



# EVERGLADE KITE

## newsletter

### AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES

Volume 56, No 9 - July/August 2016

#### July/August CALENDAR

July 2 Sat. 7:00 am STA 1E, Registration RE-  
QUIRED: send email to [asetripinfo@gmail.com](mailto:asetripinfo@gmail.com).

Aug 6 Sat. 7:00 am STA 1E, Registration RE-  
QUIRED: send email to [asetripinfo@gmail.com](mailto:asetripinfo@gmail.com)

#### IN MEMORIAM

DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF  
CLAUDINE LAABS:

JIM ARNOLD  
DR. AMDE BOLAFFI  
JOAN BRAMS  
LUCE AND TERRANCE BROWN  
CHARLES K. HENNESSEY  
LINDA HUMPHRIES  
SARA LAKLER  
JUDITH C. MADDOCK  
ALFRED MALEFATTO AND  
MOIRA ROZENSON  
JENNIFER MAYCAN  
ALAN PARMALEE  
ARTHUR AND MARY POISSON  
PATRICIA R. SCHWARTZ

A donation to ASE is a fitting way to memorialize a departed one, especially one who loved nature. To make a donation in memory of Claudine or another loved one, please go to [www.auduboneverglades.org](http://www.auduboneverglades.org) and click on the DONATE tab above the picture (for PayPal) or mail a check made out to Audubon Society of the Everglades to

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY  
OF THE  
EVERGLADES, INC.  
PO BOX 16914  
WEST PALM BEACH, FL,  
33416-6914.

Your donation is tax deductible. ASE is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization #59-6019854.

#### Monthly Membership Meeting MEMBERS' PHOTOS AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL Tuesday, July 5th at 6:30 pm

*Everyone's favorite meeting of the year – JULY this year rather than August, due to Pine Jog's scheduling need.*

Make YOUR OWN ICE CREAM SUNDAE followed by a picture show! Share your best nature photos and tell us your stories. Limit your photographs to 8 prints or slides. To help make this evening run more smoothly, please send your images/links to photos to Gerry Felipe at [gerrysemail@gmail.com](mailto:gerrysemail@gmail.com) by June 28th so they can be loaded in advance. You may still bring a thumb drive with your images but sending them in advance is preferred. Large prints and paintings are welcome. Also, Claudine Laabs' prints and post cards will be available to purchase.

As anyone who's visited our website knows, ASE is blessed with a number of extremely talented photographers. Some of the best bird pictures we've seen have been at the photo sharing meeting, so don't miss this one!

If some of the best bird photography in the state isn't sweet enough for you, we're also throwing our annual ice cream social, so come join us! And at the meeting - July Bird of the Month: Lesser Yellow-legs. Come hear more about this fascinating bird from our expert, Clive Pinnock.

Doors open at 6:30 for the fun and camaraderie. Rooms 101 and 102 at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, 6301 Summit Blvd, (near Jog Road) in West Palm Beach. Meeting is free and open to the public.

#### Monthly Membership Meeting Three 20 Minute Presentations Tuesday, August 2nd at 7:00 pm

**Location: MAIN SUMMIT BLVD LIBRARY (this month only)**

##### **State Rd 7 by Lisa Interlandi**

Lisa's legal practice focuses on greater Everglades restoration issues, including implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and Palm Beach County land use and environmental permitting decisions which impact Everglades restoration efforts. Senior Staff Counsel at the Everglades Law Center, she has also served as ELC's Executive Director and Project Manager for its Northern Everglades Project. Previously, she served as Assistant General Counsel with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Lisa obtained her Bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from Florida State University. She was named the 2006 Everglades Coalition George M. Barley Conservationist of the Year. Lisa resides in Palm Beach County with her husband and two children.

##### **Sea Grasses by David Walker**

David has broad experience conducting wildlife and environmental research and data collection with state and government agencies. In 2015, he received The President's Volunteer Service Award. David completed a certificate in Public Land Management and his undergraduate degree in Environmental Science with a concentration in Fish and Wildlife Management at American Public University. He is currently completing his MS in Policy and Management with a concentration in Fish and Wildlife Management and an MPA with a concentration in Environmental Policy. David is an Associate Instructor at the University of Florida. He is President of the South Florida Audubon Society and a board member of Nature-Scape Broward.

##### **ASE History & Reminiscences by Gerry Felipe**

Gerry Felipe has been a member and volunteer with ASE since the summer of 2015. At our general meetings, he is the person that makes all the audio-visuals go so smoothly. He is an IT professional with a passion for technology and all things digital. Gerry is also a musician, playing bass and guitar, and an amateur nature photographer. Originally from Cuba, Gerry grew up in Miami and moved to West Palm Beach in 2015. He and his wife Sheri discovered their love of birds together shortly after they were married in 2011.

## President's Letter ■ ■ ■ Paton White

Your board has just completed its annual retreat. We take a half day to make plans for the future. Scott Zucker announced two exciting new initiatives at our June general meeting that we will start in the fall: the start of a nature photography club and Adopt-A-Park, which is a new citizen science program under the auspices of Environmental Resource Management.

We would also like to create a speakers' bureau. We get calls from garden clubs and other organizations asking for speakers. Linda Humphries and Maxine Schreiber have both spoken to groups. If you enjoy speaking or are a retired educator, here's your chance to use your skills to volunteer and to share your passion for birding or your interest in the environment! Bring delight and information to schools and senior and neighborhood groups. Subjects? Maxine has created a wonderful program on John James Audubon and the history of the Audubon Society, and Linda has a terrific program on wading birds. We can help you create a program (including a power point presentation), if you wish. Consider this rewarding volunteer opportunity that will not consume much of your time but will have a huge positive impact.

ASE lost a true friend and great supporter when past-president Claudine Laabs passed away. Her brother, Allen, has given our chapter her prints, post cards, and slides, and her many friends have made very generous donations in Claudine's memory. At our next meeting, Claudine's prints and post cards will be available to purchase. It seems fitting, since Claudine's pictures were always a highlight of the ice cream social.

## Birds of the Month July/Lesser Yellowlegs - August/Greater Yellowlegs by Ben Kolstad



In May we concluded our profiles of the sandpipers in the genus *Calidris* (aka "the peeps"). In June we began our discussion of the genus *Tringa*, starting with the largest of the shorebirds in the genus: the Willet. This month, we'll look at a much more vexing ID, the look-alike Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs. Where the Willet is stout (legs and bill), these two birds are much less so. And while the Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) is closer in size to the Willet, the Lesser Yellowlegs (*T. flavipes*) is actually more closely related to the Willet than it is to the Greater Yellowlegs! (This might remind you of Hairy and Downy woodpeckers, two very similar-appearing but only distantly related members of the family Picidae.)

**VOICE:** Perhaps the best way to tell the two yellowlegs apart is to listen to their call: the lesser bird has the lesser call. A flat tu-tu is the most frequent call of the Lesser Yellowlegs, while a rather more musical three (or four or more) note tu-tu-tu is the cry of the Greater Yellowlegs.

**BEHAVIOR:** Lesser Yellowlegs tend to feed more calmly, with less thrashing about and darting, than Greater; they're also less skittish and will tend to stick around long after the nervous Greater Yellowlegs has taken off, leaving behind only its longer, more musical call notes.

**GISS:** Of course, the overall impression of the birds, when seen together, is that the Greater Yellowlegs is a larger, more robust bird, with longer legs, longer bill, etc. But it's not too useful when you don't see the two together.

**FIELD MARKS:** However, bill length relative to the head works even when you have only one species in front of you. And here, just as with the call, the greater bird has the greater bill: a bill clearly longer than the head and slightly upturned toward the tip marks the Greater Yellowlegs, while a shorter, straighter, needle-like bill about as long as the head itself gives reasonable identification of the Lesser Yellowlegs. There are some subtle plumage differences as well, but since they change with the seasons, while call pattern and bill length don't, they're a bit harder to keep in mind. (In breeding plumage, the greater yellowlegs has darker barring on its flanks.)

In any event, sorting out the yellowlegs is one of the more interesting challenges among the larger shorebirds in our local wetlands and marshes.

Photos:  
top left - Greater Yellowlegs by Paul Thomas  
bottom right - Lesser Yellowlegs by Don Davis



## “Our” Flamboyance of Flamingos featured on the TODAY SHOW!



NBC News waited two years to do a story on the return of the Flamingos in Palm Beach County, until all the factors to make it possible finally came together.

With a week of heavy rains, the visit was rescheduled several times and we were concerned whether the Flamingos would still be there when the team arrived. Luckily, the birds stuck around for their national TV debut! Florida Audubon coordinated the arrangements for NBC news correspondent Kerry Sanders and the crew to visit STA 2. SFWMD representatives Mark Cook and Brian Garrett were on hand, as well as Julie Hill-Gabriel and Celeste dePalma from Audubon Florida and Susan McKemy from ASE.

We had no idea what questions they were going to ask or how they were going to frame the story. We saw the story for the first time, when it aired, just like you!

Flamingos, present in large numbers in other parts of the world, are a rare sight in the United States other than in captive populations. Catching a glimpse of an American Flamingo in the wild is both challenging and rewarding. Challenging because they are few in number and typically only seen in remote locations; rewarding because they are elegant, beautiful, and rare in Florida. In classic Florida style, these Flamingos have chosen to visit a Restricted Area not open for public access.

Although there is some debate about the origin of the birds; ornithologists and scientists believe they are wild. ASE supports the work of Zoo Miami and the National Park Service which we hope will provide more insight into their origin in the next year. Regardless of where they originated, the birds are free to come and go as they please, so it is like a treasure hunt every time we host a tour.

If you missed the Today Show story (aired Saturday June 11), you can view the segment on the ASE website, Facebook page, or Yahoo Group. The tours for 2016 have ended. **Visit the ASE website to sign up for the ASE email list and select “Flamingo trips” to be notified of the tour schedule for 2017. THINK PINK!**

### Books Every Birder Should Read

by Corey T. Callaghan

Here is my fourth recommendation in my series of the top five books every birder should read:

#### **Of a Feather: A Brief History of American Birding**

by Scott Weidensaul. Orlando: Harcourt, 2008.

This book is well written and quite suspenseful for a book about birding. An easy book to read on a rainy weekend. Weidensaul takes the reader back in time to the beginning of Ornithology in America (when birds were “collected”). It discusses prominent ornithologists and naturalists such as Alexander Wilson, John James Audubon, and Roger Tory Peterson. Overall, this book is a concise wealth of knowledge on American Ornithology and birding.

This book is available to check out from our Audubon Collection in the main Palm Beach County Library on Summit Blvd, West Palm Beach.

ASE has a new eBay web site that offers you a great new way to support ASE. 100% of the profits from these purchases of nature-themed items goes to ASE. Right now we have silk Fortier ties (butterflies, polo players, and - of course - flamingos!), and they are priced to sell! Soon we will also have amazing photographic posters! Come check out the site at [www.auduboneverglades.org/donate/ebay](http://www.auduboneverglades.org/donate/ebay)

Please send photographs (jpg format) of Solitary Sandpiper for ASE web site September Bird-of-the Month to [SheilaElliot@yahoo.com](mailto:SheilaElliot@yahoo.com). Enjoy our on-line gallery of member images (click Bird of the Month on the right scroll down topic list).

If you are a writer interested in submitting to the KITE, please send your article idea or draft article to [auduboneverglades@gmail.com](mailto:auduboneverglades@gmail.com).

### Two Upcoming Important Solar Energy Votes

ASE believes it is important to vote yes on Amendment 4 in the August primary and no on Amendment 1 in the November general election. (We'll alert you in the November Kite about that Amendment's contents.)

Amendment 4 in the August 30 primary seeks to remove barriers to solar energy in sunny Florida by exempting panels and other solar equipment from the real property tax and the tangible property tax.

This is what Amendment 4 will look like on the ballot:

SOLAR DEVICES OR RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCE DEVICES; EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN TAXATION AND ASSESSMENT—Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to exempt from ad valorem taxation the assessed value of solar or renewable energy source devices subject to tangible personal property tax, and to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to prohibit consideration of such devices in assessing the value of real property for ad valorem taxation purposes. This amendment takes effect January 1, 2018,



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The Everglades Kite is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of the Everglades, a 501(c)(3) organization # 59-6019854. We gratefully accept any donations or bequests at <http://www.auduboneverglades.org/donate/>  
We offer Amazon Smile and eBay fundraising programs, as well as direct giving.

*Audubon Society of the Everglades general meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. (refreshments at 6:30) 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.*

### **Join Audubon Society of the Everglades**

There are now two ways to join **ASE: Chapter-only membership** and/or membership through the **National Audubon Society**.

**1. Chapter-only membership.** When you become a chapter-only member, **ALL** of your membership fees are put to use supporting local projects and education. You will receive 10 issues of the Kite newsletter and you will also receive priority for special events.

#### **ASE Chapter Only Membership Application**

Enclosed is my check payable to the **Audubon Society of the Everglades** for my yearly dues.

**Membership runs from January 1 – December 31 of the current year**

Please circle one ►►► \$20 (Regular) \$15 (Student or Senior) \$25.00 (Household) \$50 (Patron)

\_\_\_\_ Please send my Kite by email; I would like to save trees, and also save ASE both postage and printing costs.

In addition to membership, please accept my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help further local projects/education.

Name:

Phone:

Address/Zip:

Email:

**Mail to: Audubon Society of the Everglades P.O. Box 16914, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6914**

**OR pay online at [www.auduboneverglades.org/membership](http://www.auduboneverglades.org/membership)**

**2. Membership through the National Audubon Society.** If you join **ASE** through **National Audubon** you will receive 6 issues of the Audubon magazine, and membership in Audubon of Florida. Mail your \$20.00 check along with your information to: **National Audubon Society** 225 Varick St., 7th floor, New York, New York 10014 Attn: Chance Muehleck. Include the code **C9ZE000Z**

**As a NAS member you will need to request the Kite newsletter to be emailed or mailed to you by contacting Gail Tomei. Call her at 561-969-7567 or email to [blackgrouper@comcast.net](mailto:blackgrouper@comcast.net).**