discussing problems - and the biggest problem was trying to reach a consensus on how to and who should manage the extension of Everglades National Park. Florida Audubon, National Audubon, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife and their supporters probably outnumbered those who wanted a "harvest" (euphemism for hunting) and control not to pass to the Park Service, but to the Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission. The Wildlife Federation is on that side, along with some other environmental organizations primarily organized for "consumptive" use and "enhancement" of resources. Yes, the buzz words were in great attendance! Needless to say, the National Rifle Association strongly backs the latter view.

We also heard reports on the water problems of Golden Gate Estates on the west coast, Loxahatchee N.W. Refuge, Kissimmee River Restoration, and the continued assaults on north Key Large. Monroe County actually anticipates placing a landfill adjacent to the American Crocodile Preserve and John Penny-camp State Park.

The seminar in January will go deeply into all of these, plus there will also be field trips to various areas.

The next Conservation Meeting
will be held on July 11th, 7:30 p.m.,
at the home of Ruth Trumpower, 165
Audurn Drive, Lake Worth.

(Cissie Durando)

Audubon Specials Return to PBS This Summer

PBS will be airing eight Audubon Television
Specials this summer on **Sunday nights at 8:00.**
Check your local listings for details.

July 9 Greed, Guns, and Wildlife
July 16 Grizzly and Man: Uneasy Truce*
July 23 Whales
July 30 Crane River
Aug. 6 Wood Stork: Barometer of the Everglades
Aug. 13 Messages from the Birds
Aug. 20 Sharks
Aug. 27 Sea Turtles

*First place winner, 1989 North American Outdoor Film/
Video Awards, Outdoor Writers Association of America.

Audubon Television now keeps you up-to-date
on all its programs, videos, computer software, and
myriad other educational and environmental projects
with its new **Audubon TV News Bulletin.** The
Spring 1989 issue is now available. To be placed on
the mailing list to receive this quarterly newsletter,
simply drop a note with your name and address to
Audubon Television, 801 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E.,
Suite 301, Washington, D.C. 20003.

Application for Showing Member's Slides at August Meeting

A maximum of 10 slides are permitted per member. Members will do their own commentary.
Please fill out the lines below and mail to Rhonda Wilson, 3791 Dale Road, W. Palm Beach
FL 33406.

Name _____ Phone # _____

Topic slides cover _____

*A list showing your place on the program will be posted in the lobby on the night of the meeting.

AUDUBON SOCIETY of the EVERGLADES

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