

Crested Caracara

April/June 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 Jeffers
Martha Valiant
Rhonda Roff
Sonny Mowbray
Terri Lazar
Add Austin*

STA-5 2010 Schedule

April 16
April 30
May 14 NAMC Spring Count
May 28

Meetings

7:00 p.m. second Monday of the month September - May. Please check for updates and meeting locations. Most meetings will be held at the Dallas Townsend Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle

Check out our April 11th speaker John Lopinot's website at:
<http://www.johnjlopinot.com/>

May 9 – Dallas Townsend Bldg.
6:00 p.m. Covered Dish Dinner
7:00 p.m. Program
“Coyotes in Florida: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly”
Martin B. Main, PhD. - Speaker



President's Message

HGAS has been busy since the last newsletter. Please continue sending Kim Willis photos and articles of interest for the quarterly *Crested Caracara*. kim_willis@comcast.net

Thanks to all who helped, sponsored and shared information about the Big “O” Birding Festival. Plans are underway for the 2012 event.

The current officers and board have been elected to serve another term.

Please contact me if you are interested in serving on the HGAS Board.

Board meetings are held a few times each year in order to plan the budget, activities and prepare annual reports.

Marty Valiant and I attended the 7th annual Florida Audubon Academy Mary 18-20 in Gainesville. This year's theme was Florida's Special Places. Hendry County Tourism provided a 2012 Registration to the Big “O” 2012 Festival as a door prize in order to promote our Special Places and HGAS donated *The Living Gulf Coast Guide* which features inland special locations. The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail will be accepting nominations for new South Florida wildlife viewing hotspots soon. Please send me the names of site for additions to the trail.

Fisheating Creek, Dinner Island, STA5 and OK Slough have been trails sites since 2006.

Margaret

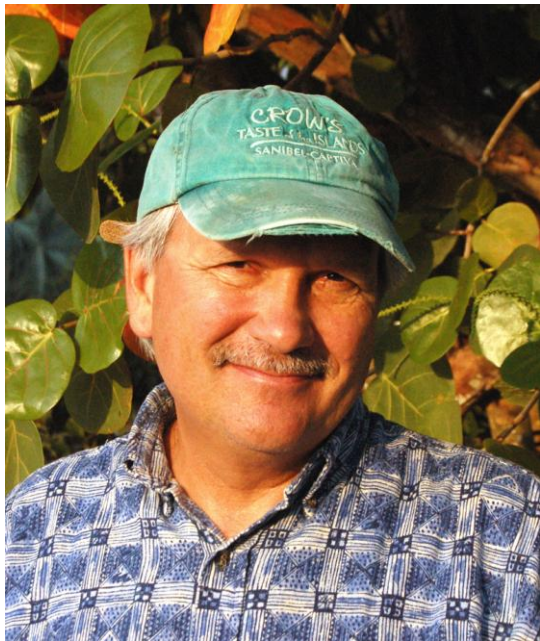
mleighthouse@embarqmail.com

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

An Evening with Charles Sobczak

Hendry-Glades Audubon members and guests enjoyed an evening with award winning author Charles Sobczak at the LaBelle Beef O 'Brady's on Monday March 14th.

Charles Sobczak lives and writes on Sanibel Island, Florida. Some of his fiction and non-fiction titles include: *Six Mornings on Sanibel*, *Way Under Contract, a Florida Story*, *Alligators and Sharks & Panthers: Deadly Encounters with Florida's Top Predator-Man* and *Living Sanibel – a Nature Guide to Sanibel & Captiva Islands*. His presentation featured his latest release: *The Living Gulf Coast: A Nature Guide to Southwest Florida* which featured coastal and inland locations. A portion of sales for books purchased at the presentation was donated to Hendry-Glades Audubon. A special thanks to Charles and Molly for an excellent program.



Check out advertisement on Pg. 61 of the Audubon Magazine! Florida's Freshwater Frontier, The Big O Birding Festival, STA5, Fisheating Creek, Dinner Island, Lake O, and OK Slough all received great publicity.

STA 5 Highlights

HGAS and volunteers gathered for the 111st Christmas Bird Count at STA 5 on Saturday December 18th and other locations in Hendry County. All 105 species submitted for STA5-Clewiston CBC were accepted. The only change was the American Coot Count was rounded to nearest ten thousand, but it still was a high count.

Saturday December 31, 2011 has been chosen as the date for the next count in order to avoid conflicts with neighboring counties. Volunteers are already beginning to register for this CBC.

SFWMD's STA5 was featured during Big "O" Birding Festival trips March 23-25th. Over 75 species were reported including a Parula Warbler which is number 192 on the ever growing list of birds observed during STA5 trips.

The 2012 STA5 trip schedule has been posted on the HGAS website. Over 4,800 birdwatchers and photographers have visited STA5 during the HGAS trips since November 2005.

The Spring North American Migration Count will be Saturday May 14th. Volunteers are needed for the team count at STA5. Watch for an update on the migratory and resident nesting birds in the next edition of the Crested Caracara.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology - Third Annual "Funky Nests in Funky Places" Contest

Ithaca, NY—The Celebrate Urban Birds project at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is bringing back its "**Funky Nests in Funky Places**" environmental challenge for the third year--the most popular of its seasonal challenges. [Celebrate Urban Birds](#) is a free year-round citizen-science project focused on birds in neighborhood settings.

For the 2011 Funky Nests in Funky Places challenge, participants may take photos, do a painting, write a story, or shoot a video showing a bird's nest built in some out-of-the-way or out-of-this-world place.

How to enter:

1. Email entries to urbanbirds@cornell.edu. If you submit a video, post it on YouTube and send the link.
2. Write "FunkyNest_yourfirstname yourlastname yourstate" in the subject line.
3. Include both your mailing address and the location where you saw the bird in your email.
4. Explain why you submitted your entry and what it shows.
5. One entry per person, please.
6. Read the terms of agreement.

Deadline for entries is June 1, 2011



LSA-Led Cranes Arrive Safely in Florida - Others Do Not

January 20, 2011 —The 2010 Whooping Crane migration that uses light-sport aircraft weight-shift trikes to help the young birds find their way south for winter concluded over the weekend (January 16) at their Florida nesting grounds in the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge. The 73-day, 1,200-mile journey began in October in Wisconsin and was led by aircraft operated by Operation Migration (OM), which has assisted the Eastern Migration (one of two major routes by cranes in the U.S.) for the past 10 years. While the trip for OM's cranes went fairly smoothly, a sister organization assisting a free-release migration suffered tragedy when three cranes were found shot near Albany, Georgia. Last year a bird was found shot in Indiana.

The cranes that were killed were part of a Direct Autumn Release (DAR) program operated by the ICF. Operation Migration and ICF are part of the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership, which uses both the LSA-led and DAR method to introduce cranes to migration in the eastern U.S.

An estimated 570 whooping cranes are left in the world. The eastern U.S. migratory population has only 108 known birds.



Thanks to Add Austin for providing article concerning the plight of the Whooping Cranes.

The *Ghost Bird* birding documentary is wrapping up its 75-city theatrical tour. As a demonstration of thanks to many participating Audubon screening partners, Small Change Productions is offering the DVD at a special discounted price of \$15.99.

For each DVD purchased, *Ghost Bird* will also donate an additional \$2 to your Chapter. That is a combined 20% off the retail price in appreciation to you for working to preserve and conserve birds and their habitats.

Order your copy at:
<http://ghostbirdmovie.wordpress.com/audubon/>.

SAVE THE DATE! Big O Birding Festival 2012!
March 28 through March 31, 2012.

Sustainable Eco-Tourism Takes a Hit

Following the lead of the Governor's budget recommendations, the Senate singled out the Office of Recreation Services in the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for **dramatic budget cuts**. This unassumingly named office is actually one of the state's *most important opportunities* to court ecotourists—wildlife viewers alone have a **\$3B annual economic impact** on our state!

By tailoring amenities for nature tourists, and promoting our natural wealth through programs like the wildly popular [Great Florida Birding Trail](#), this office brings tourists that drive private-sector job creation in some of Florida's most rural communities. Luckily, the House budget *does not include* these cuts, so the issue is still in play. If you are a fan of the Great Florida Birding Trail, ["Like" them on Facebook](#), and tell your legislators about the **important role ecotourists play in Florida's economy!**

Find your legislators:
<http://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT



White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

Living in parts of the west for most of the year, this striking bird graces our area during the winter season. A large sparrow with a boldly striped head, stripe-free gray breast and long tail, you will find White-crowned Sparrows at the edges of brushy habitat or hopping on the ground. Their diet is varied with a mixture of weed and grass seed, fruit, grains and a great number of insects.

Nesting takes place fairly low to the ground taking the female 2-9 days to complete nest building. Three to seven eggs are laid in a nest made of twigs, coarse grasses, bark, pine needles, moss and dead leaves. Fledglings move very little after leaving the nest and do not learn to fly for approximately a week after. Siblings can remain together for two months or more after fledging.

Much of what is known about bird migration has been learned from lab experiments with this species. Like most migrants, White-crowned Sparrows travel day and night covering up to 300 miles a day. They can travel at night and feed during the day with only three hours of sleep. Experiments with caged birds show that they can perform simple tasks with no decline in performance with less than one-third of their normal sleep time. If science can determine how sparrows are able to do this, the results could greatly help pilots, drivers or others who experience fatigue on the job.

White-crowned Sparrows have been studied so extensively because they are so common.

Did you know.....

- Scientists interested in movement and energetics has discovered that White-crowned Sparrows can run on a treadmill at a pace of about one-third of a mile an hour without tiring out.
- Because male White-crowned Sparrows learn the songs they grew up with and do not travel far from where they were raised, song dialects frequently form. Males on the edge of two dialects may be bilingual and able to sing both dialects.
- The oldest recorded White-crowned Sparrow was 13 years 4 months old.
- A group of sparrows has many collective nouns, including a "crew", "flutter", "meinie", "quarrel", and "ubiquity" of sparrows.

Photos



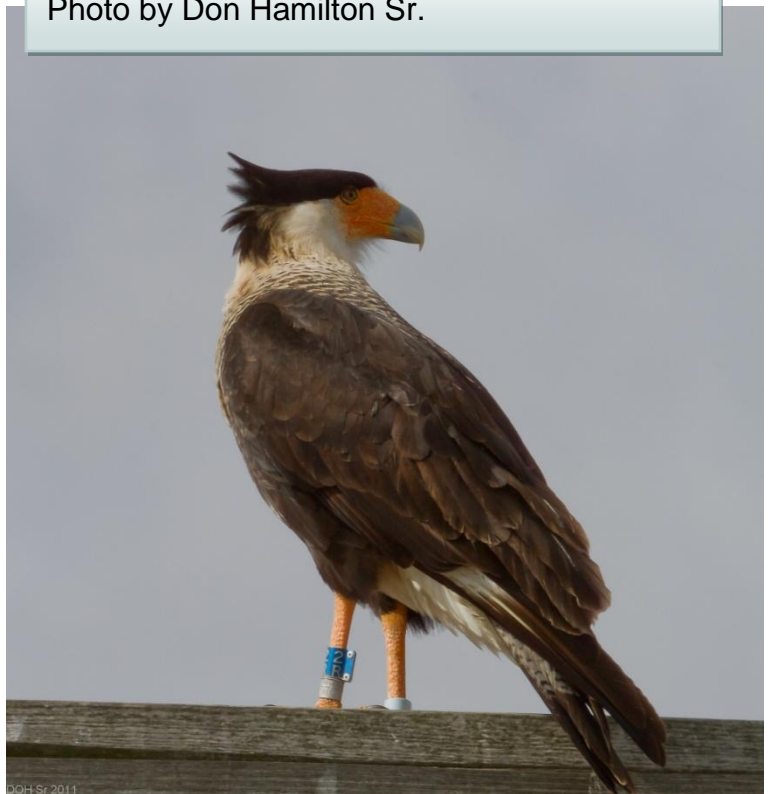
Photograph by Bernard P. Friel © 2011

Photo courtesy of Bernard P. Friel

How many Snail Kites do you see? Photo taken at Devils Garden Bird Park by David Bogert.



Banded Crested Caracara at Viera Wetlands. Photo by Don Hamilton Sr.



DOHSr 2011

Whooping Cranes!? On Lake Okeechobee?

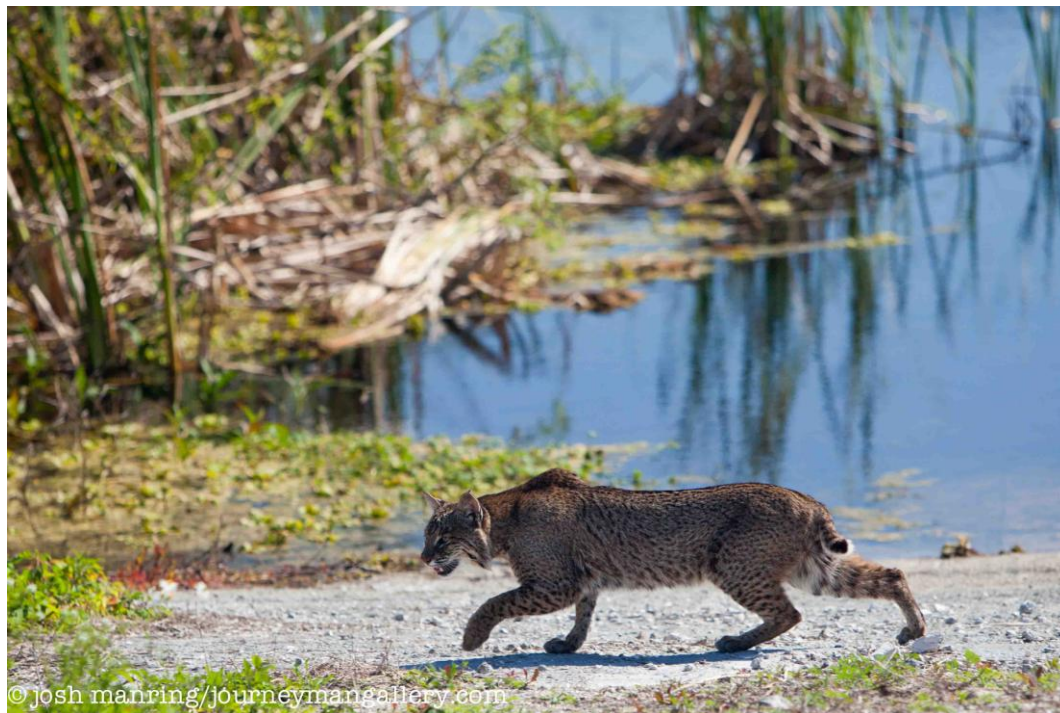


Photos by David Blood, FWC. March 2011, Western Lake Okeechobee Marsh

Liguus Tree Snail – Everglades National Park

By Larry Frogge

I know, these are not birds - but we were on a bird safari, how's that? Spent a day Friday in Everglades National Park and one of the things I wanted to find was the Liguus Tree Snail. The Liguus Tree Snail is the largest of the tree snails in Florida. What makes them so special is that they are very rare (on the Florida Species of Concern list) and hard to find. We managed to find 7! They are only found in extreme southern Florida and the Keys. They were hunted almost to extinction for the beauty of their shells. Collectors back in time would find a group, search the area for all they could find, then set the area on fire so no-one else would find them thus making theirs' more valuable. They are more active in the rainy season starting in May thru the summer months then now. Just to show that I'm not prejudice, I shot these snails with my Canon too!



Florida Bobcat (*Lynx rufus floridanus*)

Thanks to Josh Manning for this great shot of a Bobcat at STA 5 last year.

An interesting fact...there are twelve subspecies of Bobcat currently recognized.





HGAS Hendry County Fair & Livestock Show exhibit

Thanks to Eric Myer and Butch Wilson for manning the Hendry County Fair Booth, to Julie Jeffers for the Chapter scrapbook display, to Add Austin for display photos and Rhonda Roff for pictures of booth.

Big O Birding Festival Highlights March 23-26

Over 122 registered participants attended the bird watching and photo trips to various Hendry and Glades County birding hotspots including trips to J-Seven Ranch, Devils Garden Bird Park, Ah-Tha-Thi-Ki Museum, Gatorama and Lake Okeechobee boat trips. Over 132 bird species were reported during the 4 day event.

http://www.hendrygladesaudubon.org/?page_id=346) Mark your calendar for next year's festival being held March 28-31st. Better yet, join the fun helping plan this event or volunteer to help with the boat or birding trips. Your suggestions and ideas are needed in order to help provide new and interesting birding and photography activities and programs.

www.bigobirdingfestival.com



Photo by Dan Irizarry
Winner of the 2011
Big O Birding Festival
Photo Contest

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