



LAUGHING GULL

President's Message

From Ed Bowes



I want to welcome everyone back to our chapter activities for the new season! As your new chapter President, I look forward to meeting you and working to heighten interest in and awareness of birding.

I also encourage you to volunteer for our chapter. We need assistance with educational activities and we are always open to the possibility of extra field trips if someone is willing to lead them. Good birding!

IMPORTANT DATES

Bird Counts



Christmas Bird Count: December 22, 2012. Ed Bowes is coordinating again.

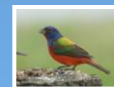


Bird-A-Thon: April 6 or 7, 2013. You have the option of counting one of those days. More details later.

Special Events



Adams Ranch Breakfast: February 2013. Date to be announced.



Painted Bunting Trip: March 2013. Date to be announced.

Safari Night – October 4 at 7 PM at the Oxbow Eco-Center

Ellen and Richard Lynch asked "What kind of birds do you see in Africa?" and they decided to find out! The "Travelling Lynches" have enjoyed safari trips to Africa three times and have visited 53 different countries.

Richard is an amateur photographer and Ellen is now

the American representative for "Travel Connections," a travel agency in Kenya that offers African safari packages.

Ellen and Richard have volunteered to share their experiences and pictures from their last African safari with our chapter on October 4 at Oxbow Eco-Center. The meeting begins at 7 PM.

Feathered Friends by Ruth Neese

If you are like me, you have visited the beaches in St. Lucie County in the winter and spent time watching little birds run up and down the sand. The birds repeatedly retreat from advancing waves then chase the receding wave while probing in the sand. These entertaining little birds are Sanderlings, one of the most widespread wintering shorebirds in the world.

Sanderlings breed in the Arctic and migrate to temperate and tropical beaches worldwide. Wintering Sanderlings can be found along both coasts of the U.S., coastal South America, Southeast Asia, and India! This preference for sandy beaches

distinguishes Sanderlings from other sandpipers. Their feeding behavior is distinctive; chasing retreating waves permits Sanderlings to have first choice of marine invertebrates and insects found in the sand.

Sanderlings are small birds with a white face, black bill and legs, white belly, and pale nonbreeding plumage. In flight, Sanderlings display a prominent white stripe on their greater coverts. So, this winter, visit our local beaches and amuse yourself watching the Sanderlings run. Good birding!



Sanderling in winter plumage.

Field Trip – Saturday October 6 with Capt. “Chop”



Captain “Chop” Lege giving a boat tour.

October 6 Field Trip – Indian River Lagoon boat trip with Capt. “Chop” Lege. Last year, a Common Eider was spotted on this trip, so sign-up! You never know which birds you will see!

Meet by 10:15 AM at the marina in front of the Tiki Bar in downtown Fort Pierce. Call Dorothy at 772-349-6025 and a leave message to reserve your seats.



Conservation Corner: Florida's Water & Land Legacy

By Ruth Neese

Florida's Water and Land Legacy is a coalition of the state's leading conservation organizations including the Trust for Public Land, Audubon Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation, Florida Conservation Alliance, 1000 Friends of Florida, Conservation Trust for Florida, and many others. These organizations have united with concerned citizens to launch a major constitutional amendment campaign for the Florida November 2014 ballot. The gutting of funding for *Florida Forever* and state conservation initiatives triggered this campaign.

As you may recall, I wrote about the defunding of conservation initiatives in March of 2011. Governor Scott's first budget proposal included zero funding for *Florida Forever*. The same budget proposal also eliminated approximately 125 trust funds intended to protect *Florida Forever* funds and significantly curtailed Documentary Stamp Tax revenue that

went into the *Florida Forever* Trust Fund. The state legislature signed-off on that budget in 2011 and the 2012 state budget included only \$8.5 million for protecting Florida's water and land.

Documentary Stamp Tax revenue has been shifted into the general fund since 2009 while *Florida Forever* experienced a 97.5% budget **cut**. The proposed amendment would require one-third of **existing** Documentary Stamp Tax revenue to be used to fund restoration and conservation projects in Florida's most critical water protection areas and lands. This would provide more than \$5 billion for water and land conservation over the next 10 years and \$10 billion over the 20-year life of the measure, all without a tax increase.

Why a constitutional amendment? First and

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foremost, an amendment provides a guaranteed funding stream for conservation projects. This would deter water management districts' impulse to sell-off conservation lands purchased with public funds to private entities as "surplus." Second, healthy natural areas supply us with clean water and improve our quality of life. Vibrant natural areas also draw tourist dollars into local economies. Finally, the amendment would reinforce Florida's long-standing leadership on water and land conservation and return these efforts to a state priority.

Florida's Water & Land Legacy is hoping you will become involved in this project. Volunteers are needed to collect petition signatures, make calls, and assemble petition packets. You can donate to the cause and spread the word by telling five friends about the campaign. There will be events scheduled in every part of the state to promote the campaign, so plan to attend on of these affairs. More details can be found on this Web site:
<http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/index.php>

Sponsors Wanted!

St. Lucie County has a policy of charging non-profits for the use of county facilities.

Our cost is **\$45 dollars a month**, payable in advance. We are looking for sponsors to underwrite the cost of our monthly meetings at the 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 St. Lucie Audubon's monthly programs, please send checks to:

St. Lucie Audubon Society

PO Box 12474

Ft. Pierce, FL 34979

ST. LUCIE AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director-at-Large – Jim Silletto

Board members may be contacted by email at stlucieaudubon@gmail.com

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.

Remember!

A St. Lucie County-specific bird checklist is available on our chapter Web site. The birds are listed in taxonomic order and the list indicates when you are most likely to see a particular bird in St. Lucie Co.

Visit
<http://stlucieaudubon.org> to download the list. It's free!

Coming Attractions: November Field Trip & Speaker

**November Field Trip: Sunday,
November 18 to STA-1 in Palm
Beach County**

Trip will be led by the Audubon Society of the Everglades in partnership with the SFWMD. This is a carpool drive around water management areas. We are limited to 20 people and are requesting 4 people per car to limit the number of vehicles. Departure time is 6:30 AM from Port St. Lucie. More details will be provided at the November meeting. If interested, call Dorothy ASAP at 772-349-6025.

**November Speaker: Thursday,
November 1 at 7 PM at the
Oxbow Eco-Center**

John Brolman

“All About Seeds”



Mark your calendars!

Help our chapter save printing and mailing costs by signing-up for the email newsletter. The newsletter can then be printed out if you prefer to read it offline. To request the email version, send your name and email address to eddie_ruth@msn.com

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Fort Pierce, FL 34979