



EVERGLADE KITE

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

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Ruth Trumpower, Editor

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PEREGRINE FALCONS IN NEW YORK CITY

Saul Frank and his wife Delores live in a twenty-story apartment building directly across from the Throggs Neck Bridge in New York. In May of 1983 they saw peregrine falcons nesting the bridge. Thus began the Franks' interest in peregrines.

In the beginning Saul Frank knew very little about falcons. He began keeping a log of their activities and he began to learn. He has been watching these birds for nine seasons as of now.

For the last three years Mr. Frank has been under contract with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Endangered Species Unit. He monitors the birds and inspects the bridge and nearby buildings for nest sites. He installs nest boxes, returns immature birds to their nests, and bands them.

Mr. Frank founded a newsletter two and a half years ago called "New York City Aeries." He also co-founded a hawk watch in which migrating raptors are counted at a barrier island beach in the New York City area. This year 600 birds were counted.

Join us for this interesting program by Mr. Frank. He has promised to show us slides of peregrines that can be seen no where else. Do hope to see

you on Tuesday, January 7, 7:30 p.m., at the West Palm Beach Garden Club Center, Dreher Trail North.
(Jeannie Girard)

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 7:30 a.m. -
Loxahatchee National Wildlife
Refuge. Meet at Marsh Trail.
Howard Langridge will lead.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 7:30 a.m. -
Loxahatchee National Wildlife
Refuge. Meet at Marsh Trail.
Dorothy Brindle will lead.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 7:30 a.m. -
Loxahatchee National Wildlife
Refuge. Meet at Marsh Trail.
Howard Langridge will lead.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8 - Everglades
National Park Bus Trip. Meet at
the Garden Club Center parking lot
at 6 a.m. Call Hal Wiedemann
(844-4903) or contact him at our
January 7th or February 4th monthly
meetings to make the required re-
servations. Fee is \$25 for Audubon
members, \$30 for non-members. Bus
will leave at 6:15 sharp and return
by 6:30 p.m.

This trip was a great event last year, with many birds seen, including painted bunting, groove-billed ani, and the short-tailed hawk, both light and dark phases.

FIELD NOTES

Field trips this past month turned up some good birds and provided excellent instruction by our leaders. Hal Wiedemann led a group around the Loxahatchee Refuge where we saw 50 species, including nice views of a limpkin, four sora rails, many egrets and ducks of various kinds. Gloria Hunter led the Tuesday morning group through MacArthur Beach State Park, where their best bird was a solitary vireo. An expert with native plants as well as birds, Gloria is a very good teacher.

The Christmas Count on December 14th was blessed with nice weather, but it was hot for this time of year. No particularly rare birds in the 132 species found, but the total numbers of each were down. Each year we find fewer and fewer birds because of the loss of habitat. Areas which had stands of large dead trees are gone - and so are the red-headed woodpeckers; areas of scrub have disappeared - as have the scrub jays. As were lucky to see a willet, as they are scarce since our beaches are so crowded. Phil and Ann Weinrich hosted the compilation party that evening.

(Elwood D. Bracey)

CONSERVATION REPORT

Wow! The big Holiday Season really came fast, and went faster. Hope you all had a happy Christmas and will enjoy a wonderful New Year.

The past year was the busiest Conservation Activity Year yet, and has left those of us on the Conservation Committee breathless. (ANY HEAL OUT THERE? Call 586-4221.)

As the year wound down, the illegal, non-permitted 24 miles of canal dredging hit us at a SFWMD meeting. We objected to the mild penalty required of the corporation committing the violation in 1989. We are hoping 1992 brings the acquisition of a reasonable amount of environmentally sensitive lands into public ownership via the referendum bond issue funds. We have tried to track all of the other habitat trouble spots and give good Chapter input to help all us "critters" two and four-legged, flyers and earthbound.

This chairman's heartfelt thanks go to our noble leader, Cissie, and to Stella and Jeannie, all of whom attend many meetings to plead the Audubon cause. And, of course, to the rest of our Chapter's capable officers and directors and to all the non-board workers who help keep the Chapter going.

Because of an important meeting which members must attend, there will not be a conservation meeting in January. (Chuck Potter)

DRY TORTUGAS SHUTTLE FOR CAMPERS

A new service has been announced that may be of interest to our camper members. Transportation can be provided for campers and their gear at a cost of \$100 for round trip from Key West.

Outbound travel for campers will be on April 12, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28, May 1 and 4. Returns will be April 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 30, May 3 and 6. Resupply of water and ice is possible every third day. For an additional \$100, campers who

travel with us from Key West can have boat privileges during the time we're berthed at Fort Jefferson. For information, contact Wings, Inc., P. O. Box 31930, Tucson, AZ 85751.

GALLERY HOSTS ARTIST'S FLORIDA WILDLIFE EXHIBIT

The Wildlife & Nature Fine Art Gallery will host an exhibit of the work of internationally renowned artist Wilhelm Goebel on Marth 7th through March 21st at 2800 North Military Trail, West Palm Beach.

On Saturday, March 7th, at 2:00 p.m., the Gallery will hold an open house. Mr. Goebel will be present to meet the public and present 15 to 20 new original works of art featuring the wildlife of Florida. Also in attendance will be Resee Collins, Curator of Florida Audubon's Center for Birds of Prey. She will be accompanied by many of her feathered patients and teaching assistants, eagles, hawks, owls and other raptors, who will be part of her presentations during the day.

In connection with the show, partial proceeds from all sales during the two weeks will be donated to the Center, which treats injured raptors and has released over 1400 birds back into the wild since its opening in 1979.

Mr. Goebel is painting a special image of the Florida osprey which will be auctioned during the show, also with proceed going to the Center. Many of his limited edition prints will also be available. For further information, call the Gallery, 407/687-3510.

TEACHERS' CAMP WELL RECEIVED

This past summer's Environmental Teachers' Camp sponsored by Audubon Society of the Everglades at Pine Jog was attended by teachers from nine elementary schools in the county.

"Water Resources of South Florida" was the theme of the course and its hands-on experiences. Among visits to theme-related sites, it included canoeing the "Wild and Scenic" section of the Loxahatchee River.

Participants included Helen Beers of Wynnebrook; Judy Perna, Crystal Lakes; Colleen Brownie, Barton; Rhonna Bell, Panther Run; Linda Brown, Indian Pines; Nancy Hewitt, Palm Beach Public; Jean Lord, Lantana; Claire Anderson, Poinciana, and Rhonda Madison and Darla Alexander, Belle Glade. (Pat Althouse)

SIGHTS FROM THE LEVEE

To celebrate our 70th year of life, Irma and I held an eight-day, 109-mile-long walking party on the levees around Lake Okeechobee. During this hike we saw fascinating snippets of bird life.

First, we were always escorted by 50 to 200 cattle egrets working the levee ahead of us. They would let us get within 50 yards, then the whole flock would fly 200 yards ahead. Their changing flight patterns of white against the green grass were an inspiring, moving scene, encouraging our tired legs to keep up with them.

Twice we spotted a peregrine falcon who had white feathers stuck to his claws. Since ducks were scarce, we believed he shifted his diet to the cattle egret.

On another occasion I had just focused on a palm warbler when he exploded in a cloud of feathers. The black streak that hit him turned into a merlin that quickly dodged into the brush.

We had seven bald eagle sightings, all of them close with no shyness on the part of the birds. Just south of Buckhead Ridge, a pair maneuvered over our heads. Suddenly they flew together, grasping beaks and claws and, with extended wings, made five clockwise gyrations like a falling maple leaf. Just above the water they broke apart and flew off in their separate ways. He didn't even kiss her goodbye.

(Hank McCall)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 1991 West Palm Beach Christmas Bird Count fielded 44 observers and tallied 129 species and six exotics, way down from the 1970's when we averaged 160 species. The 129 species was the lowest number since 1960, when we fielded only 15 observers. One reason for our low count was the absence of any really unusual species.

The only "good" birds were a solitary sand-piper (our sixth count sighting) by the McCall party, and a yellow-throated vireo (our eighth count sighting) by the Eaton party.

The strangest element was that the numbers of individuals of most species that we saw were remarkably average. Yet we had the highest number ever of loggerhead shrike and an E. collared dove.

We failed to find a common loon, hooded and red-breasted mergansers, merlin, herring and Bonaparte's gulls, barn and burrowing owls, scrub jay and a few other species that we would expect to see.

(Howard Langridge)

KITE STRINGS

Birding/Wildlife Tram Tours at Shark River Valley - Jan. 11 & 25, 7:30 a.m., 3 hours. Sunset Tram Tours, 5:00 p.m., Jan. 4 & Feb. 1, 3 hours. Moonlight Sonata - Dec. 31 & Jan. 18, 2 hours. Shark Valley entrance fee free but tram is \$9.75, or less if group, senior or child. Call 305/221-8455 for details. Shark Valley is about 30 miles west of Miami on U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail).

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Winter program schedule for MacArthur Beach State Park, north end of Singer Island - Guided nature walks Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m. & 1 p.m., free with park admission. Nature Awareness Walks for Preschoolers, Saturdays, 10 a.m., free with park admission. "The Real Florida" lecture series beginning Jan. 9th costs \$20 for 4 lectures, single ticket \$6 (includes park entrance fee). Nature Photography course with John Lopinot, 6 weekly sessions beginning Jan. 15th, 5 Saturday field trips, \$150 (includes park entrance fee). Entrance fee is \$3.25 for carload of up to 8 people. 407/624-6952-info.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

A New Year's wish for each and every one of us: May our causes enjoy success and our lives a degree of satisfaction in this New Year!

We do not have much breathing time to mull over what might happen in the up-coming legislative session. This year it will begin in less than two weeks. Rumors of reorganization of environmental agencies and who and what will be cut back, and how much, are rife. We can call or write our legislators on broad topics such as: (1) support setting boat speed limits, 35 mph daytime, 25 mph nighttime, in state waters, doesn't include the ocean. We are a most accident-prone state and more manatee deaths and injuries are from boat hits than any other cause; (2) most strongly support state (DER) oversight on all construction in wetlands (coastal and inland) and for Palm Beach County, support local delegation of wetlands permitting to our Environmental Resources Management agency (more efficient handling by more locally knowledgeable staff); (3) stand tall on not weakening growth management concepts on the pretext that it will return "our" part of the world to prosperity despite the recession that exists everywhere.

Errata: The Everglades Coalition will be meeting January 9 to 12, 1992, at Key Largo. It will be an important place to be for Floridians or anyone who knows we must salvage what's left of Florida as it was meant to be. The days will be filled with seminars, panel discussions, and great field trips, not to mention a bevy of politicians as mealtime speakers. Also, the Timer Powers education fund is financially independent of SFWMD. It will be entirely supported by private funds. ASE voted a donation at our November board meeting.

FPL is sponsoring a manatee workshop at Palm Beach Gardens High School February 27th, 7:30 p.m. For details, call 1-800-552-8440.

At our December board meeting: (1) we (ASE) are sponsoring an open workshop on January 18, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, meeting place to be announced at January 7th meeting, or call me, 965-2420. The Board feels a need to draw in all those interested in the continued welfare and direction of our chapter. Give us your 2¢ worth. If you are a little late, or need to leave a little early, or want to bring a thermos of coffee and a doughnut, feel free! Anything will be fair game for discussion; call if you wish more details; (2) we reluctantly accepted the resignation of Louise Morgan. She has been the spirit and muscle behind our chapter's nature trail at John Prince Park for years. Her only wish is that she has inspired some other dedicated souls to take up the slack. Let's thank her royally by volunteering! (Cissie Durando)

WHAT IS A PHONE TREE AND WHY DO WE NEED ONE

A phone tree is a network of ASE members who agree to make a copie of very important phone calls - one to an elected official and one to another member of the phone tree. This may be one of the most important tools a chapter can use for the protection of our environment.

If you are more or less housebound, or

up to your eyeballs in projects, this is one thing that you can do. You just need a couple of minutes. The phone tree may only be used several times a year, and all members of the tree will receive a subscription to the Audubon Activist to keep you fully updated on the issues.

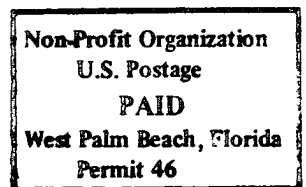
You need not come to any extra meetings in order to participate. You just need to be interested in the issues which are important to our environment. Join our phone tree and have a part in helping to formulate environmental policies.

It is much more exciting and fulfilling to play an active role than to simply bemoan harmful policies.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the next meeting, or call me for further information and sign-up, 407/965-1390. (Jeannie Girard)

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



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

MOVING? Let our Membership Chairman know!!