



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter for Audubon Everglades

VOL 59 | Issue 2 | October 2018



Photo: Red-breasted Merganser © 2018 Bob Morecraft. All rights reserved.

Bird of the Month: Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)

by Clive & Celecia Pinnock

Red-breasted Mergansers belong to a group of ducks known as “divers.” These ducks, unlike their more familiar counterpart, the “dabblers,” have legs set closer to their rear, enabling them to dive beneath the surface of the water in pursuit of fish, their primary prey. To grab and hold their slippery quarry, mergansers have long thin serrated bills. These large slim long-bodied ducks also have long necks and shaggy head feathers (crests) which give them a distinctive appearance.

Adult males sport a dark green ragged crest and head, a white collar, red eyes and bill and a rusty streaked breast. Females are pale brown with the chin and fore neck whitish in color. These mergansers are some of

the fastest flying ducks, clocking speeds of up to 81 miles per hour.

Red-breasted Mergansers are most often seen in flocks in coastal wintering areas. In migration they tend to prefer brackish and salt water estuaries, unlike Common Mergansers, which have a stronger preference for fresh water ecosystems. They are highly migratory, and their nesting range extends further north than that of the Hooded and Common Mergansers.

Highly social throughout the year, these birds are not generally territorial and, in highly populated areas, may even form loose nest colonies. Their nests are

generally placed close to water, hidden on the ground near vegetation, under boulders or in rock crevices. They have also been known to occasionally place their nest in tree cavities, a behavior more typical of the Common Merganser.

When incubation begins, males abandon the females, leaving them to incubate the eggs and raise the chicks on their own. The males then form “bachelor” flocks in secluded areas, where they molt before heading south for the winter. Females molt in the nesting areas with the young prior to migrating south.

Photographers – next month’s November bird of the month is the [American Avocet](#).

UPCOMING TRIPS OCTOBER 2018

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

06 SAT (7A-12P) STA-1E (Susan McKemy, coord.) ● ● ●

07 SUN (8A-10A) Tall Cypress (Bruce Pickholtz) ● ● ●

07 SUN (9A-3P) ★ MacArthur Beach SP (Hawk Watch) \$ (David Simpson / Jim Eager) ● ● ●

08 MON (8A-11A) Morikami Park (Gardens closed) (Sue Young) ● ● ●

13 SAT (7:30A-11:30A) ★ Green Cay (Big Sit!) (Linda McCandless/Al Pelligrinelli) ● ● ●

19 FRI (8:30A-10:30A) Peaceful Waters (Clive Pincock) ● ● ●

20 SAT (8A-10A) Green Cay (Valleri Brauer) ● ● ●

21 SUN (8:15A-11:15A) Riverbend Park (Birding by Bike) (Vicki Rogerson) ● ● ● No on-site bike rentals; No skinny tires.

25 THU (9:30A-11:30A) ★ Lion Country Safari (Clive Pincock) ● ● ●

27 SAT (8A-10A) Pine Glades (Chuck Weber) ● ● ●

28 SUN (8A-10A) Wakodahatchee (Chris Golia) ● ● ●

31 WED (6:30A-11:30A) Loxahatchee NWR (Fly-out) \$ (Rick Schofield) ● ● ●

DECEMBER 2018

The following advance registration field trips in December will become available for online registration on their corresponding dates during the month of October, e.g., registration for the December 01 trip begins October 01.

01 SAT (7:30A-12P) STA-1E (Rick Schofield, coord.) ● ● ●

08 SAT (6:30A-9:30A) Loxahatchee Slough (Dale Gawlik) ● ● ●

09 SUN (8A-12P) STA-2 (Susan McKemy, coord.) ● ● ●

16 SUN (7:30A-12P) STA-1E (Rick Schofield, coord.) ● ● ●

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 Friend priority

Monthly MEETING and LECTURE: "Ecology of the South Florida Burrowing Owl"

**Dr. Brian K. Mealey, President and Executive Director of the
Institute of Wildlife Sciences**

by Gail Tomei

OCT

02

Tuesday, October 2 at 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!



South Florida Burrowing Owls are increasingly threatened urban and suburban owls. They live among our rapidly expanding human population on what diminishing open areas they can find: parks, school yards, airports, pastures. What can we do in order to coexist with these wonderful little raptors? Join us to learn more about their lifestyle on October 2 and learn more about Project Perch.

ABOUT DR. BRIAN K. MEALEY

A wildlife biologist, Dr. Brian Mealey has studied multiple raptor and reptile species in South Florida, Florida Bay and Everglades National Park. One of his areas of expertise is the ecology and reproductive

behavior of burrowing owls in Florida. He is the Executive Director of Project Perch, the South Florida Audubon Society's burrowing owl monitoring project. A noted authority on Florida Burrowing Owls, he has lent his expertise and guidance to Project Perch, both in artificial burrow design and in installation procedures.

Brian is the President and Executive Director of the Institute of Wildlife Sciences. The institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the future of wildlife through education, partnerships and ecological research.

Brian's research partnerships have included working with the Crested Caracara, Swallow-tailed Kites and Snail Kites. His herpetological projects include insular ecology projects with the Diamondback Terrapins, Mangrove Water Snakes and the Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnakes. He has been a wildlife consultant with utility companies, government agencies and universities since 1992.

In addition, Brian currently teaches Biology, Marine Biology and Forensics at Palmer Trinity School in Miami, Florida.

Also at the meeting, our expert, Clive Pincock, will speak about the October Bird of the Month, the Red-breasted Merganser.

November's Monthly Meeting will be held Tuesday, November 6 at 7PM at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. The speaker will be Roger Hammer, Naturalist, Author, and Photographer.

Profile: Vicki Rogerson

by Kristen Murtaugh



Photo: Vicki Rogerson. This is me birding in the oak trees in my yard. The background is a Laurel Oak, and I have a perfect view of another very large Laurel Oak and a Live Oak. The Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were buzzing!

Just looking over the notes I took when I interviewed Vicki Rogerson makes me excited and inspired about how much each one of us can do to make our environment healthier for the birds we love. This is an extra-long profile, but I want to share with you the many important programs and partnerships that Vicki and her fellow volunteers have created that have made Audubon Everglades an outstanding leader in environmental education in our community.

Vicki was born in Waukegan, Illinois. The nature bug bit early. Her second-grade gym teacher took his students on nature walks through the woods around the school. She loved being outdoors at her own home, climbing the boulders in the back yard, searching out flowers, creating rock gardens with her grandmother, and exploring the woods. She remembers gathering the hickory nuts that her mother used for Christmas baking. When her family moved to Winter Park, Florida, she was turned off by the heat, sand lots, sticker burrs, and cookie-cutter urban development that seemed to show no respect for nature. When she was in the fifth grade, her family moved to Palm Beach County. There was a lot less development here, shell pits to explore, reefs to snorkel, and horseback riding to do. Vicki and her three younger siblings attended the innovative and progressive Di Bacco School in Lake Worth. Vicki graduated at age 16 and went on to college, first to Palm Beach Junior College, then to FAU and USF, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology. While she loves to explore new places, as a resident of Palm Beach County for over 50

years now, Vicki says that she is "almost" a Floridian!

Vicki's employment history is quite diverse but has the common denominators of management and customer service. She managed a Baskin-Robbins store for years while finishing high school and attending college, making and decorating the ice cream party goods and supervising young staff. She managed several automotive parts businesses, where she met her husband Steve. She and her father opened a brake specialty shop, which became a full-service auto parts store, Palm Beach Gardens Auto Parts. In 1991, her twins were born- a boy and girl. Vicki volunteered at their schools and was active as volunteer coordinator, enjoying getting parents and community members involved.

Vicki lives near Riverbend and would often bike there or to places like Corbett Wildlife Management Area, using the Northeast Everglades Natural Areas (NENA) multi-use trails or taking the back roads to Vero Beach. Before she was a birder she enjoyed doing trail maintenance with the Florida Trail Association and learned more about this county's many hiking paths, the NENA trail system, and the Natural Areas - handy when the birding bug hit!

A cat turned Vicki's attention to birds. When her daughter went to college, she left her cat in her mom's care. The cat was glued to the window, looking at the birds on the feeder outside. Vicki started looking at the birds and got hooked, too. She was particularly inspired by the Painted Buntings she was lucky to attract to her feeder. About five years ago, she and her friend Jane Wiewora looked for a local Audubon Chapter, found Audubon Everglades, and started going on field trips and then to meetings. Vicki was quickly recruited for the Board and made chair of the Education Committee. In that role she does many volunteer projects for Audubon Everglades. She has enjoyed working with schools, setting up birding clubs, advising on habitat improvement for birds, teaching about things like e-bird and the Great Backyard Bird Count or doing educational games and activities of her own creation or from the Flying Wild program. For several years she and Susan Snyder have attended R.I.S.E. (Resources In Science Education) meetings and engaged with thousands of teachers at the annual Science Symposium. Besides the many other educational outreach events Vicki and Audubon Everglades volunteers participate in every year, she

continued on page 4

NEW MONTHLY MEETING ENTRANCE PROCEDURES AT PINE JOG

by Doreen LePage

You suggested, we listened!
Audubon Everglades members take the fast lane for meeting check-in.

1. Just a reminder that doors do not open until 6:30PM. Volunteers need time to set up the refreshments and various tables. A sign will be placed on the door reminding everyone.
2. Friend members will no longer be required to sign in. You will enter the room, take an immediate left turn and take the "Fast Lane" to obtain your name tag. Get your refreshments and have a seat... no more waiting in line!
3. If you have changes to your address, email or telephone number, a sheet will be near the name tags to record your updated information.
4. Visitors will be required to sign in at a table that will be set back from the door, so members will not be required to wait in line.

AUDUBON ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 19-20

This event is filling fast. [If you are planning to attend, be sure to sign up now!](#)

Save the Date for the Annual Native Garden Tour

NOVEMBER 11 • 9AM-3PM

On November 11, from 9AM-3PM, Audubon Everglades is teaming up once again with the Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and the Atala Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association to bring you exciting information on native plants, birds and butterflies, and a special two plant give-away to attendees. More details to be announced!

YOU ARE WHAT HOPE LOOKS LIKE TO A BIRD!

by Susan McKemy

And Audubon Everglades needs you - energetic, enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers to help us educate and inspire people to conserve wildlife, especially birds, and the environment that supports them.

Audubon Everglades is the largest Audubon chapter in Florida. We operate on a small budget and yet provide amazing educational programs, field trips and conservation advocacy. How can we do this? Because of our passionate and dedicated volunteers! It is because you and people like you enjoy the benefits of our organization and want to share your time and talents that we can do all that we do. Thank you. We appreciate every volunteer hour you give.

If you have a special interest or talent or simply want to give back to Audubon Everglades as a volunteer, please check the list of volunteer opportunities below for an area where you might get involved. If your interest area is not listed and you are ready to volunteer, get in touch with us and let us know your interest area. There are new ways to get involved all the time.

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Coordinator

Citizen Science Bird Projects

- Project Perch Burrowing Owl project
- Purple Martin Project
- Florida Audubon Eagle Watch

Communications

- Kite Newsletter Coordinator
- Social Media (Facebook, Livestream, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)

Community Event Volunteer Opportunities

- Oct 13: Palm Beach County Employee Picnic
- Nov 3: Lagoon Fest
- Nov 10: Green Cay Migration Celebration
- Nov 11: Native Garden Tour

Conservation Advocacy Team

- Local, state or Everglades conservation policy advocate
- Public advocacy outreach
- Grant writing

Education and Outreach

- Speakers for school presentations and civic clubs
- Plants for Birds program

Technical Support

- AV Support at monthly meetings
- Video recording and editing

If you would like to see if you qualify for one of our volunteer needs or would like more information about any of the volunteer opportunities listed, please send an email to President@AudubonEverglades.org. We look forward to having you on our volunteer team!

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Thank you to Kristen Murtaugh and Nancy Freeman for stepping up to volunteer to be Audubon Everglades representatives on the League of Women Voters Solar Co-Op steering committee.

Welcome to Mary Dunning, a new member and skilled volunteer, who is our new Media/Publicity Volunteer.

Vicki continued from page 3

and Karen Lindquist partnered with Okeechellee Nature Center to organize the annual Earth Day event. They also created the Audubon Adventure Trail, which included 6 interactive stations, as a special feature at the event. Past presidents of Audubon Everglades, Linda Humphries and Paton White, encouraged Vicki early about the benefits of forming community partnerships. Another initiated partnership is with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which provides Audubon Everglades a long-term loan of binoculars for regular use with area youth. Our partnership with the PBC Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) and the Atala Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association began last year with Vicki's determination to continue National Audubon's program of Plants for Birds. The three non-

profits teamed up for the annual FNPS Native Garden Tour and provided information and a two-plant habitat give-away for all attendees. To date, Audubon Everglades has been instrumental in handing out over 1500 native plants, from seedlings to trees.

Vicki enjoys creating environmentally friendly decorations for Audubon Everglades' two yearly potlucks. She has done table decorations with native plants that became party favors. Making sure we use non-plastic eco-conscious plates, flatware and tablecloths that can be recycled or composted has also been a priority. No surprise, Vicki is also a Green Schools Award judge.

Perhaps Vicki's most important recent contribution to

members of Audubon Everglades and the community of environmental advocates in Palm Beach County was her work organizing the Doug Tallamy lecture in May. Vicki and fellow member Kat Rahla had heard Doug Tallamy, professor and chair of the department of entomology and wildlife ecology of the University of Delaware, speak at a conference in Vero Beach, and thought it would be great for our community to hear what he has to say about the complex relationships of wildlife and their native habitats. Paton White, then president of Audubon Everglades, and the rest of the Board threw their support behind the project, and Vicki was off and running. She secured an impressive list of co-sponsors - Atala Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, Mounts Botanical Garden, FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, and Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. The lecture was held in FAU's auditorium on the Boca campus, and the turnout was impressive. The various sponsors had tables set up in the vestibule. Attendees could purchase Doug Tallamy's book and have him sign it. Everyone went away with new insight into the relationships between insects, birds, and plants and the ways we can contribute to nature just by making small changes in our backyards. As Vicki asks, "what does a bird see when it looks at your yard?"

Besides her Education Committee leadership, Vicki is involved with many other bird-related projects. She leads Bike and Bird field trips for Audubon Everglades at Riverbend. She enjoys doing the June Challenge. She has volunteered for the Swallow-tailed Kite county roost counts for the Avian Research Conservation Institute. She works with Katie Antoniou on the Purple Martin House project, which has provided information and houses (special pricing) to Audubon Everglades members and installed houses at Wakodahatchee, Peaceful Waters, Wellington Environmental Preserve, and Daggerwing Nature Center. She is currently preparing for this year's many events, collaborating on some new handouts, and coordinating the search for Florida Scrub-Jays in Palm Beach County.

Vicki is a learner, a doer, and an energizer! I had read her reports on various Education Committee activities, but I did not know how many projects she juggles so deftly. It was fun talking to Vicki. She is passionate about conservation and inspiring in her commitment to learning and to sharing what she learns. She inspired me, and I have volunteered to join her new Audubon Everglades "Plants for Birds" Committee. You can read about Vicki's many projects in past and future Kite newsletters. Where can you make a difference?

THE SKY IS FALLING: VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT!



by Scott Zucker

"The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" said a young bird named Chicken Little, sounding the alarm in his community. While young Mr. Little was simply overreacting to an acorn that fell on his head, we have much greater concerns about our sky and earth. It is time for citizens to sound the alarm to protect our environment, using their vote as their voice during this upcoming midterm election.

In the past few years we have witnessed, to an unprecedented degree, our local, state, and national elected officials either undermine laws or eliminate funding put in place to protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and enjoy, the lands we inhabit and explore, and the birds and wildlife that we watch and love.

On a local level we have watched our municipalities allow builders to develop retired golf courses into zero-lot lined housing developments, against the wishes of surrounding local communities, and grant variances for parcels of undeveloped rural land zoned for low density housing to be developed for higher density housing.

On a county level over the years, we have watched our Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners grant changes to the Ag Reserve Master Plan and vote for zoning changes to allow for more commercial development in a region where county voters spent 100 million dollars to purchase over 2500 acres of agricultural land in order to protect the area from such development.

On a state level over the past eight years, we have watched the Florida executive branch and our Florida legislature systematically dismantle environmental protections put in place to protect and monitor our environment, actions that contributed significantly to the current algae crisis to both our coastal waters

and our estuaries. Collectively, these two branches of government have defunded our water management districts by 30%, particularly our South Florida Water Management District, which has seen their annual budget slashed in half and operates with less money today than in 2006. These Florida leaders have repeatedly ignored the role of the sugar industry in causing a massive algal bloom in the St. Lucie Estuary and have blamed the federal government for inadequate water infrastructure, yet they canceled the multibillion-dollar U.S. Sugar land deal engineered by former Florida Governor Charlie Crist, which would have purchased land south of Lake Okeechobee to allow sending the water south. They gutted the budget of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, which resulted in a 75% drop in enforcement cases against violators, an 80% drop in revenue from fines to help clean up violations, and a drop in water testing across the state. They repealed a law requiring the septic tank inspections important for reducing water pollution. They orchestrated a law that weakens standards for toxic chemicals that flow into Florida's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. They refused to use monies designated by the 2014 Amendment 1 to purchase environmentally sensitive lands in our state's watersheds and on our state's coasts. They zeroed out funding for Florida Forever, the state's hallmark conservation program, which previously had spent \$300 million a year to purchase environmentally important lands and which was funded through real estate taxes.

Additionally, they passed a bill that prohibits local governments from imposing bans on Styrofoam and polystyrene products. They refused to pass laws banning fracking on Florida lands, which a yes vote on Amendment 9 on the current ballot would remedy. Finally, they created an atmosphere of climate change "censorship" in Florida government.

continued on page 7

BIG SIT EVENT

by Linda McCandless

Come join the fun on Saturday, October 13 as we participate in *The Big Sit!* at Green Cay Wetlands!



The Big Sit! is an annual, non-competitive birding event hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest. The "rules" are simple: Tally all bird species seen or heard from a predetermined 17-foot diameter circle. It's a 24-hour event, but our Audubon Everglades circle will be open from 7:30AM to 11:30AM. We will be anchoring our circle in the gazebo on the NW corner of the boardwalk.

In 2016, we saw 53 bird species from our circle. In 2017, we saw 47 bird species. So, come join us for the 2018 event. Stay for a few minutes or a few hours and help us find the "golden" bird.

INDIAN TRAILS NATIVE NURSERY DISCOUNT ENDING SOON

by Vicki Rogerson

Your LAST CHANCE to get a 15% discount on native plants from Indian Trails Native Nursery is coming up. The final day for the discount is November 1. This fall, instead of chrysanthemums, a non-native autumn flower, consider a gorgeous mix of native wildflowers from Indian Trails that will be beneficial to hummingbirds, bees, warblers and butterflies. Be sure to mention your membership with Audubon Everglades to receive your discount. No limit on quantities!

[Indian Trails Native Nursery](#), Hours: Saturday 8-4, or weekdays by appointment. Contact them at 561-641-9488 or [by email](#). 6315 Park Lane W, Lake Worth, FL 33449



Photo: Presenter Steven Ross relaxing in chair while being introduced by Club President, Pete Lekos.
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CAMERAS READY? THE AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

by Scott Zucker

The third season of the Audubon Everglades Photography Club got underway last Monday, September 24, with our first program of the year, "How to Photograph Flowers," featuring guest presenter, Steven Roth, an award-winning photographer and the former President of the Wycliffe Photography Club. Steve inspired all of us by demonstrating the secrets of photographing flowers and showing us his brilliant work.

On Monday, October 8, Club President Dr. Pete Lekos will present a workshop: **"Improving your Images by Adjusting Composition, Exposure and Sharpening,"** where members will learn some of his tricks and secrets for making a great nature photo. Please bring your images on an SD card or flash drive and a laptop, if you have one.

Our first instructional field trip of the year will be on Saturday, October 13, to Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. We will be meeting at the Marsh Trail Parking Lot at 7:30AM. Pete and some of the more experienced members will be offering one on one instruction during the walk.

These three kick-off events should have you ready to take winning photos for our first friendly assigned subject competition of the year on Monday, October 22: Botany. We will also have a Nature Open subject competition as well. There will be plenty of ribbons to go around since the competition levels are divided into three groups: Beginner, Advanced, and

Expert. There will be at least one award of merit and multiple honorable mentions for each level. For both competitions that evening. Steven Roth, our expert presenter on Flowers in September, will be judging.

To learn more about the upcoming competition, future presentations, competitions, and field trips scheduled for this year and to find out more about membership and meetings (time and place), [please visit our informative club section on the Audubon Everglades website](#). Refreshments are served at all meetings.

While Audubon Everglades Photography Club membership is encouraged, it is not a requirement. Guests may attend up to two club meetings. However, entry in club competitions and attendance at field trips require membership. You can join at any event or field trip.

Club Chairman and founder, Dr. Pete Lekos, a widely published and award-winning photographer, says, "Our goal is to increase our knowledge of photography, inspire one another in our photographic activities, and, especially, to make new friends."

As the only (as far as we know) nature-only Photography Club in Florida, we welcome nature photographers of all skill levels. Members will be able to share their work, meet and form friendships with other photo enthusiasts, have their work critiqued by experts, and grow as photographers in this exciting digital age.

So, have your camera ready, your lens and sensors spotless, and join us for our meetings or field trips and prepare to make your photography a more exciting and rewarding hobby!

Meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month at 7PM (doors will open at 6:30) at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, 1925 Birkdale Drive, Wellington FL 33414.

[Join online now](#). Please contact [Club President Dr. Pete Lekos](#) for more information at 201-600-6463.

The Squeak is Back at Jonathon Dickinson State Park!

by Vicki Rogerson

Brown-headed Nuthatches have been returned to Jonathon Dickinson State Park! Staff from Tall Timbers released ten pairs recently near the Elsa Kimball Environmental Education and Research Center. The Florida Ornithological Society (FOS) would like help keeping track of these new residents, using a special phone app and the procedures outlined in a PDF on the Audubon Everglades website. [Your observations could help FOS track whether some of these individuals are roaming or staying close to the release area](#). Thanks for your help!

AN INVITATION FOR OCT 16

The Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society has invited Audubon Everglades members to join them for their regular October meeting. Dr. Ken Meyer, co-founder and Executive Director of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute, will be their speaker. If you have not heard Ken talk, or even if you have, you will not want to miss this opportunity to catch up on what is going on with Swallow-tailed Kites and Snail Kites. Ken, who has studied the conservation biology of Florida birds and beyond since the 1980s, will give us an update on these two species and discuss their status and specific habitat needs.

Where: Mounts Botanical Garden (entrance off Military Trail) When: Tuesday, October 16, 7-9:30PM Doors open at 6:30PM [Bring a friend and learn more about our Palm Beach County Native Plant Society and two bird species of special concern to Florida](#).

On a national level over the past two years, we have witnessed the Executive Branch of government and the Congress revoke Obama-era protections for U.S. oceans, coastlines and Great Lakes waters, opening these waters to energy extraction, fishing, trade and national security activities. They rescinded the Clean Water Rule that had protected 20 million acres of streams and headwaters from more mining, industrial and agricultural waste, sewage, and radioactive materials, thus putting the drinking water sources of one in three Americans at risk. The Environmental Protection Agency budget has been cut by nearly 10%, which, while less than the 26% request by the Executive Branch, has significantly curtailed enforcement and resulted in the firing of many scientists.

Two Harvard University scientists, David Cutler and Francesca Dominici, who examined the health impact of changes to the (EPA) policies on air pollutants and toxic chemicals, concluded that, in just the first

18 months since 2017, the changes already made to environmental law would result in 80,000 more health-related deaths in each of the next decades. These deaths would result from increased diseases from bad air and water quality

On the climate change front, the current administration has rolled back Obama-era climate change policy and reduced requirements on oil and gas companies to monitor and mitigate releases of methane from wells and other operations. They have [withdrawn from the international Paris Agreement on climate change](#), [rescinded the Clean Power Plan](#) which included regulations aimed at cutting carbon emissions from power plants, and eliminated [NASA's Carbon Monitoring System](#) of global climate emissions.

Additionally, they have auctioned off the oil and gas leases for the available 77 million acres of non-leased areas on the Gulf of Mexico's outer continental shelf, including waters off the coasts of Texas, Louisiana,

Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, and they have opened the 20 million acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. Mining is also now allowed on 2.2 million acres of federal land in Utah. This is the largest elimination of protected areas in US history.

So, while the sky is not literally "falling," our environmental protections certainly are. We must use our vote to hold our elected officials accountable and elect only politicians who both publicly state a commitment to protecting and preserving the environment and who have proven by their previous actions that they will be stewards for the earth when elected. [Learn where candidates running for office on your ballot stand on the issues.](#)

You can register in person or online to vote until October 9, and [you can request an absentee ballot to vote by mail](#). Just follow the instructions and provide the requested information. It's that easy. Be sure to vote by mail or in person by Tuesday, November 6.

We are changing the dates of our membership year. 2018 members will receive 5 additional free months. The 2018 membership year runs from January 1, 2018 - May 31, 2019. Join Friends of Audubon Everglades today.

JOIN AUDUBON

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

There are two ways to join Audubon Everglades:

FRIENDS OF AUDUBON EVERGLADES MEMBERSHIP:

All your membership dues and contributions are put to use supporting local conservation projects and educational programs in Palm Beach County. You will receive 12 issues of the Kite newsletter, priority for some special trips and discounted rates at some events and vendors. Join using the PayPal link off our website or by mailing the attached membership application. The Audubon Everglades Kite newsletter is available by email only.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP:

includes membership in Florida Audubon and Audubon Everglades plus one year of the Audubon magazine. [Join online here.](#)

Your NAS membership does not grant you the special privileges and discounts afforded to those who are local Friends of Audubon Everglades members. If you choose to join us through National Audubon Society, please also consider becoming a Friend of Audubon Everglades to support local conservation and education initiatives.

Yes, I want to become a member of FRIENDS OF AUDUBON EVERGLADES

Join now using PayPal. 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 (Single) ☐ \$20 (Student) ☐ \$20 (Senior) ☐ \$35 (Household*) ☐ \$75 (Patron*)

Please feel free to give above the membership amount with a 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 _____