

Audubon Everglades

# EVERGLADE KITE

*Monthly newsletter for our invaluable members.*


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## BIRD OF THE MONTH: RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (ARCHILOCHUS COLUBRIS)

BY CLIVE & CELECIA PINNOCK

The only hummingbird to nest in eastern North America, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, measures 3.5 inches. It exhibits plumage varying from dark to bright emerald or golden green on its back and crown and has gray-white underparts. The wings are fairly short and don't reach the tip of the forked tail when the bird is sitting. The bill is slender and slightly down-curved. The male Ruby-throated Hummingbird's throat is iridescent red but looks dark, almost black, when it's not in good light.

During the summer nesting season, we can find Ruby-throated Hummingbirds throughout their range east of the Great Plains. We find them in gardens and woodland edges, meadows, grasslands, city parks, old fields, orchards, and backyards with an abundance of flowering plants. These provide the nectar and insects the birds need for survival and for rearing their offspring. Hovering in front of a flower to sip nectar, the hummingbird beats its

wings more than 60 times per second. Hummingbirds provide an essential service to the flowering plants in their area, cross-pollinating plants with visits to each flower. These precision fliers can fly straight and fast but can also stop suddenly, hover, fly backwards, sideways, and up and down with seemingly little effort.

Hummingbirds typically obtain the nectar in their diet from various red or orange tubular flowers such as trumpet creeper, cardinal flower, honeysuckle, beebalm, red buckeye, and red morning glory. They also obtain nectar from tree sap and from sugar water mixes provided in hummingbird feeders. They pluck insects from spider webs and foliage and from the air, and they take spiders and small caterpillars as well. After the male hummingbird establishes his territory, he sets about attracting a receptive female for mating. At the arrival of a female, the male courts her with a series of U-shaped flights that can extend up to 50 feet above the perched female.

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**OUR MISSION:**

EDUCATING AND INSPIRING PEOPLE TO  
CONSERVE WILDLIFE, ESPECIALLY BIRDS,  
AND THE ENVIRONMENT THAT  
SUPPORTS THEM.

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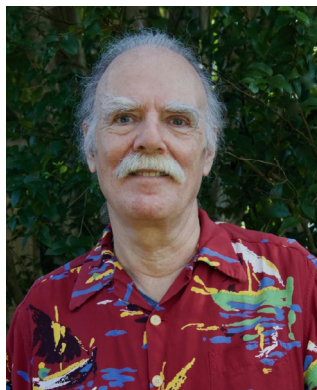
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## NOTE FROM PRESIDENT



Greetings!

I hope everyone is well and has steered clear of the Omicron variant. The prolonged pandemic has undoubtedly impacted your lives as it has my wife Mary's and mine, but it certainly hasn't impacted the loyalty of our Audubon Everglades membership. Our Friends of AE membership has remained steady throughout the past two years. Thank you for your continuing support of our Audubon chapter.

To ensure our continued health and success, the AE Board of Directors has met regularly and worked diligently throughout the course of the pandemic via Zoom on the fourth Thursday of the month, except during the winter holidays.

As board members of an all-volunteer non-profit organization, we all wear multiple hats. We chair and sit on the many AE committees that are integral to the work of our chapter (Programming, Communication,

Finance, Budget, Conservation, Education, Nomination, Plants for Birds, Outreach, Photography Group, and more). We volunteer at outreach events, lead or help with native planting and garden maintenance projects, lead field trips, administer and help host our Zoom monthly meetings and Photography Group meetings, write grants to support projects, help to provide content for and manage our website, social media platforms, and monthly Kite newsletter, and advocate for wildlife and habitat conservation. To continue improving what we do as an organization, we also attend Zoom workshops and conferences. I want to thank all of our AE Board members for their generous dedication in this challenging time.

Indicating how much you are enjoying our speakers, as well as the success of our expanded communication and programming efforts, our monthly Zoom meetings have become more popular than ever. In fact, they have more than doubled in size since we shifted to virtual meetings. When we first started airing our monthly Zoom meetings, we averaged about 65 viewing screens, but we have seen a steady rise in viewership this past year. Our last two meetings, which featured Dr. Carl Safina and Dr. Mark Cook, averaged 145 viewing screens!

Our February 1 meeting will feature a fascinating look at "Florida's Ice Age" with FAU archeologist Sara Ayers Rigsby and a summary of our Palm Beach County 2021 Christmas Bird Count effort by Chuck Weber. On March 8, the legendary Everglades photographer Clyde Butcher will be our presenter. Both meetings will include a review of important AE updates and related news and Clive and Cici Pinnock's popular monthly presentation of the Bird of the Month. We appreciate your continued interest and support for our meetings. Please let us know if there are areas you would like us to report on in more depth.

We hope you will join us at our monthly meeting on February 1 and look forward to seeing your faces at our social time before the start of the meeting!

Sincerely,

Scott Zucker  
President





## RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (CON'T)

He performs these in a "pendulum" arc and emits a whirring sound during each dive. The male also buzzes back and forth in short passes in front of the female.

The female selects the nest site in a tree or large shrub, usually 10 – 20 feet above the ground. The nest itself, built by the female, is a compact cup-shaped structure made of grasses, plant fibers, and spider webs and lined with plant down. Lichen and dead leaves camouflage the outside. The female lays two white eggs and incubates them for 11 – 16 days. She feeds and cares for the young by herself. As the young grow, the nest stretches to accommodate them. The young

are generally able to take their first flight at 20 – 22 days. Usually, one to two broods are established per breeding season. The female may sometimes begin building a second nest while still feeding young in the first.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are impressive migrants for their small size. Some have been known to travel from Canada to Costa Rica. abundant and prey availability thus high, a larger number of eggs are produced with a greater hatch and survival rate for the chicks. Correspondingly, in years of a lemming population crash (usually in four-to-five-year cycles), nesting success is poor or non-existent. Both parents care for the young are

for about 9 – 10 weeks. They can leave the nest at about 2 – 3 weeks of age and begin flying at about 7 weeks old.

*The 2021 Bird of the Month Series continues to focus on 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 is also included in the Bird of the Month Power Point presentation at each monthly meeting.*



PROGRAMS



JOIN



SOCIAL MEDIA

# AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

### BE PART OF AUDUBON EVERGLADES PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

By Mary Young

While "Friends" membership now includes participation in Audubon Everglades Photography Group (AEPG), mailings will only include limited photography information.

To receive all photography events information, including the ability to submit your photographs to critique sessions and to post on our AEPG Facebook page, please send an email to: [aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org) and provide your name, email address and phone number.

Please note that unless you send an email to register for Audubon Everglades Photography Group to the above email address, you will only receive partial information about our photography activities.

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



PLEASE  
VISIT THE  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
GROUP  
WEBSITE  
FOR  
UPCOMING  
PROGRAMS &  
WORKSHOPS

## FEBRUARY PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP SPEAKER



## THE MAGIC OF SWALLOW-TAILED KITES

PRESENTED BY MARGI HAAS

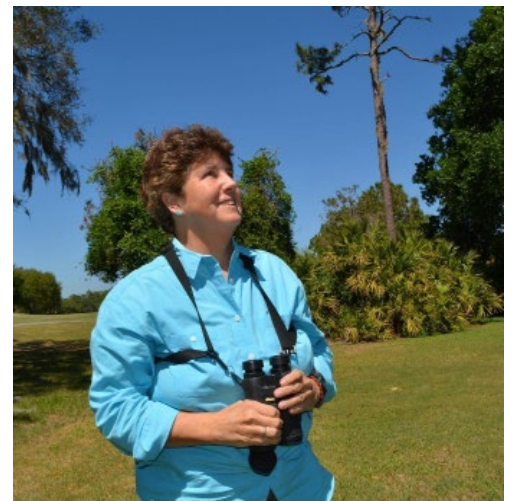
*Feb 21, 2022 Zoom 6:45 pm Social Time, 7 pm Program*

An avid birder, Margi Haas has found herself uniquely situated to closely observe Swallow-tailed Kites during her six-month annual visits to central Florida. These black and white forked-tail hawks are perhaps the most beautiful high-flying birds in North America, if you are lucky enough to see them! Through photographs and videos, she will show us rare footage of nesting and fledgling kites as well as adults soaring overhead and roosting communally in preparation for their migratory journeys to South America. In addition, she will share with us what she has learned over the years about their behaviors.

### BIO

Margi Haas is a Citizen Scientist studying Swallow-tailed Kites. But that was not always the case. After spending a year after graduating from high school in Switzerland, traveling through Europe and the U.S.S.R,

Margi majored in East Asian Religions and Philosophy at Stanford. She became intrigued with Japan, spent two years there immersed in the language, and spent two years more learning that she didn't want a PhD from Harvard in Japanese history. After spending seven years on Wall Street, she stepped out as an entrepreneur, starting her own 15-year headhunting business, mostly finding bilingual Japanese in Tokyo for Western companies. Along the way, she delved into many alternative healing arts, did much coaching and counseling, and became a Tibetan Buddhist. One of her latest adventures is birdwatching. Margi currently lives in Sarasota, FL, and is the Program Director for the Sarasota Audubon Society, a position which entails developing their monthly speakers program, locating speakers, and moderating their events live and remotely via Zoom. She is doing research on and



writing a book about her observations of America's beautiful hawk, the Swallow-tailed Kite. At our February 21st meeting, Margi will be sharing with us her insights and images of Swallow-tailed Kites.

## FEBRUARY PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP SPEAKER



## PHOTOGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR CONSERVATION

PRESENTED BY JOEL SUCH

**Feb 28, 2022 Zoom 6:45 Social time, 7 pm Program**

If you are a wildlife photographer, chances are that you care about the subjects you photograph and want to see them thrive in their natural environment. In this workshop, we will explore how your photographs can help protect species and their habitats by increasing environmental awareness, promoting conservation initiatives, documenting conservation efforts, and inspiring others to join the tide to protect biodiversity. We will cover topics such as capturing photos that tell a story and evoke emotion, crafting meaningful social media captions with a conservation message, documenting a conservation project, and creating a conservation photography project of your own that is both achievable and has the potential of making a positive impact. Photographers play a crucial role

in conservation efforts worldwide, and our natural world is counting on more photographers to channel their energy and talent towards making a difference in the world of conservation.

### BIO

Joel Such is a birder, artist/photographer, writer, guide, and field researcher from Lyons, Colorado. Growing up in the foothills of the Front Range, Joel's intense passion for the avian world was ignited by age two. Nationally recognized at age ten as the American Birding Association's 2008 Young Birder of the Year, Joel has pursued birds with unwavering devotion and has contributed to a wide range of biological field projects and environmental education. These experiences have included being a field technician for the

Second Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, field trip leader and guide for various organizations, a co-founder and leader for Boulder County Audubon Teen Naturalists, head designer for the bird mosaics on the Lyons Clarifier, and a bird bander for projects in Colorado, Ohio, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. Currently, Joel is pursuing a degree in conservation biology at Prescott College and lives part-time in Colombia, where he is a guide for Montezuma Rainforest Ecological Lodge at Parque Nacional Natural Tatamá.

## UPCOMING PRESENTERS 2022

**March 21, 2022 Critique: Categories – Nature and Conservation Photography**

**Guest Photographer: Carl Seibert** 7:00 pm ZOOM, 6:45 Social

**April 18, 2022 Program: Getting the Keeper**

**Guest Photographer: Don Hamilton** 7:00 pm ZOOM, 6:45 Social

**May 16th, 2022 Roundtable: Internal AEPG Photo Share and Summer Discussion**

7:00 pm ZOOM, 6:45 Social



## FEBRUARY FEATURED SPEAKER



**Sara Ayers-  
Rigsby**

## FLORIDA'S ICE AGE

FEATURING: SARA AYERS-RIGSBY

Florida has been a great place to live for over 10,000 years. With a cooler climate and roaming mastodons, Florida used to be much different place. Learn about how Florida's first people survived and thrived in this environment by counting on a paleo-diet (before it was all the rage), what birds were part of the landscape and how people used them, and how archaeological evidence helps tell the story of this long ago past.

### Bio

Sara Ayers-Rigsby specializes in cultural resources management and historic preservation. Prior to beginning her role as Southeast/Southwest Regional Director, she spent 10 years working as an archaeologist throughout the United States, with a regional focus on the archaeology of the southeast

and Mid Atlantic. She earned her M.A. in Archaeology for Screen Media from the University of Bristol, UK, and her B.A. in Classical Archaeology from Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. She is certified as a member of the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA). Her research interests include public outreach and archaeology, archaeological compliance legislation, and industrial archaeology in Florida. She loves visiting state parks, historical sites, and house museums in south Florida and is always thrilled to talk to others about them.

- Zoom Hosted Presentation
- Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 7PM
- 6:45-7:00 PM Social time with fellow members

[CLICK HERE  
TO REGISTER.](#)



## MARCH FEATURED SPEAKER

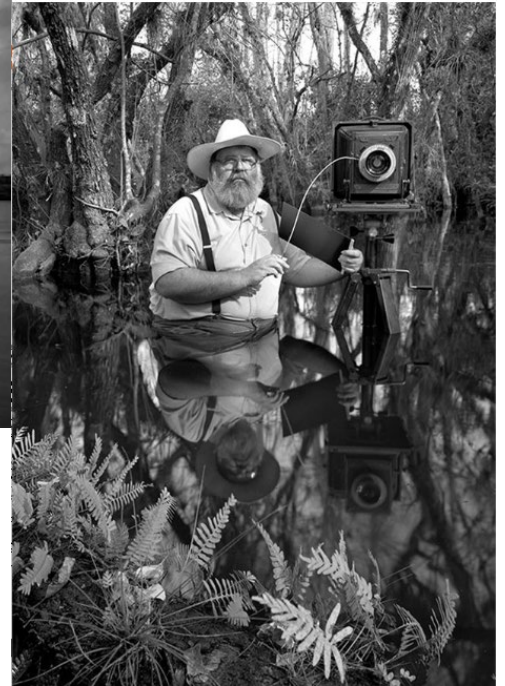


**MARCH 8,  
2022**

**7PM - 9PM**

**AUDUBON EVERGLADES PRESENTS:**

**AN EVENING WITH ACCLAIMED  
PHOTOGRAPHER CLYDE BUTCHER  
ZOOM HOSTED. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)**



### **Snail Kite Conservation**

Tyler Beck, Snail Kite Coordinator, Florida Wildlife Commission, presents on the status of Snail Kites.

Tuesday April 5, 2022  
7pm - 9pm

[Register here!](#)



### **Illegal Trapping of Songbirds**

Captain Jay Marvin of Florida Wildlife Commission Law Enforcement talks about efforts to stop illegal trapping of songbirds.

Tuesday May 3, 2022  
7pm - 9pm

[Register here!](#)



### **Red-cockaded Woodpecker**

Dr. Reed Bowman, Associate Research Biologist, Archbold Biological Station discusses his research focused on the conservation and management of the Red-cockaded woodpecker.

Tuesday June 7, 2022  
7pm - 9pm

[Register here!](#)

# VOLUNTEER



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY: VOLUNTEER WITH AUDUBON EVERGLADES

BY SCOTT ZUCKER

Become actively involved in AE and support our mission to inspire and educate others to conserve wildlife and the environment. Help ensure that future generations can enjoy all the wonders that nature has to offer! We have plenty of volunteer opportunities and are sure to have a place where you can make a difference. If you have a special interest or talent or simply want to give to the community as an Audubon Everglades volunteer, please check this list of volunteer opportunities.

If your interest area is not listed but you would like to volunteer, get in touch with us by contacting us at [info@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:info@auduboneverglades.org)

# CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPENINGS

## Plants for Birds Garden Stewards

Volunteer gardeners or plant lovers are needed to help once a week or so for a few hours in the Audubon Everglades Plants for Birds Teaching Garden at FAU Pine Jog Educational Environmental Center in West Palm Beach. Tasks may involve weeding, pruning, plant identification, watering, transplanting, and mulching to help the garden thrive. Training will be provided. If you are interested, please contact Lauren Butcher at [lauren@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:lauren@auduboneverglades.org).

## Purple Martin Stewards

Volunteers are needed to support our ten Palm Beach County Purple Martin partner locations by assisting with public outreach, education, housing, etc. No previous knowledge of Purple Martins is required. All that is required is a desire to learn and a passion to make a positive change for Purple Martin conservation. Shelly Rozenberg, our Purple Martin Project Coordinator, guarantees that volunteers will fall in love with these unique and social birds! Please contact Shelly at [shellyrozenberg@bellsouth.net](mailto:shellyrozenberg@bellsouth.net).

## Community Outreach

Assist with other volunteers in staffing the Audubon Everglades Display booth at local events and festivals. Have fun interacting with the public while providing valuable education about birds and the environment. Experience or prior training is not necessary, and all materials/information are provided. Please contact us at [info@auduboneverglades.org](mailto:info@auduboneverglades.org) for more information.







## AUDUBON EVERGLADES FIELD TRIPS

Please join us on our Audubon Everglades field trips. Most trips are led by volunteer Audubon Everglades leaders. Unless otherwise indicated, they are free and open to the public. When you arrive, we will have our usual sign-in sheet with some additional CDC practices we need to follow.

With safety in mind for all participants and trip leaders at AE sponsored and led field trips during the Covid-19 pandemic, Audubon Everglades recommends that face masks be worn and social distancing be practiced. Audubon Everglades also recommends that you stay home if you have a fever, cough,

shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, or new loss of taste or smell. Audubon Everglades Field trip leaders reserve the right to refuse those who exhibit these symptoms.

Please see our [Calendar](#) for more trip details and updates.

### FEBRUARY 2022

#### **2/5 Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **2/12 Wellington Environmental Nature Preserve**

*Field Guide: Mary Dunning*

#### **2/12 Pine Glades Natural Area**

*Field Guide: Dr. Mark Cook*

#### **2/13 Green Cay Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **2/19 STA 1-E**

*Field Guide: Kenny Miller*

#### **2/20 STA 5/6 Hendry-Glades**

*Field Guide: Bob Hartmann*

### MARCH 2022

#### **3/4 Green Cay Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **3/5 STA 5/6 Hendry-Glades**

*Field Guide: TBD*

#### **3/6 Birding Class: Ascend to Be a Better Birder**

*Field Guide: Paddy Cunningham*

#### **3/13 Indian Trails Improvement Area**

*Field Guide: Ranger Booth*

#### **3/16 Jonathan Dickinson State Park Scrub Jay Walk**

*Field Guide: Jim Howe*

#### **3/18 Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **3/19 STA 1 West Expansion**

*Field Guide: Brian Garrett*

#### **3/26 Peaceful Waters Sanctuary**

*Field Guide: Scott Zucker*

### APRIL 2022

#### **4/3 Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **4/16 STA 5/6 Hendry-Glades**

*Field Guide: Hendry-Glades Staff*

#### **4/20 Jonathan Dickinson State Park Scrub Jay Walk**

*Field Guide: Jim Howe*

#### **4/23 - 4/24 Ft. DeSoto Overnight**

*Field Guide: Paddy Cunningham*

#### **4/23 Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

### MAY 2022

#### **5/9 Pelagic Tour**

*Field Guide: Dr. Mark Cook*

#### **5/14 Green Cay Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

#### **5/18 Jonathan Dickinson State Park Scrub Jay Walk**

*Field Guide: Jim Howe*

#### **5/22 Wakodahatchee Wetlands**

*Field Guide: Valerie Brauer*

### JUNE 2022

#### **6/1 - 6/30 June Challenge**

*Organizer: Vicki Rogerson/Paula Gatrell*

*Morus rubra*

Photo by John R. Park

## PLANT OF THE MONTH: Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*)

-By Helen Laurence

I first saw a red mulberry tree in the early 1980s at Mounts Botanical Garden in West Palm Beach. It was love at first sight. It was late summer, hot and humid. The leaves were big and lush, so it was pure pleasure to stand beneath it in deep shade. The tree was beautifully shaped with a graceful, mounded crown. And it was native! Thus began my 40+ year love affair with *Morus rubra*.

Several years later, we started our garden on five acres west of State Road 7. One of our first purchases was a red mulberry tree. We gave it pride of place at the end of the garden, next to the driveway, so it was the first thing we would see as we approached the house. By the end of the first year, we had learned a few important lessons. First, the mulberry tree is deciduous. It drops its leaves in winter, so the first thing we (and our human snowbird guests) saw as we approached the house was a bare snag. Second, the mulberry tree is messy. It drops all those big leaves and all the fruits not eaten by birds, so our driveway was constantly stained purple. Third, and most importantly, you have to do your homework. Collect all available information about the plant you are considering. In this case, UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions from the University of Florida at [https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/mulberry.html)

[and-shrubs/trees/mulberry.html](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/mulberry.html) would have been a good place to start. There we would have learned that mulberry trees "can have male and female flowers on the same plant (monoecious) or different plants (dioecious)... If you select a dioecious type, be sure you plant both a male and female tree to insure fruit production." I guess our tree was monoecious since it faithfully bore fruit with no other mulberry trees in the vicinity. Finally, adhere to the cardinal rule of garden design, "Right Plant, Right Place."

The red mulberry is a wonderful tree for birds and wildlife and so lovely in appearance that it can be used as a specimen tree. Had we known it was so messy, we would have placed it away from any paved surface and in a mixed-tree planting.

According to Kushlan and Hines in "Attracting Birds to South Florida Gardens," the red mulberry is a superior bird plant. It naturally occurs as a 30-40-foot-tall hammock tree in South Florida. Its flowers attract many insects and, thus, many insectivorous birds, especially vireos, warblers, and flycatchers. The luscious purple fruit is irresistible to birds such as the Downy, Red-bellied, and Pileated Woodpeckers, doves, Eastern and Gray Kingbirds, Great Crested Flycatchers,



## PLANT OF THE MONTH (CON'T).

mockingbirds, catbirds, thrashers, cardinals, jays, crows, grackles, titmice, Carolina Wrens, tanagers, and orioles. Other wildlife, including opossums, raccoons, and squirrels, benefit as well. Once the fruit falls, quail and box turtles may gobble it up.

Perhaps you can guess how the mulberry love affair ended. Like many human love affairs, it did not end well. Before we chopped down that lovely tree, there were Downy Woodpeckers nesting in our garden, and the unmistakable call of the Carolina Wren resounded in the spring. Now we rarely see a Downy or hear a Carolina Wren. But we have plans to replace that red mulberry with one in a more suitable location. It is relatively fast growing and tolerant of sun or shade, dry or moist conditions. In the meantime, I still visit that mulberry tree at Mounts Botanical Garden, and you can, too. It's on the south sidewalk by the Wetlands near the pump house. There are also some different Mulberry varieties in the Vegetable Garden at Mounts, non-native, but with fruit equally attractive to birds. Check them out!

*Helen Laurence is a regular contributor to Audubon Everglades. A Master Gardner who loves plants, birds, and butterflies, Helen has a lavish native plant garden on her five acre property bustling with birds and butterflies. Helen also volunteers at our recently established Native Habitat Teaching Garden at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center.*



VISIT US AT

[WWW.AUDUBONEVERGLADES.ORG](http://WWW.AUDUBONEVERGLADES.ORG)