



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter for Audubon Everglades

VOL 59 | Issue 3 | November 2018



Photo: American Avocet © 2018 Nancy Freeman. All rights reserved.

Bird of the Month: American Avocet

(Recurvirostra americana)

by Clive & Celecia Pinnock

The American Avocet is one of the most elegant of our wading birds. Its long thin upturned bill (more upturned in the female), broad black and white patterned back and long spindly bluish-gray legs give the species a regal appearance as it sweeps its bill from side to side while foraging for tiny aquatic invertebrates on or slightly below the surface of the water. Additionally, the head and neck of breeding adults display a rust color, highlighted by white eye-rings and white at the base of the bill.

These birds inhabit shallow fresh, brackish and saltwater wetlands, including tidal mudflats,

impoundments, sewage ponds, rice fields and flooded pastures. Their prey, which is typically sought in open water less than eight inches deep, consists of beetles, water boatmen, midges, brine flies, water fleas, fairy shrimp and more. As previously mentioned, the most common method of foraging is sweeping the bill from side to side (called “scything”), but the birds will also obtain prey from the water column by pecking at some on the surface or plunging for others below the surface.

Avocets nest on the shores of shallow ponds, marshes and lakes, and both adults are involved in

nest selection, incubation and rearing the young. Nests are placed on bare open ground in the form of a shallow scrape and are typically close to water. If a predator approaches the nest on foot, adults perform a series of displays designed to distract the predator from the nest site. In situations where nesting is part of a loose colony made up of avocets and Black-necked Stilts, several adults will simultaneously participate in the distraction displays while running about, raising their wings and sounding alarm calls.

Photographers – next month’s December bird of the month is the [Eastern Kingbird](#).

UPCOMING TRIPS NOVEMBER 2018

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

07 WED (4P-6P) Grassy Waters (Sunset Canoe Fly-in) 📍 (Cindy Bush) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

09 FRI (8:30A-10:30A) MacArthur Beach SP 💰 (Clive Pinnoch) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

10 SAT (8A-12P) STA-2 📍 (Susan McKemy, coord.) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

11 SUN (7:30A-10:30A) Sandhill Crane Access Park (Bart Scott) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

11 SUN (8A-10A) Wakodahatchee (Chris Golia) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

14 WED (7:30A-11:30A) Loxahatchee NWR 💰 (Rick Schofield) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

16 FRI (8A-10A) Wakodahatchee (Valleri Brauer) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

17 SAT (8A-11:30A) Plantation Preserve (with SFAS) (Paddy Cunningham) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

18 SUN (7:30A-11A) Riverbend Park (Ed Kawecki) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

24 SAT (8A-10:30A) Cypress Creek North (David Witmer) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

28 WED (8A-10:30A) Peaceful Waters (Scott Zucker) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

JANUARY 2019

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 the January 05 trip begins November 05.

05 SAT (7:30A-12P) STA-1E 📍 (Brian Garrett) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

13 SUN (8A-12P) STA-2 📍 (Susan McKemy, coord.) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

19 SAT (ALL DAY) STA-5/6 📍 (Rick Schofield) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

20 SUN (7:30A-12P) STA-1E 📍 (Rick Schofield, coord.) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

27 SUN (ALL DAY) Three Lakes/Joe Overstreet 📍💰 (Rick Schofield) 🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶🚶

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: "Endemic Florida Wildflowers"

Roger Hammer: Naturalist, Author, and Photographer

by Gail Tomei

NOV
06

Tuesday, November 6 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!



This presentation will focus on endemic wildflowers found from the far western Florida Panhandle to Big Pine Key in the Lower Florida Keys.

There are 243 species of plants that are endemic to Florida and found nowhere else on earth. Some are locally common while others are among the rarest endangered species in the state. Palm Beach County is home to 46 endemic species.

ABOUT ROGER L. HAMMER

Roger Hammer is a professional naturalist and survivalist instructor for the Discovery Channel's reality television show *Naked and Afraid*. He was the manager of the 120-acre Castellow Hammock Preserve & Nature Center for the Miami-Dade County Parks Department for 33 years. He received the first

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award presented by the Florida Native Plant Society in 1982. Tropical Audubon Society honored him with the prestigious Charles Brookfield Medal in 1996, and in 2003 he received the Green Palmetto Award in Education from the Florida Native Plant Society. He has given keynote speeches at Florida Native Plant Society state conferences and at the 2008 World Orchid Conference in Miami. In 2012 he received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Florida International University. He is the author of *Everglades Wildflowers* (2014), *Attracting Hummingbirds and Butterflies in Tropical Florida* (2015), *Exploring Everglades National Park* (2016), *Central Florida Wildflowers* (2016), and *Complete Guide to Florida Wildflowers* (2018). He lives in Homestead with his wife, Michelle.

Our speaker will have books available for purchase at the meeting. Cash or check will be accepted but no credit cards. You can find out more about the books on [his website](#).

In addition, at November's meeting we will be hearing from one of the University of Florida's Croc Docs, Justin Dalaba. He'll be sharing a brief presentation on Nile Monitor lizards in Palm Beach County and how you can report sightings and help in the management of this invasive species.

Also at the meeting, our expert, Clive Pinnoch, will speak about the November Bird of the Month, the American Avocet.

December's Monthly Meeting will be held Tuesday, December 4 at 7PM at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center. The speaker will be Tom Fitz, Executive Director for Schoolyard Films, presenting "Challenges of Wildlife Filmmaking."

Draft Visitor Services Plan Threatens Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Birds and Ecosystem

by Scott Zucker



Photo: Looking into the interior of Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. © 2018 Lora Lekos. All rights reserved.

Our beloved Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge is updating its Visitor Services Plan (VSP) as required by the new lease agreement signed with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), which owns most of the 145,000 acres that comprise the Refuge. The Refuge has been accepting comments about the proposed new VSP and is in the final stages of the review process.

The new VSP shows pressure from both SFWMD and the Department of the Interior, which oversees the National Wildlife Refuge System, to offer increased hunting and fishing opportunities. The Refuge has been inundated by positive comments from hunters and sportsmen about the proposed recreational opportunities - airboat usage, migratory bird hunting, deer hunting, and frog gigging - that would be added to the activities currently allowed on the Refuge. The VSP would expand the range where these activities and motorized watercraft are allowed on the Refuge. It would also expand the hours and days when all hunting activities occur to align with what Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission allows statewide.

These proposed activities as well as others, such as allowing pets and horses on the Refuge, could adversely affect the flora and fauna, particularly the health of the resident and migratory avian population that forages and nests there (the Refuge is home to one third of all nesting wading birds in South Florida). It could negatively impact the experience of visitors to the Refuge who go there to experience birds and nature. The greatest concern is that it would threaten the Refuge's ability to meet the financial terms of the new

lease agreement signed with the SFWMD in March 2018.

The 362 page VSP also includes some proposed improvements likely to benefit birders, photographers and nature enthusiasts, who are the majority of visitors to the Refuge, such as additional observation towers and boardwalks and the possible conversion of impoundments to make them suitable for wading bird nesting. Unfortunately, the cost of these improvements could negatively impact the lease agreement.

Audubon Everglades has always been a staunch supporter of the important work the Refuge does to protect South Florida flora, fauna and hydrology. This is clear in our role as co-founder and yearly sponsor of Everglades Day, in our leadership of bird walks at the Refuge, and in our advocacy for the signing of the 2018 lease agreement.

To ensure that the Refuge remains the most important wading bird nesting habitat in South Florida and to mitigate the proposed activities that could negatively impact the ecology of the refuge, we encourage you to formulate a comment letter in your own words, sharing your personal concerns and experiences. Please note that the deadline for comments is Thursday, November 8, 2018. [Please send your letter electronically using this link.](#)

[View Audubon Everglades' extensive categorized list of concerns about the new VSP here.](#)

[See the complete Visitor Services Plan here.](#)

NILE MONITOR LIZARDS IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

What You Need to Know

by Vicki Rogerson

You will want to attend the Nov 6 Audubon Everglades meeting to hear Justin Dalaba, one of the University of Florida "Croc Docs," share important information about invasive Nile Monitor lizards in Palm Beach County. Justin will have educational materials with him and be available after the program to answer questions.

The UF "Croc Docs" are a team of biologists, ecological modelers, and outreach specialists on the forefront of wildlife research in south Florida and the Caribbean. They study crocodilians, invasive reptiles, threatened and endangered species, and climate change and human dimensions.

By reporting sightings, you can help them in their work to better understand distribution, relative abundance, and future management of Nile monitors in Palm Beach County.

If you see a Nile Monitor Lizard, take a picture, note the location, and report your sighting:

- By calling 1-888-IVE-GOT1 (1-888-483-4681)
- Online at IveGot1.org (you need to create a login account once you get there)
- Or download the IveGot1 reporting app

Photo courtesy of University of Florida



CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS!

by Susan McKerny

November is a time when we think about our blessings and the things for which we are grateful. Audubon Everglades is richly blessed with volunteers who enable us to do the work we do as an organization.

November is also for GIVING - of your time and talents. We need YOU: energetic, enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers to help us educate and inspire people to conserve wildlife, especially birds and the environment that supports them.

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, since there are new ways to get involved all the time.

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

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Coordinator

Citizen Science Bird Projects

- Florida Audubon Eagle Watch
- Purple Martin Project



Communications

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

Monthly Meeting/Program Support Team

- Audio Visual Support
- Livestream, Video recording and editing
- Room set-up and closing

Community Event Volunteer Opportunities

- Nov 10: Green Cay Migration Celebration
- Nov 11: Native Garden Tour

Conservation Advocacy Team

- Conservation policy advocates
- Public advocacy outreach

Education and Outreach

- Plants for Birds program
- Speakers (school presentations, civic clubs, etc.)
- Pathfinders and Science Fair judges

ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR

SUNDAY NOV 11 | 9AM-3PM

by Vicki Rogerson

Audubon Everglades is partnering with the Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and the Atala Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association for the second year in a row to shine the spotlight on the vital relationships between native plants, insects (especially butterflies and moths) and birds.

Be sure to drop by and see us at the Lerner Garden while you're on the tour. We will be answering questions and, while supplies last, handing out two native plants to each attendee as a gift from our partnership. Tickets are \$10, but mention your Audubon Everglades membership and receive a \$5 discount. Tickets are available at any of the gardens, cash or check. For questions, please contact [Vicki Rogerson](mailto:VickiRogerson@audubon.org) at 561-352-7835.

2019 BIRD OF THE MONTH LIST

Backyard Birds: Interesting Facts

by Clive & Celecia Pinnock

We're thinking that most of you can probably identify the birds in your backyard, but, once you've identified them, you no longer pay much attention to them. For 2019, we've selected 12 common species. Each month we'll give interesting facts about one of them, hoping to spark your interest in observing them more closely through your backyard window!

JANUARY	Northern Mockingbird
FEBRUARY	Brown Thrasher
MARCH	Gray Catbird
APRIL	Northern Cardinal
MAY	Blue Jay
JUNE	Mourning Dove
JULY	Eurasian Collared Dove
AUGUST	White-winged Dove
SEPTEMBER	Red-bellied Woodpecker
OCTOBER	Downy Woodpecker
NOVEMBER	Pileated Woodpecker
DECEMBER	Red-shouldered Hawk

#GIVINGTUESDAY

by Linda McCandless

Audubon Everglades will be participating in "Giving Tuesday", an annual national day of giving scheduled for November 27. "Giving Tuesday" donations will be used by Audubon Everglades to support two initiatives for Palm Beach County, one to help Burrowing Owls and the other to help Purple Martins. [Audubon Everglades Giving Tuesday Program](https://www.audubon.org/giving-tuesday)

The charismatic Florida Burrowing Owl is classified as "threatened" by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission because of loss of habitat

and other man-made conditions and activities that jeopardize its colonies.

In response, Audubon Everglades has joined Project Perch in its efforts to locate as many burrowing owls in Palm Beach County as possible, to build and install sturdy flood zone safe artificial burrows in safe places, to educate "guardians" for the owls, and to count the owls annually during breeding season.

The Purple Martins are welcome summer residents

continued on page 5

ASSEMBLY WRAP-UP

by Paton White



Photo: Group from Audubon Everglades at the Florida Audubon Assembly © 2018 Jayme Gershen. All rights reserved.

A record 35 of our members attended the Audubon Assembly held in West Palm Beach October 19-20, 2018. Each of the last three years Audubon Everglades has had the most chapter attendees. Many of those who attended also volunteered in some capacity. Rick Schofield organized four successful field trips, Vicki Rogerson created a beautiful stage with native plants, and Susan McKerny gave an inspiring welcome speech. We asked AE scholarship attendees to give us feedback about the event.

Rising Tides was the theme, and the three sessions were Wildlife Advocacy and Conservation, Coastal Resilience, and Why Waterbirds Are Moving. The titles

may sound dull, but each session was chock full of information presented by knowledgeable dedicated professionals. We were thrilled that even the most seasoned conservationists came away having learned things they will be able to use.

All of us were inspired by what individuals and chapters have done this year. Many of you who attended said that you would be advocates for our special natural resources. And you also told us that you had never realized that Assemblies welcomed chapter members, not just chapter leaders. We hope that you will continue to attend.

Giving Tuesday continued from page 4

throughout Florida, nesting almost exclusively in human-provided houses. They thrill us with their incredible aerial insect-catching acrobatics, beautiful song, and engaging personalities. Sadly, their numbers have declined 40% over the last 50 years due to habitat loss and introduced species like the House Sparrow and European Starling.

Audubon Everglades began purchasing high quality Purple Martin houses complete with raptor guards and predator baffles in early 2017, promoting their installation, and providing educational outreach. To

date, each house has had residents and successfully fledged young.

"Giving Tuesday" donations for Audubon Everglades will allow us to continue to support Project Perch as it seeks to stabilize and increase the population of Burrowing Owls, and it will also allow us to purchase and install additional Purple Martin houses.

Ed note: if you miss donating on Nov 27 you can still donate to the projects by using the Audubon Everglades link above.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION CELEBRATION

by Vicki Rogerson



**SATURDAY
JAN 12, 2019
NOON-4PM**

**BUSCH WILDLIFE
SANCTUARY**

**2500 JUPITER PARK DR
JUPITER, FL 33458**

Audubon Everglades wants to Crow about you!

Who's Invited? It is our great pleasure to invite past, present and future volunteers to our Volunteer Appreciation event.

Buffet-style chili luncheon with all the toppings, cornbread, salad and dessert! Exclusive bird encounters just for us by Busch Wildlife! Mini birding contest and charades! Prizes and raffle! Information table about volunteer opportunities.

Please R.S.V.P. by Jan 2 to [Vicki](#) at 561-352-7835. Please let us know if you would like to bring a guest. Be sure to let us know if you are interested in carpooling to the event. We will do our best to make that happen.

We Caracara 'Bout You!

DECEMBER MEETING HAS A NEW TWIST

by Paton White

It is exciting that attendance at our general meetings has been growing. However, this growth presents a space problem. So, this year we are doing our holiday meeting differently. Because we cannot fit the tables and all of you into our space, we are not going to have the potluck dinner. Instead, the chapter is going to supply finger desserts, fruit for those of you who do not eat sweets and coffee and other drinks. Have a light dinner before you come and enjoy a sweet evening with Audubon Everglades!



CJ McCartney (left) happily receiving Merit Award and Honorable Mention ribbons from Lora Lekos (right), as CJ broke through in the Beginners category. Photo © 2018 Scott Zucker. All rights reserved.

AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

by Scott Zucker

Capturing a beautiful photo of a bird on the wing is one of the most difficult challenges facing photographers. Don Hamilton, a passionate wildlife and nature photographer who leads tours around the world, will be sharing his knowledge of how to “Photograph Birds in Flight” at our next monthly Photography Club meeting on Monday, November 26. Don, who has practiced Nuclear Medicine Cardiology Imaging for over 30 years in South Florida, is a frequent contributor to the Clewiston News and the South Florida Water Management District’s publications. A passion to share nature’s many delights and to promote conservation is his driving force.

Butterfly magic will occur this month when the Photo Club visits Butterfly World in Coconut Creek on November 10. Butterfly World is the world’s largest butterfly park and home to more than 20,000 live butterflies from every corner of the globe as well as exotic birds and plants. Its concentrated environment offers photographers wonderful opportunities to see and capture images of butterflies, many of which are

not otherwise seen in South Florida. Pete Lekos and some of the more experienced club members will be offering one on one instruction during the visit.

Our October photo competition, which included “Botany” as our special nature category and our regular “Nature Only” category (any type of nature image), had nearly 200 submissions. Expert flower photographer Steven Roth, who had wowed the club members the previous month with his botany images, served as our guest judge. We had some breakthrough winners from all three levels (Beginner, Advanced, and Salon), spotlighting the improvement that club members are making in their craft. The list of winners is to the right. [For full details, see the website.](#)

To learn more about the upcoming competitions, future presentations, 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.](#)

OCTOBER 2018 AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB CONTEST

BOTANY (SALON)

Award of Merit:

Karen Lindquist
Bob Raichelson
Tom Rasmussen

BOTANY (ADVANCED)

Award of Merit:

Jayne Arden
Alan Chin Lee
Susan McKemy (3)

BOTANY (BEGINNER)

Award of Merit:

CJ McCartney

Honorable Mention:

Charlene Bothof
Elaine Fortune (2)
Charlene Raphael

NATURE OPEN (SALON)

Award of Merit:

Karen Lindquist
Bob Raichelson
Tom Rasmussen

NATURE OPEN (ADVANCED)

Award of Merit:

Robert DeCuir

Honorable Mention:

Alan Chin Lee
Nancy Freeman
Susan McKemy

NATURE OPEN (BEGINNER)

Award of Merit:

Charlotte Rasmussen

Honorable Mention:

Cindy Darling
Nicola Labrador
CJ McCartney
Karen Smith

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 _____