



Crested Caracara

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

October/December 2016

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.

Officers

Margaret England, President
Butch Wilson, Vice-President
Kim Willis, Secretary
Janet Falk, Treasurer

Board Members

Julie Jeffords
Martha Valiant
Rhonda Roff
Sonny Mowbray
Terri Lazar
Add Austin
Ann Starck
Mel Karau

STA-5/6 2015 Schedule

December 31 – Christmas Bird Count
January 14, 21 & 28

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

January 17: Don Hamilton -“Birds in Flight: Africa”

February 20: TBA

March 20: TBA



President's Message

Christmas and Holiday Greetings!

This is the time of year that many of us reflect on the past year's accomplishments and start planning for 2017. Some of the HGAS highlights from this past year include trips, bird counts, purchases, and community outreach. Planning has begun to add new activities next year.

Over 20 trips were led by HGAS volunteers to STA 5/6. We plan to offer Birding 101 mini-workshops at a local park. HGAS participated in the annual STA 5/6 Christmas Bird Count, summer Shorebird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, and the final year of the Breeding Bird Atlas Surveys. There is interest in hosting a one day birding or photography event during the summer or fall months. Plans are underway to apply for an official Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest and Spirit of the Wild Christmas Bird Count to be held in January 2018. There will be a trial run to prepare for this event on January 4, 2017.

Hendry-Glades Audubon recently purchased 8 pair of Celestron Outland 8x42 binoculars for birding workshops, tours or use by youth groups. The LaBelle 4-H Nature Club has borrowed them for birdwatching activities. The new Hendry-Glades Audubon pins featuring our chapter Crested Caracara mascot are available for purchase for \$1.50 and the STA 5/6 small Euro Stickers may be purchased for fifty cents each. A limited number of STA 5/6 checklist brochures were distributed to Hendry County Chambers and public buildings. Additional brochures will be printed. Printed or digital copies are available upon request.

The Hendry-Glades Audubon website www.hendrygladesaudubon.org is used regularly and has a link to Eventbrite's online scheduling for STA 5/6 trips. In 2017 this free reservation service will be used for workshops and activities reservations. The Hendry-Glades Audubon Society Facebook page with posts of interest to birders and photographers has 290 members. Waddy Thompson and other photographers often share their amazing photos on this page. Join and invite friends to join this group and help reach our goal of 300 members. Additional website and Facebook administrators is an ongoing need for our chapter. Kim Willis had done an amazing job as the editor of the quarterly "Crested Caracara". Cont'd....

President's Message continued ...

This month Florida Power and Light made a \$1,500 donation to our chapter to be used to establish a "Pollinator Garden" at the Hendry County Extension Building in partnership with the Hendry County 4-H. Hendry-Glades Audubon presented \$1,500 to 4-H this week and plans are underway to replace the watering system and build beds at the front of the building. The University of Florida has donated 2 bee hives which will be placed in an open area behind the building. Donations of plants that will attract butterflies, bees, and other pollinators are needed for this project.

You are probably wondering how you can help with the 2017 goals. Helping during counts, purchasing items, distributing STA 5/6 brochures, sharing newsletters, or promoting our website or Facebook links with your friends, or encouraging people to become member are ways to help HGAS have a successful 2017. When the time comes to begin planting pollinator plants consider sharing some of your plants for this project or help the 4-H prepare the garden site.

Please contact me to purchase pins or stickers, if you need brochures, or are interested in volunteering with projects.

Happy Birding!

Margaret

Christmas Bird Count STA5-Clewiston (FLSO)

Every December since 1900, teams of enthusiastic birders have joined together across the country to count the number of individual birds within each species present on the same date in the same locale. This extremely important project is coordinated by the National Audubon Society.

Christmas Bird Count is a free event! STA5-Clewiston (FLSO)

Join Hendry-Glades Audubon for the annual STA5-Clewiston Bird Count to be held Saturday December 31, 2016: Choice: 7am "teams" or 8:30 am - noon escorted group with volunteer guide. To participate register online at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/sta-56-driving-bird-tour-tickets-15361938973>. Choose December 31 from drop down menu. For information, contact Margaret England at 863-517-0202 or stabirding@embarqmail.com.

ADDITIONAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS: Birders, Photographers, Compilers needed

The Orange River count is in its 3rd year! Join the HGAS Team lead by Margaret England, Wednesday December 28th. We will meet at 7 am at the Alva Diner. The team will survey the east side of the 15 mile circle from Highway 80 south to Highway 82.

A new Hendry County Christmas Bird Count trial run at OK Slough and Spirit of the Wild is scheduled for Wednesday January 4th. Volunteers meet at the Keri Fire Tower on 832 at 7 am. Count should finish by 1 pm.

To join any of the teams, contact Margaret England stabirding@embarqmail.com or phone/text: 863-517-0202

STA 5 Update

Ebird has become one of the most popular free sites worldwide for birders to post sightings and keep their life lists. <http://ebird.org/ebird>. There have been 1118 checklist with 226 species on Ebird reported for STA 5/6. Of those, 206 species have been confirmed during the HGAS led trips.

In December 2016, over 100 different species were reported on eBird for STA 5/6. Birders who are walking or bicycling Friday, Saturday, or Monday during daylight hours are observing some of the more common species that aren't seen by the large escorted groups. Some of the less common birds observed by the groups in December include Smooth-billed Ani, Gray Kingbird, and Tropical Kingbirds. The wintering ducks that frequent STA 5/6, Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, American Widgeon, and Northern Shoveler, are steadily increasing their numbers.

With the water levels fluctuations, shorebirds including Black-necked Stilt, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, and sandpipers are being observed. It is always fun to watch the Purple Gallinule and Gray-headed Swamphen feeding near the cattails. It is always amazing to see Snail Kites, Raptors, Wading Birds, and Warblers during birding 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 Killdeer is actually a skillful swimmer. Adults swim well in quick-flowing water, and chicks can swim across small streams.

The Killdeer uses a quite different display to guard against large hoofed animals by fluffing itself up, displaying its tail over its head, and running at the animal to attempt to make it change its path.

The oldest recorded Killdeer was at least 10 years, 11 months old at the time it was recaptured and rereleased during banding events in Kansas.

The male and female of a mated pair pick out a nesting site through a ritual known as a scrape ceremony where the male lowers his breast to the ground and scrapes a shallow depression with his feet. The female approaches, head lowered, and takes his place. The male then stands with body tilted slightly forward with his tail raised and spread, calling rapidly.

A group of killdeers are collectively known as a "season" of killdeers.

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*)

The Killdeer is an agile little plover common to lawns, fields and parking lots. They quickly sprint across the ground stopping suddenly to survey the landscape or to see if they have managed to startle up a tasty insect. Their name comes from their far-carrying excitable kill-deer call that is often heard while they are in flight. They can be found year round in the southeastern United States and Pacific Coast. Some northern birds winter in Mexico.

Killdeer have a round head with a very large eye. The white chest has two black bands and its brown face is marked with black and white patches. The wings are long, and slender; the legs are pale in color.

Unlike other shorebirds, they seem to prefer being in dry areas. They spend their time walking or mostly running on the ground and prefer open ground with low vegetation or sometimes none at all, and are found on lawns, golf courses, sod fields, parking lots, gravel covered roofs, pastures, fields sandbars and mudflats. When disturbed, they take flight calling their name repeatedly with rapid, intermittent wingbeats.

Killdeer feed primarily on invertebrates such as earthworms, snails, crayfish, beetles, grasshoppers and aquatic insect larvae with an occasional frog or dead minnow.

Killdeer nests are simple shallow scrapes on slightly raised open bare ground. After eggs are laid, they will sometimes add bits of shell, rock and sticks to the nest. Clutch size is 4 to 6 buff-colored eggs, heavily marked black and brown. The incubation period is 22 to 28 days.

Killdeer chicks are hatched with a full coat of buffy down feathers with a single black breast band. After hatching, they are ready to walk from the nest as soon as their feather are dry. The adult Killdeer performs a broken-wing act to lead predators away from the nest.

Killdeer pairs tend to stay together for one to several years.

Photos



The Tropical Kingbird have made STA 5/6 their winter home for the last 4 years. Currently, there are three. – Photo by Kim Willis



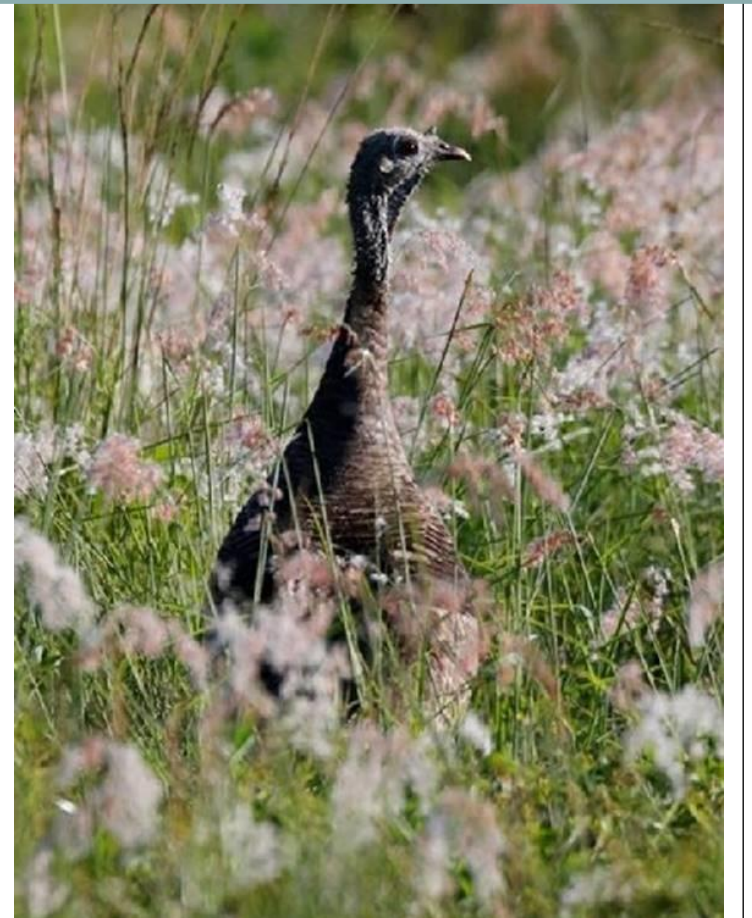
The Belted Kingfisher is one tough bird to get to sit still long enough to photograph. I was lucky..... – Photo by Kim Willis



This bird has been causing quite the excitement over the last two STA 5/6 visits. This past Saturday, a lone Smooth-billed Ani was spotted right at the trail head parking lot where it stayed around for very good views by all in attendance. – Photo by Kim Willis



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher seen on the neighboring SFWMD property west of STA 5/6. – Photo by Kim Willis



Osceola Turkey – not seen within STA 5/6 but often spotted along the way along Deer Fence Canal Road. Photo by Dan Scolaro

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: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society Chapter E51

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