



Crested Caracara

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

October/December 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

October 13
November 10 & 24
December 8 & 22
December 29 Christmas Bird Count

Meetings - 7:00 p.m. second Monday

of the month September - May
Meetings held at the Dallas Townsend
Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd.,
LaBelle or the Clewiston Museum 109
Central Avenue, Clewiston. (863) 983-
2870.

October 8 – Dr. Paul Gray, “Help for
Lake Okeechobee’s Bird Life, especially
Kites & Sparrows” -Clewiston

November 12 – Heather Ferrald,
“Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest and
Picayune Strand State Forest: An
overview of state forest management in
SW Florida.”- LaBelle

December 10 – TBA , Clewiston



President's Message

Dear HGAS Members and Friends,

HELP CREATE AND MAKE HGAS GOALS BECOME A REALITY!

Did you know that Hendry-Glades Audubon (501c3) is a Florida Non-Profit Organization whose membership is made up of residents of Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee County? The chapter was recognized as an official Audubon Chapter January 15, 2006. Our purpose is the increased enjoyment and knowledge of birds, wildlife, and the environment through a variety of experiences.

Each November Hendry-Glades Audubon (HGAS) submits an annual report which includes listing our 3 top priority goals for the upcoming year. Last year's top 3 goals were:

- Increase membership in local chapter by offering "voluntary" chapter membership for seasonal members and families who want to support our chapter.
- Increase number of programs presented to service clubs and organizations.
- Expand birding trips to local birding hotspots in order to raise awareness of species found in inland Florida.

Did HGAS meet their 2011-2012 goals? Last year “voluntary chapter only” memberships increased and the suggested annual individual donation was reduced to a more affordable \$10. At least 8 programs were presented at area RV parks, service clubs and youth organizations. Nine educational programs were presented during chapter meetings at the Clewiston Museum and Dallas Townsend (LaBelle). The number of trips to birding hotspots increased during the Big “O” Birding Festival and popular STA5 trips. A number of birding hotspots were covered during four annual bird counts and Breeding Bird Atlas surveys. HGAS volunteers lead one walk at the Ah-Tha-Thi-Ki Museum Boardwalk. Do you have ideas for the 2012-2013 goals? How can HGAS better serve the membership in all three counties? Do you have ideas for programs, bird walks or other activities to “increase the enjoyment and knowledge of birds, wildlife and the environment”?

How can you help with short term and long term goals? Would you be willing to host a program or bird walk in your community? Would you be willing to serve on a planning committee? Would you consider becoming an officer, board member, committee member, trip leader, presenter or other volunteer position?

Would you volunteer to help events including the Big “O” Birding Festival March 12-16, 2013, Breeding Bird Atlas Survey II Block Busting Weekend June 1-2, 2013, North American Migration Count Event September 14, 2013? Would you help with bird walks at the Ah-Tha-Thi-Ki Museum Boardwalk or present programs at local organizations? Would you submit articles or photos for the newsletter?

Please call or send me a list of your ideas for the 2012-2013 HGAS goals and how you can help make these goals become a reality. Thank you for your interest in helping HGAS accomplish its goals.

Margaret

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

STA 5 has a new entrance

Beginning in September the entrance to STA 5 was moved to the Deer Fence Canal gate. A kiosk was added and the portable toilets moved. A large parking area was created and further improvements are in the works that include vaults toilets and covered picnic shelters. Thank you South Florida Water Management District!

This is a permanent change and we will no longer be entering from the Blumberg Road gate.

SAVE THE DATE for the Florida Trail. The **South Regional Conference** is scheduled for **November 2 - 4, 2012** at the Tanah Keeta Boys Scout Camp in Tequesta. The Happy Hoofers is the host chapter this year and members of the chapter have been busy planning the conference. The theme is "**Go Native**" which will be presented in the programs from edible bugs to edible native plants. In addition, there will a hike and canoe/kayak trip. Activities include carving hiking sticks and star glazing - more activities to come, and contra dancing. Look for more details and registration information on the chapter's website <http://hoofers.floridatrail.org/> Proceeds from the conference registration fee will be distributed/divided to all participating chapters (6) and State All other proceeds would be distributed/divided by the participating chapters (6). A 14 foot Kayak (with paddles) is being raffled at the FTA South Florida Conference. Raffle tickets (\$5 each) are available from chapter officers (Margaret England).

STA5 update

The Official STA5 checklist for 2005 to present has a total of 197 "confirmed" bird species. Trip reports are posted on Hendry-Glades Audubon's website at: www.hendrygladesaudubon.org .

Each trip to STA5 brings birders wanting to add birds to their life lists or photographers who want to shoot landscapes, butterflies, wildflowers, or wildlife. They seldom leave disappointed with an average of 50 to 75 bird species recorded during recent trips including breeding birds and the returning wintering hawks and songbirds.

Snail Kites, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, and Black-bellied Whistling Ducks always delight visitors. "Listers" are coming to get a glimpse of one of STA5's specialty birds, the exotic Purple Swamphen, which was added to the official FOS Florida bird list in April. Mammals including hogs, otters, bobcats or deer are seen occasionally during trips. Turtles and snakes have been observed crawling across the levee roads this summer. Who knows what adventures are in store at STA5...? Someday visitors might get a glimpse of the panther that SFWMD and FWC have been reporting on the west side and middle of STA5.

Schedule and complete lists may be viewed by visiting the HGAS webpage at: www.hendrygladesaudubon.org.

Upcoming Florida Festivals

October 4, 2012 – October 7, 2012 South Florida Birding Festival Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden. Keynote speaker Pete Dunne. Workshops, presentations & field trips to Miami birding hotspots. Arts & crafts, children activities & vendor booths. Bird walks at Fairchild Garden at 7 am., and bird attracting plants for sale. Gates open to the public at 9:30 am. [Fairchild Tropical Garden website](#).

October 14, 2012 – October 20, 2012 Ding Darling Days Birding and eco-festival at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, Florida.

October 26, 2012 - October 28, 2012 Treasure Coast Birding Festival This event will benefit the Pelican Island Preservation Society and the Cultural Council of Indian River County.

October 27, 2012 - October 27, 2012 [St. Marks NWR 2012 Monarch Butterfly Festival](#) This annual event at St. Marks NWR celebrates the migration of the Monarch butterfly.

November 10, 2012 - [Florida Panther Festival](#) Free admission to this exciting event that highlights the Fantastic Florida Panther! Exhibits, Fun for Kids, Trail Tours, Field Trips, Vendors and much more. North Collier Regional Park 10 am – 4 pm

Audubon Assembly 2012 – Conserve Water to Sustain Life

Sarasota, October 26-27

It's that time of year again! The **2012 Audubon Assembly** will be held in beautiful Sarasota on Friday and Saturday, October 26-27. You are invited to attend our yearly gathering where you will have the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals at Florida's premiere conservation event.

The Assembly theme this year is ***Conserve Water to Sustain Life***. One thing is certain: Florida's most precious resource is under threat. The 2012 Audubon Assembly is your chance to learn how you can make a difference in Florida's future:

- Attend a *special keynote presentation* from Florida author Cynthia Barnett
- Engage in informative learning sessions featuring leading guest speakers
- Journey to a local special place for a hands-on field trip
- Learn cutting-edge conservation techniques for your community
- Network with other Florida conservation leaders
- *And much, much more...*

The [2012 Audubon Assembly](#) is designed to *inspire*. Our signature conservation event brings together representatives of Audubon's 35,000 members and 44 chapters with conservation leaders, scientists, educators and policy makers. Please join us for this incredible once-a-year opportunity!

Date: Oct. 26-27, 2012 (Friday- Saturday)

Location: [Hyatt Regency Sarasota on Sarasota Bay](#). **You must book your hotel room separately.** Please visit <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/Flaudubon> by September 25 to reserve the group rate.

Keynote Speaker: [Cynthia Barnett, Author of *Mirage* and *Blue Revolution*](#)

NOTE: IF you plan to travel to Sarasota on Thursday please join us after dinner for cold drinks and a special showing of *Last Call at the Oasis*.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit: <http://fl.audubon.org/audubon-assembly-2012>.

Contact Jonathan Webber at 850-222-2473 or jwebber@audubon.org with any questions.

Thank you. See you at Assembly!

OK Slough State Forest - Forest Awareness Month Celebration! Saturday, October 20, 2012 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Guided tours, Demonstrations, Butterfly garden planting.

Mark your calendars for the for the upcoming Bluebird Blitz Fall and spring dates: November 16 & 17 April 5 & 6, 2013

The 2012 Christmas Bird Count is December 29, 2012. This year it will be free of charge to all who participate. - Contact Margaret England for specific details and meeting times.

863-674-0695 - cell: 863-517-0202 <mailto:sta5birding@embarqmail.com>

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT



Photo by Kim Willis

Did You Know...

A group of thrushes are collectively known as a "hermitage" and a "mutation" of thrushes.

Clutch size varies with latitude and longitude, with bluebirds farther north and farther west having larger clutches.

The oldest recorded Eastern Bluebird was 10 years 5 months old.

There are eight recognized subspecies of *Sialia sialis*. These subspecies are distinguished based on coloration and geographic range. Four of these are in North America.

Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)

The Eastern Bluebird is a small bird in the thrush family. Male birds have a rusty-brown throat and chest and vivid, bright blue upperparts. The female is similar but much duller. Juvenile birds have gray-brown upperparts, white spots on their back, brown breast with white scaling, white belly and eye ring, and blue-tinged wings and tail.

The Eastern Bluebird breeds east of Rockies from southeast Canada to the Gulf of Mexico; winters in the southern portion of their breeding range. They inhabit open woodlands, clearings, farmlands, parks, orchards, gardens, fields and are often seen along roadsides on utility wires and fences.

Eastern Bluebirds produce four to six light blue or white eggs that are laid in a loose cup of grass and plant stems built in a natural tree cavity, old woodpecker cavities, fence posts or bird boxes 2 to 50 feet above the ground. Incubation ranges from 12 to 14 days and is carried out by the female.

The Eastern Bluebird feeds on insects, earthworms, snails, and other invertebrates, and is highly dependent upon berries during winter. They forage from low perches, usually hawking insects.

When approached by a predator, male eastern bluebirds make a song-like warning cry. If a male is not present, a female will begin to sing, hoping to attract a protective male back to the territory. Both males and females will also flick their wings and warble when predators are nearby.

Their numbers have declined due to competition from starlings and house sparrows for nest sites. Wide spread interest in nest box building programs have helped reverse the decline.

Don Juan, the exceptionally prolific panther, dies

Written by

Anne Claire Shilton

Special to news-press.com

Biologists and researchers know they're not supposed to name the animals they study. Wild animals are wild animals, and getting attached isn't a good idea.

But every now and then an animal comes along that is so charismatic and so unique that naming is impossible to resist. Three weeks ago the panther research community lost one of the most charismatic panthers of them all. Just weeks shy of his 17th birthday, Florida Panther 79 — more commonly known as Don Juan — were euthanized at Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park.

A necropsy determined that Don Juan had suffered from late-stage cancer.

Read the New-Press story in its entirety here: <http://www.news-press.com/article/20120930/NEWS0125/309300023/Don-Juan-exceptionally-prolific-panther-dies?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|Home>

7th Annual Hendry-Glades NAMC

The inaugural Hendry and Glades Florida North American Migration Count organized by St. Petersburg Audubon in 2006. This was the first experience some of the HGAS chapter members had helping in the field or at home during a bird count. This tradition has continued with the 7th Annual Hendry-Glade NAMC held on Saturday September 15th with 33 “citizen scientists” including 4 youth travelling by car, bicycle, airboat and foot to tally bird species and numbers. Highlights of the day included returning wintering hawks and songbirds and sightings of the endangered Snail Kite. The 3 Glades County teams reported 83 species and 3,679 birds and the 6 Hendry County teams found 89 species and 8,809 birds in their count areas.

Thanks go to Joe Frank and Rhonda Roff for providing the Post Count Gathering which included wonderful hospitality, an airboat ride, and delicious dinner at Big Cypress’ Billie Swamp Safari.

Mark for calendars. Hendry-Glades Audubon will be inviting birders and photographers from areas that no longer participate in the NAMC to come to Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee County for fall 2013 North American Migration Count on September 21, 2013.

Protect Our Native Ecosystems – Report Invasive Animals

Many of us spend hours in the field. We are in a perfect position to identify and report exotics. But how do we know what to do? The University of Florida has a program where you can both learn about and report problem species.

From pythons to tegus to lionfish, many of the invasive animals spreading throughout our state pose significant threats to native wildlife and ecosystems. As a network of citizens across the state with keen eyes and an appreciation of our most precious ecosystems, our chapter members are perfectly-suited to assist Audubon’s efforts as “eyes and ears” on the ground. Visit the website (<http://fl.audubon.org/invasive-species-task-force>) to learn how to easily identify and report non-native animals that you see while out birding, visiting your favorite park or even along highways or in your own community. Reporting only takes minutes online or using a simple Smartphone app and can make a big difference to land managers who are trying to get a handle on these growing populations. You can also stay on top of invasive species news through the monthly ‘Invader Updater’ series on the Audubon Florida News Blog (<http://audubonoffloridanews.org/>). New invasive animals are literally showing up every day here in Florida, and it is up to us to help detect and report them before populations establish or grow out of control!

Photos



What a handsome fella! He has found his dinner. Bon Appetite!
Photo by Larry Frogge



Not one of my better photo's. While returning home Fisheating Creek after the NAMC, this Snail kite was spotted a couple miles north of Moore Haven along US 27. After chasing it down the highway to try and capture a decent picture, my friend and I noticed the radio antenna sticking out of its back...interesting.

Photo by Kim Willis



Photo by Kim Willis

Two unexpected visitors made an appearance in local Clewiston resident's yard for a few weeks in September. These two male **Pin tailed Whydah's** (*Vidua macroura*) originate from sub-Saharan Africa where they are common across Zimbabwe, South Africa, patches of Mozambique and northern and eastern Botswana. This species has been introduced in Hawaii, without great success. However, the species is present in Puerto Rico.

One of the birds was banded; the other was not which lead us to believe that they may have escaped captivity from a breeder possibly from the Miami area.

Thanks go out to Mr. & Mrs. Belton for allowing us to invade your yard and share your beautiful find!



Bulletin Board

Special Opportunity for Early Birding Tours at the Seminole Reservation Ah Tah Thi Ki Boardwalk

November 3 (Saturday): "Special Opportunity for Early Birding" Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Boardwalk (Big Cypress Reservation) 7:30-9:30 a.m. Guided Bird/Photography Walk Free to Museum Members Non-Members Admission is \$9 for adults, \$6 for students, children, seniors and members of the military. Children under four are free. Cost includes admission to the Museum, and parking is free. Admission also includes the American Indian Arts Celebration events.

December 1 (Saturday): 7:30-9:30 a.m. Leader Kim Willis: "Special Opportunity for Early Birding" Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Boardwalk (Big Cypress Reservation) Guided Bird/Photography Walk Free to Museum Members Non-Members Admission is \$9 for adults, \$6 for students, children, seniors and members of the military. Children under four are free. Cost includes admission to the Museum, and parking is free.

November 2 and 3 (Friday/Saturday) American Indian Arts Celebration at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Museum members Free Non-Members Admission is \$9 for adults, \$6 for students, children, seniors and members of the military. Children under four are free. Cost includes admission to the Museum, and parking is free.

FGCU Service Learning Project

Sponsored by Riverwatch
(Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association)

Anytime between 8am and 1pm
on Saturday, October 6

Location: 440 Fraser Ave, Labelle

LaBelle Nature Park

CALOOSAHATCHEE
RIVER
WATCH

Earn up to 5 Service
Learning Hours. BYO
gloves and pruning
shears...if you have
them. If not, they will be
provided.

- Remove Exotic Plants
- Clear Walking Trails



Free Lunch Provided

If you need help finding the place on Saturday, then call
Margaret at 863-517-0202

Reservations are appreciated, but not required.

RSVP to email: margaret@caloosahatchee.org

THE BIG "O" HIKE IS COMING, PLAN NOW.

We will be heading North from Pahokee at approx 8 AM on the 17th of November. Be prepared for walking some of the parts of the hike off the dike to get around construction areas.

There is no charge for the hike; however, we do accept donations to help cover costs of first-day activities. Friends and family are welcome to join us for a day hike at any time. Popular hikes are the first day (a 3.5-mile wimp walk, or all 12 miles) or the last day (a variety of distances can be arranged).

Campgrounds/motels and meals are at the hiker's expense. DO NOT CONTACT THE CAMPGROUNDS, AS WE HAVE MADE RESERVATIONS.

You may be asked to assist in shuttling drivers and walkers between daily start/stop points. For everyone's comfort and safety, no pets are allowed.

Of special interest is the Thanksgiving dinner at the Clewiston Inn and the talent show where everyone is encouraged to participate.

We provide a booklet for the 2012 big "O" Hike for \$7, or a Hike Kit for \$25 which includes the booklet (providing all you need to know about the entire hike), as well as a T-shirt.

For information contact Paul Cummings:

561-963-9906

Cummingsps@att.net

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

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 Household 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 Tax Deductable Donation to HGAS Enclosed

☐

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually Enclosed is my check made payable to National Audubon Society or online select chapter code **E51**.

<https://ssl.palmcoastd.com/pcd/app/index.cfm?iXz=C3607BFDBDC71347DF4DC9FDE3E204C6>

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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 C2ZE51OZ is on the form and portion of renewal fees.

Mail the completed form and check to:

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society Chapter Code C2ZE51OZ

380 Riverview Dr. LaBelle, FL 33935

863-674-0695