



EVERGLADE KITE

newsletter

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE
EVERGLADES

Volume 57, No 6 - March 2017

2017 CALENDAR - March

04 Sat (7:30a-12p) **STA-1E**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Linda Humphries)

05 Sun (all day) **Everglades National Park**, Easy/Drive, \$, **RR** (Mark Cook) (**SOLD OUT**)

06 Mon (7:30a-9:30a) **Wakodahatchee**, Easy/Short (Patton White)

11 Sat (7:30a-10a) **Peaceful Waters**, Moderate/Medium (Scott Zucker)

12 Sun (10:30a-2p) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Susan McKemy) (**WAITLIST ONLY**)

12 Sun (3:30p-7p) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Susan McKemy) (**WAITLIST ONLY**)

14 Tue (9:30a-12p) **Lion Country Safari**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Clive Pinnock) (**SOLD OUT**)

18 Sat (5p-7p) **Wakodahatchee**, Easy/Short (Valleri Brauer)

18 Sat (all day) **Three Lakes / Joe Overstreet**, Challenging/Long, \$, **RR** (Rick Schofield) (**SOLD OUT**)

19 Sun (8a-10a) **Jupiter Ridge**, Moderate/Medium (Melanie & Steve Garcia)

22 Wed (6:30a-11:30a) **Loxahatchee NWR** (Fly-out), Moderate/Long, \$ (Rick Schofield)

24 Fri (6p-8p) **Wakodahatchee** (Fly-in), Easy/Short (Chris Golia)

25 Sat (10:30a-2p) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Susan McKemy) (**WAITLIST ONLY**)

25 Sat (3:30p-7p) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)**, Easy/Drive, **RR** (Susan McKemy) (**WAITLIST ONLY**)

27 Mon (9a-1p) **CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP TRAINING (Mounts Botanical Garden)**, \$, **RR** (Scott Zuckerman et al.) (see Scott's article on inside page 2)

Always check the web site calendar for details, registration links and last minute changes. Field trips listed in italics are new and/or unique.

***\$ There is an associated cost; see website calendar for details**

***RR advance registration required. Trips, unless otherwise specified, are "Just Show Up."**

March Membership Meeting & Lecture:

"Creative Butterfly Gardening" with Tom Hewitt, freelance writer and creator of the Mounts Botanical Garden's Butterfly Garden.....Tuesday, March 7 at 7pm

Join us for an opportunity to learn how to create and plant a stunning butterfly garden in your own yard or patio.

Tom Hewitt is a gardener extraordinaire. He has been studying and writing about Florida's famous gardens, such as the Breakers and the Ann Norton Sculpture Garden, and he has been designing inviting garden retreats in South Florida. He has written for Florida Gardening magazine for over 20 years, and his articles and photography have appeared in the Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, Flower & Garden, Birds & Blooms, and many other gardening publications.

At Mounts Botanical Garden, Tom turned a small inconsequential nursery into a volunteer-driven, financially successful source of delight by finding, propagating and growing hard-to-find plants suitable for South Florida gardens. These plants have been used throughout Mounts and sold to thousands of visitors. Today the Mounts Butterfly Garden is a special oasis filled with butterflies and their caterpillars and eggs.

Having managed the Mounts Butterfly Garden for 7 years and the Mounts Nursery Guild for 6, Tom now designs niche gardens for his clients and works as the guardian of a unique private garden in Palm Beach. Tom will share his expertise so that you, too, can have a beautiful and colorful garden that draws butterflies.

As a special treat, attendees at the program will be offered a free butterfly themed silk tie donated by designer/inventor Robert Fortier.

Also at the meeting, our expert Clive Pinnock will tell us more about the March Bird of the Month: Osprey.

Doors open at 6:30 pm for light refreshments in 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.

ASE NOTICES and OPPORTUNITIES:

Volunteers are needed

Please contact Debbie Smith hnybear3@juno.com or Vicki Rogerson vlrogerson@gmail.com

March 4: Outdoor Adventures at John Prince Park

March 11: Natural Areas Festival at Grassy Waters

March 25: Annual Turtlefest at Loggerhead Marinelife Center.

Photographers - Limpkins for April, please!

President's Letter ■ ■ ■ Paton White

ASE Highlights and Activities

1. **The Conservation Stewardship Training Course.** This is one of the major initiatives undertaken by ASE in recent years. Scott Zucker, Paul Davis and Mary Young have worked for months preparing this wonderful program. See Scott's article below.
2. **ASE Recognized.** At the Feb. 7 meeting of the PBC Board of County Commissioners, ASE and other local contributors were given a framed Proclamation by Mayor Paulette Burdick to recognize our "contribution to the preservation of these lands and acknowledge the adopters for their continued support." ASE participated in the Environmental Resources Management Adopt-A-Natural Area Program by leading bird walks at numerous natural areas this year.
3. **Purple Martin House.** Due to Vicki Rogerson's diligent work we have a specially equipped purple martin house erected at Wakodahatchee. Katie Antoniou's experience and support were invaluable. See Vicki's article on page three.
4. **Environmental Tips Hotline.** 561-616-BIRD (2473). Linda Humphries informed us of this line handled by the PBC Sheriff's office. You can report a wildlife issue occurring in a Natural Area.
5. **General Meeting A. V. support.** Sean Borak will be helping keep our speakers happy, and he will also be helping with the website.
6. **Presenter.** Scott Zucker was on the Environmental Challenges panel at the Nature's Spirit Conference Saturday January 28, in North Palm Beach.
7. **Regional Conservation Conference.** Audubon chapters from Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties were represented at this conference moderated by Celeste De Palma of Audubon Florida. Together we are working on a campaign to support FL SB10 and to create a tri-fold brochure about climate change in SE Florida. Paton White, Scott Zucker and Mary Young attended.
8. **Represented.** Debbie Smith represented ASE at the Annual Palm Beach County Dark Sky Festival February 4 at Okeehatchee Nature Center.
9. **Hospitality.** Jill Harrold is doing an amazing job.

NEW CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP TRAINING COURSE! - Scott Zuckerman

ASE, in partnership with the IFAS/UF Extension of PBC, will hold its first Conservation Stewardship Training Course from March 27 to May 8 on Mondays from 9am to 1pm. We have engaged 17 excellent instructors/trainers for this 7-week basic environmental education course. Fieldwork at six beautiful natural areas around the county will complement classroom study, and there will be an advocacy component.

The course is designed to help the average citizen understand the importance of five different Florida natural habitats and how they sustain plants and wildlife and adapt to climate change. It will encourage and empower stewards to make a personal commitment to developing an action plan to nurture and advocate for a local natural area they love.

The syllabus includes the following topics/natural areas:

March 27: Habitat 101, Ecological Overview of Greater Everglades and Palm Beach County/UF- IFAS Extension at Mounts Botanical Gardens

Apr 3: Freshwater Wetlands/ARM Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge

Apr 10: Pine Flatwoods/Pine Jog Environmental Center

Apr 17: Scrub/Yamato Scrub Natural Area

Apr 24: Estuaries & Hammocks/John D. MacArthur State Park

May 1: Beaches and Dunes/ Juno Dunes Natural Area

May 8: Advocacy/ UF-IFAS Extension at Mounts Botanical Gardens

The course fee is \$75 for ASE members, \$90 for non-members and includes a catered lunch. The class will be capped at 30 participants. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-conservation-stewardship-training-course-tickets-32038892189>

For more information email: asestewardshiptraining@gmail.com or call (561) 876-8815

AMAZON SMILE – PLEASE JOIN!

Members and friends have been fundraising for ASE by making their Amazon purchases through the Amazon Smile link. This past year, 0.5% of \$16,390.00 worth of purchases was donated to ASE from Amazon. If you'd like to participate, go to www.auduboneverglades.org and click on the DONATE tab above the banner picture and then click AMAZON SMILE. It doesn't cost you anything and helps your chapter every time you buy!

UPDATE on ASE's PURPLE MARTIN HOUSE

ASE's new Purple Martin House was just installed at Wakodahatchee. The house was made in the U.S. and includes a baffle for snake and raccoon protection and an owl guard. It's on the berm on the southeast side. Turn right where the boardwalk Y's, keep an eye out when you get near the covered viewing area before the boardwalk turns north, and look north. Our ASE house replaces an older wooden one that fell apart. If anyone visits Wakodahatchee (especially on a regular basis) please check on the house and report to Vicki (vlrogerson@gmail.com) when the birds seem to be nesting.



As you may know, Purple Martins on the east coast, where the bulk of their population is, rely solely on man-made cavities for nesting. They are communal living birds, and prefer to nest near humans. They fly up to 7,000 miles one way migrating, and south Florida is one of their southern-most nesting areas. From here all the way up to Canada, Purple Martins are directly affected by the houses that we humans provide, and those houses are on the decline. It is particularly nice for us to be helping to build what I hope will turn into a multi-building development/colony again at Wakodahatchee.

In fact, doing this at Wakodahatchee has led to encouraging Wellington to start replacing their Purple Martin houses at Peaceful Waters, and hopefully, after that, at Wellington Environmental Preserve.

I want to give huge thanks to Tom Tomlinson for making us aware of the need to fix this situation and also to thank all who have given me information and so much help with making good decisions on this first house - Mike Rawls (landscape architect) at PBC Utilities Department for making this happen, Katie Antonio and Carlos for Purple Martin expertise and putting together the 500,000 piece (!) house kit, ERVA, the US manufacturer at Nature House (www.naturehouseinc.com), where we purchased our house, owl guard, and predator baffle, and, last but not least, Susan Halpin at purplemartinplace.com, a local expert on Purple Martins who has her own colony, a supply of housing and everything Purple Martin.

Please contact me, Vicki Rogerson, if you are interested in learning more or helping on this project. Email me at vlrogerson@gmail.com or call 561-352-7835.

March Bird of the Month: Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) by Ben Kolstad

Many people worldwide call this cosmopolitan bird the "fish eagle," and it's an apt nickname, although the Osprey is not an eagle. This is the only North American raptor that feeds almost exclusively on fish, and it's the only one that dives into the water for them. Our "other" white-headed fish-eating eagle merely plucks fish from the surface, when it bothers catching them itself rather than bullying the more skilled Osprey out of its catch.

In flight, the Osprey is the hawk that looks like a gull—although it's not a hawk, either. It's in a genus all its own, neither hawk nor kite nor eagle nor falcon—in fact, it's the sole member of its taxonomic family, the level above genus. It holds its large wings in a gull-like bend, giving it a completely different flight silhouette from the otherwise potentially confusing Bald Eagle, which holds its wings so straight that its flight silhouette has been described as looking like a pair of two-by-fours nailed together. The Osprey's flight is slow and buoyant, whereas Baldy flies straight and level. Like kestrels, some kites, and especially kingfishers, the Osprey is capable of hovering in place while searching for prey close enough to the surface for a successful dive. According to the FWC, in Florida, Ospreys commonly capture saltwater catfish, mullet, spotted trout, shad, crappie, and sunfish from coastal habitats and freshwater lakes and rivers.



Photograph of Osprey by Walt Hackenjios

The bird is entirely dark brown above, except for its white cap; the dark brown eyeline/mask separates the white cap from the white underparts. If you're close enough, the bright yellow eye (darker and orange-colored in juveniles) gleams prominently out from the dark mask. The dark-brown and white contrast of the underwing in flight is diagnostic.

Much of the species' success is due to its unique adaptations for a life of fishing. From the spines on the pads of its feet that enable it to grip the scales of a fish to the reversible rear toe that enables it to fly with a fish in its grasp, this is a highly specialized bird. And these specializations have enabled it to conquer most of the world—at least, those parts near water. Only the Peregrine Falcon, among raptors, has a wider global range. And, like that of the Peregrine Falcon and many other large predatory birds, the Osprey's population rebounded with the ban of DDT in 1972.

Here in Florida, the population is resident, although there is some evidence that post-breeding birds drift northward. Nevertheless, Florida birds winter here, while more northern breeders overwinter in South and Central America.

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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. (refreshment 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

ASE APPLICATION

There are two ways to join **Audubon Society of the Everglades**.

Chapter-Only Membership: An annual membership that starts on January 1 and runs through the calendar year. **New members who join after Oct 1, 2016 and anyone who renews after that date are paid up until Dec.31, 2017.** All your membership dues are put to use supporting local projects and educational programs. You receive 10 issues of the Kite newsletter and priority for some special trips and events.

National Audubon Society Membership: It also includes membership in Florida Audubon and Audubon Society of the Everglades. You receive 6 issues of the Audubon magazine. Cost is \$20.00 a year. Please enclose a check for \$20.00, include our chapter code C9ZE000Z and mail it to: National Audubon Society, 225 Varick St., 7th floor, New York, NY 10014 Attn: Chance Muehleck.

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

Yes, I want to become a chapter-only member of ASE.

Join us online at auduboneverglades.org/membership and pay with a credit card.

Or, complete this form and mail your check to: Audubon Society of the Everglades, PO Box 16914, West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-6914

Please check one:

\$20 (Regular) \$15 (Student/Senior) \$25 (Household) \$50 (Patron)

Please accept my additional contribution of \$ _____

I would like to help the environment, and see the cost of printing and postage used for conservation and education instead; please send my Kite newsletter via email.

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