



Laughing Gull

The Newsletter of the St. Lucie Audubon Society

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President's Message

The Bird Identification Class was held last month. Good birding requires good optics. An excellent source of information on binoculars and scopes can be found under this web site. Key in www.njaudubon.org and click on Cape May Bird Observatory (CMBO), click on store-buyers guide-Pete's Pick of the Pack binoculars and scopes... You will find a summary of binoculars and scopes in different price ranges and all appropriate for birding. My wife has access to very high end binoculars, but prefers the under \$ 300.00 Nikon Monarch 8 by 42.

In addition to Sibley and Peterson field guides; check out www.Thayerbirding.com for electronic field guides.

Other items that help to make birding fun are iPod downloaded bird calls. See BirdJam at www.birdjam.com, and for those with high frequency hearing loss, the Songfinder at www.nselec.com.

With the class under your belt and the proper equipment "LET'S GO BIRDING "

A field trip to Green Cay Wetlands is perfect for new birders. All the viewing is from boardwalks and the birds are unafraid.

Join the SLAS, attend our meetings, enjoy our field trips, and invite your friends and neighbors.

Thank you for your support.

Dan Walma

Calendar of Events

March 6, 2010 Field Trip to Vero Waste Management Wetlands

Meet at Home Depot parking lot on Okeechobee Road in Fort Pierce. We will leave the parking lot by 8 AM and proceed to the Vero Wetlands area in Vero Beach. (We want to be at Vero Wetlands by 8:30 AM) Be sure to bring water and snacks. Wear proper footwear (no sandals!) We will be walking the impoundments. Any questions contact Dorothy at 772-349-6025.

March 13, 2010 Painted Bunting Trip

\$10 per person. This is a tour to a private residence to see Painted and Indigo Buntings. This 2nd trip was recently added to accommodate everyone that was interested in attending. Please call Anjula Smith at 772-924-8778 for reservations. We will meet in the Sears parking lot on St. Lucie West Boulevard at 7:30 AM and carpool from there.

April 15, 2010 Field Trip (Thursday) River Lilly Cruise Boat!

Our April field trip is something special...a late afternoon/early evening boat trip on the River Lilly. This will be on Thursday, April 15 and we need to be at the boat dock in River Park Marina on Prima Vista Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, no later than 3:45 PM. The boat departs promptly at 4:00 PM. Owners of the River Lilly are our own Audubon members, Deena and Dana Wade, and they will take us to the rookeries on the St. Lucie River where we will see hundreds of nesting birds! This is an experience you do not want to miss. The trip is open to all, but you MUST call Deena at 772-489-8344 to reserve a seat. Cost is \$20 per person and Deena and Dana are generously donating the fees back to the St. Lucie Audubon Society in honor of the memory of long-time member Dotty Hull. Please, let's make this a full boat in Dotty's honor! Call Deena ASAP to reserve a seat. 772-489-8344.

March Meeting: March 4, 2010 Speaker ????????

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 Airoso

www.stlucieaudubon.org

St. Lucie Audubon Field Trip to Green Cay and Wakodahatchee

On Sunday, February 7, 2010, 23 enthusiastic participants journeyed to Green Cay and Wakodahatchee Wetlands in Palm Beach County where 60 species of birds were seen, including a number of species observed by many of the group while traveling down I-95 and the Florida Turnpike to the water treatment facilities. The cool, windy, but sunny, weather undoubtedly kept the species count down, but close views of many nesting birds with tiny chicks in various stages of development and growth, and excellent views of showy birds such as Purple Gallinules, Soras, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, a Roseate Spoonbill, a gorgeous male Northern Harrier, several Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, a very close and cooperative Black and White Warbler, and a couple of mammoth alligators, made the day interesting

and exciting for all. The group finished with a delightful meal at Sweet Tomatoes (becoming a traditional highlight of this trip) and got home in time to see the Super Bowl. Hart and Jewel Rufe led the trip.

See list of sightings on back page!

This is to inform you of an address change for one of your members, Dorothy Davis. Her new address is: Dorothy M. Davis, c/o Abbiejean Russell Care Center, 700 S. 29th Street, Fort Pierce, FL 34950.

If any of you are in that area I know she would love for you to stop by and say hello. I make sure she gets all her birding information as that has been dear to her heart for her lifetime.

*** 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**

**Thanks to the Following Sponsors
John and Nettie Brolman
Deena and Dana Wade - "River Lilly"
Ed Bowes & Ruth Neese
Treasure Coast Wildlife Center
Billi Wagner**

www.stlucieaudubon.org

ST.LUCIE AUDUBON SOCIETY 2009 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Chapter Historian	Judy Gersony	jagersony@hotmail.com
Webmaster	Mary Dodge	mary@jackmaryetc.com

Conservation Corner

Submitted by Ed Bowes

As the new Conservation Chair, I began receiving emails about the RCC. This was a mystery; I had no idea what an RCC was! As I discovered, RCC stands for Regional Conservation Committee, and Audubon of Florida has six RCCs. The RCCs develop plans for conservation activities and priorities for Audubon of Florida. Our chapter is part of the Everglades RCC, which extends from St. Lucie County to Key West.

The greater Everglades ecosystem is the focus for conservation activities at federal and state levels. Federal level Everglades RCC priorities include advocating for a federal Water Resources Development Act and pushing for adequate federal funding of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP). State-level activities can be roughly divided into northern Everglades and southern Everglades priorities. For our chapter, the northern Everglades

priorities include benefits for the St. Lucie River estuary through advocating for Lake Okeechobee water quality improvement, pressing for control of non-native plant and animal species, eliminating lake discharges into the St. Lucie River, and advocating for the funding and implementation of the Indian River South CERP project. An overarching priority is the prevention of development that interferes with greater Everglades restoration and protection.

Audubon of Florida will need your support to succeed in these conservation activities. Keep abreast of what your local governments are doing with development and land use planning. Write your state and federal legislators in support of conservation initiatives. If you want more details about the Everglades RCC, its recommended conservation activities, or the other five RCCs visit the Audubon of Florida Web site at <http://fl.audubon.org/> Look for the section titled "Cutting Edge Conservation."

Feathered Friends

Submitted by Ruth Neese

My yard has been graced by a new winter resident this year—a Yellow-Throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*). Common in the southeastern states, Yellow-Throated Warblers often winter in South Florida. Very striking in appearance, these warblers have a bright yellow throat and upper breast outlined by black lines that extend down the chest. The forehead is black with a white supercilium and black eye stripe. The bluish-gray upper parts are unmarked except for two white wing bars. Equipped with one of the longest bills for a warbler, Yellow-Throated Warblers forage by creeping along the upper portions of trees and prying insects from the bark. The individual wintering in my yard also eats seed from my feeders, which is not noted as a behavior in any of my references! Be sure to look for this bright, active bird in your yards this season.

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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Conservation Corner

Species seen: (*observed en route)

Pied-billed Grebe
 Whistling Duck
 Brown Pelican *
 Double-crested Cormorant
 Anhinga
 Great Blue Heron
 Great Egret
 Snowy Egret
 Little Blue Heron
 Cattle Egret *
 Green Heron
 Black-crowned Night Heron
 Tricolored Heron
 Glossy Ibis
 White Ibis
 Roseate Spoonbill
 Wood Stork
 Black-bellied Green-winged Teal
 Mottled Duck
 Blue-winged Teal
 Muscovy *
 Black Vulture
 Turkey Vulture
 Osprey
 Northern Harrier
 Sharp-shinned Hawk
 Red-shouldered Hawk *
 Red-tailed Hawk *
 American Kestrel *
 Limpkin *

Sora
 Purple Gallinule
 Common Moorhen
 American Coot
 Ring-billed Gull
 Royal Tern
 Mourning Dove
 Eurasian Collared Dove *
 Rock Pigeon
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
 Belted Kingfisher
 Red-bellied Woodpecker
 Purple Martin
 Tree Swallow
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow
 Blue Jay
 Fish Crow
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
 American Robin *
 Northern Mockingbird
 European Starling
 Blue-headed Vireo
 Palm Warbler
 Northern Parula
 Yellow-rumped Warbler
 Black-and-White Warbler
 Red-winged Blackbird
 Common Grackle
 Boat-tailed Grackle
 House Sparrow * (at Sweet Tomatoes)

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