



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter for Audubon Everglades
VOL 58 | Issue 5 | January 2018



Photo: Roseate Spoonbill © Susan Faulkner Davis 2015. All rights reserved.

Bird of the Month: Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*)

by Ben Kolstad

This permanent resident of South Florida's Everglades ecosystem is the equivalent of a July 4 fireworks display. It consistently garners the most oohs and ahs, and its alliterative taxonomic name, *Platalea ajaja*, might remind you of that (it used to be the slightly confusingly spelled almost-repeat, *Ajaia ajaja*). It is also the bird most commonly misidentified by nonbirders, who are more familiar with that other large pink wader in our area, the flamingo. Both birds are large (the flamingo much larger) and pink, it's true, but that's about where the resemblance ends.

Where the flamingo's head is feathered and pink, the spoonbill's head is bare, like a vulture's, and has

a faint greenish color when seen in good light. The large spatula-shaped bill is instantly recognizable and quite different from the equally specialized feeding apparatus of the flamingo's muck-strainer. Roseates sweep their bill from side to side and use their bill like tongs to capture prey; flamingos insert their "upside-down" bill into the muck and strain the prey out like a baleen whale, albeit on a slightly smaller scale.

Most "rosies," as they're affectionately known, breed on coastal islands, from Tampa Bay on the Gulf to Merritt Island on the Atlantic, although there are some inland breeding colonies as well. It's designated a species of special concern by the Florida Fish and

Wildlife Conservation Commission, which means that its population is considered at risk by at least one of five criteria (rapidly declining population, restricted range/habitat, small population size, risk of extinction greater than 10% in next 100 years, population size fluctuates and/or is fragmented). They meet several of the criteria, since their population size, location, and ability to breed are strongly influenced by water levels for feeding.

Here in Palm Beach County, Roseate Spoonbills are most frequently encountered at the Loxahatchee NWR, Green Cay, the STAs, and the flooded agricultural fields in the EAA (Everglades Agricultural Area).

UPCOMING TRIPS

JANUARY 2018

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

- 06 SAT** (7:30A-12P) **STA-1E** (Rick Schofield, coord.)
● ⓘ 0
- 07 SUN** (8A-10A) **Pine Glades** (Mark Cook) ■ ⓘ 1.5 ⓘ
- 10 WED** (7:30A-11:30A) **Loxahatchee NWR** \$
(Rick Schofield) ■ ⓘ >1.5 ⓘ
- 13 SAT** (8A-10A) **Wakodahatchee** (Chris Golia) ● ⓘ <1 ⓘ ♿
- 14 SAT** (8A-12P) **STA-2** (Chuck Weber) ● ⓘ 0
- 19 FRI** (8:30A-10:30A) **MacArthur Beach SP** \$
(Clive Pinnock) ● ⓘ 1.5
- 20 SAT** (ALL DAY) **STA-5/6** (Rick Schofield) ● ⓘ 0
- 21 SUN** (7:30A-12P) **STA-1E** (Rick Schofield, coord.) ● ⓘ 0
- 27 SAT** (8A-11A) **Grassy Waters (Behind the scenes)**
(Walt Hakenjos/Paul Thomas) ■ ⓘ >1.5
- 28 SUN** (ALL DAY) **Three Lakes/Joe Overstreet** ⓘ \$
(Rick Schofield) ◆ ⓘ >1.5
- 29 MON** (8A-10A) **Pondhawk** (Sue Young) ● ⓘ 1.5 ⓘ

MARCH 2018

The following advance registration field trips in March will become available for online registration on their corresponding dates during the month of January, e.g., registration for the Mar 03 trip begins Jan 03.

- 03 SAT** (7:30A-12P) **STA-1E** (Rick Schofield, coord.)
● ⓘ 0
- 06 TUE** (9:30A-11:30A) ★ **Lion Country Safari** ⓘ ♿
(Clive Pinnock) ● ⓘ 0
- 11 SUN** (3:30P-7P) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)** ⓘ
(Susan McKerny, coord.) ● ⓘ 0
- 22 THU** (10A-1:30P) ★ **Jonathan Dickinson State Park (Wildflowers & Scrub-Jays)** ⓘ \$ (Lori & Tony Pasko)
■ ⓘ >1.5 ⓘ
- 24 SAT** (3:30P-7P) **Flamingo Quest (STA-2)** ⓘ
(Susan McKerny, coord.) ● ⓘ 0

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

- ⓘ 0 **Sitting /Driving:** no walking required
- ⓘ <1 **Short:** less than 1 mile
- ⓘ 1.5 **Medium:** 1-1.5 miles
- ⓘ >1.5 **Long:** more than 1.5 miles

OTHER

- ★ New and/or unique trips
- ♿ Family-friendly
- 💰 There is an associated cost
- ♿ Handicap Accessible
- 📅 Advance registration required
- 🐦 Audubon Everglades member priority

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

January 2018

by Paton White

Happy New Year!

I hope each of you had a wonderful holiday and that your 2018 is filled with happiness, good health and lots of birds.

Remember our good friend and long-time member and officer Alan Parmalee, who passed away in October 2016. This month Audubon Everglades received a very generous bequeath from Alan's estate. Recognizing Alan's dedication to our community's conservation efforts, your Board has decided to establish a fund for conservation education. What does that mean? We want an educated membership that actively supports our chapter's advocacy causes. This gift will allow us to bring major speakers from out of town for special conservation programs and to create new conservation programs and classes. We will be able to offer scholarships to students for these

events. In addition, members of Audubon Everglades will be able to request scholarships for registration fees for conservation meetings they wish to attend. We are deeply grateful that Alan's commitment to Audubon will allow us to further our conservation education mission.

Linda McCandless headed up our successful first Giving Tuesday Fund Raising Efforts. Thank you for your donations. Be sure to read Linda's article reporting the results.

Audubon Everglades will again be a co-sponsor of Everglades Day at ARM Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge in February. Plan to attend!

It's time to renew your membership and to make your plans for the spring field trips. Hope to see you on one of them!

Profile: Gerry and Sheri Felipe



A more engaging young couple than Sheri and Gerry Felipe would be hard to find. Avid and articulate enthusiasts of Audubon Everglades, they both hold important volunteer "jobs" at the organization. Sheri is the talented graphic designer who puts together our Kite newsletter and our brochures. She played an important role in the recent "rebranding" project and designed the striking update of Audubon Everglades' Snail Kite logo. Since May, Gerry has been an at-large member of the organization's Board of Directors and is assisting it with his technology expertise. He has helped the Photography Club use new software for their competitions. One of his goals is to expand the digital social media capability of Audubon Everglades.

Sheri and Gerry met at a church in Ft. Lauderdale in January 2011, where they both worked, and they

currently both work at Christ Fellowship in West Palm Beach, Sheri as a part-time graphic designer, Gerry as IT Systems Administrator. In 2009 Sheri "fled" the cold of the east coast and Midwest, where she grew up, went to college, and started her career, to come to tropical Florida. Gerry, who was born in Cuba and came to Florida at age 5, yearns to spend more time in a cooler climate. He'd like to be a "reverse snowbird!" The two spent one year in Lynchburg, Virginia from April 2014 to April 2015, but Sheri's preference for warm weather brought them back to Florida.

Sheri and Gerry discovered birds together. They love the outdoors, and, out walking one day, they "discovered" the Boat-tailed Grackle. They liked the look of the bird, they researched the species, and they found it interesting that it is not a common bird outside of Florida. That research led them to discover the Merlin app for bird identification.

When they were in Virginia, Sheri and Gerry joined the local bird club, where a professor of ornithology from Liberty University mentored them and involved them in a Saw-whet Owl banding project. Back in Florida in 2015, they wanted to continue their connection to birding, so they googled "bird clubs" and found Audubon Everglades. They were immediately recruited into action - Sheri to work on the organization's "rebranding" project and graphic

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Monthly MEETING and LECTURE: “State of The Everglades: 2015-2017 (It’s been a rough few years)”

Steven Davis, Ph.D., Wetland Ecologist, The Everglades Foundation

JAN

09

Tuesday, January 9 (second Tuesday), meeting & lecture 7PM
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!



Photo: Steven Davis, Ph.D.

Come hear Steven Davis present “State of The Everglades: 2015-2017 (It’s been a rough few years).” His presentation will provide an overview of recent conditions across the Everglades stemming from drought, flood, and hurricane impacts and resulting in regulatory discharges, excessive high-water conditions, hyper-salinity, seagrass die-off, and algal blooms. Davis will also cover key restoration efforts needed to remedy these water management challenges.

About Steven Davis, Ph.D.:

Davis, a native of Ohio, earned a PhD from Florida International University in 1999 with research in Florida Bay and the coastal Everglades. In his role as the Everglades Foundation’s Wetland Ecologist, Davis draws upon his 20+ years of Everglades research experience and 10 years of experience as professor of wetland ecology at Texas A&M University. Among his Foundation duties, Davis leads science efforts focused on Everglades restoration planning, ecological forecasting of restoration scenarios, and impacts of sea-level rise.

Come enjoy this informative program!

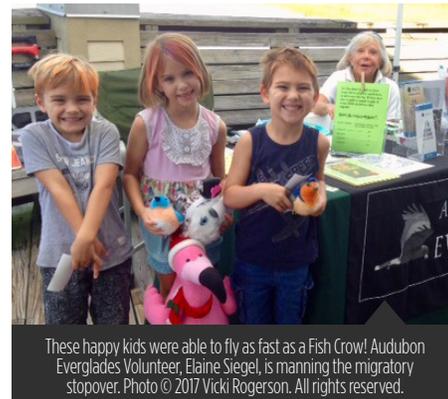
Also at the meeting, our expert, Clive Pinnock, will speak about the January Bird of the Month, Roseate Spoonbill.

[If you missed last month’s program by Paul N. Gray, Ph.D. about Audubon’s fight for the Everglade Snail Kite and the Everglades, you can view it online.](#)



Photo: Davis assessing the effects of Hurricane Irma on Florida Bay

Our Educational Project at Friends of Green Cay’s Migration Celebration



These happy kids were able to fly as fast as a Fish Crow! Audubon Everglades Volunteer, Elaine Siegel, is manning the migratory stopover. Photo © 2017 Vicki Rogerson. All rights reserved.

Audubon Everglades offered a fun and educational migratory stopover at Green Cay’s Migration Celebration on December 2nd. Kids challenged themselves to see how fast they could “flap their wings” in comparison to many common birds. They measured their wingspan with the Audubon Everglades Wingspan Banner, and they used various tools that mimicked beak adaptations to forage for “worms” and “fish” (Gummy Worms and Swedish Fish).

Several hundred attendees at the Green Cay Migration Celebration visited our migratory stopover and were thrilled to receive Claudine Laabs posters. Audubon Everglades handouts were given on our 2017/2018 Field Trips and Programs, Creating a Bird-friendly Habitat, Birding Locations in Palm Beach County, and information on the Audubon Everglades photography club.

Volunteers Vicki Rogerson, Bill Mauser, Elaine Siegel, CJ McCartney, Sue Revie and Mary Young were kept very busy! If you’re interested in joining some of our Audubon Everglades volunteer adventures, please contact Vicki Rogerson at Education@AudubonEverglades.org.

Tribute Donations

2017 NOV 28

“Giving Tuesday” Donation by Shelly Rosenberg in tribute to Vicki Rogerson, Board Member and Education Committee Chair, for her work establishing purple martin houses.

2017 NOV 28

“Giving Tuesday” Donation by Andrea Hillman, Gift in loving memory of Andrew and Joan K

BEGINNING BIRDERS ROAM NATURAL AREAS



Photo: Rain-soaked new birders wrap it up after seeing a wonderful array of migrating species on their first birding adventure.
© Mary Young 2017. All rights reserved.

On four consecutive Thursdays this fall, an enthusiastic group of beginning birders were led through four different Florida natural areas during Audubon Everglades' first Beginning Birding Course in partnership with PBC Environmental Resources Management (ERM).

On their first day, despite the pouring rain, these diehard new birders were introduced to migration at Winding Waters Natural Area with a Black-throated Green Warbler, an American Redstart, a Magnolia Warbler, 2 Ring-necked Ducks, and 12 Common Yellowthroats. They joined us for three more educational birding adventures, where expert ERM leaders taught them about the distinct habitats they were birding.

We would like to thank the ERM staff: Matthew King, Environmental Program Supervisor, who coordinated this program and created field guides to help us understand the habitat as well as the birds who dwell and migrate through these natural areas; Barbara Bobsein, who led the walks at Winding Waters and Frenchman's Forest; Jamie Caston, who led at Seacrest Scrub; and Melissa Tolbert who led at Juno Dunes.

And kudos go to our own volunteers who mentored the new birders and helped us identify birds on these walks: Don Marchetto and John Shelly.

Audubon Everglades is planning a second Beginning Birding Course with ERM in the spring. If you would like to volunteer as a birding class mentor, please email Scott Zucker: vp-conservation@auduboneverglades.org.

GIVING TUESDAY (NOV 28 2017) FUNDRAISING RESULTS

Thanks to you, Audubon Everglades raised \$805 in its first Giving Tuesday campaign. Donors specified \$325 for Burrowing Owls, \$75 for Purple Martins, and \$405 to be applied to both projects.

Your donations allow us to continue to support Project Perch, which provides Burrowing Owls burrows, owl-friendly fencing, and educational and protective signage and comes to their aid wherever they are in trouble.

Additionally, your donations have enabled us to approve the purchase of a Purple Martin house to be installed at a local park, school, or other site to be determined.

From the bottoms of our hearts, we thank everyone who supported Audubon Everglades this #GIVINGTUESDAY. If, perhaps, you intended to donate on Giving Tuesday, but missed the day, it's not too late. [Please go online to give.](#)

Felipe's continued from page 2

design and Gerry for sound and A/V at general meetings.

Owls are the favorite birds of both Sheri and Gerry – for Sheri, the Barred Owl, for Gerry, the Short-eared Owl. When I met with them, they reported excitedly that Sheri had just had her first view of a Great Horned Owl at Pine Jog, during the bird walk before the Audubon Everglades' November meeting. They also told me they were getting ready to take off for a weekend in Indiana, where Gerry could get his cold fix and they both could look for a Snowy Owl. They reported back that they did see the Snowy Owl and met some other birders out braving the cold who generously shared the use of their scope.

Sheri is a "crafter," busy on Pinterest. She loves making things, and has many knitting and sewing projects. She put a lot of work into fixing up their home in West Palm Beach. Gerry is a musician. He plays guitar, bass, and mandolin. He has directed bands and music at the churches where he has worked. He prefers folk and Western genres, what he calls "cozy, front porch" music. They consider themselves almost opposites – Gerry an intuitive free spirit, looking for fun; Sheri an organizer, responsibly planning and structuring their life. Their beloved cat, Lady Wellington, humorously named for the "proper, ideal couple" they'd like to be, brings them together. Friends know that the invocation of a "true Wellington moment" is a reminder to keep in order.

The couple's sane approach to balancing work and play is impressive. They love to travel. Right now, they take short vacations every few months, many of them bird-related. Their goal is to be able to travel full-time in an RV. Both Sheri and Gerry have job-skills which allow them to work from remote sites. In a broader philosophic context, they consider themselves "minimalists," trying to live with less and to make all their possessions and activities meaningful.

The goal of Audubon Everglades is to *provide our members the knowledge and means to be informed citizens and effective champions of policies that promote and protect natural habitats and wildlife.* The future of our birds and their habitats depends on bringing in and educating new generations. Audubon Everglades will do that with the help of Sheri and Gerry Felipe. Their energy and dedication to birds are contagious. Their skills in digital social media will help make our organization relevant and attractive to young people, millennials like them, who are visual learners.



Photo: From left to right: Rich Raphael, Don Marchetto, Karen Lindquist, Marge Barham, Edwin Wilke, Lora Lekos, Nancy Freeman, Julie Zambory, and Jayne Arden. © Scott Zucker 2017. All rights reserved.

19th Annual Everglades Day Festival PREVIEW

FEB
10
Saturday February 10,
9am-4pm
Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee
National Wildlife Refuge
10216 Lee Road,
Boynton Beach 33473

AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB “MIGRATES”

Sixteen photographers visited Green Cay on December 2 during the Migration Day Festival and photographed avian wildlife during the “magic” morning hour. The highlights included a Belted Kingfisher about to swallow a snared fish, a Red-shouldered Hawk preening on a nearby snag, an American Bittern alighting into the vegetation, an illuminated Pine Warbler feeding on an insect, and wading birds descending from the sky. Afterwards, many of our photographers enjoyed the festivities, exhibitions, lectures and demonstrations of Migration Day.

On December 18th, professional nature photographer and PBC ERM (Environmental Resources Management) Program Supervisor Benji Studt was our guest judge at our Zoology and Open Nature Photo competition. See the winners at the end of this article.

Our next Photo Club field trip will be on January 20 at 7:30 AM at Peaceful Waters, one of Palm Beach County’s best-kept secrets (Psst! Don’t tell anyone!) for great wildlife photography.

The January 22, 2018 monthly meeting will feature an exciting program, where we will try to answer the question: “what do I do with all those great images that I have?” The program, How to make a Coffee Table Book with your Great Images, will be presented by award-winning photographer and president of the Wycliffe Photography Club, Steven Roth.

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

Save the date! Don’t miss this year’s free, family-friendly eco-adventure – with the theme **COLORS OF THE EVERGLADES**. The Festival is co-sponsored by Audubon Everglades and includes a full day of live wildlife presentations, interactive action games, guest speakers, conservation exhibits, demonstrations, *plein air* art, canoeing, live music, food trucks, and, of course, the chance for a guided hike or two into our natural treasure, America’s Everglades. There’s free off-site parking and a shuttle.

Audubon Everglades provides a \$2500 grant to the event We also sponsor special education experiences for kids and distribute Audubon and birding information at our information tent. If you can volunteer for a 2-hour shift staffing our tent during your visit to Everglades Day, contact Marcia Yeip at 954.480.2663.

[Check out a visual preview from the Palm Beaches tourism bureau.](#)

ZOOLOGY AND OPEN NATURE PHOTO COMPETITION, DECEMBER 18, 2017, WINNERS:

ZOOLOGY (NOVICE)

Honorable Mention: Cindy Darling, Edwin Wilke, Nancy Freeman, Harvey Mendelson
Award of Merit: Edwin Wilke, Nancy Freeman

ZOOLOGY (ADVANCED)

Honorable Mention: Karen Lindquist, Lora Lekos
Award of Merit: Marge Barham, Bob Raichelson (2), Lora Lekos, Karen Lindquist

OPEN NATURE (NOVICE)

Honorable Mention: Rich Raphael, Jayne Arden, Julie Zambory
Award of Merit: Nancy Freeman (3)

OPEN NATURE (ADVANCED)

Honorable Mention: Lora Lekos, Karen Lindquist, Tom Rasmussen
Award of Merit: Susan McKemy, Don Marchetto, Bob Raichelson



Photo: © Pete Lekos 2017. All rights reserved.

Progress on the Proposed Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Deep-Water Reservoir

A Deep-Water Storage Reservoir in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) has been 17 years in the making. Thanks to SB 10, which was sponsored by Senate President Joe Negrón, implementation is finally in the planning stages. South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has held numerous public hearings on the construction of this deep-water reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee in the EAA. The Florida Legislature has allotted 800 million dollars for the reservoir's construction, contingent upon the federal government's paying half of the total \$1.6 billion project cost.

The goals of the reservoir are to reduce freshwater discharges from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries in order to diminish the impacts of harmful algal bloom events like the one that made international headlines in 2016. In addition, since water stored in the reservoir would need to be treated according to state and federal water quality standards, specifically with regard to phosphorus

concentrations, an additional Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) would need to be built, and the water would then be used to help improve the hydrological conditions in the Everglades, as envisioned by the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Currently, the SFWMD staff, under enormous time constraints, has worked diligently to provide four proposals using different configurations of reservoir size, depth and STA size for public consideration and comment. They have shared an Ecological Habitat Evaluation for the two estuaries showing the potential benefits to be gained in each proposal. (The benefits to the Southern Everglades will have been presented on December 21.)

SFWMD has not, as of the time of this writing, shared the costs associated with the alternatives, which must be presented to the Legislature on January 9. Additionally, SFWMD has not looked at using alternatives outside the A-1 and A-2 reservoirs.

Sen. Negrón shares the disquiet among many members of the conservation community who have been attending the hearings and voicing their concerns that SFWMD has not shown any proposals to use other lands that have been designated for possible use in this project. On December 14th he sent a letter addressing these omissions to SFWMD, specifically asking them "to be flexible with the footprint to put an effective reservoir plan into action" which could require "the termination of state leases, land swaps, and land acquisition of additional lands in the designated area."

Senator Negrón shares the hope of the conservation community for a workable proposal to decrease the harmful discharges to the estuaries and benefit the Greater Everglades that meets the cost parameters established in SB-10.

REMINDER: memberships expire 12/31/17. Renew your membership either online with PayPal or use the form below and mail your check.

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 _____