Join us as Dr. Paul Gray tells us more about Lake Okeechobee's natural and human history. He will talk about Lake Okeechobee—what it was originally, how and why we changed it, the undesirable results of some of these changes and what Audubon and our society are trying to do to make Okeechobee better again. He will also discuss how Lake O, the center of south Florida's water management system, should work in the future.

Dr. Gray, Science Coordinator of Audubon of Florida's Lake Okeechobee Watershed Program, provides technical support to Audubon's policy teams. He is working with various agency technical and policy teams designing and implementing restoration and stewardship plans in the region. Paul has been working in this area for more than 20 years and his educational background includes a BS from the University of Missouri, an MS from Texas Tech University and a Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 1993. Among his awards are the John Kabler Grassroots award from the Everglades Coalition and the Audubon of Florida Staff member of the year.

“Florida is a biologist's paradise and I like being with an effective conservation group and being part of the good we do. My hobbies are reading, gardening, and kayaking, hunting and fishing. Join me for a presentation mixing ecology, history, hydrology, politics AND BIRDS!” said Paul.

Our Annual Meeting will be a pot luck dinner. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. and the food will be served at 6:30 p.m. The annual meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. People with last names that begin between R-Z please bring a main dish A-I bring salads and veggies, J-Q bring desserts. Please bring ready to serve food; we have no kitchen. We will supply the drinks. Paton is creating a special raffle. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

The program will take place at the Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, 6301 W. Summit Blvd., in West Palm Beach.

President's Column
Linda Humphries

This is the last time I will be writing the President's Column. I want to sincerely tell you that it has been a wonderful four years. I have had lots of new ideas, some good, some not so good. I know that you could tell I put my heart and soul into trying to be a good President and you responded by giving me your support and encouragement. I have repeatedly told you that having a great board and their help and support is what made the past four years go by so quickly and smoothly. They made me look good! I look forward to the next two years and the guidance of a new President with new ideas. I am not disappearing you will see me around offering my help and support. Thank you to the board, all the volunteers, and to you the members for all your help the past four years!

Our chapter signed a five-year contract with the South Florida Water Management District to continue leading tours in STA 1E. I will continue to schedule them. The birding trips will be the first Saturday of each month. You can call me at 561-742-7791 or email me at hlindaase@aol.com to schedule a trip thru September 1. As you know there are not as many birds seen during the summer season. It will be interesting to see what surprises are out there. The beginning of September I will start taking reservations for the fall/winter season.

The Snook Island boardwalk in Lake Worth Lagoon is open and I understand people have been able to see the Oystercatchers. I hope to go see them soon. We all look forward to your continued support and ideas. Don't forget to take time to enjoy the birds and the nature around you! Spring migration is starting soon. I look forward to seeing you on our bird walks and at our meetings!
The Everglade Kite
is the newsletter of the Audubon Society of the Everglades, published 10 times a year.

Nominations for ASE Officers 2012–2014
Nominations for the offices of President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be posted on our website, auduboneverglades.org, by March 27 and presented at the April general membership meeting. See you there!

Proposed Budget 2012–2013

INCOME
Investment 10,300
NAS 3,000
Donations 5,000
Membership local 2,500
Merchandise Sales 400
Fund Raising 3,000
Field Trips 1,500
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME 25,700

EXPENSES
Administration
Office Supplies/Postage 100
Telephone -
Storage 450
Website & other computer progs. 350
Fees, Licenses, & Taxes 300
Insurance 1,500
Accounting 2,200
Fund Raising Expenses 500
total 5,400

Programs
Newsletter printing 2,500
Newsletter postage 2,000
Conservation award 200
ASE brochure 1,000
Hospitality 600
Speaker expense 450
Busch Wildlife Sanctuary -
Field Trips 1,250
total 8,000

Education
Lectures, school programs 1,700
Everglades Day 2,500
Library Purchases 250
Green Schools 500
Conference/ Convention 500
Pathfinders Award 6,000
Festivals & exhibits 300
Donations 250
workshops 300
total 12,300

Total expenses 25,700
Stop The Senseless Deaths!

Let's work to save the ones we love. Carrion feeding birds are in great danger. There has been a noticeable upswing in deaths of carrion feeding birds. We usually see the road kill on our highways with the cloud of vultures waiting their turn to feed. These birds are an important link in the food chain, yet they themselves are dying from the food they eat. The hidden danger continues from out past and impacts many levels of our bird life today.

I bring to your attention the common, though unreported, danger to all carrion feeding species: POISONED MEAT!! This poisoned meat source comes in many forms, often from places you wouldn’t expect.

The agriculture community has for many years used poison baits to get rid of unwanted predators on their herds and flocks. The unsuspecting predator crawls off to die after consuming the poisoned bait and the carrion feeders eat them and DIE TOO! Even common household Rat bait used regularly in our homes, garages and barns is a danger to bird life; the carrion feeders feast on them too. This results in even more collateral damage and death.

Another source of poisoned meat comes from the veterinary, pet shelter and vermin control companies; not commonly acknowledged sources. For instance: what do you think the vet does with the dead animal when they “put down” a pet? Or when pet rescue organizations can’t adopt them all? Or when the “pest control” company rids our neighborhoods of nuisance animals (raccoons, rats, opossum and others)? Legally, all animals that are euthanized are supposed to be incinerated, yet many animals, wanted or otherwise, are simply dumped. These practitioners unwittingly add to the “poisoned food” link in the food chain.

I ask just how many of the above-mentioned groups have the proper facilities or can afford to incinerate? Unfortunately, there are those who make the choice to not follow the law. Some cannot financially comply and eventually they are forced to get rid of the animal. I will let you decide how...

In the case of the unsuspecting carrion feeders, including hawks, caracaras, eagles and vultures, they are victims of a lack of oversight by the humans using the poison. Usually the bird just falls out of the sky and becomes yet another food target for a carrion-eater, continuing the “poison meat” link of the food chain. Hopefully, the lucky bird will fall out of the sky where it is found by a concerned person. Herein lies a shortfall in the safety net provided for just this event – who do you call – when will a live person actually answer the phone?? Good luck trying to get a human on the phone from any state agency to help a distressed bird. We need a 24/7/365 contact for birds of prey in distress; preferably local. Let’s rally our Audubon brainpower to solve the problem and part of the solution.

It is nesting season. The chicks require both parents to supply the food. What happens when a nesting adult ingests poisoned meat? It drops out of the sky and can no longer help in the rearing of the chicks. Who is on call to help? Who checks on the nest? My concern is for the great migratory species in Florida that nest here.

It is time for strict enforcement of the euthanized animal laws regarding disposal and more education for those who work in any business that must use poison to kill animals. Refer to: Florida Statutes 823.041 - Disposal of bodies of dead animals. See FSS Text below.

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Bird of the Month: Sanderling

The bird of the month for April is the little sandpiper you’ve been seeing all winter long running up and down the beach: Calidris alba.

Come to our April meeting to hear more about these winter residents of Palm Beach County.

PAPER COPY OF THE KITE

ASE has converted our Kite subscription list from paper delivery to electronic delivery (email) because of the monthly expense. If you are a CHAPTER MEMBER OF ASE you are receiving your copy in the form (email or paper) as you requested and do not need to contact us. If you are a NATIONAL MEMBER and want to continue to get your Kite (email or paper) and have not already contacted us, you must contact Paton White (561-818-7574/ patonrwhite@aol.com). You will always be able to read the Kite on our website, www.auduboneverglades.org.

ARE YOU A NEW MEMBER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON?

We are delighted to have you as a member of the Audubon Society of the Everglades as well. We hope you will join us at our meetings and trips. If you wish to continue to get the Kite, please contact Paton White and let her know if you prefer to receive your Kite by mail or by email. Paton White 561-818-7574, patonrwhite@aol.com.

Featured Trips

April 14 - Pelican Island Boat Ride! Pelican Island is the country’s first National Wildlife Refuge and it is here on the east coast of Florida (just north of Vero Beach). Depart at 2PM from West Palm Beach to carpool to Sebastian for a 2 1/2 hour boat ride in the Indian River Lagoon to see Pelican Island during the beginning of nesting season. $35.p/p reservations required (limit 32) Call Claudine 561-655-9779

April 28 - Blue Cypress Lake This small lake west of Vero Beach was not on maps until around 1900 - and now it is home to the highest concentration of nesting Ospreys in the WORLD! Expect to see hundreds of ospreys in all stages of nesting. We need an early departure to carpool from West Palm Beach. Limit - 7 people! $45 p/p -Call Claudine 561-655-9779

May 6 - Sunset/Moonrise Cruise in the Lake Worth Lagoon Our annual event is always enjoyable as we cruise from Singer Island to the Sanctuary Islands at Southern Boulevard.

Bring a picnic dinner if you wish! Meet at the Sailfish Marina in Palm Beach Shores at 6:30 PM. $ 26. p/p - call Claudine 561-655-9779.

(1) Any owner, custodian, or person in charge of domestic animals, upon the death of such animals due to disease, shall dispose of the carcasses of such animals by burning or burying at least 2 feet below the surface of the ground; provided, however, nothing in this section shall prohibit the disposal of such animal carcasses to rendering companies licensed to do business in this state.

(2) It is unlawful to dispose of the carcass of any domestic animal by dumping such carcass on any public road or right-of-way, or in any place where such carcass can be devoured by beast or bird.

(3) Any person violating any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(4) For the purposes of this act, the words “domestic animal” shall include any equine or bovine animal, goat, sheep, swine, dog, cat, poultry, or other domesticated beast or bird.
Audubon Society of the Everglades
PO Box 16914
West Palm Beach, FL
33416-6914

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ATTENTION: This could be your last issue of the Kite! See inside for details.

The Everglade Kite is published 10 times a year by Audubon Society of the Everglades, P.O. Box 16914, West Palm Beach, Florida, 33416-6914. Also available on the web: www.auduboneverglades.org.

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES IS A 501(C)3 ORGANIZATION. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Articles NEEDED! Send to ben@kolstad.com by the 15th of the month.

The phone number for the chapter, 561-588-6908, has been disconnected. Please visit our website auduboneverglades.org for information. If you need assistance, you will find board member phone numbers, on the website, in the Kite, and in our Calendar of Events Brochure.

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. Send your check, payable to ASE, along with this form to Membership, Audubon Society of the Everglades P.O. Box 16914 West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6914

National Audubon Society Membership

If you join ASE through the National Audubon Society, you will receive 6 issues of Audubon Magazine, and membership in Audubon of Florida, but unless you give us your email, you will not receive the Kite. For details, visit www.audubon.org. To join the National Society, send your information and check to National Audubon Society Membership Center PO Box 422450 Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

Be sure to include the code C9Z000Z with your application so NAS will know how to process your payment.

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.