



Crested Caracara

Oct/December 2011 **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 2011 Schedule

October 15
November 12 & 26
December 3 & 17
December 31: **Christmas Bird Count**

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.

October 10: Elston Raimundo Chavarria: **Birds of Central and South America**, Clewiston

November 14: LaBelle TBA

December 12: Sam Fried: **THE INTIMATE GALAPAGOS – AN ISLAND ADVENTURE**, Clewiston



President's Message

"Bird is the word around Lake Okeechobee".

The word is getting out about bird watching and wildlife viewing in Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee Counties. Over 1,000 visitors are flocking annually to STA5 (SFWMD Stormwater Treatment Area 5) for HGAS lead bird watching trips. Nature enthusiasts are visiting Lake Okeechobee, public lands, Devil's Garden Bird Park, Gatorama, Billy Swamp Safari, Ah-Tha-Thi-Ki Museum and other inland destinations searching for birds to add to their "life lists". In order to promote bird watching in inland Florida Hendry County Tourism has generously provided funding to print the 2011-2012 STA5 brochures with upcoming trip and Big "O" Birding Festival information. The brochures will be distributed at welcome centers, events and to local businesses. Help with distributing brochures in the community or other locations are needed.

For the past three years, the Ah-Tha-Thi-Ki Museum has donated table space to HGAS for the American Indian Arts Celebration held November 4-6, 2011. HGAS volunteers are needed to man the booth Friday afternoon Nov. 4th from 1-5 p.m. Janet Falk has volunteered to set up and man the booth Friday morning. Volunteers are needed for Saturday Nov. 5th and Sunday November 6th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for half to full day. Other volunteer opportunities include an early morning bird walk. The museum will offer Hendry-Glades Audubon members a 20% discount off of museum membership which includes other membership benefits. The Museum Boardwalk is a great place to find wintering songbirds.

Other special offers and discounts are available to HGAS members and friends. The Clewiston Best Western will offer a \$55 per night room rate until December 31, 2011 to anyone who mentions that they are participating in the STA5 bird trips. Wes Briggs birdsafnt@bellsouth.net of Florida Nature Tours is offering a \$100 donation to the birding/conservation group of your choice when you book one of his Spring 2012 Dry Tortugas or South Florida Nature Tours. E-mail Wes for the itinerary.

Plans are underway for the Audubon Assembly which will be hosted at the Clewiston Inn March 16-18, 2012, two weeks prior to the Big "O" Birding Festival March 28-31. Please help get the word out about our area bird watching opportunities. To volunteer to help with upcoming activities or distribute brochures please contact me.

Thank you for your continued support of HGAS and your help promoting Inland Bird

Watching.

Margaret

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

HGAS 6th Annual North American Migration Count

The final report for the September 17, 2011 is being prepared. The tallies have been submitted for Hendry and Glades Counties. Approximately 60 volunteers spent the day recording birds that sighted or heard. Early birders were greeted by Barred, Great Horned and Eastern Screech-Owls. Wading birds, including Roseate spoonbills were reported in the wetland areas. Wintering ducks and raptors were sighted.

Eighteen snail kites were included for STA5, three Scrub Jays in Muse, and flocks of migrating Bobolinks were reported by Hendry and Glades teams. In addition, area teams found Barn, Tree and a few Bank Swallows.

Thanks and appreciation is extended to volunteers who traveled by foot, boat, bicycle and car in order to make the 6th Annual Hendry-Glades County another success.

Christmas Bird Count – Mark Your Calendars for another amazing day of camaraderie and bird watching in Inland Hendry and Glades Counties!

Saturday, December 31, 2011

For information or to register to volunteer,

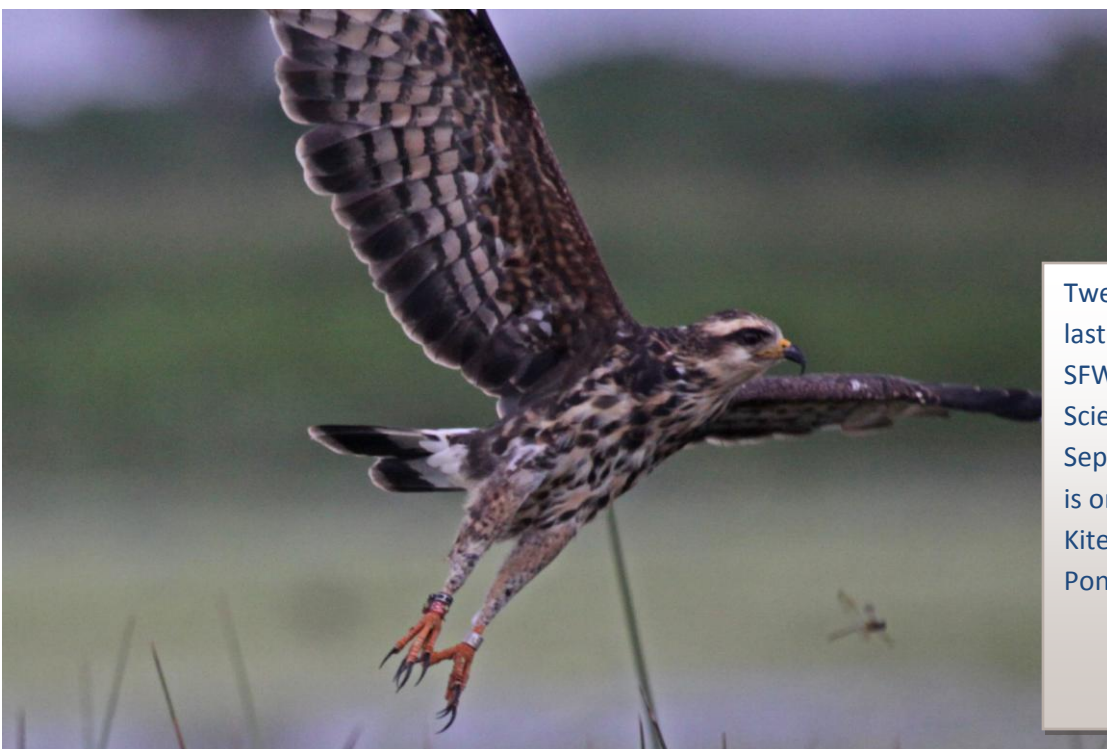
Contact Margaret England at: 863-674-0695 - cell: 863-517-0202 or sta5birding@earthlink.net

STA 5 Highlights

The highlight of the summer STA5 trips was watching the fledging birds. Black-necked Stilts, Common Gallinule (formerly Common Moorhen) and Mottled Duck chicks were seen swimming with their parents. Adult and last year's Snail Kites were observed, but were not observed nesting in the STA5 cells this year which has been attributed to the lack of apple snails during drought conditions. The rare Great White Heron (white form of Great Blue) was observed during the summer. Four species of wintering raptors: Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk and Peregrine Falcon have made their returned. Tree and Barn Swallows are common sightings. Visiting birdwatchers were able to add the exotic Purple Swamphen to their life lists. Over 100 Eastern Meadowlarks were spotted on the L1 Dike Road leading to STA5 during the NAMC. Reservations for the popular STA5 trips are being taken.

Check out the schedule on the HGAS website at: www.hendrygladesausubon.org Also: Click Like on Facebook for HGAS news.

Complete lists may be viewed by visiting the HGAS webpage at: www.hendrygladesaudubon.org.



Twenty Snail Kites were banded last year at STA5. Charles Hanlon, SFWMD Senior Environmental Scientist took this photo on September 12th. This juvenile bird is one of last's years STA5 Snail Kite fledglings sighted at Harney Pond north of Lake Okeechobee.

Take a break and come join us at the Oct. 14-15, 2011 Florida Audubon Assembly!



Take a little time to make plans to join us at the 2011 Audubon Assembly in Lake Mary, FL (near Orlando). As in the past several years the bulk of the Assembly activity will happen between 12 pm on Friday Oct. 14 and will continue through the Chapter Awards banquet on Saturday, Oct. 15. Several activities are being planned if you would like to come early. These include a special FLYWAY FIESTA at the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey on Thursday evening, and on Friday morning a series of WALKING WORKSHOPS and TRADITIONAL FIELDTRIPS. For more information and to register online go to: www.audubonoffloridanews.org. **To register by mail**, contact Jonathan Webber at 850-222-2473 or jwebber@audubon.org.)

Our venue will be the Orlando Marriot Lake Mary, 1501 International Parkway, Lake Mary, FL. 32746 (a designated Green Lodging facility). **You will need to call** 1-800-380-7724 to reserve your room **by September 24** and mention **Florida Audubon Society to receive the special \$90 rate**. You will not be able to secure this special rate if you make your reservations online.

Florida Panther Festival

The first annual Florida Panther Festival will be held on Saturday, October 29, 2011 from 10am - 4pm at North Collier Regional Park in Naples, Florida!

The Florida Panther Festival is a free family event with children's activities, live music, demonstrations, presentations, livestock pen exhibit, living with Wildlife pavilion, trail walks, face painters, food vendors, and more for the whole family. Learn about the endangered Florida panther, its habitat, and the issues facing the species' survival through fun and educational activities for the kids, panther tracking activities, interactive hikes, speaker presentations by panther biologists and capture team members, and information about living in panther country. The Festival will include live music from the bands Bugtussle Ramblers and Frontline Bluegrass and educational exhibits by the Children's Museum of Naples, Naples Zoo, Ritz Carlton Nature's Wonders program and much more!

Optional field trips into panther habitat are available on Friday, October 28th to Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, Big Cypress National Preserve, Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, CREW Land and Trust, Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, and Picayune Strand State Forest. Various fees apply to field trips and reservations are required. Please visit the website for more information and registration

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT



Photo by Kim Willis

Did You Know...

Male Painted Buntings are highly territorial and aggressive toward each other. Fights between males, which include pecking, beating with wings, and grappling, sometimes result in death.

The Painted Bunting's species name, *ceris*, comes from the Greek myth of Scylla, who was turned into the bird keiris.

The male painted Bunting is the only bird in the U.S. to have a blue head and red under parts.

A group of painted buntings are collectively known as a "mural" and a "palette" of buntings.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Breeding in two distinct populations, one from Missouri and North Carolina south to the southeastern states and west to New Mexico and Oklahoma; wintering from the Gulf coast states southward, the Painted Bunting is one of the most brilliantly colored birds in all of the United States. This medium-sized bunting is bronze-green on its back with a bright red rump and under parts. The head and nape are brilliant blue. The wings are dark with green shoulder patches. Female has green upperparts, yellow-green under parts and dark wings. Juvenile birds resemble the female, but are duller.

Three to five light blue eggs with red brown markings are laid in a cup nest made of grass stems, rootlets, and bark strips, lined with moss and hair, and built near the ground in a bush or small tree. Incubation period ranges from 11 to 12 days and is carried out by the female.

Preferred habitats include brushy tangles, hedgerows, briar patches, woodland edges, and swampy thickets; the Painted Bunting eats mostly seeds in winter and insects, spiders, and snails in summer. Foraging on the ground it strips seed from grass stalks or snatches insects from spider webs.

Breeding Bird Survey data shows a steady decline in overall population since 1965. Sadly, males are targets of trappers for the cage-bird trade, especially in Mexico.



Photos



Snowy Egrets were constantly chasing each other away even with the whole ocean in front of them full of shrimp and fish!!! – Photo by Larry Frogge



Lee McMichael, vice-president of Hendry County Tourism Development, invited community businesses to be guests for the new “Historical Eco-Tour,” managed by the Clewiston Museum. Guests toured STA5, which is noted for its great birding and the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail that runs along the Herbert Hoover Dike. For information contact the Clewiston Museum - 863-983-2870. (Pictured l to r: Lee McMichael, VP of Tourism, Hendry County EDC, Debbie Woodford, Butch Wilson, Clewiston Museum director, Margaret England, President, HGAS and unknown guest.

Bluebird Nest Box Project Community Outreach....



Bluebird boxes with Labelle boy scouts. 170 kits were made, 114 have been placed.



Bluebird box building project with the Hendry-Glades Youth Leadership.



A day of building with the Ortona 4H Day Camp.



Bluebird program with the little ones at Barron Library.



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!

HGAS on Call FM 91.5 --Tune in to Radio Call FM 91.5 Clewiston for Hendry-Glades Audubon's 1 minute Bird of the Week. Visit Call FM 91.5 Clewiston on Facebook. The link to the interview is on the Call FM 91.5 Facebook page.

Watch for posting of the 9/7/2011 interview with Margaret England.

[Hendry-Glades Audubon logo merchandise online](http://imprintsite.com)

<http://imprintsite.com>

Gatorama sells a small postcard of a wonderful photo of Larry Frogge's "Lakeport Daisy's". Patty Register is developing a line of Glades County postcards. If anyone has images or suggested venues to be included in this project please contact Gatorama, Inc.

Fisheating Creek Outpost, Inc.

Come visit our corner of the Glades

www.Gatorama.com

www.FishEatingCreekOutpost.com



Margaret England Quarterly Winner !

Congratulations to Margaret England for winning an autographed copy of "The Crossley ID Guide to Eastern Birds" from Birding Adventures TV's quarterly drawing. Visit their Facebook page and click on WIN PRIZES to enter the quarterly drawings.

Seminole Tribe of Florida Big Cypress Ah-Tah-Thi-ki Museum 14th Annual American Indian Arts Celebration, November 4 - 6, 2011

A three daylong event, focusing on the traditional and contemporary arts, dance and music of the Seminole, Southeastern and other Indian tribes from across the country. The festival has become widely regarded as an indigenous cultural explosion in the Everglades and grows in attendance from year to year. (877) 902-1113

The Florida Wildlife Corridor Project

The Florida Wildlife Corridor is a collaborative vision by leading national and statewide conservation organizations to connect remaining natural lands, waters, working farms and ranches from the Everglades to Georgia, protecting a functional ecological corridor for the health of people, wildlife and watersheds.

Florida Wildlife Corridor Goals:

- Protect and restore dispersal and migration corridors essential for the survival of Florida's diverse wildlife, including wide-ranging panthers and black bears
- Protect and connect habitat for all of the other native species that live in the corridor
- Restore water flow to the Everglades and sustain water supply to southern Florida
- Safeguard the St. Johns River and water supply from Orlando north to Jacksonville
- Sustain the food production, economies and cultural legacies of working ranches and farms within the corridor
- Give wildlife and plants room to adapt to a changing climate and sea level rise

The Florida Wildlife Corridor opportunity exists today thanks to decades of dedication by numerous individuals and organizations, including Larry Harris, Johnny Jones, the Florida Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation Trust for Florida, Audubon of Florida, numerous state and federal agencies, cattle ranchers, farmers and others. Future success will rely upon continued focus and collaboration. Present-day initiatives such as Everglades restoration, Everglades Headwaters protection, expanding the National Wildlife Refuge network, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's investment in conservation easements on Florida ranches, and voluntary conservation programs such as Florida Forever, all offer great hope that the Florida Wildlife Corridor concept remains possible.

<http://www.floridawildlifecorridor.org>

Fall Migrants

Following HGAS recent participation in the Fall North American Migration Count, I thought this article on eBird might be something of interest for tips for fall migration.

"Fall migration starts earlier than most people realize, with many shorebirds on the move by late June, and the first land birds heading south soon thereafter. August through October is peak months, but migration continues into December for some species, especially shorter-distance land birds (e.g., sparrows, blackbirds), raptors, waterfowl, and seabirds. Birds are often on the move every day during this entire period, but there are reasons that some days are better than others for observing them. The volume of migration depends on the weather, with many birds waiting until conditions are favorable before initiating migratory flights." –excerpt from ebird article.

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/fall-birding-basics>



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Identifies Giant African Land Snails in Miami-Dade County

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services have positively identified a population of Giant African land snails (GALS) in Miami-Dade County. The Giant African land snail is one of the most damaging snails in the world because they consume at least 500 different types of plants can cause structural damage to plaster and stucco, and can carry a parasitic nematode that can lead to meningitis in humans.

The Giant African land snail, *Achatina fulica*, is one of the largest land snails in the world, growing up to eight inches in length and more than four inches in diameter. When full grown, the snail's brownish shell consists of seven to nine whorls (spirals) that cover at least half the length of its long and greatly swollen body whorl. Each snail can live as long as nine years and contains both female and male reproductive organs. After a single mating session, each snail can produce 100 to 400 eggs. In a typical year, every mated adult lays about 1,200 eggs. *Achatina fulica* is originally from East Africa and has established itself throughout the Indo-Pacific Basin, including the Hawaiian Islands. This pest has also been introduced into the Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe with recent detections in Saint Lucia and Barbados.

Giant African land snails are illegal to import into the United States without a permit and currently no permits have been issued. Anyone who believes they may have seen a Giant African land snail or signs of its presence should call the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services toll-free at 888-397-1517 to make arrangements to have the snail collected.

To preserve the snail sample, Floridians should use gloves to put the snail in a zip lock bag, seal it and place it in a bucket or plastic container. They are advised not to release or give these samples away.

For more information on invasive snail species, visit: www.freshfromflorida.com.

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