



EVERGLADE KITE

NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter for Audubon Everglades
VOL 60 | Issue 4 | December 2019



Photo: Red-shouldered Hawk © Wikipedia

Bird of the Month: Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)

by Clive & Celecia Pinnock

This medium-sized, soaring hawk in the Buteo group is often found in or near moist woodlands, forests and wooded areas near streams, canals and ponds. Its size and color patterns are quite variable, ranging from the smallest and drabest in south Florida and gradually increasing in size and plumage richness further north in the species range.

Red-shouldered Hawks are one of the most distinctively marked resident hawks in our area, with barred reddish underparts and a relatively long, strongly banded, black and white tail, which is highly visible in soaring birds. They are also identifiable in flight by the pale crescent patch at the base of the primaries. Their flesh-colored to yellowish legs are also noticeably long. The species gets its name from the reddish shoulders seen more clearly on perched adult birds.

Red-shouldered Hawks are typically observed perched on a tree branch, telephone pole, or telephone wire

along the roadside. Their hunched-over resting posture is also an indicator for identification. While foraging for prey, these raptors use one of two hunting strategies: the sit and wait technique and the active flight and search technique. The latter technique includes soaring above forests, swamps and suburban woodlands with broad-spread rounded wings and tail or flying beneath the canopy in the flap and glide pattern of Accipiters such as the Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks. This hunting tactic startles woodland birds and other prey that are not expecting the hawk's presence. The primary yet variable prey base for Red-shouldered Hawks is small mammals (mice and voles), reptiles (snakes and lizards), amphibians (frogs and toads) crayfish, and small fish, and they will occasionally take birds foraging at a bird feeder. In rare circumstances, they have been known to eat carrion.

Nesting territories are usually established in late fall or early winter, with the adult mated pair calling

repeatedly throughout the territory being established. This is done to let others of their species know that the territory is occupied, and all others are unwelcome. Nesting is done in deciduous and mixed deciduous/coniferous woodlands near a body of water. There is a preference for wooded areas with some established clearings to be used for hunting. The nest is usually located 35' to 65' above ground in the fork of the main trunk of a deciduous or coniferous tree. Both birds assist in the construction of the nest, which is made of a platform of sticks and other material lined with bark, moss and sprigs of other vegetation. Usually 2-4 bluish-white eggs blotched with lavender are laid in the nest and incubated primarily by the female for about 33 days. The male spends most of his time defending the territory and bringing his mate food. While she eats, he incubates the eggs. The female remains with the young for one to three weeks after hatching, feeding them with the prey brought to the nest by the male. The young leave the nest 5 to 7 weeks after hatching.

UPCOMING TRIPS

DECEMBER 2019

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

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

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

11 WED (7:30A-11:30A) Loxahatchee NWR (Rick Schofield) ● ● ●

13 FRI (8:30A-11A) DuPuis MA (Clive Pinnock)
● ● ●

14 SAT (8A-11A) Lakeside Ranch STA (Roy Netherton coord.) ● ● ●

14 SAT (8A-10A) Wakodahatchee (Valleri Brauer)
● ● ●

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

19 THU (ALL DAY) T.M. Goodwin / Broadmoor Unit (Rick Schofield) ● ● ●

FEBRUARY 2020

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

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

06 THU (4:30P-6:30P) Grassy Waters (Sunset Canoe Fly-in) (Cindy Bush) ● ● ●

09 SUN (8A-12P) STA-2 (Shorebird Survey) (Brian Garrett/Susan McKemy, coord.) ● ● ●

15 SAT (ALL DAY) Viera Wetlands and Click Ponds (GBBC) (Bob Dieterich) ● ● ●

22 SAT (8:30A-12P) Kissimmee Prairie Preserve SP (Paul Gray) ● ● ●

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
- ● ● <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
- There is an associated cost
- ✍ Advance registration required
- 👤 Family-friendly
- ♿ Handicap Accessible
- 🌿 Audubon Everglades Friend priority

by Mary Dunning

December 2019 Monthly Meeting and Lecture Program: "Fighting and Flirting: The Social Roles of Bird Song"

Dr. Rindy Anderson, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences, Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, Florida Atlantic University

DEC
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Tuesday, December 3 at 7PM

Meeting and program are free and open to the public. Doors open at 6PM; Pot-luck dinner at 6:15PM; Lecture at 7PM. MEETING AT OUR NEW SOUTH COUNTY LOCATION South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Rd, Delray Beach, FL 33446

Special Holiday Pot-Luck Dinner

This is a chance to chat with friends, bid on raffle items and enjoy a fascinating speaker. So, come prepared to share what you make best! This year we have not divided the membership up and asked you to bring a specific item, instead we hope you will bring your specialty and enough for at least four people. Each of us should bring our own plate(s) and utensils and something to take our dirty items home. The doors will open at 6PM, dinner will be served at 6:15 and the program will start at 7PM. Remember it is a new location with plenty of well-lit parking and a bright and cheery meeting room. Volunteers are needed for both set up and serving. Contact Paton White to help 561.818.7574. Come celebrate!

Join us for our December 2019 lecture where Dr. Rindy Anderson, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences in the College of Science at Florida Atlantic University, will present "Fighting and Flirting: The Social Roles of Bird Song." Dr. Anderson will be sharing some of her research on songbird vocal communication, including her ongoing work with the Bachman's Sparrow at Jonathan Dickinson State Park.



Dr. Rindy Anderson

"Our lab studies behavioral ecology, which means that we want to understand how and why animals behave as they do. We study wild animals in their natural habitats to learn how the environment shapes their behavior. Much of our work involves the social behavior of songbirds, with a focus on acoustic communication and cognition," Anderson said.

The Bachman's Sparrow is a secretive and shy sparrow found only in the southeastern United States in a habitat of open grassy pine woodlands with limited to no shrub development. During the breeding season, Bachman's Sparrow males are quite vocal, singing from low perches in the

understory. The sparrow has a large repertoire of many song types and multiple categories of songs and calls it uses for territorial defense.

Dr. Anderson has a BS in Zoology from Arizona State University, an MS in Marine Science from the University of San Diego, and a PhD in Behavioral Ecology from the University of Miami. After obtaining her PhD, she worked as a postdoctoral research associate at Duke University before joining the faculty at FAU. Dr. Anderson's research interests are Behavioral Ecology, Animal Communication, Bioacoustics, and Avian Ecology and Conservation.

January's Monthly Meeting will be held Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at Origin Church, 6073 Summit Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL. The speaker will be Shawnlei Breeding, Eaglewatch Program Manager, Audubon Center for Birds of Prey.

Audubon Everglades 2019 in Review

by Susan McKerny, President



Susan McKerny

2019 has been another active and exciting year for Audubon Everglades. You've seen the growth in the number and diversity of our programs in our monthly Kite newsletter. However, I would like to single out a few of the year's highlights which show how we implement our mission to inspire people to learn about the environment and habitats supporting wildlife, especially birds, and to take action to conserve them.

Audubon Everglades, an entirely volunteer organization, started the year off by celebrating our volunteers at Busch Wildlife Sanctuary. In addition to a tour of the Sanctuary and a special program with the staff, we had time to relax, share a meal, and express our gratitude for the time and talents our volunteers contribute to Audubon Everglades and its mission.

We saw the power of social media this year when Vicki Rogerson shared the photo her neighbor, local photographer and artist Laurie Wolf, had taken of a young duckling in an owl box with an Eastern Screech Owl. The image went viral! It has now been seen by over 1.5 million people and reported by WPTV News, National Geographic, The Do Do, Bored Panda, BirdWatching Daily, People.com, Entertainment 9 (Australia), and LADBible (England)!

Our monthly programs have become so popular that we outgrew our "nest" and had to search for new spaces for them! We found one practically next door to Pine Jog and a second location in south county, where we will meet three times a year. With new technology and volunteers to implement it, many of our programs have been available via livestream to people not in the area or unable to attend in person.

A welcome addition to the Kite newsletter has been Bob Dieterich's "Bird Nerd" column with fun facts and interesting tidbits to expand our knowledge!

Audubon Everglades supported the Palm Beach County Library's "Birding Backpacks" program, which has been a huge success and is expanding.

Generous grants from FPL for the "Plants for Birds" program have enabled us to expand our efforts to educate members and the public about the importance of planting native plants to support the birds we love.

We are excited by the growth and expansion of our community science programs, including the Christmas Bird Count, the Burrowing Owl and Purple Martin programs, and Eagle Watch and Shorebird Surveys. More volunteers have stepped up to support each of these efforts, increasing their impact and success (and there is still room for more volunteers – hint, hint!).

The many changes we witnessed this year with the new administration and new board of the SFWMD have encouraged us, and we hope this means good things for Everglades Restoration.

We were thrilled by the variety of birds we found right here in Palm Beach County this year, including several very rare birds such as the Dark-billed Cuckoo and the Red-legged Thrush. Both of these rarities brought many birders from throughout Florida and the country to our area. We were also fortunate to see several other species we don't get every year, including Groove-billed Ani, Lesser Nighthawk, Brown Noddy, and the Mississippi Kite.

As an organization, we are committed to eliminating single-use plastics, and we encourage you to help us, both at club functions and in your daily lives.

Audubon Everglades continues to have many more wonderful ideas waiting for volunteers to put them into action! Please share your ideas AND your time and talents with us. You'll be glad you did!

Here's looking forward to another wonderful year ahead!



GIVING TUESDAY

Mark your calendars! [Giving Tuesday](#), a global generosity movement, will take place on December 3, 2019. People celebrate Giving Tuesday by giving their time or money to charities they find worthwhile.

Audubon Everglades participates in Giving Tuesday. As a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), all-volunteer organization, we depend on your generous donations to support our mission, "Educating and inspiring people to conserve wildlife, especially birds, and the environment that supports them."

If Audubon Everglades has impacted your life in some way - you may have joined a field trip, attended a meeting, or read our newsletter - please join us in this Day of Giving. [You can make a donation by going to our website](#) and clicking on the "Donate" link on the right side of the page.

Thank you.

Correction to the November Kite

Thank you Audubon Everglades Member Paula B. Gatrell for the great "Audubon Everglades 2019 Hawk Watch" article that was published in the November issue of the Kite.

BIRD NERD: ANTICIPATION...

by Bob Dieterich



We're well into a new season of birding: fall migrants have come and gone, and winter visitors are settling in, from numerous forms of waterfowl to shorebirds and land birds from up north. It's also a challenging time of year for bird identification; they're not in their showy spring plumage now. It's time to break out those field guides and really get down to work. Now's when it's helpful to belong to a like-minded group and take part in organized outdoor birding activities.

It just so happens that one of the most important birding events of the year, the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC), is scheduled for the end of this month. In coordination with groups across the continent, we tally all the birds we can find, species and numbers, within the confines of a 15-mile diameter circle in the span of a 24-hour period. For Audubon Everglades, that's the West Palm Beach (WPB) CBC, stretching approximately from Southern Blvd. in the north to Atlantic Ave. in the south, and from the ocean shore to Loxahatchee Refuge. Our results are then shared with National Audubon, which then compiles all the Counts across the continent to produce a comprehensive inventory. Over the years, these data can be helpful in documenting the range and numbers of many of our avian friends during the winter season. Our Count has been active since 1950, and I think you'll find that there have been some interesting observations, even noteworthy developments, in our territory over the past 60+ years.

One of these is the relative consistency of the numbers of species recorded by the WPB CBC. Species totals ranged from the mid-120's to 150, with a median of about 140. That's probably due to the relatively mild climate conditions we enjoy. Even when there's rain, it usually doesn't seriously disrupt the birding effort. Compare that to a CBC in Cape Cod, where one year you may have clear sunny weather and another year when you're contending with a snow squall.

But even with relative consistency in species totals, we do see changes over time in the individual species themselves. A number of species have become less regular over the years, and much of this is probably due to the changing habitat conditions in our area. Clearing pine forest and scrubland, not to mention draining and filling in wetlands, reduces habitat for resident native species and offers opportunities to less selective, even invasive kinds. Local residents like Clapper Rail, Smooth-billed Ani, Barn Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Florida Scrub Jay have disappeared from our Count summaries, to be replaced by such introduced species as Egyptian Goose, Gray-headed Swamphen, Common Myna, and various parakeets. Regularly wintering birds like Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, and Yellow Warbler have dropped off the list, replaced by White-winged Dove, House Finch, and Spot-breasted Oriole. The decline of Common Tern on the Count corresponds with the increase of Lesser

and Great Black-backed Gulls, and Fulvous Whistling-Duck appears to have been replaced by Black-bellied Whistling-Duck. Perhaps more reassuring is the increasing occurrence of Roseate Spoonbill, American Oystercatcher, and Piping Plover.

Of course, the real reason one gets up at the crack of dawn to take to the field is to encounter that special rarity that one can tout to the rest of the crowd at the end of the day, and the West Palm Beach CBC has certainly had its share. Going back to "olden" days, there have been such northern visitors as Snow Goose, American Black Duck, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Red-throated Loon, Rough-legged Hawk, and Short-eared Owl. Mid-continent visitors included American Avocet, American Golden-Plover, Dickcissel, and Western Meadowlark. Late-lingers include a suite of migrant flycatchers and warblers, and from the south such oddities as Masked Duck, White-crowned Pigeon, Caribbean Coot, and Scarlet Ibis have made their appearance. Our latest Count last December produced such notables as Common Eider, Black Scoter, Masked Booby, Neotropic Cormorant, Black-legged Kittiwake, Blue-winged Warbler, and Western Tanager.

If this summary has whetted your appetite to participate in this year's Christmas Bird Count, you can contact the event coordinator and sign up for one of the several groups that will be tasked to cover the territory of our Count circle. It's a rich variety of environments, from parkland to beaches, golf clubs, and wetlands, and there's surely an area you'll enjoy investigating.

If you are interested in participating in the the longest-running citizen science survey in the world, our annual CBC, [please contact the CBC coordinator ASAP at CBC Participation](#). So, have fun, and I'll see you there!

Treat Yourself to a Unique Learning Adventure: THE 2020 CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP TRAINING COURSE

by Scott Zucker and Mary Young



Photo: Lee Lietzke, ERM Environmental Analyst, explaining succession at Yamato Scrub Natural Area.

Imagine walking through native habitats with distinctive flora and fauna that you have never experienced . . .

Once again, Audubon Everglades is offering a seven-week Conservation Stewardship Training Course, an exciting educational opportunity to explore the beautiful natural habitats surrounding us in Palm Beach County. The course will run on consecutive Mondays, from February 3 to March 16, 2020, from 9AM to 1:30PM.

Fifteen expert instructors will engage participants in understanding how five fragile Florida habitats sustain plants, birds and wildlife, cope with invasive flora and fauna, manage species of concern, and adapt to growth and climate change. They will also explain the function and importance of the Greater Everglades ecosystem.

This basic environmental education course will include field exploration, complemented by classroom study, an advocacy component, and special presentations during the catered lunch provided each Monday. Throughout, Stewards will be guided in developing a personal plan of action that will empower them to aid and advocate for their environment.

To bring you this experience, Audubon Everglades is partnering with the [PBC UF/IFAS Extension](#) with support from [Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge](#), [Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center](#), and [PBC Environmental Resources Management](#).

The syllabus includes the following dates, topics and natural areas:

- Feb. 3: Two topics: Ecological Overview of Greater Everglades, including PBC, and Pollinators in a Butterfly Garden, to be held at UF-IFAS Extension at Mounts Botanical Garden
- Feb. 10: Freshwater Wetlands, to be held at ARM Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge
- Feb. 17: Pine Flatwoods, to be held at Cypress Creek Natural Area/Classroom: Jupiter Farms Park
- Feb. 24: Scrub, to be held at Yamato Scrub Natural Area/Classroom: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Boca Raton
- March 2: Beaches and Dunes, to be held at Juno Dunes Natural Area/Classroom: Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center
- March 9: Estuaries & Hammocks, to be held at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park/Classroom: First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Palm Beaches
- March 16: Conservation Advocacy, to be held at UF-IFAS Extension at Mounts Botanical Garden

[Conservation Stewardship Training Course](#)

[View the complete 7-week course syllabus.](#)

Scholarship Opportunity for College Students: We are offering scholarships for college students to take this course free of charge. If you are a college student or you know one who would be interested, this application is to be completed and submitted by January 16, 2020.

Save this date: The Monday after the course ends, March 23, 2020, from 9AM to 1:30PM, we will be sponsoring a Climate Symposium to explain the problems Climate Change poses to birds, wildlife, humans and the environment and what we, as citizens, can do to help. Current and former Stewards, as well as anyone on the course waiting list, will be invited to attend.

Course Fee: \$98.00 includes seven catered lunches.

[Register for Conservation Stewardship Training Course.](#)

For more information email: stewardship@auduboneverglades.org or call (561) 876-8815.

The Conservation Stewardship Training Course is open to the public, so be sure to tell your conservation-minded friends about it.

AE Photography Club Challenges Members

by Alan Chin Lee

Kite Flashback

by Doreen LePage



Photo: Nancy Freeman. Merit Award Photo in Salon Group: "Lorikeet Best Buddies"

Photography is a great hobby that can get the creative juices flowing and modify one's perspective on nature in many ways. Not only are photography club members challenged to produce technically excellent images with composition that best showcases their subjects, but also to get eye-level perspective with optimal lighting to best showcase those subjects. That said, nature does not always cooperate, and that was the case with the November club field trip scheduled at Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. One of Florida's first winter season cold fronts brought grey skies and rain for that entire weekend, forcing the cancellation of the field trip. By comparison, the Butterfly World field trip was a success even though conditions were overcast. Members still managed to creatively capture winning images of lorikeets and a white morpho butterfly in the October competition.

Members can always avail themselves of technical assistance provided by Pete Lekos and Alan Chin Lee during club field trips. Other members also assist, depending on the brand of camera. When all else fails, Pete and Alan will resort to consulting with their smart phones for answers. Whatever it takes!

December Photography Competition

The theme for the December photography competition is Zoology: all things fauna except for

birds. This theme restriction is another way the club expands a photographer's ability, challenging most members, who are birders and have a library of bird images to match their level of enthusiasm. Birding images are always welcome in the Open category, which always accompanies the themed category in a competition month. Photographs will be judged by Alan Fabricant, who specializes in Nature, Travel, Still and Action Photography.

AE Photo January Workshop

On January 13, 2020, the AE Photography Club brings in the New Year with a workshop that will be led by club president, Pete Lekos. He will demonstrate tips and tricks to help members optimize their images. The demonstration will be in Adobe Photoshop, but Lightroom, Elements and Mac programs will also be discussed. Members wishing to participate may bring up to 3 images on a flash drive and see what can be done to improve their work.

To learn more about the upcoming photography competitions, future presentations, and field trips scheduled for 2020, including finding out more about membership and meetings (time and place), please visit our informative club section on the Audubon Everglades website.

As we approach our 65th CBC, let's look back to 1978... Western Tanager at Quail Ridge! In 1983, the team at the refuge reported 98 American Bitterns, 77 Least Bitterns, 1200 Turkey Vultures...how times have changed. Finally enjoy a comical segment on Count Adventures from the Feb 1982 Kite.

CHRISTMAS COUNT REPORT

On our twentieth Christmas Bird Count, sixty observers found only 140 species, ten below what one might normally expect. The absence of severe cold fronts failed to push many hardy species this far south; yet this mild weather turned up only two late stragglers: the Red-eyed Vireo and the Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

NEW SPECIES - For the first time on our count, William Dowling and Ollie Olsen identified a Western Tanager, bathing with Robins at Quail Ridge. The next morning Gloria Hunter and Marge Eaton confirmed the sighting.

GOOD FINDS - The Red-eyed Vireo, an excellent find in December and only our third count sighting, was chasing and fussing with a Solitary Vireo when Ray Plockelman and Tom McElroy found it. The observers even relocated the vireo later in the day.

A straggling Yellow-billed Cuckoo flew to a perch in a tree and allowed careful study by Tadjiu Trotsky and hpl for our fifth count record. For only our third time, the Wilson's Warbler at Loxahatchee Refuge was spotted by Paul Sykes and Ann Ayers and confirmed a few days later by Al and Barbara Liberman and Cecil Kilmer.

Near the same sparrow field as last year, Helen and William Dowling, Jane Brooks and Ollie Olsen again found two White-crowned Sparrows for our second count record. Three Clay-colored Sparrows (Trotsky and hpl) were present all week at Congress and Hypoluxo Road for our fourth sighting. Trotsky found a magnificent diamond-backed rattlesnake in this field after the count.

The Greater Scaup flew within twenty feet, reported Barry Vorse and Lorne Malo, to show its white "down to the tip of the wing" for our seventh record. Alan Parmalee, David Hasse and Joseph Sandella saw six Lark Sparrows, our sixth record.

Some Saves: Clapper Rail and Forster's Terns (Hunter, Bowman, Graves), American Wigeon (Eaton,

Liberman, Cooley, Wilson), Northern Waterthrush (Sykes, Ayers), Vesper Sparrow (McCall, Mueller).

Last year we were high in the U.S. with the following species: Cory's Shearwater 1 (this year 0), Least Bittern 43 (this year 33), Snail Kite 3 (this year 0), Limpkin 67 (35), Purple Gallinule 20 (9), Eastern Kingbird 1 (0), House Wren 142 (107), Gray Catbird 325 (287), Magnolia Warbler 1 (0), Ovenbird 13 (16), and Common Yellowthroat 737 (this year 656).
(H. P. Langridge)

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

A reader looking at the 1981 Christmas Count of birds might wonder if we conducted only a cursory species count because many common species on our list are represented by only one individual. And surprisingly, only two robins and two goldfinches are included in the 141 total of species seen by our 45 observers.

Low numbers weren't the only feature of this year's count. We did have several exciting finds: 35 black scoters (only our 2nd count sighting) by Hunter, Canning, Hassee and Black; 2 dark phase short-tailed hawks (3rd count sighting) by Hope, George and Hendrickson; an adult bald eagle (2nd sighting) by Sykes and Ayers, and a peregrine falcon (2nd sighting) diving on a kestrel, by the Dowlings and Brooks.

Another 3rd count sighting was a solitary sandpiper by Eaton, Wilson, Dunn and Brindle; two more 2nd sightings - prothonotary warbler by the Eaton group and Brewer's blackbird by Alvarez, Hope and Langridge, and a 4th count sighting of a red-eyed vireo by Liberman.

Despite the cold weather and strong winds, Trotsky and Matthews tallied the high screech owl count with 12. On the coast, the Hunter group saw 88 great blue herons. The total number of birds counted was 24,554.

Saves (species seen by only one group) included common loon and gannets by Hunter party, indigo bunting by Trotsky and Matthews, Bonaparte's gull by McCall, Kilmer and Mueller, scrub jays by Parmalee, Korzenewski, Sandella and Barnett, broad-winged hawk by Clifford party, and various ducks by Sykes and Ayers.

Count Adventures-Past & Present

Most parties on our Christmas Bird Counts work throughout the day with few eventful distractions - or even minor ones such as someone forgetting binoculars, being investigated by the police, or stepping up to one's waist in mud. However, some bizarre happenings have occurred during the West Palm Beach CBCs. Once, several years ago, a well known local lady of shapely proportions stood briefly on an ant hill and had to strip to her own music of "ouches" and "ows." The two amused male observers didn't dare applaud, but the event sounded humorous to sympathetic listeners later.

On another CBC, Phil Weinrich was teasing a cottonmouth into its huffing and puffing display for his brother. Momentarily distracted, Phil lost visual contact with the angry snake. While trying to relocate it, Phil felt a sharp pain in his hand. He was struck. He knew he was struck. The culprit proved, however, to be only a wasp.

While getting out of bed long before dawn for this year's CBC, Ray Plockelman pulled a muscle in his back, which hampered his bipedal locomotion all day. Next, he awakened everyone in his household with screams as he spilled ice water all over himself while loading his cooler. Then, in the cold early morning, a nail punctured a tire and the cold tools gave Ray's hands a frosty thrill. At noon Ray discovered that someone had siphoned gas from his vehicle. To unify the day, he spilled Coca Cola on his binoculars and tape deck. So, before anything else occurred, Ray, instead of attending the compilation, returned to his bed to rest his back and his frazzled emotions. A simple day in the field occasionally can lead to bizarre adventures. (Howard Langridge)

1983 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Flagged by scattered showers, the 1983 West Palm Beach Christmas counters tallied 146 species and 3 yellow-headed parrots. The count average is slowly and inexorably slipping downward because of the planting of more and more acres every year that completely cover habitat areas. With this yearly crop of new housing developments, we can expect this continuous decline in results.

Although the White Pelican winters in Florida, the sighting by Clifford, Albera, Connolly and Hartranft (also seen by Hope) at Boynton Sewage Plant is our first ever for a Christmas Count in 26 years. The Clifford party also found a Horned Grebe, only our third count sighting, and a Cooper's Hawk. Sandella and Hartranft found 3 Scrub Jays.

The Dowling party, with Brooks, from Ft. Pierce recorded a sound count and a Grasshopper Sparrow. The Eaton party, with Palmer and Calmes, had good numbers of yellowlegs and two redstarts.

The Hope party, with George from Ft. Lauderdale, recorded the only Great Horned Owl, Western Kingbird, a Black-throated Green Warbler and the amazing number of 7 Least Flycatchers. Covering the condo beat, the Hunter party, with Janning and the Christians, added 30 Gannets.

The Langridge party, with Bolte from Ft. Lauderdale and Basham from Tennessee, saw 3 Black-throated Green Warblers, a Black-throated Blue Warbler and 4 Least Flycatchers.

The Liberman party, with Wilson, added Clay-colored Sparrows and a Barn Owl. The McCall party, with Palmer, Muller, Silverman and Rimberg, sighted 2 Dunlin and a Hermit Thrush. The Parmalee party, with Wagner and Korzenewski, saw a Yellow-crowned Night Heron. The Plockelman party, with Trumpower, sighted a Merlin and a Hermit Thrush.

The Schad party, with Guadagnoli, Dunn and Teahan, added the only Magnolia Warblers, Parulas, Reddish Egret and 6 Limpkin.

The Sykes party, with Takekawa and Flores at Loxahatchee Refuge, reported 98 American Bitterns, 77 Least Bitterns, 1200 Turkey Vultures in the air at one time, 42 Limpkins, a Virginia Rail, a Common Nighthawk, only our fourth count sighting, and a Wilson's Warbler.

The Trotsky-Matthews party used a tape to get Bachman's Sparrows to respond, counted only 32 Screech Owls (they started at 12:30 a.m.) and reported a Prothonotary Warbler, only the second count sighting. The Weinrichs, with Bryam, counted 3340 Laughing Gulls at the jump. (Howard Langridge)

CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

by Susan McKerny

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE VOLUNTEER WITH AUDUBON EVERGLADES

Do you have some free time to share? Would you like to get more involved with Audubon Everglades? We have plenty of volunteer opportunities and are sure to have a place where you can make a difference. Remember, YOU are what hope looks like to a bird - get involved!

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. If your interest area is not listed but you would like to volunteer, get in touch with us and let us know your interest. There are new ways to get involved all the time.

If you would like more information or are ready to get involved, please send an email to President@AudubonEverglades.org. We look forward to having you on our team!

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Community Science Projects

(bird surveys, habitat projects, etc.)

Community Events

Conservation Advocacy Team

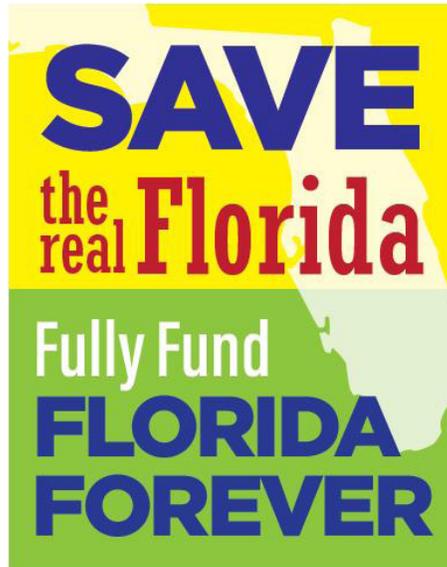
Education and Outreach

Social Media

Volunteer Organizer

SAVE REAL FLORIDA: CONSERVATIONISTS SEEK FULL FUNDING OF *FLORIDA FOREVER*

by Scott Zucker



Florida is growing by approximately 1,000 people a day. To provide housing for these newcomers, developers are gobbling up undeveloped land in rural areas that protect our springs, lakes, rivers, and wetlands and provide crucial habitat for native wildlife, birds, and flora. Once that land is developed, it is grayed by concrete and lost forever.

Hoping to save critical habitat in Florida from development, environmentalists gathered in

Tallahassee last month to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the passing of the historic Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, also known as Amendment 1, which was approved by 75% of voters. The amendment requires that the legislature set aside 33% of net revenue from the real estate document stamps into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund. This amounted to \$900 million last year. However, the legislature has diverted most of that money toward administrative and operational costs that previously came out of the general budget.

Environmentalists want legislators to spend that Amendment 1 money on land acquisition through the landmark program Florida Forever, which, when combined with its predecessor, Preservation 2000, has protected more than 2.5 million acres of land, making it the largest public land acquisition program of its kind in the United States.

For many years, approximately \$300 million dollars was allocated by the legislature for Florida Forever, but that all changed in 2009, when the Jeb Bush administration allocated zero dollars for the program. It was only in 2018, during the final year of his second term and his run for the US Senate, that Governor Rick Scott rebranded himself as an environmentalist, and \$100 million was allocated to the program. Last

year under Governor Ron DeSantis, the legislature allocated only \$34.5 million to Florida Forever.

Audubon Everglades recently joined 122 other Florida conservation-minded organizations in sending a letter to Governor DeSantis and the legislative budget leaders asking them for a “commitment today to pass legislation during the 2020 session that restores full funding for the Florida Forever land conservation program.” This would save more of the remaining one million plus acres of critical habitat still on the Florida Forever priority list. [Read our letter here.](#)

Join Florida Conservation Voters’ ongoing action asking Floridians to call their local legislators and urge them to set aside dedicated funding for Florida Forever. To have your voice heard, receive talking points, and speak to the legislators from your district, [simply click this link.](#) Type in your name, address, and phone number, and you will be connected to your State Senator and Representative.

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 available to members of Friends of Audubon Everglades. 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 ([make checks payable to Audubon Society of the Everglades](#))

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 \$ _____

New Member Renewal

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 _____

Gift a Friends of Audubon Everglades Membership!

