



Crested Caracara

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

January/March 2017

Audubon mission: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitat for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

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President's Message

Hello Hendry-Glades Audubon Members and Friends:

I thought I'd share an exciting experience with you.

Licensed Bird Bander, Nancy LaFramboise, and her team of volunteers banded 5 Painted Buntings at my home in LaBelle March 24th. They also placed Federal Bands on one Northern Cardinal, one Great Crested Flycatcher, and three Indigo Buntings. The birds were weighed, photographed, and measured before being released; data that will be sent to the North American Bird Banding Laboratory. The team plans to return in a few weeks to band additional Painted Buntings. This was the farthest west that this team banded birds in Florida. They are interested in other sites where they can band Painted Buntings before the end of April or next fall or winter.

Bird banding is a universal and indispensable technique for studying the movement, survival and behavior of birds. The North American Bird Banding Program is jointly administered by the United States Geological Survey and the Canadian Wildlife Service. Their respective banding offices have similar functions and policies and use the same bands, reporting forms and data formats. Joint coordination of the program dates to 1923.

For information about bird banding or reporting bands to The North American Bird Banding Program Bird Banding Program Bird Banding Laboratory website which is located at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL/>. You can report a bird band or a marked bird or request an electronic Certificate of Appreciation.

Enjoy the banding photos.

Happy Birding!

Margaret

863-674-0695 - cell: 863-517-0202, 380, Riverview Drive, LaBelle, FL 33935

STA-5/6 2017 Schedule

April 8, 22	No tours scheduled for July &
May 13	August
June 10	

Meetings - 7:00 p.m., September - May -Third Monday of the month Meetings held at the Dallas Townsend Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle.

April 17 – Charlie Ewell will present an informative program “Spring Bird Migration”. Charlie is a High School Gifted Resource Specialist in the Lee County School District. He is recognized in the birding community for his volunteer work as the Lee County Bird Patrol Coordinator, Birding Trip Leader, reviewer for eBird, and Christmas Bird Count compiler.



May 15 - Jayne Johnston “Living with Panthers” 6:30 pm
Pot Luck Dinner & Installation of Officers

Painted Bunting Banding



The buntings are enjoying their new squirrel proof feeder.

Spring Breeding Ground Birds by Kim Willis

It is that time of the year again when many a young bird's fancy turns to love. During this amorous season, birds will be busy selecting their mate and building their cozy little nests.

Unfortunately, not all nests are tucked safely away in the nook of a thick leafy bush; some are placed directly on the ground, and yes right in the path of vehicles and foot traffic. During this season it is a good idea to be mindful that we share our gravel roadways, beaches, athletic fields, golf courses, parking lots and even our lawns with these ground nesting birds. Watch your step!

Here is a short list of a few of the more common ground nesting birds that you may encounter in your outings.

Killdeer – In our area, this is probably the number one ground nesting bird to be mindful of. Killdeer build their nests on bare soil areas with an open view. Breeding season for the Killdeer is typically March – July.

Common Ground Dove – Common Ground Doves place their nests either on the ground in a slight depression in lined with vegetation or as flimsy structures of twigs or pine needles lined with roots and grasses. The Common Ground Dove have been found nesting in almost every month.

Osceola Turkey – Osceola turkey constructs shallow nest on the ground nests. Nesting occurs in late March or early April.

Northern Bobwhite – Northern Bobwhite construct a shallow nest built on the ground and hidden beneath vegetation. Breeding season typically occurs April – July.

Black Skimmers – Black Skimmers nests are built on the ground and often just simple scrapes in the sand. Due to habitat loss, Black Skimmers will also nest on gravel roofs. Breeding season for Black Skimmers is

Eastern Meadowlarks – Eastern Meadowlarks usually nest on the ground in grassy fields or meadows. The nest is a domed cup of grass and stems and well hidden. The breeding season for Eastern Meadowlarks is late March through July.

Great caution is needed during this special time of the season. If you find nesting birds whether on the ground or otherwise, please be respectful of the bird and remember that they need their space to raise their precious young. Place a marker to let others know that there are nesting birds about.

For general information about nesting birds, please visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Nest Watch website:

<http://nestwatch.org/>



Nancy LaFramboise and her team hard at work performing bird banding and data collection before releasing the birds.



North American Bird Banding Project at the home of Margaret England, LaBelle, FL.

STA 5/6 Update

Birds and Birders have been busy at STA 5/6 this first few months in 2017. Over 130 confirmed bird species were reported at STA 5/6 on eBird from January-March 2017 including 15 species of waterfowl. The Swallow-tailed Kites have been flying overhead since the end of February. On April 8th few wintering Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were still being seen, but the Smooth-billed Ani, which was first reported in November 2016, hasn't been heard or seen in a few weeks. The 3 wintering Tropical Kingbirds, Peregrine Falcons and American Kestrel will probably migrate to their breeding grounds by the end of April. This is the beginning of the breeding season for some of the resident birds. Common Gallinule have chicks and the Anhinga are on nests. Some of the colonial nesting Egrets and Herons are also busy building nests.

Many interesting visitors have come to see the birds at STA 5/6 in the past few months. These included students lead by Dr. Jerry Jackson from the Wilson's Ornithological Conference held at FGCU and FIU students studying Everglades Restoration. The Caloosa Bird Club traveled from the west coast for at least 5 trips this year. The Everglades Birding Festival brought a group to STA 5/6 in January. Some of the Audubon chapters including Audubon of the Everglades, St. Pete Audubon, Audubon of the Western Everglades, and Manatee Audubon participated in the driving trips as well. It is always a pleasure to host our neighboring chapters! Check the HGAS website for the 2017-2018 scheduled trips.

To register for upcoming trips, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sta-56-driving-bird-tour-tickets-15361938973>

Species Spotlight



Photo by Kim Willis

Did you know...

The Eastern Meadowlark is not a lark at all. It is a member of the blackbird family (Icteridae), which also includes cowbirds and orioles

Male Eastern Meadowlark typically have two mates at a time, rarely they will have three.

The oldest known wild Eastern Meadowlark was at least 8 years, 8 months old. It was banded in Pennsylvania in 1926, and shot in North Carolina in 1935

There are 17 subspecies of Eastern Meadowlark, including one isolated population in the Southwest known as the Lillian's Meadowlark, which lives well within the range of the Western Meadowlark.

A group of meadowlarks are collectively known as a "pod" of meadowlarks.

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)

Often seen perched on a fence post with beak wide open in song, the Eastern Meadowlark is a small stocky, short tailed bird identified by its unmistakable black "V" necklace and brilliant yellow chest. It's flute-like call is very recognizable in its open meadow, fields, pasture and grassland habitats.

The Eastern Meadowlark is a common resident throughout most of mainland Florida. Its breeding range extends from Maine west through southern Canada to eastern Minnesota and central Arizona and south through Central America to northeast Brazil.

Their diet primarily consists of insects, which encompass more than 75% of the diet, with grains and the seeds of weeds and grasses making up the remainder.

Eastern Meadowlarks build their nests on the Ground, hidden very well in thick grass. The nest has an arched "roof" consisting mostly of very fine grasses. Three to five smooth white brown and lavender splotched eggs are laid in each clutch. The female incubates the eggs for 13 to 15 days, and the young fledge at 11 or 12 days of age.

Eastern Meadowlarks numbers are on the decline. This is primarily due to disappearing grassland habitat.

"According to the State of the Birds 2011 report, more than 95 percent of the Eastern Meadowlark's distribution is on private lands, meaning farmland conservation practices are vital to the survival of this species". (All About Birds 2017)

Photos



Glossy Ibis and its White-tailed Deer friend at STA 5/6 Photo by Kim Willis



Short-tailed Hawk (light phase) over southern Hendry County – Photo by Kim Willis



Glossy Ibis are thought to have come from Africa in the 19th century and have spread their range northward via the Caribbean. Photo by Dan Sclaro



“I can’t do a thing with my hair”! The sentry of the wetlands - Great Blue Heron – Photo by Kim Willis



Juvenile Alligator at STA 5/6 enjoying the day. – Photo by Kim Willis

Although I have a vast collection of photos from my many visits to STA 5/6 and other adventures to choose from for our newsletter, I would love to share more photos from our members and friends. Please feel free at any time to email me your photos and we will use them in our newsletter – kimwillis@centurylink.net. I look forward to seeing your pictures.

- *Kim*

Join Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, Inc. (HGAS)

You may choose between two types of membership:
"HGAS Chapter Only Voluntary Member" or both National Audubon and HGAS

1. "Voluntary" memberships receive the quarterly Crested Caracara newsletter by e-mail. Voluntary membership funds and donations support local educational and program opportunities.

YES! I want to become a "Voluntary" member of HGAS.

"Voluntary" Hendry-Glades Audubon Individual Membership \$10 Annually

"Voluntary" Hendry-Glades Audubon Household Membership \$15 Annually

Please send my Crested Caracara via e-mail.

Additional Tax Deductible Donation to HGAS (501c3) is enclosed.

Enclosed is my check payable to HGAS (Hendry-Glades Audubon Society)

OR

2. You may join or renew your HGAS membership through the National Audubon Society using this form and payment to Hendry-Glades Audubon or online at: <http://support.audubon.org/> Select Chapter Code: E51 Hendry-Glades AS

With this type of membership, you receive the quarterly Crested Caracara (via e-mail), 6 issues of Audubon Magazine, the Florida Naturalist magazine and membership in the National Audubon Society and Hendry-Glades Audubon Society.

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually

Enclosed is my check payable to the National Audubon Society.

Mail to:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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Hendry-Glades Audubon Society Chapter E51

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