

BIRD OF THE MONTH

A SERIES THAT FOCUSES ON NORTH AMERICAN SPECIES REQUESTED BY OUR AUDUBON EVERGLADES MEMBERS.



PLANT OF THE MONTH

A SERIES THAT FOCUSES ON NATIVE PLANTS AND THIER BENEFITS TO NATURE AND WILDLIFE.



LATEST NEWS

READ UP ON THE LATEST AUDUBON EVERGLADES NEWS, EVENTS AND NOTICES



Featured Presenter

CAPT. JAY MARVIN:
MIGRATORY SONGBIRD TRAPPING
IN SOUTH FLORIDA

FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (FWC) OFFICER

CONTINUED TO P. 09

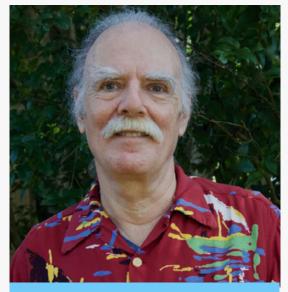






GET OUTDOORS: HOW CONNECTING WITH NATURE CAN RECHARGE YOU

Become actively involved in Audubon Everglades 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, get in touch with us by contacting us at info@auduboneverglades.org



PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Greetings!

I hope that everyone is thriving and enjoying the sounds, sights, and flurry of activity that accompany breeding season in South Florida. It's a wonderful time to visit easily accessible wetland habitats like Wakodahatchee (Be patient as you wait for a parking spot there!) and any of the PBC Natural Areas or to enjoy the avian activity in your own backyard, where I hope you have been able to plant native species. Also, be sure to look for the Purple Martin hatchlings and fledglings at most of the eleven locations in PBC that AE volunteers led by Shelly Rozenberg advise, support, and

probably heard, American
Flamingos returned to STA-2 for
the first time since 2018, and
Audubon Everglades was
fortunate to be able to offer two
Flamingo Quest tours to the area
in conjunction with the South
Florida Water Management
District (SFWMD). Read more











PRESIDENT'S NOTE (CONT.)

by Scott Zucker

Unlike previous years, when we were able to offer more trips, this year we were restricted to two because extensive heavy construction is currently underway in the area, and District staff had to be present to lead and coordinate with construction personal. Participants wielding binoculars and cameras and generously sharing scopes were able to see and photograph four Flamingos on April 9 and two Flamingos on April 16. In addition, the rarely seen Ruff was also spotted on both occasions. All donations from the Flamingo Quest trips will go to the Flamingo Working Group

We are grateful to the SFWMD for their continuing partnership with AE and for allowing us to host these trips, We thank SFWMD personnel Dr. Mark Cook, Natasha Warraich, and Brian Garrett for volunteering their personal time to lead our Flamingo Quest adventures, and AE Field Trip Coordinator Paula Gatrell for her hard work organizing the trips.

The Annual General Membership Meeting was held on April 5 and Friends of Audubon Everglades unanimously approved the 2022-23 annual budget and the 2022-24 slate of Board Officers. Congratulations to new Board of Directors members Charlotte Nevell, who will become our new Conservation Co-Chair, and Theresa Beermann, who will succeed outgoing Board member Cathy Hanson as Recording Secretary. In addition, Louann Dillion will return as Treasurer, Natasha Warraich will become Second Vice President, and Susan Kennedy, Michelle Bachoon, and Autumn Kioti will continue as Officers. Thank you, Natasha Warraich, for chairing the Nominating Committee and putting together this year's impressive slate of officers, and thank you, Louann Dillon, for drafting this year's comprehensive budget.

Zoom Program Meetings continue. I hope that you tuned in for our April Monthly Meeting, when FWC Snail Kite Coordinator Tyler Beck shared the current success story of "Snail Kite Conservation" in Florida.

At our May 3, 2022 Monthly Meeting, Captain Jay Marvin of FWC Law Enforcement will address the dynamics surrounding "The Illegal Trapping of Songbirds." Be sure to register https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsfuigqD8jG9HK2pLTDyjvWKUxD1quNUhT

Our AE Photography Group's May 16 Presentation will be an AE member "Photo Share and end of the Season Social." If you are an AE member and wish to submit your photos, please read the AEPG article in this Kite issue about the process for submission. To get more involved in our photography group, please contact AEPG aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org

Anyone can join us for our Photo Social by registering in

Zoom https://uso2web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZElfumtqTouEgAUAhyxTX4J-JdBCzAnZvCK

In case you missed one of our AE Monthly Meetings or Photography Group programs or you wish to view them again, please visit our AE YouTube channel.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGouyWb_SVROovvA2hhZapg

We hope you will join us at our May 3rd Monthly Meeting, and we look forward to seeing you at our social time before the start of all our meetings!



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











By Kristen Murtaugh

Helen Laurence has been writing the Plant of the Month column for the Audubon Everglades Kite newsletter for about a year and a half now. I have been enjoying "chatting" with her by email as I've proofread her excellent articles. My own native plant garden has benefited from her tips and now includes species I was inspired to plant from her descriptions of them. I was happy when she agreed to be interviewed for a profile in this month's Kite.

Helen was born in Brooklyn, New York and moved to Cambria Heights in Queens when she was three. From an immigrant and first-generation tenement setting, the family now lived in an idyllic, leafy green suburban area. They had a backyard, and Helen was introduced to the magic of gardening. The time she spent every year at her aunt's summer cottage in Croton-on-Hudson, a small village on the Hudson River in Westchester County north of NYC, was another formative experience. In contrast to NYC, the village was still quite rural then, with unpaved roads and woods to explore.

At 16 Helen went off to Radcliffe College, where she majored in Social Relations. She went on to get a master's in education at Harvard and then an EdD at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She met her husband Scott at a yoga class in Worcester MA, where he was studying for a doctorate in neuroscience at Clark University. They were married in 1974 in Worcester and moved to St. Croix, where Scott's parents lived and where he had gone to high school. Their son was born in St. Croix, and they lived there together for 12 years. Helen's parents lived in South Florida then, and in 1985 they decided to move here to be closer to them. Helen had loved her job in a public library in St. Croix, so she enrolled in the master's in library science program at the University of South Florida. She was hired by Florida Atlantic University, where she worked for 23 years as a Reference, Systems and Technical Services Librarian.

When they moved to Florida, Helen and Scott bought a five-acre homestead east of Wellington. They built their house there and started gardening. They began (like probably most of us do!) by planting lots of plants they didn't know anything about. Over the years, they pulled out many non-native plants and started over with natives in support of their efforts to reestablish native habitat. After Helen retired, she enrolled in the Master Gardener class at the Mounts Botanical Garden and took Florida Naturalist classes.

Helen's connection to Audubon Everglades began when she and her husband Scott took the AE Conservation Stewardship Training course in 2018. She is enthusiastic about the course and its field trips and called it a peak experience. When they realized that Friends of AE got priority on some of the more popular field trips, she and Scott joined the organization and have become active members. Besides writing her monthly article about one of the South Florida native plant species, Helen has assisted in the development of the Audubon Everglades Plants for Birds project at Pine Jog.

Helen volunteers regularly in the Butterfly Garden at the Mounts Botanical Garden, and she is an active member of the Palm Beach County chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS). She and Julia Renninger, a fellow Master Gardener, have organized "Botanizing Morning" walks open to members of FNPS. Each month up to

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT (CONT.)

by Kristen Murtough

twelve participants explore a natural area with Julia and Helen to discover and identify the native plants in that habitat. The sites have included Royal Palm Beach Pines Natural Area, Juno Dunes Natural Area, Hypoluxo Scrub, and Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. Before the walk Helen and Julia explore the targeted area and make a list of the plants they see as a guide for the participants.

Helen and her husband love to travel. At the end of April this year they set off for a lengthy trip to Scandinavia. They will spend May in Stockholm, visiting their son, a video game designer living there now. They will then spend ten days in Denmark and a month in Iceland. The last four years they spent the summer months in their camper, visiting friends on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State.

When Susan Lerner was president of the local FNPS chapter, Helen once heard her say about native gardening, "This is what you can do to save the world." Those words inspired Helen and made her realize that we do have agency, the capacity to act, the ability to make a positive difference in sustaining the health of the natural world. Helen quoted Susan's words to me twice in our conversation. I was moved by them but perhaps moved even more by something Helen herself said. In talking about the AE Conservation Stewardship Training experience, she said, "Nature never disappoints." Helen's excellent articles about native plants never disappoint. That is due not only to the wealth of knowledge she imparts about them but also to the warmth and enthusiasm with which she writes about the plants and her personal experience growing them in her garden.







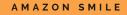






Photo by Helen Laurence

Plant of the Month: Pineland Passionflower (Passiflora pallens)

BY HELEN LAURENCE

Some six years ago, when Tom Hewitt was the nursery manager at Mounts Botanical Garden, he propagated many unusual native plants, among which was an unprepossessing, scraggly little vine. I was not enthused, but Tom said the magic words: "rare and endangered." I took it home, and all these years later, our Passiflora pallens (known also as pale passionvine or pineland passionflower) is still going strong, now in its fourth generation. Not only is this lovely vine on the Florida state endangered list but it is designated as "Imperiled" by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory and the Institute for Regional Conservation. Its native habitats include rockland hammock, coastal berm, strand swamps, and roadside thickets in strand swamps, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory. Judging from its vigorous growth and habit of spreading in our garden, the only reason it became endangered is most likely due to widespread habitat loss throughout its native range in South Florida.

This is why we native plant gardeners do what we do. Every time we introduce and nurture a native plant, we do our part to re-establish critically threatened, disappearing native habitat. This benefits birds, insects, the plant community, and the wider ecosystem. When we plant for birds, it's "birding with a purpose – a chance to make a contribution to conservation," according to ornithologist Kathryn J. Schneider, quoted in an article by New York Times In the Garden writer Margaret Roach (April 6, 2022). Roach is participating in the New York State citizen science-supported Breeding Bird Atlas. She describes it as "a chance to learn about the lives of birds, sharpening our observation skills along the way. And isn't that the best part of gardening – the way it connects us to the wider world?"

The pineland passionflower is just one small link in the great chain of being that starts with the soil in our gardens. The profuse, showy, 2-inch flowers fade after one day, soon to be replaced by plump green 2-inch fruits which turn yellow and fragrant when ripe. These are filled with pulp and seeds attractive to many birds and mammals. As a result, seedlings will pop up throughout the garden far from the original plant. These are not long-lived plants, generally lasting about two years, but because they replant themselves liberally, you may always have a specimen in your garden. The birds will enjoy the fruit while you enjoy the marvelous blossoms!

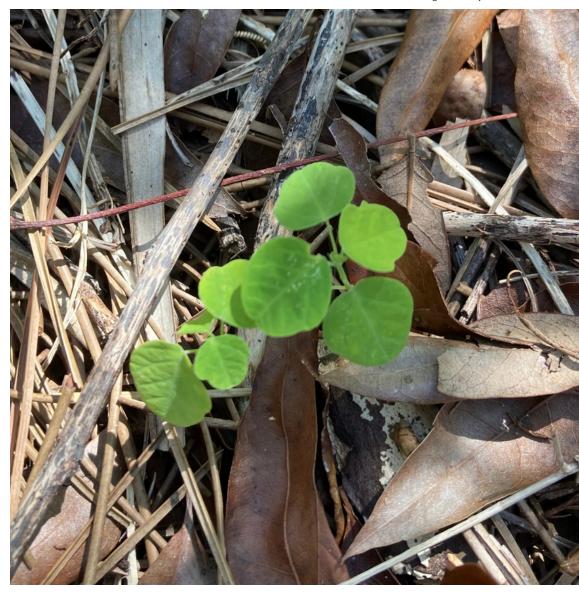


Pineland Passionfruit. Photo by Helen Laurence

The greatest challenge is finding pineland passionflower in a native plant nursery. According to the Florida Association of Native Nurseries, a nursery in Broward County may have some (https://www.plantrealflorida.org/plants/detail/passiflorapallens), but a search on their website shows no P. pallens in current inventory. A better bet would be to call around to native plant nurseries in Palm Beach County and ask about availability or haunt meetings of the Florida Native Plant Society in case any P. pallens plants appear in monthly raffles or regular plant swaps and sales. Best of all, find a friend with pineland passionflower in their garden, because chances are excellent that they will have volunteer seedlings for you to dig up and take home.

Helen Laurence is a regular contributer to Audubon Everglades. A Master Gardener 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.

















Bird of the Month: California Condor – (Gymnogyps californianus)

BY CLIVE AND CECELIA PINNOCK

The iconic but endangered California Condor, measuring 47" long with a wingspan of 108", is the largest bird in North America and is grouped with Black and Turkey Vultures as New World Vultures. The characteristic features linking the condor with the other vultures are the small, unfeathered head, neck, and hooked bill which aid the bird in consuming carrion. The carcasses of deer, pigs, cattle, sea lions, whales and other animals make up the diet of this prehistoric-looking bird.

Adult birds are predominantly black with striking white wing linings, which are more obvious when viewed from below while the bird is in flight. The wings are exceptionally long and broad, with long primary feathers which give a fingered look to the wing tips, and the short black tail is held widespread in flight. The naked head and neck are yellowish-orange, and the feet are gray. Immatures have dark heads, grayer necks, and mottled gray instead of clear white patches under the wings. Adult coloration is reached at 6 – 8 years of age. The California Condor's habitats range from Pacific beaches to mountain forests and meadows. As air thermals rise off the cliffs they occupy, the birds set out on aerial surveillance, looking for the carcasses of dead animals. Their flight is made effortless on their broad outstretched wings that enable them to glide for hours without flapping.

Dangerously low population numbers (22 birds) were reported in the 1980s, due to lead poisoning and illegal shooting. In response to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service initiated recovery activities to capture all remaining wild condors to breed them in captivity for eventurelease to the wild. The captive breeding program was surprisingly successful, and by 2014, flocks of released condors were occurred to the skies in sections of Arizona, central California, Utah, and Baja California.

Although highly social, forming groups around carcasses, bathing sites, and roosts, pairs separate at the onset of the breeding season to establish a nesting territory. The breeding age for wild condors seems to be about 7 years. Pairs are monogamous. Courtship involves coordinated pair flights, mutual preening, and displays. Nests are placed in caves on cliff faces in mountains up to 6,000 feet in elevation. They are also occasionally placed in trees, such as coastal Redwood and, historically, the giant Sequoia. Having the potential for multiple nest sites, the pair may change sites between years. The female makes the final decision on which nest site will be used. Mated pairs share nesting duties nearly equally, staying together throughout the year. The nest, placed on a flat surface, may be made of stones, debris, or gravel. One whitish egg is laid and incubated by both adults for about 56 days. The pair trade places every 1 – 5 days and rarely take shifts up to 9 – 10 days.

Both parents care for the young, bringing it partially digested and regurgitated food. After 5 – 6 months, the young condor is capable of flight. However, it may remain dependent on the adults for an additional six months, extending the nesting period to more than one year. Due to this extended period, most adult pairs skip a nesting season before attempting to nest again. Condors can live to be 60 years or older.

The 2022 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.

DON'T MISS OUR MONTHLY VIRTUAL PROGRAMS!



MONTHLY PROGRAM

The Illegal Trapping of Songbirds

Captain Jay Marvin: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Officer

Captain Jay Marvin will talk to us about the widespread illegal trapping of songbirds in South Florida. He will describe what FWC has been doing to stem the activity, show us the types of illegal traps used to capture birds, and tell us how we can support FWC's efforts to protect our wild bird population from being mistreated and sometimes killed or injured when illegally trapped.

Besides the daunting challenges migrating passerines face from natural predators and the forces of nature along their perilous journey, these songbirds must also contend with unscrupulous poachers who use illegal traps to capture and sell them on the black market, fetching hundreds of dollars.

While the Migratory Bird Act makes trapping songbirds illegal in the United States, a profitable black market in songbirds continues to thrive, particularly in South Florida, where the birds are kept for their beauty or for use in illegal singing competitions. Fortunately, in 2019, FWC passed a new regulation that makes it easier to charge and prosecute unscrupulous songbird poachers.

If you see instances of illegal trapping, you can report it to the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922) or by email or text to Tip@MyFWC.com.

We offer a variety of informative and educational programs at our virtual monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. These Programs are free to our members and the public.













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FEATURED PROGRAM

AEPG Member Show & Tell Meeting

6:45 PM Social 7:00 PM Presentation May 16, 2022

LEARN MORE



Enjoy our monthly programs and events



Brush up on your skills with one of our Guest Expert Photographers.



Join our discussion and post your photos





Why Share

Long-standing members of Audubon Everglades (AE) may remember that we used to hold an annual ice cream social and nature photo share meeting every summer. AE members would bring their photos on a flash drive, and the coordinator would load all the photos onto a laptop and present them. When their photos were displayed, the members would briefly describe (or not, if they preferred to remain silent) something about the photos - where it was taken, what made the captured moment special, etc. If the audience had questions, they could ask them, and the total time for each member sharing a photo was limited to a few minutes so that there was enough time for all. Unfortunately, Covid suspended that social gathering.

Since our meetings remain in the Zoom zone, we must forgo the ice cream part, but the AE Photo Group would love to host a Photo Share

FEATURED PROGRAM

AEPG May 16 Member Show & Tell Meeting

6:45 PM Social 7:00 PM Presentation

JOIN NOW

meeting and invite all members to participate. Zoom is convenient on many levels. People can watch programs and even ask questions in the "chat room" wherever they have a laptop or smartphone. Zoom does fall a bit short on group discussions, the social element. We are, after all, a gregarious lot who enjoy sharing our sightings and our adventures, and we've lost a lot of that connectedness in Zoom.

What to Share

We'd like to recapture a bit of that two-way exchange by offering an opportunity for us to share a few of our favorite birding, wildlife, nature, and conservation photos that we may have captured while we've been apart and to talk a bit about what makes them special to us. Again, as before, no more than a few minutes of "telling" about no more than three photos to make sure everyone who wants to can participate.

How to Share

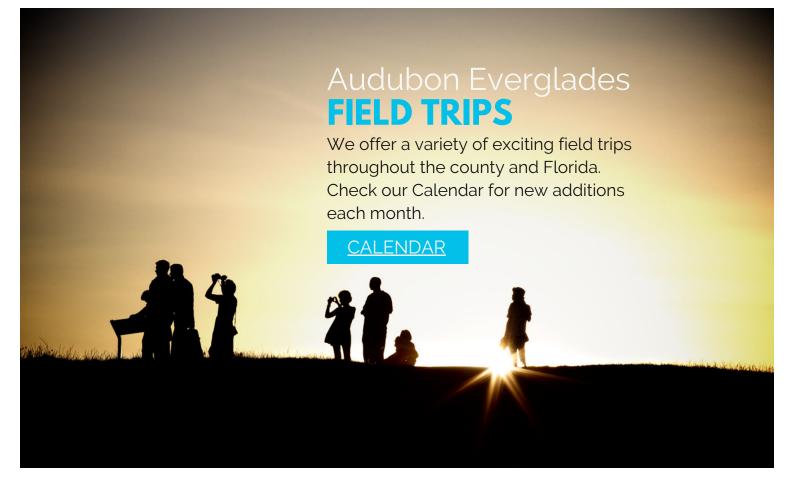
We use software called PhotoContestPro, not for judging photo contests, but for ease of collecting and organizing photos for critique or, as in this case, for "show and tell." It's easy and there is no fee to participate.

If you are already a Photo Group member who has submitted photos for critique, you know the drill. The photo submission process for this event will be the same, except that you may number the photos if they are to be shown in a certain sequence to tell a story. See https://photography.auduboneverglades.org/critique-sessions/photo-share-meeting-instructions/. May 12 is the deadline to enter photos. AE members who want to share photos but are not already in the Photo Group or who are in the Group but do not yet have an account in PhotoContestPro must register by no later than May 4 by sending an email with their first and last name, email address, and phone number inside the body of the email to:aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org. PhotoContestPro access uses individual email addresses as UserIDs, so "Household" AE memberships will need to provide an email address for each member submitting photos or split ownership of the maximum 3 photos being shared.

The process of downloading and using this software differs for PC and Mac users. Specific information for each may be found here: https://photography.auduboneverglades.org/critique-sessions/install-and-set-up-photocontestpro-account/
After you've set up your account in PhotoContestPro, please enter your photos by May 12, numbering them if order is important as indicated here https://photography.auduboneverglades.org/critique-sessions/photo-share-meeting-instructions/
Show and Tell

So, start looking through those camera memory cards and digital photo files. Find no more than 3 of your nature photos that tell a story, capture a "first" for you, hold a special memory, or reveal an environmental concern. Then on May 16 at 7pm, share your images and the stories that only you know. Your fellow AE friends are looking forward to them.

And, remember, in order to "Show and Tell" or to just "Watch and Listen," you need to register for the Zoom session at the link above.



Observe, Conserve, & Inspire

Check our Calendar for upcoming events and programs.

CALENDAR





Events & Workshops

Spring Pelagic Tour

• Our popular field trip is back Spaces are limited, register here!

PROGRAMS







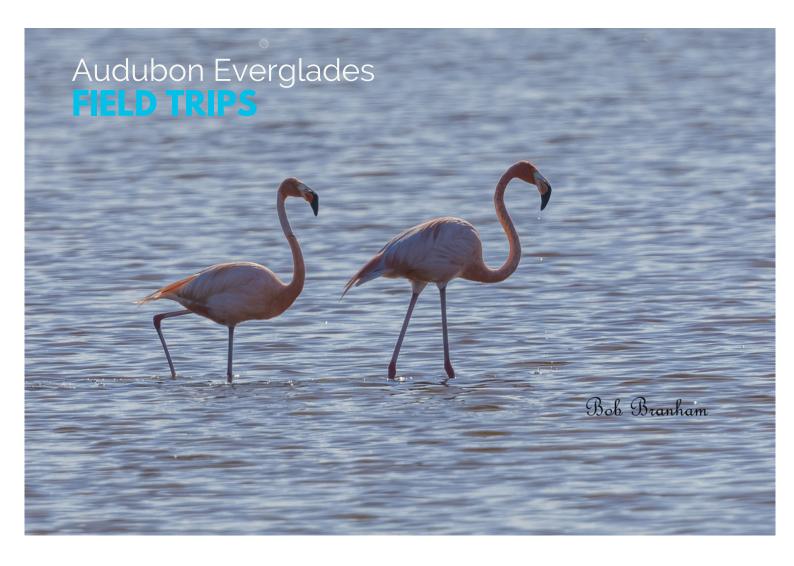












FLAMINGO QUEST

by Paula Gatrell - Field Trip Coordinator, Audubon Everglades

In April, Audubon Everglades, through partnership with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), was able to offer two field trips to see the American Flamingos that were sighted this winter in Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 2. I am happy to report that participants on both trips were successful in the flamingo pursuit. The birds were foraging about 400 yards off the berm and because several people had brought scopes and generously shared them, everyone had a great look at them. Flamingos are tall wading birds. The males are slightly larger than the females, but the two sexes look alike. Entirely pink except for the rear edge of the wing and the bill, their most obvious and magnetic trait is their coloration. Their bright pink feathers are a result of their diet. When flamingos feed on shrimp and other small crustaceans, they consume high amounts of carotenoids. Scientists are still determining what food source is sustaining them at STA 2. Besides their black-tipped bill bent at an angle, another unique feature of flamingos is their legs. This is not just because they are so long and dainty, but also because their knees bend backwards. Or do they? What look like the flamingos' "knees" are actually their ankles. The joint midway up their leg is the ankle, and their knee is up underneath their feathers. They spend a lot of time walking on their tippy toes! Seeing Flamingos in the wild was a magical moment for me.

Besides the flamingos, we saw many other birds, including Dunlin, Ruff, Black Bellied Plover, and Northern Harrier, which added lifers or year birds to many participants' lists. The combined total for both trips was 66 species. We are grateful to the SFWMD and their staff for hosting us on these exciting trips. Audubon Everglades Field Trip eBird Reports are available for viewing at https://ebird.org/mychecklists

Flamingo Quest is one of our exciting programs that we offer to our members. For early access to our popular trips, become a member today!!!

BECOME A MEMBER!













Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day on May 14 with a special "Plants for Birds" Native Garden Workshop for K-12 teachers!

It's spring and birds are on the wing! Come learn how to use native plants to create a haven for wild birds and other pollinators on your own school grounds - and a living classroom for your students.

Hosted by Audubon Everglades in partnership with FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, this FREE workshop for K-12 teachers will share expert tips on how you can choose native "plants for birds" to enhance your school garden, enrich your curriculum, and support local biodiversity.

Special guest presenter: Susan Lerner, Director of Horticulture at the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach - site of the entirely native botanical gem, Pan's Garden.

At this workshop, teachers will:

- Take a guided tour of the new "Plants for Birds" Garden at FAU Pine Jog featuring over 35 native species that are SDPBC approved plants!
- · Learn more about why native plants are so important for birds and other wildlife
- Discover some of the best native plants you can select for South Florida birds and pollinators
- Explore hands-on, classroom-ready "plants for birds" lesson resources to engage your students

PLUS: Each participant will receive a \$50 gift certificate to purchase native plants for your school!

This workshop is made possible by a generous grant from FPL and Audubon Florida's Plants for Birds Program. Continental breakfast provided. Please wear sun protection, closed-toe shoes, and bring a refillable water bottle. Space is limited – register today!

NOTE: If this workshop is full, please email lauren@auduboneverglades.org to be added to our waitlist.

For more information, please contact Lauren Butcher, Audubon Everglades Education Co-chair, at lauren@auduboneverglades.org.









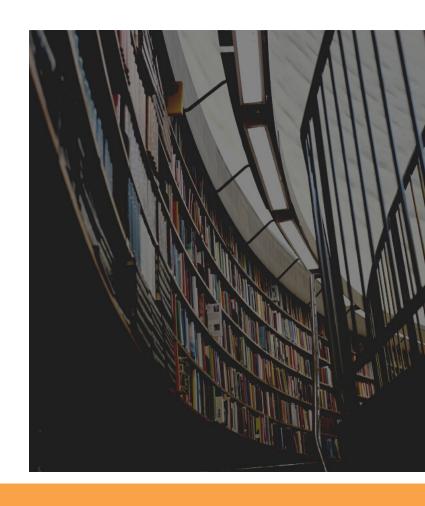


AUDUBON EVERGLADES ACTION ALERTS



BILL HB741

Governor DeSantis has vetoed Bill HB741, which threatened the growth of rooftop solar power in Florida. Many thanks to everyone who signed the petition and called. Never doubt that your voice is important.



BECOME A MEMBER
TODAY!

DONATE

AMAZON SMILE

