



Crested Caracara

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

January/March 2012

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*

STA-5 2012 Schedule

Jan 14
Jan 28
Feb 4
Feb 18-20 Great Backyard Bird Count
Mar 10
Mar 28-31 Big O Birding Festival

Meetings

7:00 p.m. second Monday of the month
September - May. Most meetings will be held at the Dallas Townsend Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle or Clewiston Museum 109 Central Avenue, Clewiston. (863) 983-2870.

January 9 – LaBelle – Jerry Jackson
Woodpeckers of South Florida

February 13 – Clewiston -Dr. Paul Gray Human & Natural History of Lake Okeechobee (including Snail Kite update)

March 12-LaBelle-Gene McAvoy,
Hendry County extension agent
Topic of local interest to be announced



President's Message

On January 15, 2011 Hendry-Glades Audubon Society celebrates its 6th year as an official Audubon Chapter. Our membership is over 100 members and their families who live in Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee Counties plus winter visitors and friends. We completed the 5th Annual STA 5-Clewiston FLSO Christmas Bird Count on December 31, 2011. Plans are underway to participate in 6th Annual CBC to be held on Saturday, December 29, 2012 plus the Great Backyard Bird Count, Spring Migration Count and Fall Migration Count.

Over 5,000 birders or photographers have visited the successful STA5 birding trips since November 2005. SFWMD plans to develop a public access area at STA5 when funding becomes available.

HGAS received a grant from National Audubon for a Bluebird Trail to build bluebird nest boxes and establish a bluebird trail. Bluebird programs were presented at public libraries in Clewiston and LaBelle. Over 170 nest boxes were built by 4-H, The Greater LaBelle Garden Club and other volunteers. Quality Electric and Pittman Electric donated conduit posts for the boxes. Fifty-two nest boxes need to be put up in January at locations in Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee Counties in preparation for the upcoming Eastern Bluebird nesting season.

The Big "O" (and Photography) Festival will be held at the Port LaBelle Inn March 28-31. This year's featured bird will be the Wood Stork. ... Some of Florida's best birding guides have been added to this year's Big "O" lineup of trips to birding hotspots in Hendry and Glades County including boat trips on Lake Okeechobee. The photo contest, photo tours and workshops have being expanded. The Big "O" website at www.bigobirdingfestival.com will be updated soon. To volunteer to help with registration or events contact Margaret England.

During 2011 Kim Willis developed the HGAS Facebook page. The Clewiston News and Call FM 91.5 Clewiston began featuring Hendry-Glades Audubon weekly.

Thank you all for helping Hendry-Glades Audubon in having a successful 2011.
Best wishes for the New Year,

Margaret

863-674-0695 - cell: 863-517-0202

5th Annual Hendry-Glades Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count another success

From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. December 31, 2012 marked the 5th Annual STA5-Clewiston Christmas Bird Count which has become a tradition for Florida birders and winter visitors. One of this year's participants came from as Washington State. Peace River Audubon's Team spent several days birding at local birding hotspots.

Over 50 observers of all ages covering the 15 mile diameter circle found 118 species tallying over 131,000 individual birds. Some of the highlights included a Snow Goose, Gray Kingbird, 2 Cassin's Kingbirds and White-throated Sparrow.

For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of their house during the Holiday season. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action.



Spotted on the journey home from STA-5 December 31st, a Gray Kingbird was seen first out on the wires along CR-835 just north of Deer Fence Canal Rd in Hendry Co, and then on DFC Rd at the traditional flycatcher wintering area in the Cypress trees along the right hand side shortly after entering the road. Many Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and Western Kingbirds were also present. Photo courtesy of Bill Marr.

STA 5 Highlights

STA5 is the place to be if you have been inspired by the "Big Year" book or movie to try want to for a North America or county "Big Year".

At least 100 species of birds were reported at STA5 between October and December of 2011. Some of the STA5 highlights included a Greater White Fronted Goose in November and a Snow Goose during the December 31st Christmas Bird Count. White-tailed kites were seen at STA5 and nearby Devils Garden Bird Park in November and December. The wintering Cassin's Kingbird was reported for the fourth year at STA5 in November and the fifth year near Deer Fence Road.

Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were observed in November and during the CBC. Caspian Terns and American Avocets were reported in November and December. On the last day of 2011 the White - throated Sparrow became bird number 194 on STA5 bird checklist. For a schedule of upcoming trips to STA5 go to:

www.hendrygladesaudubon.org . Reservations are required.

Illegal Hunters nabbed at STA 5

RPS Officers Mike Lilley and Kyle Patterson, and Officers John Greene, David Burnsed, John Santerfeit and Lieutenant Pam Steelman worked a detail in Stormwater Treatment Area 5 for the opening of duck hunting season. RPS Officer Lilley and Lieutenant Steelman observed three subjects who killed 40 ducks and four coots, only 11 of the ducks were in their possession. The remaining 29 ducks and four coots were left in the field where they were previously hunting. Officer John Santerfeit found one subject to be taking migratory game birds without a federal duck stamp. The detail resulted in ten misdemeanors citations being issued, along with six warnings issued and over 60 users checked.

See more FWC law enforcement activity:

http://myfwc.com/media/1620241/2011_Nov18-Dec1.pdf

*Wishing each of you a prosperous **New Year** from the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society.*

What is Eco-voice?

Eco-voice is an environmental portal. It takes the email messages from many organizations and their members and combines them into a single daily email known as the 'Daily Digest.' Add the power of Facebook, plus a web-site and you finish up with a great communication tool for us all to use, Eco-voice.

What do we do?

Our objective is to provide a practical method of communication between environmentalists in South Florida. Any member of Eco-Voice can send us an e-mail and the information in that e-mail will be delivered the next day to thousands of other environmentalists in South Florida and displayed on the web-site and Facebook for everyone else to read. Eco-Voice's members have a common cause; saving the local environment. However they belong to many different organizations, each with its own rules, objectives and methods of communication.

Many local organizations have joined with us as sponsors to develop the web-site www.eco-voice.org . The web-site has an interactive event calendar and a map display that enables one to easily track environmental events in the neighborhood, and around South Florida.

Membership is free! If you are interested in helping save the environment of South Florida, you may join Eco-voice by visiting our website and Subscribing.

Unsubscribing is just as easy, if you change your mind, so give it a try.

STA 1 East and Audubon Society of the Everglades – New Partnership

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has formed a new collaboration with the Audubon Society of the Everglades to offer public bird watching tours at Everglades Stormwater Treatment Area 1 East in Wellington. The tour program is modeled after the popular partnership with the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, which has served more than 5,000 bird watchers from across the globe at Stormwater Treatment Area 5 in Hendry County.

Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) are the water-cleaning workhorses of Everglades restoration. These expansive wetlands utilize plants to naturally remove phosphorus from water flowing into the Everglades. They have also become renowned havens for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts alike.

Tours will begin Saturday, January 7, 2012 at 8:00 am at the entrance to STA-1 East on Flying Cow Road, just South of Southern Blvd.

To RSVP for these tours, contact Linda Humphries, Audubon Society of the Everglades, 561-742-7791 or HLINDAASE@aol.com.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT



Photo by Kim Willis

Did You Know...

The Green Heron is one of the few tool-using birds. It commonly drops bait onto the water's surface and grabs the small fish that are attracted. It uses a variety of baits and lures, including crusts of bread, insects, earthworms, twigs, or feathers.

When alarmed, the Green Heron may take the classic bittern stance, with head held vertical, looking across the base of its bill.

The Green Heron is part of a complex of small herons that sometimes are considered one species. When lumped, they are called Green-backed Heron. When split, they are the Green Heron, the widespread Striated Heron, and the Galapagos Heron.

A group of herons has many collective nouns, including a "battery", "hedge", "pose", "rookery", and "scattering" of herons."

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)

Solitary and secretive, the Green Heron is the smallest of the North American Herons. Stocky, with a dark green crown, a rufous neck, gray belly, and dark, iridescent, greenish-blue back and legs that are bright orange.

Green Herons inhabit small, freshwater wetlands, ponds, and stream edges with thick vegetation at their margins. In winter, they may frequent coastal areas and mangrove swamps.

Fish are the primary food of this opportunistic feeder. Crayfish and other crustaceans are also a source of food, as are aquatic insects, frogs, grasshoppers, snakes, and rodents.

Green Herons ordinarily nest in trees near the water. Males stake out territories and call to attract females. Unlike most herons, the Green Heron does not usually nest in large colonies. The male starts the nest, bringing nesting material to the female who finishes the nest. Both parents incubate the 3 to 5 pale green eggs for about 21 days. Once the young hatch, both parents feed them by regurgitating food. Both help brood the young for about three weeks. At about 21 to 23 days, the young start to fly. The parents continue to feed the young for a few more weeks until they fledge after about 30 to 35 days.

As is typical for many herons, the Green Heron tends to wander after the breeding season is over. Most wanderers probably seek more favorable foraging areas and do not travel far, but occasionally some travel greater distances, with individuals turning up as far as England and France

Photos



STA-5 had a recent unusual visitor; a leucistic Northern Shoveler. Photo courtesy of Margaret England.



Burrowing Owl – Photo by Larry Frogge



Eastern Screech Owl – Photo by Kim Willis



White-tailed Kite

Taken at the December 17, 2011
STA - 5 tour by guest and professional
photographer Josh Manning.

www.Journeymangallery.com



Bulletin Board

SAVE THE DATE! Big O Birding Festival 2012!

Join us for the largest bird-themed event in South Central Florida, located on the Southwest shores of Lake Okeechobee, the state's largest lake. Wide vistas of blue skies, oak-canopied rivers, quaint small antique towns and farming communities offer visitors a taste of inland Florida. Some of the state's rarest plants and animals are found here including the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, the Florida Scrub Jay and Florida panther.

The 4-day event in 2012 will have a new registration "roost:" Port LaBelle Inn. From there, we will explore Hendry and Glades counties which are home to more than 400 species of birds, including Wood Storks, Everglade Snail Kites, Limpkins, Swallow-tailed Kites, and Painted Buntings, who reside from October through April. An all-inclusive four-day festival pass is available. While the all-inclusive pass excludes accommodations, it does afford festival attendees four full days of programs and exclusive tours led by prestigious experts, birding activities, scheduled meals, and transportation to and from the guided tour sites including Lake Okeechobee. Early registration begins in November. Click or call for details: www.BigOBirdingFestival.com or 863-517-2136.

We will be offering field trips and workshops led by professional photographer John J. Lopinot, so mark your calendars now for March 28-31, 2012!

January Program – LaBelle

Dr. Jerry Jackson, host of Public Radio's "With the Wild Things" and Professor of Ecological Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University will share his enthusiasm and knowledge of the woodpeckers of South Florida during the Monday January 9 Hendry-Glades Audubon Society meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Dallas Townsend Extension Office. Dr. Jackson is especially known for his work with Red-cockaded and Ivory-billed woodpeckers and has served on the endangered species recovery teams for both species. He has also done extensive work with other woodpeckers throughout North America, the Caribbean, and many areas of Latin America. In this program he will focus on the unique adaptations of woodpeckers and the diversity and home life of woodpeckers in south Florida.

February Program – Clewiston

Dr. Paul Gray is the Science Coordinator of Audubon of Florida's Lake Okeechobee Watershed Program. He has been with Audubon for 17 years and working in and around Lake Okeechobee since 1988.

For Audubon, Paul works with agencies and stakeholders on Okeechobee water management, water quality, aquatic plants, fire management, and more. He has written numerous popular and technical articles on Okeechobee-related issues and helps write fact sheets on current issues on an on-going basis. Paul's educational background includes a BS from the University of Missouri, an MS from Texas Tech University on wetland ecology and a Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 1993, working on Florida's Mottled Duck in the Okeechobee region.



The Big Year DVD release

If you missed it in the theaters, don't miss the January 31, 2012 DVD release of "The Big Year", starring Jack Black, Steve Martin and Owen Wilson.

Join in the Great Backyard Bird Count February 17 – 20, 2012

Hendry-Glades Audubon will be participating at STA5 Feb. 17-20 for the Great Backyard Bird Count. It is the only "local event" posted on the GBBC website. [For inquiries or if you would like to attend, contact Margaret England at 863-517-0202 or \[sta5@embarqmail.com\]\(mailto:sta5@embarqmail.com\).](#)

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

Join Hendry Glades Audubon Society

When you become a member of Hendry-Glades Audubon Society (HGAS) using the form below, all of your membership fees are put to use supporting local projects: Educational programs, Christmas Bird Count, North American Migration Counts, field trips and conservation activities "Voluntary" memberships receive the quarterly **Crested Caracara** newsletter either e-mail or in print if requested. Make check payable to Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, Inc. (HGAS)

YES! I want to become a member of HGAS.

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

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

Enclosed is my check payable Hendry-Glades Audubon Society.

I would like to save HGAS postage and printing costs. Please send my **Crested Caracara** via email.

Additional Donation to HGAS Enclosed

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 annually (**C0ZE510Z**) Enclosed is my check made payable to National Audubon Society.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

National Audubon Society Membership

When you join HGAS through the National Audubon Society, you receive the quarterly **Crested Caracara via e-mail unless print copy requested** 6 issues of **Audubon Magazine**, Florida **Naturalist** and membership in Hendry-Glades Audubon. Membership dues sent to **NAS** for new members are returned to HGAS if Chapter Code C0ZE510Z is on the form. Less than \$2 per membership is returned to HGAS for renewing memberships. Mail the completed form and check to:

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

380 Riverview Dr. LaBelle, FL 33935