







BIRD OF THE MONTH

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



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.





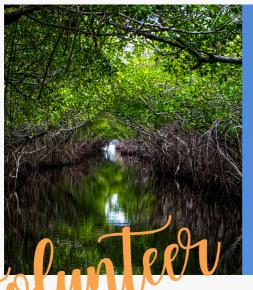
Featured Presenter

DR. REED BOWMAN RECOVERING THE RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER: "FIRES, CAVITY MANAGEMENT, AND ASSISTED DISPERSAL: A SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY FOR RECOVERING THE RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER."

RESEARCH PROGRAM DIRECTOR, AVIAN ECOLOGY. ARCHBOLD BIOLOGICAL STATION



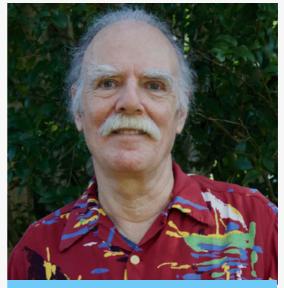






GET OUTDOORS: HOW CONNECTING WITH NATURE CAN RECHARGE YOU

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











PRESIDENT'S NOTE (CONT.)

by Scott Zucker

AE donates proceeds from Flamingo Quest Tours

The Audubon Everglades three Flamingo Quest tours raised \$784.75 from participants, and we are excited to be donating the proceeds to the Florida Flamingo Working Group, "a coalition of scientists and conservationists who share a mission to promote conservation and awareness of American Flamingos in Florida and throughout their range."

Newly elected officers attend April 28 AE Board Meeting

Our newly elected officers were welcomed and introduced to our returning officers at the April board meeting. We discussed the upcoming May 14 teacher training workshop at the Audubon Everglades Native Habitat Teaching Garden at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, and we voted unanimously to give Pan's Garden Horticultural Director Susan Lerner a \$250 honorarium to thank her for generously giving her time to help us plan, landscape, train garden volunteers, and develop instruction for our first teacher training. We discussed the need to upgrade aspects of our current website and provide additional IT support as needed, and we voted unanimously to allot \$3000 for that purpose. The board discussed the possibility of working with Birding by Bus Tours to schedule an exclusive AE field trip in South America during the 2023-24 season. Finally, the Board agreed to meet on May 26 for a strategic planning retreat for the upcoming year and to meet on June 1 for a combined May and June Board meeting.

2022-23 Friends of AE Membership Drive

IThank you to the record number (609!) of 2021-22 Friends of Audubon Everglades new members for your unwavering support of the organization. Your support helps fund our efforts towards conservation and education. If you haven't already, it's time to join or renew your AE membership for 2022-23 as the current membership year ends on May 31, 2022. AE members receive priority at select field trips like Flamingo Quest and Pelagic Tours and can participate in all AE Photography Group programs. The success and strength of our organization relies upon your continued generous support.

Recent and upcoming Zoom Program Meetings

I hope that you tuned in for our May Monthly Meeting, when FWC law enforcement officer Capt. Jay Marvin shared the recent issues and successes surrounding "The Illegal Trapping of Songbirds in Florida." The AE Photography Group members closed their 2021-22 season with a picturesque "Photo Share and End of the Season Social." If you are an AE member and wish to join the photo group and participate in next year's activities, including posting on the Photo Group's Facebook page, please register by sending your name, email, and phone number to aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org

At our June 7, 2022, Monthly Meeting, avian ecologist Dr. Reed Bowman of Archbold Research Station will speak on "Fires, cavity management, and assisted dispersal: A successful strategy for recovering the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker." His presentation will highlight how management efforts have been critical in helping this species rally from the brink of extinction. Be sure to <u>Register</u>

And at our July 5, 2022, Monthly Meeting, freshwater community ecologist Dr. Nathan Dorn of Florida International University will give a presentation on "Droughts, Floods, and Wading Bird Nesting in the Everglades" and tell us how research on food webs and water conditions impacting breeding waders also helps influence management of the Everglades. Be sure to **Register**

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

We hope that you will join us at our June 7 and July 5 Monthly Meetings, and we look forward to seeing you at our social time before the start of each meeting!

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

Scott Zucker













Plant of the Month: Coral Honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens)

BY HELEN LAURENCE

A classmate in the Florida Master Naturalist program, inspired by our classroom explorations and field trips into the Palm Beach County Natural Areas, decided to start a native plant garden. She planted the brilliant coral honeysuckle, but when we met the following year at another Master Naturalist class, she complained that after the initial blooming period, the vine started to look leggy and bare, so she pulled it out. So disappointing! Apparently, she subscribed to the myth of the maintenance-free native plant garden. There is no such thing! Although, as the species name sempervirens suggests, it is basically evergreen, the coral honeysuckle will drop leaves and start to look unkempt during the winter, but that's its way of telling us that it would be a good time to prune away the bare branches and shape it according to our human aesthetic. Then in the spring, it will flush out with new growth and begin blooming furiously again.

Coral honeysuckle does best climbing and twining along a trellis in partial shade to full sun and can make a good hedge supported by a fence. The tubular red flowers attract hummingbirds. Other birds, especially cardinals, eat the bright red berries that follow the flowers in the fall, thus spreading the seeds. Nevertheless, coral honeysuckle has not spread aggressively in our garden. It should not be confused with another Lonicera species, the Japanese honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica), which is an aggressive nonnative plant designated as a Category I invasive that should never be planted.

Coral honeysuckle's native habitats are upland hardwood forests and floodplains. As such, the plant is not particularly salt tolerant, so should not be expected to flourish near the beach or where it gets direct salt spray. According to the Atlas of Florida Plants, vouchered plant specimens found in wild populations indicate that its native range in Florida is to the north of Lake Okeechobee. (https://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=3861) Vouchered specimens are dried plant materials deposited in an herbarium for research which formally documents a plant's occurrence in a particular location. Thus, although coral honeysuckle is not officially vouchered in Palm Beach County, it does quite well here in South Florida, making it an excellent addition to the bird-friendly garden.



Photo by Helen Laurence

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 log Environmental Education Center.



Bird of the Month: Chimney Swift – (Chaetura pelagica)

BY CLIVE AND CECELIA PINNOCK

The five and a quarter inch long Chimney Swift is usually first noticed by its rapid chattering call high overhead, as it flies erratically and bat-like, chasing flying insects in the early evenings of late spring and throughout the summers within their range. The dark grayish brown cigar-shaped body, with long swept-back wings, a short stiff, tapered tail, and wide, tiny bill adds to the confirmation of its identification. Its throat is paler in color than the rest of the body.

The bird spends almost its entire life airborne, feeding, drinking, and even mating on the wing, landing only to roost and nest. Because the bird is incapable of perching when it lands, it clings to vertical walls inside chimneys or in hollow trees or caves. Chimney Swifts forage over urban and suburban areas, rivers, forests, lakes, and fields. Their diet is made up of a variety of flying insects, including flies, bugs, bees, wasps, ants, mayflies, and caddisflies, to name a few. They grab large insects with their bills; smaller ones are swallowed instantly. They will sometimes pick insects from branch tips and even "helicopter" down through foliage to flush out prey. They are typically seen in small flocks, and their foraging is normally a diurnal event; however they sometimes hunt for insects at night around street lights or lit windows.

The breeding range of the Chimney Swift is generally the eastern half of North America. Although they originally nested in natural sites such as caves and hollow trees, they now nest primarily in chimneys and other artificial structures with vertical surfaces and low light. These locations may include air vents, old wells, abandoned cisterns, outhouses, boat houses, barns, garages, lighthouses, and firewood sheds.

Courtship involves aerial displays and once a pair bond is established, the birds remain monogamous. The nest is built by the pair and is shaped like a half saucer and composed of twigs glued together by the birds' saliva. The completed nest measures 2 – 3 inches from front to back, 4 inches wide, and 1 inch deep. Three to six white eggs are laid and incubated by both parents for 19 to 21 days. The helpless, naked young are fed regurgitated insects by both parents and may climb out of the nest after about 20 days, creeping up vertical walls. They generally make their first flight about 28 to 30 days after hatching.

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.





by Zephyr Tsolkas-Jennings 9 years old

Red-winged blackbird mom Feeds hungry chicks in her nest Bird of prey is near



Painting by 5 year old Chrisoula Tsolkas-Jennings of female Red-winged Blackbird above her nest ready to feed hungry chicks.

Birds, Books and Backpacks: A Children's Adventure at Green Cay

BY MARY YOUNG

Storytime in a nature center with a live Eastern Screech Owl is always exciting. Then, when children move out onto a boardwalk surrounded by water, turtles, alligators, birds and chicks, the book adventure meshes with real life.

An Audubon Everglades' partnership with the PBC Library System at Green Cay Nature Center gave children and their parents a unique experience. Adam Davis, Director of System Services, enthusiastically read the books, This is the Tree We Planted by Kate McMullan and Ruby's Birds by Mya Thompson. Then he showed off one of the 16 Birding Backpacks that Audubon Everglades partnered to create. AE researched and recommended the adult and children's binoculars and a Florida Birds Pocket Guide that are inside the backpacks that families can check out at their local branch of the Library.

Abbe Paul, Assistant Naturalist at Green Cay awed the audience by bringing Oliver, the Eastern Screech Owl to meet them. With Oliver on her gloved arm, she explained his injuries and the educational role he plays at their nature center. Scott Zucker, AE president, explained how to use the AE binoculars that we brought to lend to parents and children. (con't)





Demilade Haastrup looks on as Kenyarna Harden is pulled toward the action by her son, Fredrick Photo by Mary Young

Of the seven Red-winged Blackbird nests with newly hatched chicks that we saw, his nine-year-old son Zephyr Tsolkas-Jennings found most of them. Zephyr told his dad later, "It was very cool how I got to see baby birds getting fed. Also I never knew there was that kind of hibiscus that grew in wetlands." He is speaking of the Scarlet rosemallow, Hibiscus coccineus, a native plant that is imperiled.

William and John Bartram were impressed by it also. Having seen it in Florida in 1765, William painted it and John wrote about it in his journal.

(http://www.newmoonnursery.com/plant/Hibiscus-coccineus)

Mr. Tsolkas' five-year-old daughter Chrisoula often climbed to the top of the rail to scan the expansive habitat for wildlife. She told her father that "the nests that the baby



Chrisoula Tsolkas-Jennings and Scott Zucker watch what Zephyr Tsolkas-Jennings has discovered Photo by Mary Young

As the group spilled out onto the boardwalk, Scott, with the assistance of AE volunteers Library Liaison, Kristen Murtaugh and Education Chair Lauren Butcher and me, guided families through the alligator hole and to the right. Children pointed and shrieked and at times pulled their parents to catch up so they could peer through the lattice planks and squint through kid-sized binoculars.

Mr. Davis wore the adult-sized Birding Backpack on the walk and mentioned that it was comfortable. Afterwards he noted, "Because children are so inquisitive, I noticed that the children were retaining the names of plants and animals at the beginning of the adventure, but towards the end, they were answering questions from the adults."

Panagoiti Tsolkas, along with his son and daughter, filled in the AE Wetland Birding Checklist for Kids confirming that they saw 19 species of birds as well as turtles and a Marsh Rabbit.

He said, "My kids love story time at the library. So getting to hear two great stories read by a librarian, then learning about the library's bird backpack was awesome. Then we got a presentation from Green Cay staff with their resident screech owl... that really built the excitement to get outside and see birds in the wild. The kids are still talking about it days later. We're looking forward to doing it again."



Fredrick along with Zephyr Tsolkas-Jennings and his sister Chrisoula learn to use binoculars.
Photo by Kristen Murtaugh

birds are in are small, like as big as my hands put together. I think baby birds are very cute." Adam Davis agrees with Chrisoula and called the chicks, "one of the highlights of the day." I share their sentiment.

Although I have been awed at Green Cay many times, being engaged by children engaged by nature is special. I agree with Adam Davis when he said, "I hope that this is the first of many birding collaborations to come!" I gain much encouragement witnessing a child explore their known world and discover unexpected wonders.

More Family Birding and Nature Adventures will begin this Fall. Until then, take a child out to see what you find in the water, trees and sky!

DON'T MISS OUR MONTHLY VIRTUAL PROGRAMS!



Fires, cavity management, and assisted dispersal: A successful strategy for recovering the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker.

While Archbold Biological Station's Avian Ecology Program may be best known for its research of the Florida Scrub-Jay (You may remember Dr. Bowman's excellent presentation on the Scrub-jay to AE in April 2019.), the Station also has an extensive history of working with the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. a bird whose survival is inextricably linked to Longleaf Pine forests. Unfortunately, these Southeast forests have been reduced to less than 3% of their original size due to timber harvesting, agriculture, and development, which has resulted in a dramatic decline in Red-cockaded Woodpecker populations and the federal listing of the species as Endangered in 1970. For more than 25 years, Archbold staff, under the leadership of Dr. Bowman, have closely monitored the management of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker at the Avon Park Air Force Range. Dr. Bowman's presentation will share the Station's research and show how management efforts have been critical in helping this species rally from the brink of extinction.

Dr. Reed Bowman is the John W. Fitzpatrick Director of the Avian Ecology Program at Archbold Biological Station in south-central Florida, one of the oldest and most celebrated not-for-profit biological research stations in the US. He holds graduate degrees in wildlife and biology from McGill University and the University of South Florida. Over the last 40 years he has studied the ecology, demography, and conservation of several threatened and endangered birds, including the American Kestrel, Common Raven, White-crowned Pigeon, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, and the Florida Scrub-Jay. His primary research focuses on the comparative demography, ecology, and evolution of Florida Scrub-Jays in a variety of different landscapes, using long-term data on marked populations. The study of scrub-jays at Archbold overseen by Dr. Bowman is the longest-running study of marked birds in North America, now entering its 52nd consecutive year. In addition to his work in avian ecology, another of Dr. Bowman's interests is in the many effects, both local and worldwide, of urbanization on birds. He is an author on more than 100 scientific papers and book chapters, the editor of two books, including the acclaimed Avian Ecology and Conservation in an Urbanizing World and co-author of the second edition of Florida Bird Species. He has made more than 150 public presentations about science, ecology, and conservation of Florida birds. He is a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, past President of both the Association of Field Ornithologists and the Florida Ornithological Society. He is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Field Ornithology. In 2018, he received the Wilson Ornithological Society's Margaret Morse Nice Award for lifetime contributions to ornithology and in 2021 Audubon's Guy Bradley Award for "his relentless commitment to conserving Florida's wildlife." For over 30 years he has been deeply involved in conservation, both locally and nationally. He is a graduate faculty member at the University of South Florida and the University of Central Florida and has been the major advisor of two Ph.D. students and 11 Master's students. Dr. Bowman is also an avid landscape and nature photographer, using his images to further education and conservation of our endangered landscapes.

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.

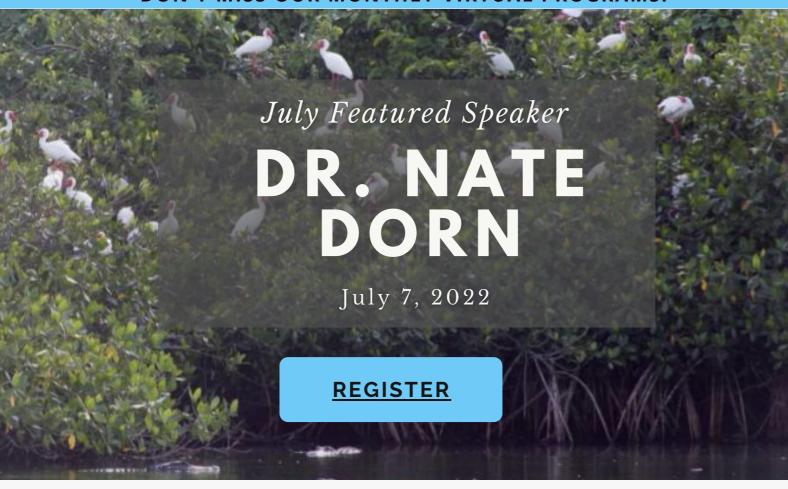












MONTHLY PROGRAM

Droughts, Floods, and Wading Bird Nesting in the Everglades

Dr. Nathan Dorn, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Florida International University

The Everglades, our slow-moving river of grass, is home to the largest wading bird breeding population in North America. Many spring seasons its coastal mangroves, sawgrass marshes, and pine flatwoods are dripping with the whites, pinks, and blues of the hundreds of thousands of nesting wading birds that are emblematic of South Florida. But why have the breeding numbers for these waders been so fluid from year to year? Find out from Dr. Dorn what effects wetland water levels are having on the food webs and nesting conditions of these colorful and elegant birds.

Dr. Nathan Dorn is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Florida International University. He is also part of the FIU Institute of Environment where he leads a large lab of students, post docs and technicians studying wetland ecology. He received his PhD from Michigan State University in 2003 and has been studying the ecology of the Florida Everglades and adjacent wetlands for more than 19 years. He is probably best known for his work studying the ecology of freshwater crayfish and food webs, but his work is diverse and includes examinations of the diets of nesting wading birds. He has also been a contributor to the Annual South Florida Wading Bird Report. "I am a freshwater community ecologist, and I am particularly interested in the ecological significance of predation and hydrologic variation for population regulation, trophic dynamics, and patterns of coexistence in freshwater ecosystems," Dr. Dorn said. His research is funded by both federal and state agencies tasked with restoration and management of the Everglades.

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.







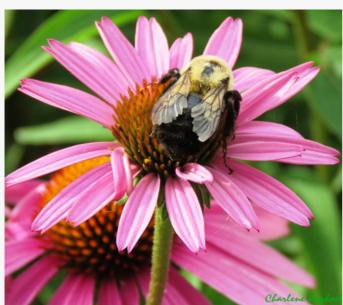






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FEATURED PROGRAM

Join us Monday, June 6, for our AEPG Planning Meeting to let us know your thoughts for next season.

Our kick-off meeting will be Thursday, September 8. Please visit our youtube page for our past presentations. Link is below. Thank you AEPG members for a very successful season, we have grown in numbers and are very excited to see what the next season holds!



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





Another Season Just Zoomed By

By Charlene Raphael

Well, that was fast! Seems like the Audubon Everglades Photo Group's (AEPG) season just started. What happened anyway? Well, by the numbers our membership doubled from 31 at the beginning to 62 at the end. We enjoyed 5 programs, 3 critiques, and 3 workshops presented by a total of 10 guest photographers.

All of our sessions aimed at providing insight or perspective and improving photographic skills for the new as well as seasoned photographer. To that end, we selected topics by presenters across a wide spectrum of experience, focus, and age. We tapped into locally known resources as well as speakers sourced through Hunts Photo and Video in Massachusetts, which offers AEPG members a discount on equipment. (Contact Noah Buchanan at nbuchanan@huntsphoto.com)

By zooming presentations rather than meeting in person, we had seemingly boundless access to diverse expertise in photographic style and natural environment, in both studio and field, from this country and beyond. Want to know about composition or optimizing the likelihood of finding what you're looking for in the field, getting your best shot, post processing, or conservation photography? We had a presentation on each of those topics. Do you want feedback on your photographs? We had critiques, averaging 20 photos for 10 members per session. Did you miss or want to review a presentation? Watch the video of the programs that we recorded with permission. Access is on our AEPG website calendar.

Our season ended with "show and tell." Our members shared photos and the stories behind them, describing what excites them about nature photography in general and bird photography in particular. Seventeen members showed 51 images that captured attitude, interaction, drama, splash and bubbles, wildlife catching and eating food, flirting and catching a mate, textures, colors, contrasts, and moods. As members showed their photos, they talked about the thrill of the chase as well as the thrill of the capture and the joy of taking a piece of nature home with them.

How did we do this season? We want to hear from you. June 6 at 7pm we are zooming a Planning Meeting for next season. If you liked or didn't like some aspect of this season's programs or want to learn about something specific next season, let us know. We will try to factor your ideas into programming and, although we can't promise we'll find someone to address specific interests right away, we can promise we'll try. Do you know a nature photographer who would be willing to speak to our group about technical, artistic, or communicative aspects of photography, capturing mood or message, field or post processing? Come to our June 6 Planning Meeting and let us know! What excites you about photography? We'd love to hear what you want to hear and learn what you want to learn so we can make the programming relevant to your interests. Can't make the June 6 Planning meeting? Send your thoughts by email to aepgregister@auduboneverglades.org. Think about being a volunteer and hear about opportunities or create new ones at the June 6 Planning Meeting. Be a part of making next season everything you want it to be.

Next season begins September 8; our new meeting night will be the second Thursday of each month. We look forward to seeing you then and hearing about your summer photo adventures. Enjoy the next few months and keep on clickin'.

Register here for the Planning Session



2021 - 2022 AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

by Paula Gatrell - Field Trip Coordinator, Audubon Everglades

What an amazing, challenging, and rewarding first year it has been in my role as field trip coordinator. I would like to thank all the Audubon Everglades (AE) field guides. It is your willingness and birding knowledge, for both beginners and advanced birders, that makes our trips so popular. It was great seeing birders again, post covid lock- down. It is with your support that AE continues to grow, inspire, and educate others

I have added some new adventures for next season. This year's Pelagic Trip, the first in four years, sold out quickly. I hope to add a fall Pelagic. And Who knows what surprise birds await us, as we explore Paleo Hammock Preserve and Cypress Creek Natural Area? Will we spot that nemesis, the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, at Dupuis Wildlife Management Area (WMA)? It has been awhile since we have been to the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park. The Grasshopper Sparrow would be a lifer for many. Are you up for an overnight stay? A trip to Merritt Island is in the works.

Enjoy your summer, stay safe and healthy, and be kind!





Our sincere gratitude to Paula and our dedicated volunteer team of Field Guides! Audubon Everglades thanks you for a wonderful year of Field Trips!

Please Contact Fieldtrips@auduboneverglades.org if you're interested in joining our Field Trip













NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS

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Audubon Everglades would like to thank the EVERGLADE KITE newsletter volunteers for their dedication, wonderfully informative contributions, and for giving their time to produce our beautiful monthly newsletter. We hope you enjoy your well-deserved respite!

If you would like to contribute or become part of our talented team, please contact us at EvergladeKite@auduboneverglades.org

Newsletter Volunteer Positions Available

Editor

Great opportunity for volunteer hours and experience in Digital Print and Journalism.

Production

Assists with the monthly production of the Kite. Volunteer hours available for high schooler. Great opportunity in Graphic Design and Media.