

news briefs

AUDUBON EVERGLADES FEBRUARY 2018 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Monthly MEETING and LECTURE: "Barn Owls - Nature's Mousetrap", by Dr. Richard Raid, Professor/Plant Pathologist and Manager of the Barn Owl Project, Everglades Research and Education Center, University of Florida.

Tuesday, February 6, 7:00 p.m. meeting & lecture.

Come hear Dr. Richard Raid present "Barn Owls - Nature's Mousetrap." His exciting presentation will provide insights about how barn owls provide a natural and non-poisonous rodent control measure for Florida's valuable agriculture.



In accepting the Commissioner's Agricultural Environmental Leadership Award, Dr. Raid recounted that, while volunteering at his child's elementary school, he saw the need for agricultural awareness. So, he started Student SOAR -- Sharing Our Agricultural Roots -- a school gardening program. His passion for teaching and the outdoors inspires students and instills in them an appreciation of the importance of agriculture.

"My original intent was simply to establish some gardens at schools so that kids could actually see how vegetables are grown and where their food came from," Raid said. "Agricultural awareness is very important to me."

Never anticipating the overwhelming response from students and teachers, he quickly found the program blossom beyond simple gardens. Now more than 70 schools throughout Florida have SOAR programs, most of which were established by Raid himself. Agricultural awareness promotes environmental awareness.

"We've earned awards because of Dr. Raid's input," said Kathy Picano, a teacher of gifted fifth-grade students at H.L. Johnson Elementary School in Royal Palm Beach. "My children have opened their eyes to the environment. They want to recycle. They want to help, and they also want to find out more about careers in botany, zoology and environmental studies. I have many in college now; they come back to visit, and they share that the majors they are pursuing are because of Dr. Raid."

"I think it's important that our youth -- our future voters, the people that are going to be making the decisions in this state -- have a connection to agriculture," Raid said. "They need to realize its importance, not just from a food standpoint, but also from an environmental standpoint."

A tireless educator, he has volunteered thousands of hours. Working in the schools, with the Boy Scouts or the Audubon Society, it's important to Raid to let people know that agriculture and the environment can not only co-exist, they benefit one another.

ABOUT RICHARD RAID:

A native of Pennsylvania, Dr. Raid was hired as a plant pathologist at the University of Florida's Everglades Research and Education Center in Belle Glade in 1986, where he has developed integrated strategies for managing plant diseases. A naturalist, Raid has actively promoted the use of barn owls for sustainable rodent control in the Everglades Agricultural Area, south of Lake Okeechobee. The program is known as the University of Florida Barn Owl Project and is responsible for some of the highest barn owl densities in North America. Capturing the attention and imagination of the public, Raid and his barn owls have been featured on PBS NATURE, CNN, and National Geographic's webpage.

Dr. Raid is a popular and captivating lecturer. We invite everyone to come enjoy this informative program!

Meeting and program are free and open to the public. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. 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! Also at the meeting, our expert, Clive Pinnock, will speak about the February Bird of the Month, American Bittern.

SPECIAL EVENT:

**19th Annual Everglades Day Festival
Saturday, February 10, 8AM-4PM
Family friendly & FREE**

The Festival will be held at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge at 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach -- off State Road 7/US 441, 2 miles south of Boynton Beach Blvd and 3 miles north of Atlantic Ave.

This year the theme is "Colors of the Everglades," and the goal is to promote awareness, appreciation, and understanding of America's Everglades.

The festival will include wildlife presentations, canoeing, fishing demos, birds of prey, music, educational programs, guest speakers, presentations in Spanish, food trucks, interactive activities, LILA tours, and nature explorations. There will be over 30 exhibitors from agencies, clubs and non-profit organizations.

Visitors should park at the Southwest County Transfer Station of the Solid Waste Authority, which is 2 miles south of the Refuge entrance. There is a free shuttle to and from the Festival.

The Festival is handicap-accessible but persons needing reasonable additional accommodations to attend and participate should contact Serena Rinker at 561/735 6029 or serena_rinker@fws.gov. To allow sufficient time to process requests, please contact us for assistance by close of business Friday, February 2, 2018.

The Everglades Day Festival is coordinated by Serena Rinker at the Refuge and Sue Snyder and Paton White of Audubon Everglades, a major festival sponsor.

Come enjoy this exciting and educational special event!

Check out a visual preview of this UNIQUE free event at the Palm Beaches tourism bureau web site at <https://www.thepalmbeaches.com/top-event/everglades-day-festival>.

For more information, call 561/734 8303. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to the Everglades Day Festival for all participants.



EVENTS: (Free & Open to the public unless otherwise stated) If you have any questions on the Bird Walks, email: FieldTrips@AudubonEverglades.org or call 508-296-0238

FEBRUARY 2018 GUIDED FIELD TRIPS:

Feb 03, Sat 7AM-9AM Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Cypress Creek North. Challenging: Improved or unimproved trail; uneven, rocky, and/or wet surfaces. Long: more than 1.5 miles. Family friendly. Leader: David Witmer.

Feb 03, Sat 7:30AM-12PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk STA-1E (Shorebird Survey). Easy: mainly from auto. Sitting / Driving: no walking required. Advance registration required; see website calendar for details. Leader: Chuck Weber.

Feb 04, Sun 8AM-11AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Riverview Park Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces. Long: more than 1.5 miles. Leader: Ed Kaweck

Feb 10, Sat 8AM-4PM, Everglades Day (19th Annual) FESTIVAL, coord: Serena Rinker/Sue Snyder. Family friendly. Handicapped accessible. Check out a visual preview of this UNIQUE free event at the Palm Beaches tourism bureau web site at <https://www.thepalmbeaches.com/top-event/everglades-day-festival>.

Feb 10, Sat 8AM-12PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk STA-2 (Shorebird Survey). Easy: mainly from auto. Sitting / Driving: no walking required. Advance registration required; see website calendar for details. Leader: Brian Garrett.

Feb 10-11, Sat-Sun, All Day, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Viera Wetlands/Merritt Island. New and unique. Easy: Sitting: no walking required. There is an associated cost and advance registration required (Audubon Everglades member priority); see website calendar for details. Leader: Valleri Brauer

Feb 14, Wed 7:30AM-11:30AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Loxahatchee NWR. There is an associated cost; see website calendar for details. Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces. Long: more than 1.5 miles. Family-friendly. Leader: Rick Schofield.

Feb 17, Sat 8AM-10:30AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Peaceful Waters. Family friendly. Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces. Medium length: 1-1.5 miles. Leader: Scott Zucker

Feb 17, Sat All Day, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Blue Cypress Lake New and unique. Easy: Sitting: no walking required. There is an associated cost and advance registration required (Audubon Everglades member priority); see website calendar for details. Leader: Rick Schofield

Feb 18, Sun 7:30AM-12PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk STA-1E Easy: Sitting: no walking required. Advance registration required; see website calendar for details. Leader: Rick Schofield

Feb 18, Sun 8AM-10AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Snook Islands. Easy: Boardwalk or paved level surface. Short: less than 1 mile. Family friendly and handicapped accessible. Leader: Gael Silverblatt

Feb 19, Mon 7:30AM-9:30AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Wakodahatchee. Easy: Boardwalk or paved level surface. Short: less than 1 mile. Family friendly and handicapped accessible. Leader: Paton White.

Feb 22, Thu 4:30PM-6:30PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Grassy Waters (Sunset Canoe Fly-in). Moderate: 2 hours of canoe paddling. Sitting: no walking required. There is an associated cost and advance registration required; see website calendar for details. Leader: Cindy Bush.

Feb 24, Sat 8AM-10AM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Wakodahatchee. Easy: Boardwalk or paved level surface; short distance – less than 1 mile. Family-friendly. Handicap Accessible. Leader: Chris Golia

Feb 24, Sat 8:30AM-12PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Kissimmee Prairie Preserve SP. New & Unique. Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces. Short: less than 1 mile. There is an associated cost and advance registration required (Audubon Everglades member priority); see website calendar for details. Leader: Paul Gray

Feb 25, Sun 6:30AM-12PM, Audubon Everglades Bird Walk Belle Glade/West County. Moderate: Improved trail; dirt and uneven surfaces. Medium length: 1-1.5 miles. Leader: Chuck Weber

Always check the web site www.AudubonEverglades.org calendar for details, registration links and last-minute changes. Trips, unless otherwise specified, are "Just Show Up."



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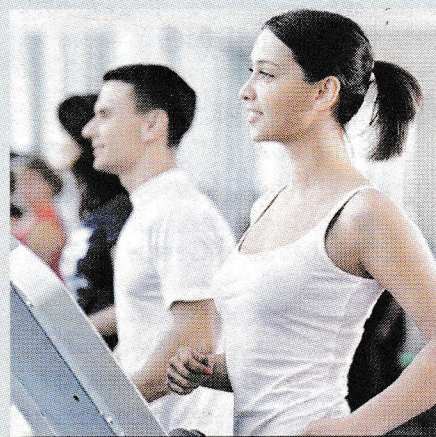
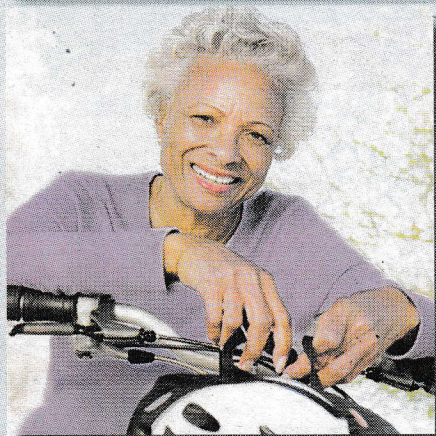
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