



# EVERGLADE KITE

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

VOLUME 31, No. 9

Ruth Trumpower, Editor

AUGUST 1991

## MEMBERS' SLIDE SHOWS HIGHLIGHT AUGUST MTG.

Add to the excitement of our August program by showing and explaining your own wildlife slides.

Just fill in the blanks below and send the information to Rhonda Wilson, 3791 Dale Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406. Be sure to get your name to me by July 31.

Remember: the slide show must have a name and must be about wildlife, not people. There is a 15-slide maximum.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Number of slides \_\_\_\_\_

Hope to see you on Tuesday, August 6th, 7:30 p.m., at the West Palm Beach Garden Club Center, Dreher Trail North. (Rhonda Wilson)

## BIRDING IN COSTA RICA (continued)

We saw ten different trogons, of which the most famous is the resplendent quetzal. This is the bird that

Jonathan Mazlow called "Bird of Life, Bird of Death." One day as I was walking a forest path, I saw a male quetzal chipping out a nesting hole. Its awesome green tail hung far down (can be up to 25 inches) as he worked for quite a while before flying away.

The true Muscovy duck is black with greenish gloss and large white wing coverts, not ugly as the hybrids we see here. Some special tropical birds were the crested and the black guans, the latter with a blue face. We were fortunate to see three kinds of tinamous, one of the most secretive birds ever.

There were vultures galore, including king vultures; handsome kingfishers; various woodpeckers, including chestnut-colored; white-fronted nunbird, its coloring like a nun's habit except for a red bill; confusing woodcreepers which are hard to tell apart. The birds hardest to see are the skulkers: the antshrikes, antbirds and antwrens. You can crouch down and stare at a place where the bird is and just about not see it.

There were lots and lots of flycatchers. Some, like the great Kiskadee, social, boat-billed, white-ringed, and golden-bellied flycatchers look very much alike, except for size, with their yellow underparts and black and white head patterns. An unusual one was the royal flycatcher, which has a long, fan-tailed orange

crest that is usually folded, giving a hammer-headed appearance.

We saw a lot of "our" warblers and vireos. I regret to report that the house sparrow is settling in. Everywhere there were great-tailed grackles, yellow-eyed cousins to our boat-tailed grackles, and every bit as noisy. There were finches, seedeaters, and, of course, toucans, their enormous bills being hollow and therefore not heavy.

A final treat was a visit to the home of Dr. Alexander Skutch, who has written much about birds and is the co-author of the field guide to Costa Rica. He lives very simply - no electricity for example - on the land he has chosen to remain wild. His home is named Los Cusingos after the fiery-billed aracari, a beautiful toucan with an orange, yellow-green, and white upper mandible and a black lower one.

We saw some interesting animals. There were javelinas (collared peccaries), golden-mantled black howler monkeys, white-faced capuchin monkeys; grison, a member of the weasel family; agoutis, ctenosaurs (iguanas), a salt-water crocodile, and a two-toed sloth. Great trip! (Rita Rosenberg)

#### GRANT BENEFITS AUDUBON ORNITHOLOGICAL LIBRARY

The Audubon Society of the Everglades received an \$800.00 grant from the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties to help fund expansion of our Ornithological Book Collection at the Palm Beach County Central Library at 3650 Summit Blvd., West Palm Beach.

The collection's first volumes were purchased in 1979 with a \$10,000 grant. It has now grown to over 900 books and subscriptions to seven periodicals, including THE AUK, CONDOR, WILSON BULLETIN, AMERICAN BIRDS, FLORIDA FIELD NATURALIST, BIRDING, and BRITISH BIRDS. Colleges and universities throughout the United States have called the library requesting to borrow books because of its reputation as one

of the best collections in the south-east.

Fred Lohrer, ornithologist and librarian at Archbold Biological Station, states, "This is probably the best ornithological collection in any Florida public library, and it can hold its own when compared with ornithological holdings in the better academic libraries in Florida."

Albert Earl Gilbert, the famous wildlife artist/author, used the library's resources extensively and said, "I want to express my gratitude for the library's outstanding "Audubon Collection" which I used extensively in my work as a wildlife artist. I recently illustrated the Reader's Digest BOOK OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS, and your Audubon collection provided me with an unmatched reference source. It must be the finest collection of books on birds available to the public in South Florida."

The grant money will be used to replace lost or stolen volumes, to order new books, and to renew the annual magazine subscriptions. The Community Foundation, when awarding the grant, congratulated the Audubon Society of the Everglades for its fine work in Palm Beach County, which is enriched by its ideas and efforts.

(Esther Zaretsky)

#### CONSERVATION REPORT

We have reached a new "plateau" in our long fight to produce meaningful efforts by South Florida Water Management District, DER, Corps of Engineers, etc. to really start restoring (salvaging) the Everglades and are glad to report on the "Settlement Agreement." This document, by the U.S. Government and backed by the Court, outlines procedures the above agencies must follow between now and 1997 to accomplish this "restoration." By five years after that, the proper water quality and hydrology must be functioning. The settlement contains many of the important features Audubon has been urging on these agencies for years. Governor Chiles, Attorney General Dexter Lehtinen, Secretary Carol Browner

and others formally announced the settlement the second week in July. We will continue to attend all meetings and monitor the progress.

Your Conservation Committee has worked recently to preserve some of the habitat left on the new middle school property in Lake Worth, but it does not look promising.

Next Conservation Meeting:  
August 14, 7:30 p.m., home of Ruth Trumpower, 165 Auburn Drive, Lake Worth.

Have a nice summer and plant a nice TREE. (Chuck Potter)

#### EDUCATION REPORT

As is done each summer, Audubon Society of the Everglades has provided summer camp scholarships to students from nine county elementary schools.

Students attending the Everglades Youth Camp in the Corbett Area were Gerald Simmons, Candace DePasquale, Michelle MacCargan, Michaela McKinley, Jomi Williams, Lydia Gibbs, Sandra North, Terrell Dawson, Corey Manke, Amanda Althouse and June Kerr.

Attending the Junior Rangers Summer Day Camp at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park were Whitney Laubscher, Arlando Williams, Lee Holmes, Kyle Arendell, Lindsay McCarger, Richard Marrero, Mike Casanovas, Kelly Redwine, Oswaldo and Uhifia Castillo.

Sixteen students attended the various day camps at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center during June and July. They included Tricia Althouse, Jeffrey Quinney, Lee Brutus, Tiffany McAleer, Jessica Redwine, Shannon Dunbar, Daniel Cohen, Jennifer Obranic, Erica Felton, Jimmy Larson, Jennifer and Chet Wyckoff, Maghan and Melissa Franklin, Sarah Athenosy and Richard Rosch.

The scholarships awarded by our chapter are made possible by several grants which must be used for educational purposes only.

#### BIRDING THE MISSISSIPPI

We drove down the Mississippi River from its source at Lake Itasca, Minnesota, which is 1475 feet above sea level, to its mouth 2552 miles down river at Venice, Louisiana.

We arrived at the source the first of October just in time to see the fantastic variety of colors in the fall foliage. In Lake Itasca Park we saw a magnificent mature bald eagle sitting on the bank of a small pond from which he had snatched a wall-eyed pike. As twilight approached we were slowly driving down a forest road and came upon a ruffed grouse, the first I had seen since 1941.

Bemidji, Minn. is the tourist center, and it has good motels and restaurants. Paul Bunyan and his blue ox, Babe, were camping on the shore of Lake Bemidji. A ring-billed gull sat on each horn. Both eastern and western meadowlarks range through the area, but we never heard them call, so we know not whether we saw one or both.

Following the river southward, the states have minor roads marked plainly with signs the shape of a ship's steering wheel marked "Great River Road." The scenery along either bank from the low bluffs is a scene of constant beauty. While exploring the cliffs near Hannibal, MO during a late afternoon drizzle, we came across eight wild turkeys promenading down a narrow lane.

Not only the river is good for birding, but there are many oxbow lakes down its length that were formed by earthquakes. We saw large quantities of Canada geese, mallards, black ducks, pintail and teal during the trip. Great blue herons, night herons, and great egrets were seen from the source to the mouth.

The river is always big, mighty, and timeless. Try this trip before you run out of time. (Hank McCall)

**AUDUBON SOCIETY  
of the EVERGLADES**

P. O. BOX 6762  
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33405  
(407) 588-6908

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
West Palm Beach, Florida  
Permit 46

Palm Beach Co. Library System  
3650 Summit Blvd.  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406