



LAUGHING GULL

The Newsletter of the St. Lucie Audubon Society

Volume 32 Issue #7

P.O. Box 12474, Fort Pierce, FL 34979

April 2008

President's Message

Spring has sprung and I expect that many of our migrating friends, both feathered and human, will be leaving soon. I hope those members remaining will continue coming to the monthly meetings. Our Program Committee has worked hard again this year to give us another season of great presentations.

This winter the board has noticed that our operating funds have been diminishing quicker than usual. We have discovered the reason. When someone joins the National Audubon Society, our chapter does not receive any part of those funds. However, National has directed the locals to provide a newsletter to those members. In the St. Lucie Audubon Society this represents 250 of 350 members. Our local membership is \$15. Our 100 local membership fees are subsidizing the newsletters of 250 national members. With the costs of postage and printing rising, we must request that national members secure their newsletters by reading them online or downloading from the website (<http://stlucieaudubon.org/newsletter.html>). If you cannot do this, please send a written request for a printed copy to: St. Lucie Audubon Society, P.O. Box 12474, Ft. Pierce, FL 34979. I hope this will not be too great an inconvenience. It will certainly be a "green" thing to do.

Thank you for your support. See you at the next meeting.

All Parmentier

Calendar of Events

Meeting: Thursday, April 3, 2008

"Threatened and Endangered Terns and Skimmers in South Florida" presented by Ricardo Zambrano, FL Fish & Wildlife Commission As a nongame wildlife biologist he primarily works with endangered, threatened and declining species of wildlife.

ANNUAL FIELD TRIP & PICNIC

Saturday, April 5, 2008 @ Gordy Park in Fort Pierce
See back page for more details.

New Members

Velia Vagnasco, Albert Brooks, Jr.

Welcome!

More Upcoming Events

Treasure Coast Photography Club Meeting

Wednesday, April 2nd @ 6:30pm
@ Oxbow Eco-Center

If you are interested in learning the art of photography or improving upon your skills, come join other shutterbugs. Everyone is welcome from the novice to the expert.

Meeting Place:

Oxbow Eco-Center

5400 N.E. St. James Dr., Port St. Lucie, FL 34983

Upcoming Events

"Green Building 101"

Oxbow Eco-Center Lecture Series

Saturday, April 5th at 11 am

Ever wondered what the term "green building" means or how it can affect you? There is more to it than just buying locally made products or using energy saving appliances. Building green means increasing the efficiency of your home; starting from reducing the amount of energy, water, and materials to reducing impacts on the environment and our health. It encompasses the complete building life cycle from start to finish, from indoor environment to your landscape.

Come learn about some things you can do to make your home greener

This presentation is free. Bring a coffee mug and enjoy some delicious bird-friendly coffee.

Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 19th 10 am - 3:00pm

Oxbow Eco-Center

**Indian river Bluegrass Boys * Exodus Café *
Parade * Wildlife * Green Living Displays *
Face Painting * Crafts**

Environmentalist @ Home

By Gale Parmentier

GreenChoices - www.greenchoices.com

For everything you do, there's a green choice that's good for you and the environment. Today, it's easy to be environmentally friendly by using the web to find the many "green choices" that exist for the products and services you use at work and at home. You can find ideas about energy, conservation, organic food and organic gardening or pest control products, replacement appliances, and recycling. There are more choices than ever before. Moreover, socially responsible investing and ecotourism offer earth friendly options for saving and spending. We recently used this website to select a new washing machine. A link to the government's EnergyStar ratings was especially helpful.

Let **www.GreenChoices.com** be your guide to finding simple, easy ways to make whatever you do just a little bit greener. Just click on a category and you are on your way to doing something good for you and the environment.

Feathered Friends

By Dotty Hull

Spring migration has begun with many birds now making their journey northward for the breeding season. Most American Robins have already left our area to nest in the northern part of our country. Most warbler species and other songbirds will be on their northern territories by early April. Painted Buntings have begun to leave the area with most going to Louisiana or South Texas for the summer. Some will remain in northern Florida, Georgia or the Carolinas for breeding. Indigo Buntings migrate farther north and west than Painted Buntings. To find more information about North American bird species go the Cornell website at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/>



Please Remember to Recycle!

Breakfast with the Birds

Submitted by Edie Schor

Little did I suspect that when I opted out of the Adams Ranch Breakfast because of moving to a new home that I would be breakfasting at what Sunday mornings must be like in heaven.

I sat on a porch overlooking Lake Tozour where only a couple hundred feet away I watched sandhill cranes on their nest on an island not far offshore. Mallard ducks paddled back and forth. White ibis foraged along the lake edge. Two pileated woodpeckers were busily inspecting what had been a mature maple before Frances and Jeanne and which it just hasn't been able to find its former self. Wood storks dropped out of the sky. Great white egrets came and went. The Louisiana heron was busily shooing off the cattle egret who was threatening to ruin the neighborhood. The visiting coots were there along with the pied-billed grebes and local moorhens.

And that's just the birds that were there to say nothing of the butterflies flitting hither, thither, and yon and the resident turtles sunning themselves.

Also found gracing the tables were Bill and Jeanne Hearn, the hosts, my landlords, and co-creators of this beautiful paradise; Doug Bond, my high school sweetheart and fiancé; a PGA teaching professional from Iowa and his wife on their way to the Daytona 500; and several locals, all of whom were gracious and welcoming to the new "tenants" of the lake.

Words are lacking to convey the beauty of this masterpiece of nature and aptly characterized as "nature's runway." I invite you to go the website <http://www.laketoour.com/> and see for yourselves photographs accompanied by the history of this wonderful heaven on earth. I have to pinch myself to remind myself how blessed and lucky I really am!!!

EXTIRPATION

Let us offer a mass
 For feathers on the grass, alas.
 Hunters hold to fashion
 Shooting with a passion.
 Retrievers know the scent.
 From crippled birds a sharp lament.
 Snarling saws cut forest tall.
 Silenced is the trush's call.
 Builders fill the marshes green.
 Herons are no longer seen.
 Farmers spread insecticide;
 For birds a certain suicide.
 Exotics roam our fields and streams.
 No one can hear their victim's
 screams.
 Floating oil chokes oceans wide.
 Pelagic birds cannot abide.
 Feral cats completely free.
 Shame on man's depravity.
 Extirpation.
 A curse on our nation.
Michael Chiaramonte

New on www.stlucieaudubon.org

- Daily updates of local news stories and documents of interest to SLAS
- Smashing, detailed photos on home and photos pages from Hart Rufe with regular updates on a Sandhill Crane family born in his community outside Fort Pierce (High Point).

FRIDAY SUNSET CRUISE

Departs @ 4:30pm

Relax & enjoy as we meander down the St. Lucie River. Catch a glimpse of Bird Island.

Boat departs from two locations:
 River Park Marina & Rivergate Park

RESERVATION REQUIRED:
River Lilly 772-489-8344



Eat Your way to a Healthier Environment for Everyone

The argument for a Less-meat diet

Submitted by Oxbow Eco-Center

1. SLOW GLOBAL WARMING

It is estimated that livestock production is responsible for nearly one-fifth of the world's greenhouse gases, more than the transportation industry. Greenhouse effects include fuel used for transportation and processing of livestock and feed grain, as well as fermentation and manure from cows, which contains methane and nitrous oxide. Each time you replace 6oz. of beef with a rice & vegetable meal, you save 9.3 lbs of CO₂ gases from entering our atmosphere.

2. DEMAND WATER QUALITY

US Livestock alone produces about 900 million tons of waste annually. That's the weight equivalent of over 600 vehicles! Much of this waste ends up in our rivers, lakes, and streams as runoff. Wastes such as nitrogen, pathogens, hormones, and pesticides can be devastating in our waterways.

3. FEED HUMANS

It is estimated that 24,000 people per day or 8.8 million people a year die from starvation or hunger related causes (mostly children under 5). Only 10% of hunger deaths are attributed to unpredictable events such as famine or war. The remaining deaths are due to misdistribution of food resources, primarily using grain to feed livestock rather than people. A meat-based diet requires 10-20 times as much land as a plant based diet. If Americans reduced their meat intake by 10% we could feed 60 million people.

4. IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

Meats and dairy products are high in protein, but also in saturated fat. A diet high in animal fat has been shown to increase the risk of several diseases including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. Additionally, confined animals in tight spaces are subject to diseases and are treated with antibiotics. Antibiotic residues in the meat we consume often builds resistances to diseases. Ultimately, these residues make antibiotics less effective for treating human diseases.

5. BIODIVERSITY

As demand for meat rises, so does the need for land that can be used for grazing and growing feed crops. Amazingly, 30% of the Earth's available land is used to produce feed for agriculture. The need for land has extended into our tropical rainforests. An estimated 55 square acres of rainforest is destroyed to produce one quarter-pound hamburger, Imagine how many undiscovered creatures are lost when forests are eliminated. Overall, livestock represents 20% of all Earth's terrestrial wildlife.

6. ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal agriculture annually kills 50 billion animals worldwide. Often, these animals are subjected to the cruelties of industrial farming, including close confinement, illness, harassment and other inhumane practices.

www.meatout.org



QUICK TIPS FOR LIVING GREEN



- Change your light bulbs to compact fluorescents. These bulbs use substantially less energy.
- Recycle glass, plastic, metal, paper and cardboard and turn your food scraps into 'black gold' by composting.

- Buy locally produced products ... to reduce the fossil fuels used in the transport of these products.
- Conserve water ... fix leaky faucets, turn the water off while brushing your teeth.

Membership Renewals

Chapter memberships extend from October through May. Chapter members may use the coupon below to renew membership for 2008. Please mark **RENEW** on your check.

SLAS is now offering a Chapter-only annual membership option for those who want to financially support their local chapter. The annual cost is only \$15 per year, which includes a monthly subscription to our "Laughing Gull" newsletter. Please make checks payable and send to:

St. Lucie Audubon Society, P.O. Box 12474, Ft. Pierce, FL 34979

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

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Table of Contents

*President's Message, Calendar of Events,
New Members*

Page 1

Feathered Friends, Environmentalist @ Home

Page 2

Membership Renewal, Officers & Committee

Page 3



JUNGLE CRUISE

1:00 PM Daily

See alligators, turtles, birds and more.
River Park Marina on Prima Vista Blvd.

BIRD WATCHING CRUISE

4:00PM Wednesday (seasonal)

Experience Bird Island & see several hundred
nesting birds! Rivergate Park/ Midport Rd.



RESERVATION REQUIRED: River Lilly 772-489-8344

Audubon Print Drawing

**Don't forget – time to purchase
tickets** for the
beautifully framed
Audubon print of
the Pileated
Woodpecker.



The winner will be
selected at our
May 3rd general meeting.
Good Luck!

Meeting: Thursday, April 3, 2008

"Threatened and Endangered Terns and Skimmers in South Florida" pre-
sented by Ricardo Zambrano, FL Fish & Wildlife Commission.

Field Trip: Saturday, April 5, 2008

Our April field trip is always combined with our Annual Picnic which will be held at Gordy Park (Ten Mile Creek Recreation Area) in Fort Pierce. There is a trail along 10 Mile Creek and picnic tables are available. There is also an overlook where we can look for birds. Bring a covered dish to share and your own plate and eating utensils. The park is located west of I-95 just off S.R. 70. Join us for an enjoyable outing and good food!!

Meet at 10:30 a.m. at Home Depot in Fort Pierce at Okeechobee and Jenkins Rd. in the northeast corner of the parking lot just off Jenkins Rd.



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St. Lucie Audubon
P.O. Box 12474
Fort Pierce, FL 34979

Get your Laughing Gull by e-mail

Do the "**Green Thing**" and help our chapter save printing and mailing costs by getting your newsletter by email. No special program is needed to open it, and you can print it out if you prefer to read it offline.

Send your name and email address to newsletter@stlucieaudubon.org to sign up.

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