



Crested Caracara

April/June 2014

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

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 2014 Schedule

April 12, 26
May 10
June 14

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.

April 14 - Local Birders: "Birding in
Hendry and Glades County by Car, Boat,
or on Foot" and Election of
Officers/Board

May 12 - Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife
Burrowing Owl Slideshow & Short
Videos by Dan Tudor

September 8 - TBA

October 13 - Dr. Reed Bowman: Scrub
Jays



President's Message

Hendry-Glades Audubon is a 501c3 Florida non-profit organization established in 2006 which represents over 105 individual and family members in Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee County.

Sincere appreciation goes to HGAS secretary, Kim Willis, who has produced and edited the quarterly "Crested Caracara" since September 2009. Please continue to submit photos and articles about birds, local history, poems, or antidotes to Kim at: kim_willis@comcast.net

Hendry-Glades Audubon volunteers did an outstanding job of helping at this year's Big "O" Birding Festival setting up, manning the information table, greeting, helping with carpools, and other jobs at the events. Plans are underway for the 2015 festival. Please e-mail me or Janet Papinaw to be part of next year's team of volunteers.

Over 1,000 out of area visitors come to STA5 annually. They want to know where they can go to watch or photograph birds and wildlife while in our area. The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail websites lists information about the GFBWT sites, but there are other opportunities. We need to make a list that can be shared and encourage other sites to apply to become a recognized GFBWT location. If you would like to nominate a site please e-mail or phone me to request a nomination form. The form will be used to contact the site manager who will complete the application.

The Clewiston Museum offers Thursday and Friday Eco tours which feature area birding hotspots. For tour schedules contact Butch Wilson at clewistonmuseum@embarqmail.com or at 863- 983-2870. Martin's Marina has started offering 1 hour airboat rides customized to their guests interest. Billie Swamp Safari offers airboat rides, swamp buggy rides, and nature shows. Gatorama in Palmdale is always an adventure. There are also a number of public parks in inland Florida.

Volunteers have started Breeding Bird Atlas II Surveys in our area. Most of the atlasing which will be done through 2016 is done during April, May and June. To check the current data go to: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/index.cfm?fa=bba.Bbahome>

Happy Birding!

Margaret

mleighthouse@embarqmail.com, 863-674-0695 - cell: 863-517-0202, 380, Riverview Drive, LaBelle, FL 33935

It's Spring Migration time again!

The trees and flowers are blooming and the bees are busy buzzing pollenating each new blossom. Spring is here! With spring comes the migration of many species of birds traveling ever so expeditiously to their spring/summer homes. Many a birder is fraught with delight at the prospect of adding a new "lifer" to their list during this much anticipated time of year. It doesn't have to be frustrating as well. Here are some tips for the resolute birder.

1. Watch the weather. The right weather conditions can make all the difference in a boom or bust day. South winds help to push migrants straight to their breeding grounds to the north. Stormy weather may force migrating birds out of the air for a short period. The greatest concentrations of fallouts are when the southerly winds are met by a change in the weather that has a quick change in wind direction such as an approaching frontal boundary, especially westerly winds. Be quick! Birds will generally take their opportunity to depart the next night.
2. Use your ears. As birds are moving north the frequency of their singing increases. Birding by ear is a great way to locate that unexpected bird. Being an expert birder by ear isn't necessary. Simply listen and track down the songster.
3. Bird often. The numbers and types of birds at any one location can vary almost daily or even hourly during peak migration. Take advantage of every opportunity for extra birding.
4. Focus on the entire flock. Mixed flocks are common during migration. Checking the flock carefully can reveal a surprise among the crowd.
5. Attract migrating birds. Invite them in with a bird friendly yard. Give them the right food, water and shelter for a good place to stop over for a rest on their incredible journey.

It isn't going to be here for very long, so strap on the binoculars, get your backyards ready, hit those birding hotspots and take advantage of the short highly anticipated season that is spring migration!



STA 5 Update STA5 Jan-March 2014

From January through April 131 species of birds were reported at STA5. During the Christmas Bird Count held January 4th over 55 volunteers recorded 122 species of birds in the STA5-Clewiston (FLSO) 15 mile diameter circle.

Some highlights from January through March trips at STA5 included a Tropical Kingbird and Cinnamon Teal. Species number 203, Chipping Sparrow, was added to the combined list for confirmed species at STA5 from 2005 to present.

The power lines along CR 835 north and south of the Deer Fence Road intersection netted up to 14 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. Cassin's, Gray, and Western Kingbirds were seen in the early morning or late afternoon in the Cypress Trees at the Deer Fence/CR 835 intersection.

The route in the public access areas has been modified in order to avoid the 6 active Snail Kite nests at STA5 and caution is advised in order to avoid ground nesting birds on the levees during visits to STA5. Check the kiosk for directions.

STA5 is now open for walking and bicycling Friday through Monday during daylight hours except for the posted fall and spring duck hunting Sunday's. The Clewiston Museum offers inexpensive van trips by reservation that include STA5 on Fridays. Hendry-Glades Audubon volunteers lead scheduled driving trips 25 times a year.

Hendry Glades Audubon website at: www.hendrygladesaudubon.org

Big O Birding Festival Update

The 13th Annual Big "O" Birding Festival, showcasing Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail sites and other birding hotspots in Hendry and Glades County, was held March 9-13, 2014. Traveling by bus, boat, swamp buggy, or carpools over 100 participants from 14 states, Canada, and South Florida documented 149 species during the events on Lake Okeechobee, public lands, and private ranches. The Sunday through Thursday evening keynote programs were well attended by out of town visitors and local residents.

The success of this year's event was possible because of the support of volunteers, businesses, and community. Eleven local volunteers and twenty-five guides donated their time during the festival. Twenty-eight businesses and organizations are recognized on the festival website for their generous support or donation of services. The inaugural trips on the City of LaBelle and Hendry/LaBelle Recreation bus (photos left) covered with photos taken in Hendry County were one of the highlights of the festival. Over 20 items were donated for this year's silent auction by individuals and businesses.

Mark your calendar for the 14th Annual Big "O" Birding Festival for March 10 -14, 2015. Invite your friends, neighbors, or volunteer to help with the festival. Remember to thank our sponsors and friends of the festival for helping make the festival a success. Visit the Big "O" Birding Festival at: www.bigobirdingfestival.com Or on Photostream: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/110627342@N02/>



Bulletin Board

Valiant Martins

And I don't just mean fearless! The Purple Martins are back at Marty Valiant and Janet Falk's home for their annual visit at 570 Captain Hendry Drive. There is lots of activity right now - flying in and out, chatter, chicks peeking out, and even one successful fledge a couple of days ago. Any and all are just welcome to come over and walk around back and have a look; no need to call. The best viewing times are between 9 am -11:00 AM and late afternoon and dusk. Be sure to take the opportunity to visit this wonderful colony if you are in the area. They are spectacular to watch.

Bird the Dry Tortugas with Florida Nature Tours – 2014

2014 Tour Dates

Dry Tortugas I April 10-April 13

Dry Tortugas II April 15-April 18

Dry Tortugas III April 22-April 25

South Florida Land Tour April 26- May 2

(Land tour connects with Dry Tortugas III and IV)

Dry Tortugas IV April 27-April 30

Dry Tortugas V May 2 – May 5

www.floridanaturetours.net

email: infofloridanaturetours@gmail.com

Phone: 407384-9766 or 407-376-6967

A unique combination of history, natural beauty and birds, the Dry Tortugas is a spectacular photographic destination and a birders paradise!



Bring your favorite covered dish and join us Monday May 12 at 6 pm at the Dallas Townsend Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd. in LaBelle for a covered dish supper and Burrowing Owl slideshow presentation from Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife and short videos by Dan Tudor. Photo by Dan Tudor

Earth Day 2014

Tuesday, April 22 is Earth Day. First celebrated in April 1970, today it is coordinated globally and celebrated in more than 192 countries each year. Earth Day should be celebrated every day but if you are feeling the environmentalist calling in you, here are some ideas for “going green” in celebration of Mother Earth:

Reduce, reuse & recycle everywhere, even at work, plant a tree every Earth Day, plant a garden, walk, or ride your bike instead of driving for short errands or if you live close to work, use CFL light bulbs in place of regular light bulbs, turn off lights around the home and unplug devices that aren't being used and even some you do, hang your clothes out to line dry as much as possible, keep your car tires properly inflated, drive the speed limit, get a reusable water bottle, be more conscious of your water use, eat vegetarian for a day or two a week, take a child outdoors, get involved in at least one environmental issue, and join an local Earth Day celebration in your community. Trying any one or two of these things will not only be good for the earth, but will also be good on the pocketbook as well. Most importantly it is important for the environment and a sustainable future.

Species Spotlight



Photo by Kim Willis

Did you know...

A group of Yellow warblers are known as a “stream”, “sweetness”, and “trepidation” of warblers.

Yellow Warbler subspecies (Golden population) found in the Florida Keys and West Indies have an olive-brown crown.

Yellow Warbler subspecies (Mangrove population) found in Central America and northern South America have a rufous hood.

Recent DNA studies have indicated that the Chestnut-sided Warbler is their closest relative. Both have similarly phrased songs.

The Yellow Warbler was first described in 1766 by Swedish botanist, zoologist and physician, Carolus Linnaeus.

The Yellow warbler is one of the most numerous warblers in North America.

Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechial*)

Five inches tall and bright, buttery yellow overall, the aptly named Yellow Warbler is an easily recognizable little bird with a sweet song emphatic of “Sweet, sweet, sweet, I’m so sweet”. Reddish streaks adorn the male of this proud little bird’s chest and his conspicuous black eye makes it easy to spot this bird as if his coloring alone were not enough. The juvenile and female though not as brightly yellow and lacking streaked chest are no less beautiful and a treat to see.

Yellow Warblers breed from Alaska east across Canada to Newfoundland and south to Southern California, northern Oklahoma and northern Georgia. The Yellow Warbler spends its winters in Central America, and the northern areas of South America and luckily for us, in south Florida.

As with most warblers, the Yellow Warbler eats mostly insects that they glean from the foliage of trees and bushes. They can be prefer habitat that includes the edges of marshes and swamps and willow-lined streams, leafy-bogs, thickets, orchards, farmlands, forest edges and suburban yards and gardens. In their wintering grounds, they inhabit the mangrove forests.

Nest building is done by the female in about 4 days. Nests are built in the vertical fork of a tree or small bush and are within about 10 feet of off the ground but may be as high as 40 feet. The clutch size is 1-7 eggs with the incubation period lasting 10-13 days. The nesting period is from 9-12 days. 1-2 broods are produced. Both the male and the female participate in feeding of the young. Yellow Warblers are often parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds. If this occurs, the Yellow Warbler will often build a new nest directly on top of the parasitized one, abandoning both the Cowbird and its own eggs, sometimes as many as six times. Yellow Warblers form monogamous pairs that can sometimes last for more than one breeding season.

The Yellow Warbler is a long distant migrant. They migrate earlier most other migrants and are typically the first to arrive in both spring and fall.

Photos



A Florida non-migratory Whooping Crane seen on Lake Okeechobee, April 2014! Photo by Mike Baranski



A trio of Cape Coral's finest. Florida Burrowing Owls can be seen year round day or night and Cape Coral is home to the largest population of the Florida species in the state. Photo by Dan Tudor



American Oystercatcher having a sand flea snack. What a strikingly beautiful bird. Photo by Larry Frogge



A face only a mother could love. Still adorable, these baby wood storks are anxiously awaiting a meal from momma. Photo by Larry Frogge

Look who made *Visit Florida's* "Five Top Spot for Birding in Florida"!

Five Top Spots for Birding in Florida

[Five Top Spots for Birding in Florida](#)

Here in Florida, birding and wildlife viewing is a big deal – even bigger than you might imagine.

In fact, birding is second only to beach-related activities as a form of outdoor recreation for both visitors and residents. The trend is still on the rise, so count on seeing more and more people carrying binoculars and spotting scopes around the Sunshine State.

If you're already into birding, you probably know that Florida is considered one of the best places in the world for the activity. Here are five of the top spots you don't want to miss:

- **Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge** - For Titusville, having one of the state's most diverse wildlife habitats on your doorstep is a good thing. In January, the area hosts the annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, which is the largest of its kind in the country. Birders flock to the area en masse to get a look at migrating waterfowl and all manner of shorebirds along Black Point Wildlife Drive, a 7-mile loop around salt marsh impoundments. Whether you're visiting for a day or a week, you're sure to check a few species off your life list here.
- **Everglades National Park** - When wildlife lovers dream, they more than likely dream about the Everglades. Not only is it a National Park, it's also designated as an International Biosphere Reserve for its ecological importance. Residents of Everglades National Park include the Florida panther, American crocodile, the rare Ghost orchid, manatees and much more. For a good day trip, check out the Anhinga Trail and the Shark Valley tram. www.nps.gov/ever
- **Dry Tortugas National Park** - Located about 70 miles west of Key West in the Gulf of Mexico, Dry Tortugas National Park is a little difficult to reach, but the reward is well worth the effort. Catch a ride on the Yankee Freedom Ferry, a high-speed catamaran that can get you there in just a couple of hours. Go in the spring and you'll be rewarded with the rare sight of thousands of Sooty terns and Brown noddies nesting on Bush Key. www.nps.gov/drto
- **J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge** - Year-round birding and wildlife viewing is terrific on Sanibel Island. At "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, you can drive around the 4-mile Wildlife Drive and get looks at Roseate spoonbills and Gray kingbirds. Take a walk on the Indigo Trail in the summer months, where Mangrove cuckoos can be found. www.fws.gov/dingdarling
- **STA5/Lake Okeechobee** - It's not a National Park or a National Wildlife Refuge, but STA-5 is one of the best birding spots in South Florida. Stormwater treatment areas are designed to filter out excess nutrients that would otherwise flow to the Everglades, but they also turn out to be excellent places for birding. To access STA-5, you'll need to register a visit with one of the local Audubon Society chapters. The birding is fantastic year-round, and you'll definitely add a few life-listers at STA-5. www.hendrygladesaudubon.org

If five locations aren't enough, don't worry. The **Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail** covers the entire state, with 514 official sites to explore. Check out www.floridabirdingtrail.com for more information.

<http://www.visitflorida.com/en-us/articles/2013/insider--outdoorsnature/top-birding-spots-mims.html>



Now enrolling volunteers for 2014 Jay Watch training sessions!

Jay Watch training sessions are FREE to participants

All trainings will be held in the morning. Site specific time, location, and other information can be obtained by contacting the person listed for each training.

~An overview of Florida Scrub-jay behavior and review of the survey protocol will be followed by field practice with the Scrub-jays~

Saturday, April 26—Royce Ranch/FWC, Highlands County

Contact: Jacqui Sulek <jsulek@audubon.org>

Saturday, May 3—Duette Preserve, Manatee County

Contact: Jacqui Sulek <jsulek@audubon.org>

Saturday, May 10 — Cross Florida Greenway, Marion County

Contact: Jess Rodriguez <Jess.Rodriguez@myFWC.com>

Saturday, May 10 — Lyonia Preserve, Volusia County

Contact: Jacqui Sulek <jsulek@audubon.org>

Saturday, May 31 — Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Martin County

Saturday, May 31 — Allen David Broussard Catfish Creek State Park and FFA Leadership Training Center, Polk County

Contact: Jacqui Sulek <jsulek@audubon.org>

Saturday, June 7—Prairie Shell Creek Preserve, Charlotte County

Contact: Jacqui Sulek <jsulek@audubon.org>

Participants will learn:

About Florida Scrub-jay cooperative breeding behavior

Population trends and factors affecting population stability

Standardized Jay Watch survey methods employed statewide June 15 —July 15



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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