



# EVERGLADE KITE

## NEWSLETTER

Monthly Newsletter for Audubon Everglades

VOL 61 | Issue 11 | July 2021



Photo: Juvie Swanson's hawk flies while calling © Linda Hall

## Bird of the Month: Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)

by Clive & Celecia Pinnock

*The 2021 Bird of the Month Series focuses on twelve North American species requested by our Audubon Everglades members. Each month, information on the featured species will cover its description, range, habitat, food, and reproduction. This information will also be covered in the Bird of the Month Power Point presentation at each monthly meeting.*

The Swainson's Hawk is a raptor of the western plains and prairies of North America. This hawk, although a member of the group of raptors called *buteos* (which typically have stocky bodies and broad, rounded wings and tail), is more stream-lined with narrower, pointed wings. Plumage patterns are quite variable, often depending on the geographic region within the species' range. Those occupying the eastern portion of their range (east of the Rocky Mountains) tend to be lighter in color and pattern than their darker counterparts in the western parts of the range. Despite the plumage variability, most Swainson's Hawks are light-bellied birds with a dark or reddish-brown chest and brown or gray upperparts.

They have distinctive underwings with white wing linings that contrast strongly with black flight feathers. The darker members of the species vary from reddish to nearly all black with reduced contrast on the underwings.

The species generally inhabit open country comprised of grasslands, pastures, farmlands and prairies. As is typical of *buteos*, they spend much of their time soaring over these areas, looking for prey, with outspread tail and wings (held in V formation like Turkey Vultures). They may also be seen perched on fence posts, telephone poles, overhead agricultural irrigation sprinklers, or running around on the ground, chasing insect prey. Their diet during the summer breeding season is made up primarily of rodents (ground squirrels, gophers, mice, voles, and bats), rabbits, reptiles (snakes and lizards), and, occasionally, birds. However, during late summer, the fall migration, and on the wintering grounds in South America, there is a dietary shift to large insects (dragonflies, crickets, and grasshoppers).

Nesting season occurs during their summers in North America and commences with the male and female participating in extravagant aerial displays. Once the pair-bond is established, the pair sets about building a nest, with the male generally selecting the nest site. The bulky nest is typically placed in an isolated tree on the prairie, agricultural field with few trees, plains, or grasslands. The birds may also refurbish a previously built nest from the past nesting season or utilize the nest of a crow, magpie, or raven. They occasionally nest on cliff ledges as well, but this is rare. The pair becomes highly territorial during the nesting season, driving off other birds, including Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures.

The female lays two to four whitish-blue eggs with dark spots and incubates them for 28 – 35 days. The male brings food to the female during incubation. Both parents participate in caring for the young, which fledge about 38 to 46 days after hatching. The young may remain with the parents until the fall migration.

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

July 2021

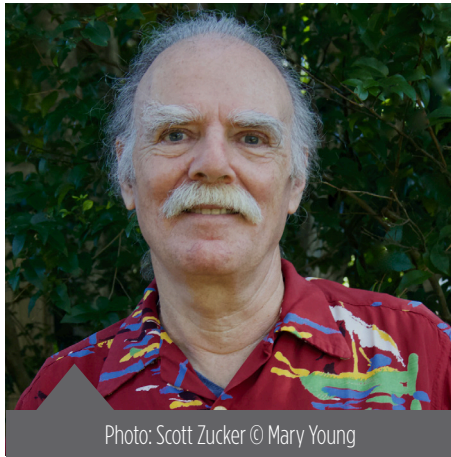


Photo: Scott Zucker © Mary Young

## Greetings, everyone!

Summer is now upon us! I hope that those of you who are summering in Florida are getting out occasionally to tend to your native plants and gardens, bird, and enjoy a semblance of normalcy as we all slowly resume activities that many of us may have taken for granted before the pandemic and missed during the lock-down. I also hope that some of you were able to participate in the June Challenge, and I look forward to the seeing the results from Palm Beach County.

## Tuesday, July 6 Zoom Monthly Meeting

This month's general meeting will feature biologist Captain Ryan Young of Rising Tide Explorers, who will be presenting on the *Magic of the Mangroves*, the unique coastal ecosystem that protects our shorelines in innumerable ways.

## Field trips to resume

Audubon Everglades is currently scheduling an assortment of birding, photography, and science-related field trips for this fall. These will be our first field trips since March of 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic began. We look forward to seeing familiar as well as new faces out in the field. The field trips will be listed on our Events Calendar, and we will be sending out emails to make you aware of upcoming trips.

## AE Photography Group concludes season

The AE Photography Group under the leadership of Jay Richard and Alan Chin Lee just wrapped up an outstanding season, in which they offered more programs, workshops, roundtables and critiques than ever before. While the Group will be taking a hiatus until September, they are currently busy scheduling a full array of programs for the upcoming season, which can be seen by [clicking here](#).

## Birding Backpacks win Award

We are excited to announce that the Palm Beach County Library System recently received the 2021 "Library Innovation" award from the Florida Library Association in recognition of their Birding Backpacks program created in 2019 in collaboration with Audubon Everglades. A number of Audubon Everglades volunteers worked with the Palm Beach County Library staff under the leadership of Ann Hocht, our AE Library Committee Chair at the time, to support and advise on this innovative effort.

## AE Plants for Birds Demonstration Garden at Busch Wildlife receives 2022 PBC NEAT Grant.

The Plants for Birds Demonstration Garden planned for the new Busch Wildlife Sanctuary facility on Indiantown Road in Jupiter, slated to open in March 2022, has received a \$9,100 grant from Palm Beach County. AE Vice-President Sabeena Beg, who has been championing the project, led the grant-writing effort along with Busch Wildlife Assistant Director Lisa Wynne and was assisted by AE Board Members Lauren Butcher, Mary Young, and myself.

## \$500 grant from AE to Elementary School

Audubon Everglades awarded Dwight D. Eisenhower Elementary School in Palm Beach Gardens a \$500 grant to support a native habitat improvement project on their campus and in the contiguous scrub area.

## New Intern

We are delighted to introduce a new intern who recently joined our volunteer staff at Audubon Everglades. Tammy Beltran is currently a student in the Master of Public Administration in Environmental Policy at Syracuse University and will be working in various areas with the Chapter. She is currently assisting Mary Dunning with the publication of the Everglades Kite and Sabeena Beg with various administrative duties.

## Amazon Smile

We continue to receive many donations from Amazon due to your use of their special Amazon Smile program when ordering. Please keep using this site. The donations do add up and are a great resource for us. To get started using Amazon Smile, simply go to Smile. Amazon.com, sign in, and indicate Audubon Everglades as your agency of choice. They will send us a percentage of your sales without your paying anything more. Thank you!

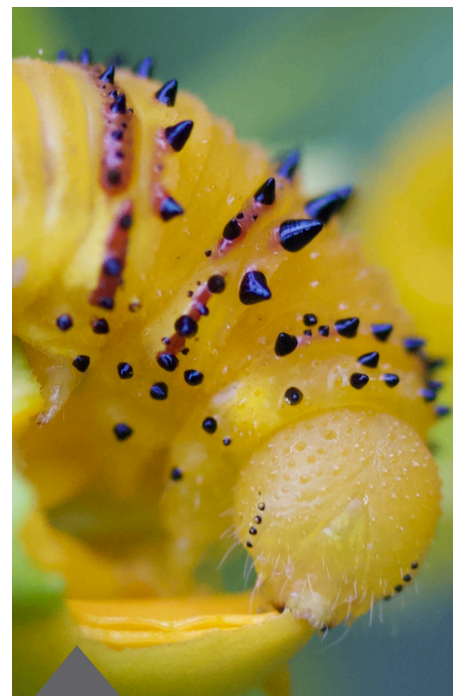


Photo: Orange-barred Sulphur, *Phoebastria philea*, (yellow morph) caterpillar feeding on Senna flowers  
© Mary Young

## REGISTER FOR NEXT SEASON'S AE PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

by Mary Young

The Audubon Everglades Photography Group (AEPG) wrapped up this season in June with a member's Photo Share.

Events are already being scheduled for our 2021-22 season beginning in September.

If you are an AE "Friends" member and would like to register now for next season's Photography Group, please email [aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org) and provide your name, phone number and email address. Registration includes participation in presentations, workshops, and field trips (when AE deems it safe) as well as the ability to submit images to the critique sessions and to post on our AEPG Facebook page.

To visit our Photography page, [click here](#).

To visit our AEPG Facebook page, [click here](#).

Membership in "Friends" of Audubon Everglades is required to be part of AE Photography Group. To join "Friends" of Audubon Everglades, please [click here](#).



# “Magic of The Mangroves”

Presented by Ryan Young, Environmental Scientist and Restoration Ecologist and Founder of Rising Tide Explorers

JUL  
06

Tuesday, July 6, 2021 at 7PM  
Zoom-Hosted Presentation

6:45-7PM Social time with fellow members and presenters



Photo: Paul Davis © Susan Davis

Join biologist Captain Ryan Young, Founder of [Rising Tide Explorers](#), and learn about the trees that make up the unique coastal ecosystem of the [Rookery Bay Research Reserve](#). The Reserve protects 110,000 acres of coastal lands and waters at the northern end of the Ten Thousand Islands on the Gulf Coast of Florida and is a prime example of a nearly pristine subtropical mangrove-forested estuary. In “Magic of the Mangroves,” you will learn about the unique adaptations of these forests and how they have come to define Southwest Florida’s Paradise Coast.

Ryan is the Founder and Lead Explorer of Rising Tide Explorers in Naples and Marco Island, Florida. He founded Rising Tide Explorers in 2016 to raise the bar of the ecotour industry in Southwest Florida by

providing high quality environmental education-based programming and access to a group of the most qualified guides in the region – 100% local biologists and science professionals. Rising Tide Explorers provides guided kayak tours, kayak rentals, boat tours, and educational programming. As the exclusive ecotour partner of the Friends of Rookery Bay, Rising Tide Explorers donates a portion of the proceeds from these adventures and programs to support the research, education, stewardship, and conservation efforts of the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Ryan holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from Florida State University and a master’s degree in Environmental Science focusing on wetland and restoration ecology from Florida Gulf Coast University. He is a level 2 American Canoe Association coastal kayaking instructor, a licensed US Coast Guard Master Captain, and a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association of Interpretation. Visit [risingtidefl.com](#) to learn more about their Ecotours in Naples and San Marco Island.

**Please click the link below  
to register for the meeting.**  
[Register now.](#)

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

Wax Myrtle *Morella cerifera* (formerly *Myrica cerifera*)

by Helen Laurence



Photo: Wax Myrtle blooming in late February at Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area © S. Laurence

If you can only plant one thing, and if you have room, plant a Live Oak tree. Oak trees provide a cornucopia of food and habitat for many birds, insects and small mammals in our region. But if you don’t have room for a live oak tree which after all can attain enormous height and girth during its long lifespan, plant a Wax Myrtle. Wax Myrtle is a shrub that can be maintained as a hedge or can be allowed to grow into a medium-sized understory tree that may attain a height of about 20 feet. Wax Myrtle is a wetland plant, and as such it prefers moist soil, but will do fine in dry locations even without irrigation once established. Apparently, it is able to do so because it is one of the few non-leguminous plants that has bacterial root nodules which add nitrogen to, and thus improve, the soil. It is dioecious, which means that the plants are either male or female; only the female plants bear fruit. The flowers appear in early spring and the fruit appears (hopefully) in time for fall migration.

The little blue waxy berries are attractive to many species of birds including the white-eyed vireo, gray catbird, Carolina wren, wild turkey and ruby-crowned kinglet, and most especially the yellow-rumped warbler, which was known at one time as the myrtle

*continued on page 4*

# AUDUBON EVERGLADES COMPLETES FINAL STAGES OF PLANTS FOR BIRDS GARDEN

by Mary Young and Lauren Butcher



Photo: Scott Zucker, President of Audubon Everglades  
© Mary Young

Audubon Everglades is completing the final stages of its new “Plants for Birds Native Habitat Teaching Garden” at FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center.

On May 29, volunteers from AE, FAU Pine Jog, Pan’s Garden of the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, and the Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society joined forces to plant over 175 Florida native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers in the new garden. Planting was the easy part – digging the 175 holes to accommodate them was a challenge!

Susan Lerner, Director of Horticulture at the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, and Jane Thompson of Indian Trails Native Nursery generously provided expertise and guidance on garden design and plant selection. Ms. Lerner also provided instrumental leadership, orchestrating all aspects of the garden’s installation.



Photo: Natasha Warraich, AE Board member  
and wildlife biologist © Mary Young

Established in partnership with FAU Pine Jog, the garden is designed to provide a model for local teachers, schools, and community organizations to demonstrate how they can use native plants to create living classrooms, educating students about the importance (and joys!) of providing native habitat for birds, butterflies, and other pollinators.

The project was made possible by an FPL/Audubon Florida Plants for Birds Program grant. These grant funds will also enable AE and FAU Pine Jog to host a workshop for Palm Beach County teachers next fall. With the garden as a focal point, these educators will learn first-hand about how they can create native “plants for birds” gardens on their own school grounds to benefit both students and wildlife.

So, if you enjoy gardening, The Native Habitat Teaching Garden needs volunteers to actively help with maintenance. Please email [Lauren@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:Lauren@auduboneverglades.org) for more information.

*Plant continued from page 3*

warbler because of its fondness for wax myrtle berries. According to a booklet entitled “Planting a Refuge for Wildlife: how to create a backyard habitat for Florida’s birds and beasts,” flocks of tree swallows have also been observed swarming to feed on the wax myrtle berries (p. 31). This worthwhile, comprehensive booklet, published by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, has been helpfully digitized by [University of Florida Smathers Libraries](http://UniversityofFloridaSmathersLibraries). It is also available for purchase from the [Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida](http://FishandWildlifeFoundationofFlorida).

Speaking of berries, George Rogers’ excellent blog, *Treasure Coast Natives*, notes that wax myrtle seeds won’t germinate unless they are de-waxed, and this happens in the guts of certain birds. He specifically mentions the yellow-rumped warbler, which favors wax myrtle fruits especially during migration when the waxy lipids in these berries provide valuable fuel. Rogers cites a 1993 Master’s thesis by Clarmarie Moss, who found that wax myrtle berries are tops in “optimal lipid profitability.” She also found that the range of the yellow-rumped warbler is directly related to [wax myrtle distribution](http://waxmyrtle.com).

Left to its own devices, wax myrtle is “self-pruning;” that is, branches die and eventually fall off the tree. But in the meantime, if dead branches don’t appeal to your landscape aesthetic, the wax myrtle also responds well to hand-pruning. In addition to its other marvelous qualities, it is the larval host food for the red-banded hairstreak butterfly. Finally, “...it is reported that wax-myrtle ‘repels insects, particularly fleas, and for many years, was planted around southern homes to keep the fleas out. A sprig in a closet or drawer will keep cockroaches out.’” (Rufino Osorio’s *A Gardener’s Guide to Florida’s Native Plants*: p. 201)



Photo: Wax myrtle foliage © S. Laurence



# PALM BEACH COUNTY LIBRARY IN COLLABORATION WITH AUDUBON EVERGLADES HONORED FOR BIRDING BACKPACKS

by Scott Zucker



The Palm Beach County Library System recently received the 2021 “Library Innovation Award” from the Florida Library Association in recognition of their Birding Backpacks program created in collaboration with Audubon Everglades. Each bright blue OGIO Fugitive Pack is embroidered with the logos of the library system and Audubon Society of the Everglades. A number of Audubon Everglades volunteers worked with the Palm Beach County Library staff under the leadership of Ann Hctor, our AE Library Committee Chair at the time, to support and advise on this innovative effort.

The Florida Library Association said of our award-winning partnership: “Library Innovation — The Palm Beach County Library System, in partnership with Friends of the Palm Beach County Library and the Audubon Society of the Everglades, created birding backpacks — kits with an adult pair of professional-grade binoculars, two children’s binoculars, wipes and a guide to Florida birds — in May 2019. Available in all 17 branches and the Bookmobile, these kits have circulated more than 270 times (3 week circulation period). As a result of its success, the library system has been sought out by other libraries around the United States to recreate this popular kit. Birding Backpacks are the culmination of a 40-year relationship with the Audubon Society of the Everglades and an enhancement to a collection of ornithological periodicals spanning decades and over 1060 monographs.”

# EagleWatch in Palm Beach County

by Linda McCandless



Photo: Adult and two juvenile Bald Eagles photographed on an aerial survey © Mark Cook

Since 2015, Audubon Everglades has participated in the Florida Audubon EagleWatch Program which began in 1992 in Central Florida and has expanded statewide. Through this program, volunteers monitor Bald Eagle nests and report their findings to an on-line database.

For the just completed 2020/2021 season, 19 volunteers monitored 24 Bald Eagle nests in Palm Beach County (PBC). Sixteen of those nests successfully fledged a total of 30 eaglets; one of those nests alone produced three eaglets! This data includes nests monitored in Dupuis WMA by their personnel.

Sadly, though, the mortality rate for Eagles during their first year of life is greater than 50%. Of the nests monitored in PBC this season, three of them suffered losses of an eaglet; in another two nests, the eggs failed to hatch for unknown reasons; Busch Wildlife Sanctuary is rehabilitating an eaglet which fell from yet another nest.

The recent nesting history at Grassy Waters is of particular interest. A nest located there was

destroyed by Hurricane Dorian in the 2019/2020 season. The Eagles rebuilt nearby but experienced a failed nesting, and then the tree supporting that nest fell as a result of a hail storm in April 2020. Therefore, the initial effort for this 2020/2021 season was to determine if and where a new nest would be established. Our dedicated volunteers discovered the new nest site in September 2020 and, in March 2021, they documented the successful fledging of two eaglets!

Thank you, volunteers! There is no EagleWatch program without you.

If you would be interested in becoming an EagleWatch volunteer, please send an email to the Palm Beach County EagleWatch Coordinator at [LindaM@AudubonEverglades.org](mailto:LindaM@AudubonEverglades.org). Bald Eagle nesting season runs from October through May. All new volunteers are required to go through training. You’ll be asked to visit your assigned nest every two weeks for at least 20 minutes per visit and submit observations to the EagleWatch database.

# PROFILE: SABEENA BEG

by Kristen Murtaugh

The availability of Zoom has made it possible for me to interview special people for these Kite Profiles during the pandemic and now, when I'm in Pennsylvania for the summer, and for that I'm grateful, but I am really looking forward to meeting some of the people I've gotten to know only online. One of these is Sabeena Beg, the new First Vice-President of the Audubon Everglades Board and the Chair of the Communications Committee.

Sabeena grew up in upstate New York, in the Binghamton area. She took a few classes at SUNY – Binghamton, where she planned to major in Advertising and Marketing. While there, however, she took a biology class as a science requirement, where one of her reading requirements was a book by David Attenborough, and that sent her in a completely new direction. Her father was a surgeon, so she had biology in her blood. She packed up and came down to Florida, where she enrolled at FAU and completed a major in Marine Biology and Zoology. She worked as an undergraduate research assistant in Dr. Lutz's Biology lab, where she was a part of a directed independent study of the effects of different sand types and temperature of sea turtle nestlings.

Sabeena is married to Dr. Mark Cook, who is the Scientific Section Lead of the Systemwide Everglades Research Group for the South Florida Water Management District and is also a wildlife and scientific photographer. Mark and Sabeena live in Jupiter Farms and have two daughters, Ameline, 9 years old, and Sehrish, 11 years old.

Sabeena has over 25 years of professional experience in the environmental field. She has extensive knowledge of marine and tropical terrestrial biology and has been involved in numerous ecological field monitoring projects. She also has many years of experience in science communication and graphic design.

Sabeena started her environmental career working at Palm Beach County ERM for Paul Davis as a Sea Turtle and Coastal Field researcher in the Shoreline Protection program. Paul Davis's environmental research is concerned with shoreline protection and sea turtle management. While working in Paul's department, her knowledge of local plants and shoreline bird identification soared, thanks to him.

For six years Sabeena was the Exhibits Coordinator for Gumbo Limbo. She used her artistic, advertising, and marketing skills as well as her knowledge of biology to create exhibits and signage. Gumbo Limbo has a strong sea turtle program. While she was at Gumbo Limbo, Sabeena earned an Environmental Executive MBA at FAU.

From Gumbo Limbo Sabeena went into the private sector as a project environmental scientist. She traveled frequently to the Bahamas in her work, which involved developing environmental assessments of marine and terrestrial life, insect life, animal life, and ecology. She worked with private resort development projects as well as municipal governments, and regulatory federal and state agencies.

She then took a position at St. Lucie County School District as a Grants Program Manager. Sabeena spoke enthusiastically about her involvement in helping to create exciting educational projects and programs for teachers in the St. Lucie County Schools. The district received a \$1 million Math Science Partnership (MSP) Grant from the National Science Foundation to teach science to teachers of grades K-12. The teachers participated in a one-year after-school enrichment program that gave them professional credits while increasing their comfort level in teaching math and science. Indian River State College partnered with the district and offered classes, which were similar to a Biology 101 class. During the summer they offered what they called the "Magic School Bus." The teachers went on field trips to visit natural resources, state and federal parks, and science and nature centers. To explore science learning opportunities throughout the state, they even visited Disney, where they learned about the many resources in science education available behind the scenes at the park, especially at Animal Kingdom and Universal Studios (I had to ask – it's physics at Universal!). The teachers also went to Loxahatchee NWR, where they participated in a workshop created for them and led by local scientists and biologists, in which they learned about the Everglades ecosystem and the LILA project and took informational canoe trips guided by staff. The MSP Grant lasted one year but was followed by a math grant for K-12 teachers, which was equally creative in its curriculum.

Sabeena continues to work as an independent contractor in both graphic design and websites for various businesses and organizations and ecological field surveys. She also spends time raising two little future scientists with projects of their own.

I asked Sabeena what inspired her to become active in Audubon Everglades. She told me that one aspect of her career involved bird surveys and identification. Birding and IDing birds were part of her profession. Birds are an important ambassador of conservation, and Audubon Everglades plays a large role in promoting important environmental messages in South Florida. One of her mentors has been her husband Dr. Mark Cook. He is also active in Audubon Everglades and serves on the



science advisory committee, as is Paul Davis, who is our longtime Sanctuary Chair and Chair of our new Science Advisory Committee. Paul recommended Sabeena to Scott as a possible board member, and, happily, the vote came in from the membership clinching her role as First Vice-President. In her role as Chair of Communications, Sabeena has oversight for the social media accounts of the organization. She is also involved in many of the programs sponsored by Audubon Everglades so that she can help them get the public attention they deserve. One of her first projects was with the Plants for Birds committee and her involvement with the creation of the Busch Wildlife plants for birds and wildlife garden. She is excited about the recent grant that the County awarded Busch Wildlife Center and AE to create a bird friendly garden as they move location. The Plants for Birds demonstration garden project will include native trees, plants and shrubs for birds and pollinators. The garden will have educational signage about the conservation of native plants and wildlife and how community members can incorporate this into their own yards and neighborhoods.

Sabeena is a strong believer in the mission of Audubon Everglades and wants to focus and promote diversity. She's a firm believer that an understanding and appreciation of nature can inspire societal change through birding, photography, nature programs and tours, and she also advocates more conservation programs and field trips. She would like to help develop family-oriented programs, create more opportunities for underprivileged children and help improve access for the differently abled.

I enjoyed chatting with Sabeena and feel she will be a valuable asset to Audubon Everglades. I invite all of you to welcome our new First Vice President. She's got the four Es that will make us a stronger organization: Experience, Expertise, Enthusiasm, and Energy!





## Pompano Beach Least Tern Colony – Thriving and Filled with Chicks

by Marcia Yeip and Chris Golia

We are fortunate to witness another successful Least Tern Colony in South Florida. Last year, the birds chose an area in Deerfield Beach that is normally crowded but was mostly empty due to COVID. In early May this year, the adult terns arrived from Cuba and South America to establish their nesting colony on a newly renourished section of Pompano Beach. They picked the perfect location - a nice wide beach without a lot of human traffic!

The colony has been nurtured and monitored by a group of volunteer Shorebird Stewards led by FWC volunteer (and AE Member) Ann Wiley and her assistant Chris Folkes. Ann and Chris spend countless hours at the colony, making sure the shifts are covered, talking to the residents in neighboring buildings, and warding off the most dangerous predators - feral cats. The area is cordoned off with bright colored tape and multiple signage with information for curious on-lookers. Ann says that support from AE members has been super - 7 of the 13 Stewards are members of AE! Way to go, team!

There is a lot of activity, and it is a birder's delight to watch this wonder of nature unfold. The adults scrape a shallow depression in the sand in which to lay their eggs, usually two or three. Incubation is by both sexes. In extremely hot weather, adults may dip into the water and wet their belly feathers to cool the eggs. Incubation is 23 to 25 days. The young leave the nest a few days after hatching, finding places to hide nearby. Both parents feed the young. Young birds are downy at first and can walk, but they stay close to the parents to be fed. The young take their

first flight at 19 to 20 days of age. The young birds may remain with parents another 2 to 3 months. Least Terns usually have one brood per year.

Watching the chicks grow and develop is pure joy. The little ones start out as fuzz-covered chicks about the size of a golf ball. They exhibit the classic, frantic baby bird wing-flapping behavior when the adults arrive with food. Their little wings, which look about an inch long, flap furiously as they scoot around the sand after the adult. Watching the adult settle on the nest and seeing the chicks' heads pop out under the adult's wing is heartwarming. The older chicks get braver and stronger and test their wings, hovering vertically at first, then making their first lap around the colony in the air. Starting as downy chicks, they grow into feathered chicks, then flight-capable chicks on their way to adulthood. The young birds and adults will forage for food by flying over the ocean, hovering, and plunging to catch prey just below the water surface. Sometimes they may catch insects in flight.

The current count is 350+ birds – adults and chicks of all stages. Breeding is still occurring, with 25 nests still active. The ending date is predicted to be in early August, when they will leave Florida and move to tropical waters as far south as Brazil.

Stewards are still needed to help with this project – mornings, afternoons, and even the “graveyard” shift of midnight – 6 am, when most of the colony incursions from feral cats occur. If you can help, please contact Ann Wiley at (954)805-3355.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECIPIENT OF GREEN SCHOOLS MINI-GRANT AWARD FROM AUDUBON EVERGLADES

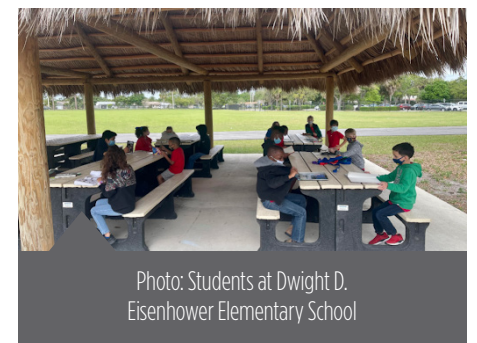
by Mary Young

Dwight D. Eisenhower Elementary School is the recipient of the Audubon Everglades \$500 Green Schools Mini-Grant Award. Each year, AE sponsors a participant in FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center's Green Schools Recognition Program.

The school will use the grant money to support their native habitat improvement project, “Feeding Our Gopher Tortoises.” With our funding they will “purchase native plants and supplies to improve native habitat on campus and in contiguous scrub area to support resident gopher tortoises, pollinators, and other native wildlife and involve students in habitat restoration, stewardship, and education, with a focus on gopher tortoises.”

Lauren Butcher, the Green Schools Recognition Project coordinator, FAU Pine Jog, said that the school looks forward to sharing the outcome and photos of this project with AE next fall.

Audubon Everglades is proud to continue to support the education of young people through hands-on experiences that promote conservation and stewardship.



**Join Friends of  
Audubon Everglades**