



# Laughing Gull

*The Newsletter of the St. Lucie Audubon Society*

VOLUME 33, ISSUE VII

APRIL 2009

## President's Message

### MARCH 7, 2009 SLAS FIELD TRIP REPORT TO VERO WETLANDS

We had perfect weather conditions, an abundance of birds, Marsh Rabbits and American Alligators. Twenty persons participated on the field trip lead by Hart Rufe and Dan Walma.

The following is a list of the fifty five species identified: Pied-billed Grebe--Double-crested Cormorant--Anhinga--Great Blue Heron--Great Egret--Snowy Egret--Little Blue Heron--Tricolored Heron--Green Heron--Black-crowned Night-Heron--White Ibis--Glossy Ibis--Roseate Spoonbill--Wood Stork--Black Vulture--Turkey Vulture--Canada Goose--American Black Duck--Mottled Duck--Blue-winged Teal--Northern Shoveler--Green-winged Teal--Ring-necked Duck--Hooded Merganser--Osprey--Snail Kite (male and female)--Bald Eagle--Red-shouldered Hawk--Peregrine Falcon--Sora--Common Moorhen--American Coot--Limpkin--Sandhill Crane (with young)--Greater Yellowlegs--Lesser Yellowlegs--Least Sandpiper--Common Snipe--Ring-billed Gull--Eurasian Collared-Dove--Mourning Dove--Belted Kingfisher--Eastern Phoebe--Loggerhead Shrike--Fish Crow--Tree Swallow--Northern Mockingbird--European Starling--Yellow-rumped Warbler--Palm Warbler--Savannah Sparrow--Red-winged Blackbird--Common Grackle--Boat-tailed Grackle.

*Dan Walma*

## Calendar of Events

### Meetings

Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 7 pm

Jon Moore, FAU's Professor' presents "Fisheries and wildlife exploration around the Antarctic Peninsula"

### Field Trips

Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>

Gordy Park, Annual Picnic.

Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>,

Spruce Bluff Preserve, Port St. Lucie.

(more details.at meeting)

## Meeting Place

Oxbow Eco-Center

5400 NE St. James Drive, Pt St. Lucie, Fl 34983

Located 1.5 miles south of Midway Road / 1.5 miles north of Airosa

## Upcoming Events

### Wake-up Call Lecture Series

Oxbow Eco Center presents

Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> \* 11 am

### "Your Money or Your Life"

Learn how to live well with less. Monique Tilford, co-author of the newly released edition of the New York Times bestseller, **Your Money or Your Life** will talk about transforming your relationship with money to gain financial independence.

This is a FREE event, just bring your coffee cup to enjoy some shade grown coffee for the birds.



## New Members

Richard & Jo Ann Williams

*Welcome*

## Growing Green Together!

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Festival at the

Oxbow Eco-Center

Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> ❖ 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

FREE

Join the **Oxbow Eco-Center's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Festival on April 18<sup>th</sup>** and learn how we can 'grow green together' here in St. Lucie County. This free event is packed with fun for the whole family, including live animals, an eco-challenge, reggae music by INJOY, and even a wildlife parade!

This year's festival focuses on '**Growing Green Together**' and includes a plethora of ideas on how you can do your part to conserve and act sustainably. Visit the Healthy Home, and learn just how easy it is to go green in every room of your house. Dozens of exhibitors will be on-hand to demonstrate the slow food movement, alternative energy, water harvesting and conservation, and planting wild and native landscapes. Be sure to visit the Ft. Pierce Utility Authority booth and see the difference a light bulb can make. Then make the commitment to **Change A Light** and receive a FREE compact fluorescent bulb to take home (quantities limited).

This year's festival is sure to delight kids of all ages! Take the **Eco-Challenge** and test your nature acumen. The Treasure Coast Wildlife Center will be on-hand with some of their majestic **birds of prey**, while the St. Lucie Regional Herpetological Society will have dozens of **reptiles and amphibians**.

Do you have a favorite animal and like dancing in the woods? Then make a wildlife mask or puppet with some recycled treasures at **Crafty Corners** and join the "**Salute to Wildlife**" Parade. We are really pleased to be highlighting some of our local youth as the musical troupe of **Future Generations, Inc.** performs on stage at 11:00 am and leads our first wildlife parade. Follow the beat of the incredible **Boys and Girls Club DRUM LINE** performing on stage at 1:00 pm, and then leading the afternoon parade through the Oxbow forest. This is your chance to express your wild side!



**Reduce!  
Recycle!  
Reuse!**



## Feathered Friends

Submitted by Dotty Hull

Purple Martins, the largest swallows in North America, have nested almost exclusively in manmade nest boxes for more than 100 years. The male is all dark and the female has a brownish breast. Native Americans hung up empty gourds for the Purple Martin before Europeans arrived in North America. Purple Martins in eastern North America now nest almost exclusively in birdhouses, but those in the West use mostly natural cavities.

We have two martin houses located at the edge of our property where there is a drainage canal. The martins seem to like it there since they have been nesting there each year for the past 15 years. The older birds are the first to return to where they nested before. If you decide to put up a martin house next year it should be up by the end of January. It is a joy to listen to their musical chirps as they perch outside the entrance to their compartment. Houses are sold online and sometimes in stores like Home Depot or Lowe's. A good online source is <http://duncraft.atom5.com/purple-martins-1232.html>



[www.stlucieaudubon.org](http://www.stlucieaudubon.org)

### ST.LUCIE AUDUBON SOCIETY 2009 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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## Message from Vice President

*Submitted by Ruth Neese*

Remember the furor over the wind turbines FPL proposed for Hutchinson Island? That was brought to my mind when I read a brief article in the March 20<sup>th</sup> paper. The article summarized the 2009 "U.S. State of the Birds Report." The report was a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Interior and major conservation organizations, such as the Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and other. The report described conservation successes, such as the Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Osprey and went on to detail hundreds of other species in decline. The link to wind turbines came from a statement that alternative energy development is the gravest threat to birds next to habitat loss!

Wind turbines were heavily implicated in species decline, but this technology was not alone. Simply stringing power lines interferes with breeding success in species like the Prairie Chicken. You can access the full report at <http://www.stateofthebirds.org/>

We all want cleaner, sustainable energy, but we must remember to account for *all* the costs involved in energy production. These costs now include bird kills and breeding interference. When you hear about plans for alternative energy production, refer your elected officials to the 2009 "U.S. State of the Birds" report.



## Conservation Corner

*Submitted by Ed Bowes*

Window strike is one of the major reasons passerines become patients at the Treasure Coast Wildlife Center. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has produced some excellent advice to help everyone concerned about birds prevent window strike. This information is reprinted with permission from Cornell Lab of Ornithology.



See insert included.

[www.stlucieaudubon.org](http://www.stlucieaudubon.org)

## From Your Webmaster...

Check out the wonderful new photos supplied by members, including Elsa Millard, Dorothy Shultz and, of course, Hart Rufe. And, the page has been re-organized to match the order of birds listed in Sibley's guide.  
\*\*\*\*\*

And, for the first time, sound has been added. The Brown Thrasher's varied melody was recorded on the old Wilderness Golf Course in southern PSL by Jack Dodge.  
\*\*\*\*\*h

[Birdpost.com](http://Birdpost.com) has added a regional bird list for St. Lucie County. This free site lets you track and map your sightings on Google Earth from your computer or iPhone.

## Membership Application

A one-year chapter membership extends from January to January. You may use the coupon below to begin or renew your membership.

SLAS is now offering a Chapter-only annual membership for those who want to financially support their local chapter. The following dues options apply:

- Individual: \$20 per year**
- Family: \$25 per year**  
(for 2 or more people in same household)
- Sponsor: \$50 per year**
- Patron: \$100 per year**
- Lifetime: \$500**

Each local membership includes a subscription to the monthly newsletter "The Laughing Gull". You may receive "The Laughing Gull" via standard mail or electronically via email. Please indicate your preference below.

**Please make checks payable to and send to:**

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**New membership:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send my "Laughing Gull" by:

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ or **Standard mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Thanks for your support.*

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**Meeting: Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 7pm**

“JUST RETURNED FROM ANTARCTICA” FAU's Professor Jon Moore, a close friend of the Society spoke with us recently from Antarctica and has confirmed that he will share his experiences with us at this month's meeting.

**Field Trip: Saturday April 4<sup>th</sup>**

This month's field trip will be to Gordy Park, Fort Pierce Annual Picnic.

**\*\*\* SPONSORS WANTED \*\*\***

St. Lucie County has a new policy of charging Non-Profits for use of County facilities. Our cost is \$45.00 per month payable in advance. We are looking for sponsors to underwrite the cost of using Oxbow-Eco-Center.

In return we will acknowledge individual or company names in our Newsletter several times during the ensuing year. If you are interested in sponsoring SLA's ongoing program please send checks to :

**ST. LUCIE AUDUBON, P.O. BOX 12474, FORT PIERCE, FL 34979**

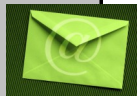


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