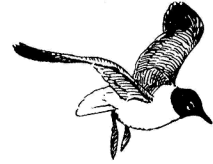


LAUGHING GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. LUCIE Audubon



Volume 32 Issue #2

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

November 2007

President's Message

Welcome to another season of interesting events with the St. Lucie Audubon Society. Well, I am back for another year as your President. With the unfortunate resignation of Holly Tetzloff, the void needed to be filled quickly for continuity. Others have generously stepped forward to fill additional board vacancies: Karie Fowler, our new treasurer, will also be Conservation Chair. And Margaret Seiler has agreed to serve as Director at Large.

Activities for the coming months are well planned. We had a great October general meeting with awesome presentations by our two Science Fair winners from last spring, Ken Gioeli's enlightening and entertaining discussion of St. Lucie County's bat population, and guest appearances by a Peregrine Falcon and a Red-shouldered Hawk. I am expecting many strong presentations similar to our season last year.

The slow down in construction and growth of the county is going to slow our quest for the classroom. The county leader have told Sandy Bogan, head of the Oxbow Eco-Center that the expected funds for expansion will not be forthcoming. She is planning a capital fundraising program and we will participate in every way we can.

A special thing happened at our home a few days ago. The hurricanes and bark beetles have caused the loss of more than thirty trees on our property, mostly pines. As a result, the pair of Pileated Woodpeckers we used to see routinely have been missing for three years. However, last Saturday morning a lone female visited our backyard's two dead pines. What a treat!

Let's all get out and enjoy the beautiful weather and the fall migration of our little feathered friends.

Al Parmentier, President

Calendar of Events

Meeting:

Thursday, November 1, 2007

Bats, presented by Ken Geoli

Field Trip:

Saturday, October 5, 2007

Gordy Park in Fort Pierce

(see back page for details).

New Members

Carol Fazackerley
Marilyn Grossman
David & Lauriann Sayers

Meeting Place:

Oxbow Eco-Center 5400 N.E. St. James Dr.,
Port St. Lucie, FL 34983 772-785-5833
1.7 miles south of Midway Rd./ 1.8 miles north of Airoso Blvd.
on St. James Dr. (S. 25th St.)

Upcoming Events

*Plants for Attracting Butterflies and
Wildlife to Your Garden*

Oxbow Eco-Center Lecture Series
Saturday, November 3rd at 11 am

This year's lecture series focuses on "**Living with Natural Florida**"; giving participants an opportunity to see why maintaining native habitats is so important.

Native plants have adapted to a particular region, including the climate, geography, and animal populations over thousand of years. These plants provide homes to wildlife and feeding grounds for birds and butterflies. They withstand harsh weather conditions better than exotic plants used in landscaping. Native plants also require less watering as they are adapted to our hydraulic conditions. Lawns and gardens comprised of non-native species are replacing our indigenous plants.

Come learn how you can create a beautiful native habitat on your own lawn and save money as Marc Minno presents his talk entitled, "Native Plants for Attracting Butterflies and Wildlife to Your Garden."

Feathered Friends

By Dotty Hull

Several St. Lucie Audubon birders participated in a national event called "The Big Sit", which is sponsored by Bird Watcher's Digest Magazine. The idea is to sit in a 17 foot circle and record each species of birds seen on October 14.

Heathcote Botanical Gardens allowed us to "sit" in their gardens for this event. It was a beautiful warm morning with a breeze when we arrived at 7 a.m. to set up our chairs. We were somewhat disappointed in the small numbers of birds we saw considering the surroundings and nice weather. Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable day and we contributed to a national database.

The species seen were: Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Mourning Dove, Palm Warbler, B & W Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black & White Warbler, American Redstart, Blue Jay, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Swainson's Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Northern Cardinal and sparrow species.

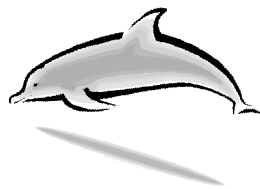


Thanks to Karie Fowler, Ian Greene, Grace Stock, Nettie Brolmann and Bruce & Liz Bardsley for joining us for this enjoyable day at Heathcote.

Indian River Boat Ride

St. Lucie Audubon is planning a boat ride aboard the Gator, a forty-two passenger pontoon boat. During the hour and a half tour, participants may catch a glimpse of fish, birds, manatees, dolphin and more. With Captain Barry "Chop" Loge's and his knowledgeable crew at the helm, participants will learn about birds, marine mammals such as dolphin and manatees, the natural and cultural history of the Indian River Lagoon, and the ecology and habitats of the Lagoon, including sea grasses.

The boat ride will leave from the Manatee Center at 1 p.m. on Saturday, February 2, 2008. We have been given a special group rate of \$15 per person with a minimum of ten persons. **Please call Dotty Hull at 340-2226 for reservations or see her at the November meeting.** This will be a fun event and educational too.



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

Indian River Lagoon Report

The Audubon Indian River Lagoon Regional Committee/Coalition consisting of Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Brevard counties has been formed because of the perception and reality that the magnificent and unique Indian River Lagoon has been treated like a stepchild partly as a result that no Audubon group has its main efforts focused on it.

Because freshwater runoff from many sources is one of the major problems confronting the Lagoon environment, the second coalition meeting held September 22, 2007 at the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory library in Vero Beach featured presentations highlighting algal turf scrubber systems and series screening methodology to remove harmful organisms and debris before entering the Lagoon.

The next meeting on December 1 will include a presentation on septic tank systems, now being considered also as a viable solution.

2007-2008 Chapter Officers & Committee

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Environmentalist @ Home

By Gale Parmentier

National Geographic's *The Green Guide*

Acquired by the National Geographic Society earlier this year, this website (www.thegreenguide.com) and printed newsletter contain information about practical, everyday, environmentally responsible and health-minded product choices and actions.

Online you will find a Tip of the Week and Smart Shopper's Guide with articles and recommendations. In the Green Home section are quizzes to assess your "greenness" and formulas to calculate your carbon dioxide production. Ideas for food are in the Green Kitchen pages. Check it out – there is so much more.

An affordable subscription fee is optional for the mailed newsletter, but will also get you the new Green Guide magazine in 2008.

Birding at Gordy Park

Gordy Park in Fort Pierce was the destination for our October field trip. It is one of several new St. Lucie County parks that have recently opened. In spite of threatening skies, eight members came out to enjoy the beautiful setting of the park, which is located around Ten Mile Creek. Many birds were seen flying across I-95 toward the landfill, which can be seen from the park.



There are three trails, one being a rather short paved trail that is ADA approved for wheelchairs. Most of the group walked the one-half mile trail by the creek. On the drive into the park we came upon nine female Wild Turkeys walking in the road. A large platform with seating overlooks a large reservoir. Most of the wading birds were seen from this comfortable spot. Eighteen species were seen, with other highlights being Pileated Woodpecker, Wood Stork, Belted Kingfisher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and several wading bird species.

We encourage you to go experience this lovely park for yourself and visit some of the other county parks that our tax dollars have provided for us to enjoy. Visit the St. Lucie County website for a complete listing of the locations. <http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd>

Webmaster Needed

St. Lucie Audubon is in need of a volunteer to maintain our website. It would require uploading the Calendar of Events in October and the monthly newsletter from October through May. Please call Dotty Hull at 340-2226 if you can fill this important volunteer job.



In Her Memory

The family of Grace Kedziora placed a plaque in her memory on October 18, 2007 in the Manatee Center in Fort Pierce for her concern and interest for the gopher tortoises while living on S. Hutchinson Island. Grace was a member of the Conservation Alliance. Daily she watched over the gopher tortoises and their burrows, which earned her the name of the "Tortoise Mother".



Please Remember to Recycle!

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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Meeting Date

"Bats" Presented by Ken Geoli.

Field Trip Date & Place

Our first field trip of the season will visit Gordy Park in Fort Pierce. The park is located on Gordy Rd. off Okeechobee Rd. This is a fairly new St. Lucie County Recreation Area.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the northeast corner of the parking lot of Home Depot on Okeechobee Rd. & Jenkins Rd. We will carpool to the park together. To reach the park, go west on Okeechobee Rd.

Fuel for Thought and Little Known Fact

Submitted by Edie Schor

Did you know that recreational boating with its oil and hydrocarbon pollution - the main culprit being the ubiquitous two-cycle engine - causes the equivalent of 40 Exxon Valdez (remember that!) disasters every year?

Such is the claim made by Andre Mele in his book **Polluting for Pleasure** published by W.W. Norton & Company 1993. He cites "boating's remarkably enduring immunity" to anti-pollution initiatives. He presents documented and convincing arguments as well as recommendations regarding this mostly overlooked aspect of the pleasure boating industry, stating that "we have clearly failed in our stewardship" of the environment.

It is worth a read but - be warned - it may change the way you think of your boat or your neighbor's boat.



**Laughing
Gull**

St. Lucie Audubon

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
*** ENCLOSED ***

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