As noted in last month’s write-up of the endangered Florida population of Grasshopper Sparrow, the first part of this month’s bird’s common name comes from a city in Georgia (Savannah) rather than the grassy-plain ecosystem in which the bird is typically found (a savanna). The Savannah Sparrow is one of the more common and widespread sparrows in Florida, but it’s not a backyard feeder bird. It’s more a bird of open spaces and brush piles than manicured lawns and urban lots.

ID tips from the Cornell lab: “Savannah Sparrows are medium-sized sparrows with short, notched tails. The head appears small for the plump body, and the crown feathers often flare up to give the bird’s head a small peak. The thick-based, seed-eating bill is small for a sparrow.” If you’re struggling with sparrows, this one is usually a gimme, because it can usually be distinguished from other sparrows by the patch of yellow in the lores (the bit between the eye and the bill). Other populations show yellow above the eye or even behind it as well, but our Florida birds keep their yellow under control.

Like other sparrows, their camouflage often keeps them out of sight even though you can hear them calling all around you. The New Jersey wildlife department describes their song thus: “The song of the savannah sparrow consists of two to three chips followed by two buzzy trills. The insect-like melody is represented as tsit tsit tsit, tseee tsaaay. The call is a mild tsip.”

Look for this bird almost anywhere in the open parts of Palm Beach County. Most of my sightings are from the refuge and the STAs.

Photographer’s please note: next month’s BOM is the Eastern Meadowlark.
**UPCOMING TRIPS NOVEMBER 2017**

Always check the website calendar for details, registration links and last minute changes. Unless otherwise specified, trips are “Just Show Up.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04 SAT</td>
<td>(7:30A-12P) STA-1E</td>
<td>(David Simpson)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 SUN</td>
<td>(8A-10A) Tall Cypress</td>
<td>(Bruce Pickholtz)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 WED</td>
<td>(6:30A-11:30A) Loxahatchee NWR (Fly-out)</td>
<td>(Rick Schofield)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Handicap Accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 WED</td>
<td>(4P-6P) Grassly Waters (Restoration Area Hike)</td>
<td>(Undy Bush)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 FRI</td>
<td>(8:30A-10:30A) Wakodahatchee</td>
<td>(Clive Pinnock)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 SAT</td>
<td>(8A-12P) STA-3-4</td>
<td>(David Simpson)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 SAT</td>
<td>(8:15A-11:15A) Riverbend Park (Birding by Bike)</td>
<td>(Vicki Rogerson)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bike rental opens at 8A; No skinny tires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 SUN</td>
<td>(7:30A-10:30A) Sandhill Crane Access Park</td>
<td>(Bart Scott)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 SUN</td>
<td>(8A-10A) Wakodahatchee</td>
<td>(Chris Golia)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 FRI</td>
<td>(8A-10A) Wakodahatchee</td>
<td>(Valleri Brauer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 SUN</td>
<td>(1:30P-5:30P) Plantation Preserve (with SFAS)</td>
<td>(Paddy Cunningham)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 TUE</td>
<td>(9:30A-11:30A) Lion Country Safari</td>
<td>(Clive Pinnock)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 WED</td>
<td>(8A-10:30A) Peaceful Waters</td>
<td>(Scott Zucker)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JANUARY 2017**

The following advance registration field trips in January will become available for online registration on their corresponding dates during the month of November, e.g., registration for Jan 06 trip begins Nov 06.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06 SAT</td>
<td>(7:30A-12P) STA-1E</td>
<td>(Rick Schofield, coord.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 SAT</td>
<td>(8A-12P) STA-3</td>
<td>(Chuck Weber)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 SAT</td>
<td>(ALL DAY) STA-5/6</td>
<td>(Rick Schofield)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 SUN</td>
<td>(7:30A-12P) STA-1E</td>
<td>(Rick Schofield, coord.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 SUN</td>
<td>(ALL DAY) Three Lakes/Joe Overstreet</td>
<td>(Rick Schofield)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRIP KEY**

- **Effort/Difficulty**
  - Easy: Boardwalk or paved level surface; or birding mainly from bike / boat / auto
  - Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces
  - Challenging: Improved or unimproved trail; uneven, rocky, and/or wet surfaces

- **Distance**
  - Sitting /Driving: no walking required
  - Short: less than 1 mile
  - Medium: 1-1.5 miles
  - Long: more than 1.5 miles

- **Other**
  - New and/or unique trips
  - There is an associated cost
  - Advance registration required
  - Family-friendly
  - Handicap Accessible
  - Audubon Everglades member priority

**Profile: Sheila Hollihan-Elliot**

Audubon Everglades is fortunate to have a broadly experienced and dedicated volunteer filling the role of Managing Editor for its publications. Sheila Hollihan-Elliot believes that lucky accidents are opportunities, and she attributes her connection to our organization to just such a lucky accident. While visiting the Mounts Botanical Garden in 2008 as a newcomer to Florida, Sheila picked up a brochure for Audubon Everglades and decided to attend the Christmas party meeting. There she made friends and met members who were looking for someone to help publicize the work and activities of the organization. Happy to share her writing skills and experience as a publicist, Sheila volunteered to help. Soon she was writing media releases, organizing Bird of the Month articles and helping to get out the newsletter. She became an Audubon Everglades Board Member in 2009 and served until 2016.

Sheila spent her childhood in the Philadelphia suburbs and in Princeton, New Jersey. During summers at Stone Harbor on the Jersey Shore, she developed her love for nature. She traces her interest in birds in part to a gift she received of sophisticated Audubon coloring sheets when she was a child. Instead of crayons, Sheila used watercolors on the images. Art has been important to her throughout her life, as has writing. She was involved with school newspapers throughout her schooling. Before going off to freshman year at Vassar, she had a summer internship at Seventeen magazine in New York City. Not only was this experience a good introduction to the world of publishing, but, in an unexpected way, it shaped her college studies and her future career. Her mentor at the magazine counseled Sheila not to major in English, history, or art, the subjects that most interested her, but rather in science and math, subjects she could not learn easily on her own. So, with a major in physics and a double minor in astrophysics and math, Sheila understood. Happy to share her writing skills and experience as a publicist, Sheila volunteered to help. Soon she was writing media releases, organizing Bird of the Month articles and helping to get out the newsletter. She became an Audubon Everglades Board Member in 2009 and served until 2016.

Audubon Everglades is fortunate to have a broadly experienced and dedicated volunteer filling the role of Managing Editor for its publications. Sheila Hollihan-Elliot believes that lucky accidents are opportunities, and she attributes her connection to our organization to just such a lucky accident. While visiting the Mounts Botanical Garden in 2008 as a newcomer to Florida, Sheila picked up a brochure for Audubon Everglades and decided to attend the Christmas party meeting. There she made friends and met members who were looking for someone to help publicize the work and activities of the organization. Happy to share her writing skills and experience as a publicist, Sheila volunteered to help. Soon she was writing media releases, organizing Bird of the Month articles and helping to get out the newsletter. She became an Audubon Everglades Board Member in 2009 and served until 2016.

Audubon Everglades is fortunate to have a broadly experienced and dedicated volunteer filling the role of Managing Editor for its publications. Sheila Hollihan-Elliot believes that lucky accidents are opportunities, and she attributes her connection to our organization to just such a lucky accident. While visiting the Mounts Botanical Garden in 2008 as a newcomer to Florida, Sheila picked up a brochure for Audubon Everglades and decided to attend the Christmas party meeting. There she made friends and met members who were looking for someone to help publicize the work and activities of the organization. Happy to share her writing skills and experience as a publicist, Sheila volunteered to help. Soon she was writing media releases, organizing Bird of the Month articles and helping to get out the newsletter. She became an Audubon Everglades Board Member in 2009 and served until 2016.
**Monthly MEETING and LECTURE:**

“Saving the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow – big challenges for a tiny bird”

Paul R. Reillo, Ph.D., President, Rare Species Conservatory Foundation, and Co-Director, Tropical Conservation Institute, Florida International University

**Tuesday, November 7, 7PM meeting & lecture**

Meeting and program are free and open to the public. Doors open at 6:30PM 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. We look forward to seeing you there!

The Florida Grasshopper Sparrow is a non-migratory subspecies with a historic range limited to the prairie region of south-central Florida. Over 80 percent of the bird’s habitat has been lost in recent decades with much of the remaining prairie degraded by fire suppression and encroachment by trees and shrubs.

For the first time ever in captivity, RSCF’s colony of critically endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrows has successfully hatched four chicks! This groundbreaking event took place on May 9 and 10, with one clutch of eggs hatching over two days. The chicks are thriving, and parental care is excellent. The chicks develop extremely quickly—they typically fledge nine days after hatching. Come enjoy this informative program!

**About Paul R. Reillo, Ph.D.:**

Dr. Reillo is founding director of the Rare Species Conservatory Foundation (RSCF), a publicly supported 501c(3) wildlife conservation organization based in Loxahatchee, Florida. A Maryland native, Reillo has a background in environmental engineering (B.A., Johns Hopkins) and ecological genetics (Ph.D., University of Maryland) and has spent many years as a field-oriented research zoologist and conservationist. Today he focuses on the demography and genetics of small populations of endangered wildlife, and he develops recovery strategies for flagship species, notably the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, the mountain bongo antelope from Kenya, and the endemic Amazon parrots of Brazil and the Caribbean.

Today Reillo also helps direct the Tropical Conservation Institute (TCI)—an innovative collaboration between RSCF and Florida International University. The Institute merges the full conservation portfolios of RSCF and FIU to leverage protection of critical species and ecosystems, while training the next generation of conservation practitioners. Like RSCF, TCI focuses on hands-on, practical conservation solutions for Earth’s most endangered wildlife.

Also at the meeting, our expert, Clive Pinnock will speak about the November Bird of the Month, Savannah Sparrow.

**If you missed last month’s program by Michael Brothers on Florida’s Pelagic Birds, you can view it online.**

**Congratulations to Photographer Susan Faulkner Davis**

Former Board member and volunteer graphics designer/layout for the Audubon Everglades KITE, Susan Faulkner Davis, has just had her photographs published in the scientific review Natural History Notes. Her pictures illustrate the article “Seminatrix (Black Swamp Snake) Predation.”

Figure 1 and Figures 3 A, B, and C were photographed at Peaceful Waters. The accompanying text presents details of the predator birds’ hunt. “This is my first publication in a scientific review!” she tells us. Congratulations to SFD from Audubon Everglades!
Now is the critical time to convince our legislators to renew their commitment to us, their constituents, who have overwhelmingly voted for land preservation. We must urge them to adequately fund Florida Forever, the state’s commitment to conserve our natural and cultural heritage. Since the inception of Florida Forever in 2001, more than 718,126 acres of land have been purchased and preserved. In previous years the program received as much as $300 million; however, last year the Florida Legislature gave ZERO dollars to fund Florida Forever. This comes at a time when we are currently losing natural and agricultural land at a rate of 175,000 acres a year.

Scientists have identified, studied and ranked 2.2 million acres of environmentally sensitive lands throughout Florida that the Legislature must conserve in order to protect our water supply and our air quality, to prevent increasing losses from flooding, and to mitigate the effects of climate change (recently experienced during Hurricane Irma). Land preservation also protects critical bird and wildlife habitat and insures that Floridians and visitors have areas where they can enrich the quality of their lives by wildlife viewing, hiking, biking, horseback riding, kayaking, swimming, fishing and hunting.

The only way to conserve this land is to insure that the legislature adequately funds Florida Forever. Voters overwhelmingly passed the Water and Land Legacy Amendment (Amendment 1) in 2014 that provides land conservation funding with documentary stamp-tax revenues going to the Land Acquisition Trust. However, the Florida Legislature has remained deaf to our voices and has refused to fund this program in the intended manner, instead failing to purchase conservation lands and diverting funds to pay for existing environmental programs.

Senator Rob Bradley, Republican District 5, hopes to have come to the rescue, proposing SB370, which would set aside $100 million annually from the state’s Land Acquisition Trust to fund the Florida Forever program. As he rightly says, this bill “meets the demands of the overwhelming majority of Floridians.”

However, the Department of Environmental Protection has estimated that the real estate documentary taxes used to fund the Land Acquisition Trust Fund will generate $862 million next fiscal year and, thus, has recommended that Governor Scott include only a paltry $50 million for Florida Forever in his proposed 2018 budget.

In the last legislative session, the House passed HB 7119, which would fund Florida Forever through 2035, beginning next fiscal year. However, in the bill Florida Forever receives just $57 million in the first year and its progressively increased funding reaches only $200 million in 2035. The bill not only falls short in necessary funding, but it also designates only 35% for acquiring properties on Florida Forever’s priority conservation list. We must not let that happen this legislative session.

One of the priority conservation parcels is located in NW Palm Beach County and neighboring Martin County, and it desperately needs your help for its preservation. This is the Pal-Mar tract with 9,522 acres at an Estimated (Tax Assessed) Value of $27.5 million.

So, as we approach another legislative session, I urge you to visit, call or write your local state legislators to ensure that they support SB370, adequately fund Florida Forever, and use the 2014 Amendment 1 dollars as they were intended: to preserve Florida’s unique ecosystems for our children and grandchildren.

HERE’S HOW TO FIND YOUR LOCAL LEGISLATORS:
Find your State Senator
Find your State Representative
Plants for Birds is a program created by National Audubon that includes a national native plant database and local native plant resources. Just by typing in your zip code at Audubon.org/nativeplants you can get excellent information about plants for your county, the birds that they attract, local native plant nurseries, and other local resources. For me the key is local. When it comes to plants and birds, it makes a huge difference not only what state you are talking about, but, in our case, what part of Florida you live in.

You may have guessed the purpose of this program just from the name, and you would be right. By planting native plants in our yards, neighborhood parks, and public spaces, we create bird-friendly landscaping that provides them food and shelter, saves water, and fights climate change. We do our part to counter the urbanization that has brought sterile lawns, exotic ornamental plants, walls of glass, toxic pesticides, and domestic predators. “Planting native” restores and reconnects habitat and brings more birds to our yards. You may ask, why native plants and not the ornamentals and exotics that are commonly found in big box stores? Entomologist Doug Tallamy provides one of the most important answers. His research has shown that native oaks alone support more than 550 different species of butterflies and moths. A non-native tree might host just 5. With 96% of all terrestrial bird species in North America feeding insects to their young, planting insect-proof exotic plants is like serving up plastic food. No Insects = No Birds! Our native birds need native plants and the insects that have co-evolved with them.

National Audubon has set a goal of planting 1 million native plants in 5 years. I think Audubon members throughout the country will far exceed this goal as local chapters implement this national initiative. Audubon Everglades has been responsible for giving out well over 1,200 native plants to members and the public since 2015. In partnership with the PBC Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) and the Atala Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, we gave out 600 bird-friendly native plants to attendees at the FNPS Native Plant Tour on October 1st. We have decorated our potluck meeting tables with Salvia coccinea and Simpson Stopper for party favors that keep on giving.

Our next step is a partnership and collaboration with Indian Trails Native Nursery in Lake Worth. The owner, Jane Thompson, is enthusiastic about Plants for Birds and has offered a 15% discount for all plant purchases to members of Audubon Everglades. The discount offer is good for 1 year – through November 1, 2018. There is no limit on how often you can take advantage of this generous offer during the year or how many plants you can purchase with the discount. The nursery is open Saturdays from 8am-4pm. If you are not yet a member, this would be a great time to join. Jane will even sign up new members at her nursery at time of purchase (and already has!). She is knowledgeable about the benefits of native plants to wildlife and the environment, planting conditions and landscape use, and has offered us the use of her native plant demo garden and outdoor screened patio area for workshops. We have discussed some fun workshops that include making seed bombs, birdhouses, and eco-pot bird gardens. No dates have been set for the workshops, but if you are interested or have a talent you’d like to share in this area, please let me know.

Your native plant patch can really help birds! Contact Vicki Rogerson with questions or comments at Education@Auduboneverglades.org or 561-352-7835.

MORE INFORMATION:
Audubon’s Plants for Birds Program
Search native plants database
Indian Trails Native Nursery
561-641-9488

Late Breaking News
Audubon Everglades has once again been featured in National’s Weekly Chapter Update October 27 Plants for Birds Retail Partnerships Guide thanks to Vicki Rogerson and volunteers!
This documentary reenacts wildlife artist and naturalist Joe Hutto’s experience raising wild turkey hatchlings. After a local farmer left a bowl of eggs on Joe Hutto’s front porch, his life was forever changed. Biologist Hutto was mother to the strangest family in the world: thirteen endangered wild turkeys that he raised from egg to the day they left home.

“My Life as a Turkey” is the account of an amazing experiment. Hutto incubates wild-turkey eggs with the intention of human-imprinting and raising them. But the relationship that develops between the scientist and the birds changes his life so that he wonders who has imprinted whom.

For a whole year his turkey children were his only companions as he walked them deep through the Florida Everglades. Suffering all the heartache and joy of any parent as he tried to bring up his new family, he even learned to speak their language, and he began to see the world through turkey eyes. (You will understand why Ben Franklin wanted the turkey, not the eagle, to be the national bird!)

Presented in cooperation with Audubon Everglades. Preregister by phone: 561-233-2600. MAIN LIBRARY 3650 Summit Boulevard, West Palm Beach 33406

Ed note: if you miss donating on Nov 28, you can still donate to the projects by using the Audubon Everglades link above.
The Audubon Everglades Photography Club Season is Underway

The Photography Club is off to a wonderful second season. Thirty-three eager photographers of all levels attended our first meeting in September, where they learned how they could improve their photography using their present camera gear.

On October 15, fifteen photographers spent the morning exploring Macro and Botanical photography while stepping gently about the Butterfly Garden at the Mounts Botanical Garden. Pete Lekos, Club President, shared tricks of the trade for getting great photos in that environment, and many who attended entered images from the field trip in our first Photo Club competition of the year on Oct. 23. See list of winners to the right.

Our next Photo Club field trip will be at Green Cay on December 2 at 7:30AM, when we will be shooting wildlife, landscapes and plant life during the magical hour of golden morning light.

The November 27 monthly meeting will feature an exciting program on one of the most important aspects of making a great photo: Understanding and Improving the Composition of your Images. Alan Leckner, a professional graphic artist and award winning and published photographer, will share his creative perspective on the subject.

Please join us at our next meeting or outing and make your photography more rewarding and enjoyable. Club meetings begin at 7PM at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church, 1925 Birkdale Drive, Wellington FL 33414. For more information please contact Pete Lekos: PhotographyGroup@AudubonEverglades.org *201-600-6463

PHOTO CLUB COMPETITION WINNERS:

BOTANY (NOVICE)
Honorable Mention: Charlene Bothof, Jayne Arden, Elaine Fortune, Harvey Mendelson
Award of Merit: Jayne Arden, Julie Zambory, Charlene Raphael, Charlene Bothof

BOTANY (ADVANCED)
Honorable Mention: Lora Lekos, Don Marchetto
Award of Merit: Lora Lekos, Bob Raichelson

OPEN NATURE (NOVICE)
Honorable Mention: Rich Raphael, Julie Zambory, Jayne Arden, Susan Stechmij, Edwin Wilke
Award of Merit: Ron Frendreis, Elaine Fortune (2)

OPEN NATURE (ADVANCED)
Honorable Mention: Lora Lekos (2), Bob Raichelson, Don Marchetto

JOIN AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

There are two ways to join Audubon Everglades:

CHAPTER-ONLY MEMBERSHIP: An annual membership that starts on January 1 and runs through the calendar year. All your membership dues are put to use supporting local conservation projects and educational programs. You receive 12 issues of the Kite newsletter and priority for some special trips and events.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP: includes membership in Florida Audubon and Audubon Everglades plus one year of the Audubon magazine. Join online at Audubon.org by selecting JOIN. Or send a check for $20 per person along with your address and email to National Audubon Society, PO Box 97194, Washington DC 20090-7194.

The Audubon Everglades Kite newsletter is available by email only.

Yes, I want to become a chapter-only member of Audubon Everglades. Join now using a credit card: Go to AudubonEverglades.org/membership to complete the application.

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: ☐ $25 (Regular) ☐ $20 (Student) ☐ $20 (Senior) ☐ $35 (Household’) ☐ $75 (Patron’)

Please accept my additional contribution of $__________________________

Name _____________________________________________________________

Email ____________________________________________________________

Phone ____________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________

City ________________________________________________________________

State ____________________________ ZIP _____________________________

*If you selected Household or Patron Membership, please provide the names of all members living at the same address.
(2 adults and children under age 18)

Household/Patron Additional Names ___________________________________

____________________________________________________________________