



# Crested Caracara

## Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

July/September 2013

*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.*

Hope everyone has had a



relaxing summer!

### **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**

July 20  
August 17  
September 21

### **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.

September 9 - La Belle "So You're  
Birding and You See a Python- What Do  
You Do?" - Cheryl Millett, Biologist at the  
Nature Conservancy

October 14 - Clewiston Amazing Bird  
Photography "Nuclear Medicine  
Cardiology Monday thru  
Friday...Photography, and Travel  
Weekends" - Don Hamilton, Jr.



### **President's Message**

Summer Greetings!

Excerpts from an article nominating STA5 as one of Florida's Special Places:

Before 2009 most people hadn't heard of STA-5 (Stormwater Treatment Area 5), until it was featured in the April 2009 "Birder's World". Mark and Selena Kiser, Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail (GFBWT) staff described the area as an "Oasis for Birds" and "one of the best birding spots of South Florida".

This birding hotspot is located in the EAA (Everglades Agricultural Area) west of Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area in Palm Beach County and north of Big Cypress Indian Reservation in Hendry County.

STA-5 was designed as a living wetland where plant growth and the accumulation of plant materials in the impoundments, remove and store nutrients in orders to help improve water flowing into the Everglades. Bijaya "BJ" Kattel, senior recreational planner with SFWMD (South Florida Water Management District) says that "the excellent habitat created during cleaning nutrients from runoff water made these treatment areas magnets for waterfowl and special places for birding enthusiasts."

Margaret England, with volunteers Alan Murray, Jill Strickland, Kim Willis, Dori Sosensky, and Vince Lucas have organized and lead over 175 trips to STA-5 since November 2005. For information about escorted trips to STA-5 copy of the STA-5 trip checklist with 202 confirmed species see <http://www.hendrygladesaudubon.org>

*Margaret*

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

## Birding in Hendry County - BBA Updates

The first Florida Breeding Bird Atlas Surveys were conducted nearly 25 years ago. The current 5 year Breeding Bird Atlas Survey II will be completed in 2016.

New breeding birds for Hendry County included probable breeding Scrub Jays and confirmed breeding Purple Swamphens.

Most of the data is collected between May and July during the peak of the Florida breeding bird season. In order to help survey some of the South Florida blocks over 20 members of the Florida Ornithological Society gathered at the Port LaBelle Inn and participated in the "Block Busting Weekend" May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Birding expert David Simpson and other volunteers have been actively collecting and reporting data for inland Florida.

Check for updates at the USGS website: [www.pwrc.usgs.gov/](http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/)

## STA 5 Update

During the summer an average of 50 bird species are being observed. The highlight of the trips is observing the breeding birds with their young and the wildlife at STA5.

The Red-shouldered Hawk young have fledged and are often seen on the power lines. Pied-billed Grebe, Common Gallinule, and Purple Gallinule chicks are being observed with their parents.

Shorebirds and American White Pelicans are being observed foraging in the fields north of STA5.

During the July trip hogs, raccoons, and a bobcat were seen on the levees.

Walking/Bicycling access will be available after weather allows for the installation of the electric gate to be completed.

Hendry Glades Audubon website at: [www.hendrygladesaudubon.org](http://www.hendrygladesaudubon.org)

## Summer birding by Kim Willis

Shiny cowbirds in Everglades National Park, Black-whiskered Vireo in Broward County, Fork-tailed Flycatcher near Apopka, a Carolina Chickadee in South Florida? So many interesting bird species reported from around the state in recent weeks it is hard for the wanderer not to want to chase each and every one of these magnificent creatures.

Granted, summer birding in South Florida may not be as exciting as fall and winter but it does have its merits. Our beautiful Swallow-tailed Kites bring beauty to the skies during the early part of our summer followed by the sprinkling of black terns and various sandpipers in the flooded agricultural fields of our inland communities.

Who can resist the majesty of the Eastern Kingbird sitting high on its perch after a recent rain shower as it sits in wait of a passing meal or the Gray Kingbird as it warbles high from its roost alerting all within earshot of its grand presence.

Flying through the air like mini fighter war planes, the Chimney swifts dart through the air chattering as they go in search of flying insects.

Purple Martins, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Least Terns, Upland Sandpipers; these are but a few of the species one can enjoy while birding in the splendor that is South Florida.

## *Cabinet Resolution Recognizes Corridor and Expedition Team*

The Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition team of photographer Carlton Ward Jr., biologist Joe Guthrie, conservationist Mallory Lykes Dimmitt and filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus were recognized with a resolution set forth by Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Cabinet on June 4, 2013 for their efforts in this collaborative visionary project to connect the remaining natural lands, waters, working farms, forests and ranches from the Florida Everglades to Georgia.

All team members were on hand as Cabinet members acknowledge the vital importance of the corridor to the State of Florida.

<http://www.floridawildlifecorridor.org/>



# Bulletin Board

## “So you’re birding and you see A Python- What do you do?”

Don’t miss the Hendry-Glades Audubon September speaker Cheryl Millett.

Cheryl Millett is a Biologist at The Nature Conservancy and leads Python Patrol, the Central Florida Lygodium Strategy, and the Heartland CISMA. Python Patrol is a program to provide containment and early detection and rapid response of invasive exotic Burmese pythons, and other invasive species in south and central Florida, by training detectors to accurately identify and report them, training responders to safely capture them, and providing a hotline to link the two. The Central Florida Lygodium Strategy is a partnership to apply a regional approach to stopping the northern spread of Old World climbing fern on public and private lands. The Heartland CISMA is a partnership to regionally focus efforts to deal with invasive species. Cheryl also coordinated Jay Watch, a citizen science program monitoring the federally threatened Florida scrub-jay, which is now a project of Florida Audubon.

### Audubon Assembly 2013 - Boots on the Ground

The 2013 Audubon Assembly will be held on October 25-26 (Friday-Saturday) in beautiful Palm Harbor, Florida at the beautiful **Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club** in Palm Harbor. This year’s Audubon Assembly focuses on Florida’s inspiring grassroots citizen scientists and volunteer conservation efforts. <http://fl.audubon.org/audubon-assembly-2013-boots-ground>

**To register by mail or by phone**, contact Jonathan Webber at 850-222-2473.

### Audubon Academy 2014

Audubon Academy 2014 will be held April 11-13 at the DaySpring Conference Center in Parrish, Florida, near Bradenton. <http://dayspring.dioswfl.org/> . DaySpring is located on the Manatee River and the program, planned by Audubon chapter members for Audubon chapter members, promises to be **exciting, informative and fun** (details will be sent out later).

### June Challenge Results are in!

Congratulations to Alan Seelye-James of Broward County, Ann Starck of Glades County and Kim Willis of Hendry County for taking top spots in their respective counties for the 2013 June Challenge. Way to go!

Save the Date for the 2014 **[Big "O" Birding Festival March 9-13, 2014!](#)** The “roost” hotel will again be the Port LaBelle Inn. Plans are already underway for the 13<sup>th</sup> annual event! Mark your calendars early to attend!

# Species Spotlight

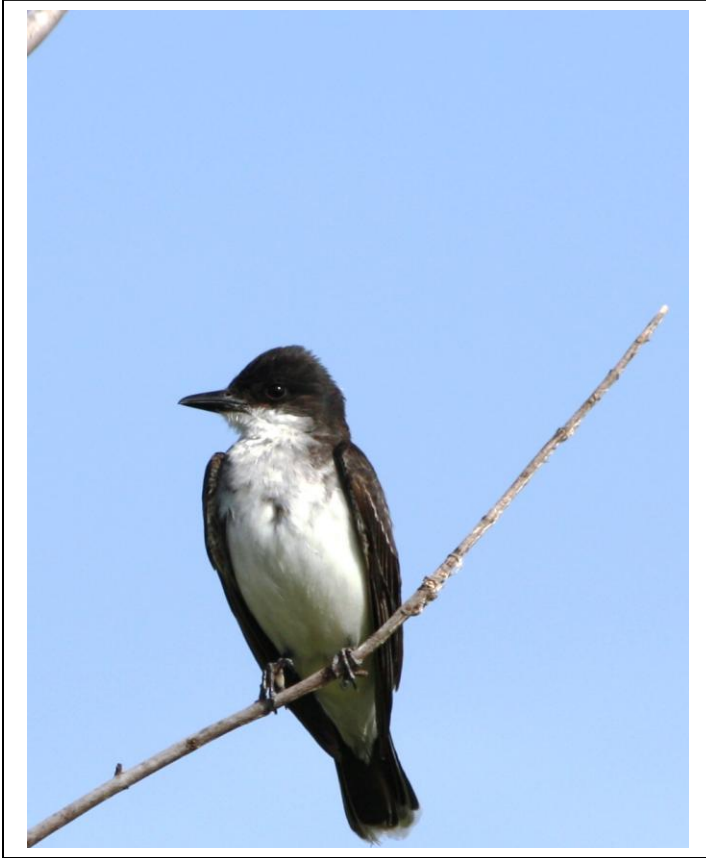


Photo by Kim Willis

## Did you know...

A group of kingbirds are collectively known as a "coronation", "court", and "tyranny" of kingbirds.

Despite its name, its range extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

One of the byproducts of being an insectivore is that both adults and nestlings regurgitate pellets of insect exoskeletons.

The scientific name *Tyrannus* means "tyrant, despot, or king," referring to the aggression kingbirds exhibit with each other and with other species. When defending their nests they will attack much larger predators like hawks, crows, and squirrels. They have been known to knock unsuspecting Blue Jays out of trees.

The oldest Eastern Kingbird on record was 10 years, 1 month old.

## Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)

Often perched solitary in the open atop trees or along utility lines or fences with its dark gray upperparts and a neat white tip to the tail, the Eastern Kingbird looks as if dressed to the nines in a business suit. With its large head and broad shoulders, the Eastern Kingbird commands its territory high above its perch as it sallies for its prey which consists of various insects that unsuspectingly wander in to their demise.

The Eastern Kingbird leads a very different lifestyle in its winter home in South America near the Amazon where it is a mainly fruit eating bird living in flocks. Their breeding range however, extends from British Columbia across interior Canada to Maritime Provinces and south to northern California, central Texas, the Gulf coast, and Florida. They occupy open woodlands, clearings, rural roadsides, farms, and orchards, edges of fields, streams, and suburbs. They are relatively tolerant of human population.

The Eastern Kingbird gets its name from the crown of yellow, orange, or red feathers that it has on its head that are usually concealed until it meets a potential predator, at which time the kingbird may simultaneously raise its crown patch, stretch its beak wide open to reveal a red gape, and dive-bomb the marauding intruder.

During breeding season, the female is the nest builder of this monogamous pair. The nest is a large and bulky cup, made of weeds, bark, and twigs, and is lined with plant down, hair, and feathers. There are usually two to five eggs in a clutch and the female incubates the eggs for 14 to 17 days. Both parents assist in the feeding of the young, which will leave the nest and take their first flights at about 16 to 18 days. The parents continue to feed them for another three to five weeks after they fledge.



# Photos



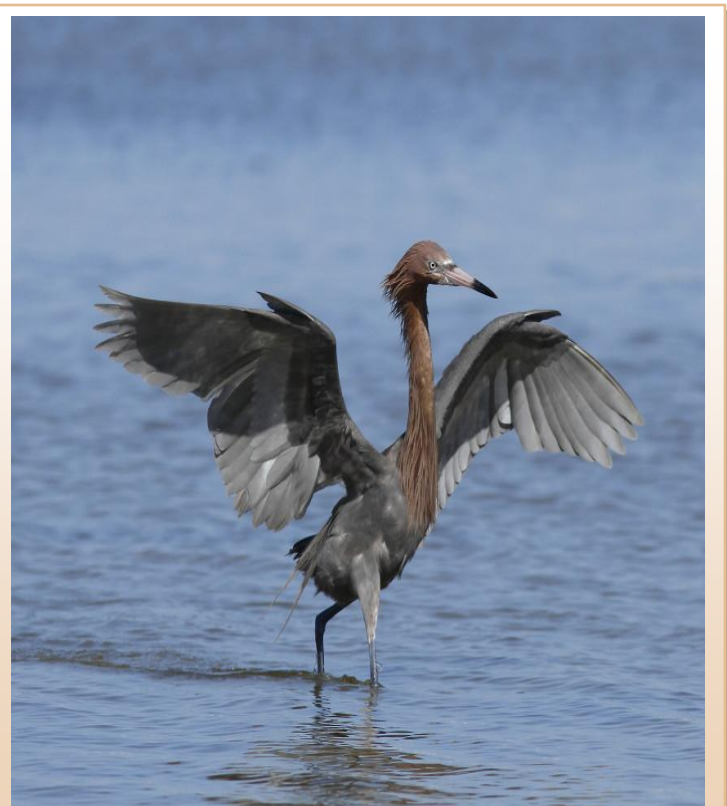
This Cattle Egret has decided on frog legs for his meal today. Photo by Larry Frogge



Crested Caracara at Dinner Island Ranch – Photo by Jean Hall



Yellow-billed Cuckoo, taken at the STA 5 duck hunter's boardwalk blind in May. – Photo by Owen Comora of Sarasota



This Reddish egret is trying to scare up his feast. Photo by Larry Frogge



Garden of the Gods, Colorado Springs – Photo by Add Austin

## Are you a Citizen Scientist?

Help the Avian Research Conservation Institute (ARCI) monitor Swallow-tailed Kites and other species such as Short-tailed Hawks, Reddish Egrets and Crested Caracara. Your observations can really help conserve these species for future generations to enjoy.

Report sightings here  
<http://arcinst.org/arci-report-sightings-2>

### Audubon of Martin County's field trips for 2013-2014

Audubon of Martin County has recently entered into an agreement with SFWMD to sponsor tours at a brand new STA in Western Martin County, Lakeside Ranch STA.

Over 80 species of birds have been documented so far, white pelicans, snail kites & short tailed hawk to mention a few. Least Terns & Black-necked Stilts have also been reportedly nesting there.

8 guided tours for 2013-2014

4 guided tours for photographers only

*September 21, 2013*  
*October 19, 2013*  
*November 16, 2013*  
*December 21, 2013*  
*January 18, 2014*  
*February 15, 2014*  
*March 15, 2014*  
*April 19, 2014*

*September 28, 2013*  
*November 30, 2013*  
*January 25, 2014*  
*March 29, 2014*

For information contact Audubon of Martin County at 772-288-2637

## 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)

2. You may join or renew your HGAS membership through the National Audubon Society using a print form 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.

All dues for new memberships through the National Audubon Society and a portion of renewal dues are returned to HGAS if the Chapter Code C3ZE510Z is on the membership form or the Chapter E51 Hendry-Glades AS is selected from online menu.

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually C3ZE510Z

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 Code C3ZE510Z**

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