



# Crested Caracara

## Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

April/June 2016

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*  
*Ann Starck*  
*Mel Karau*

### **STA-5/6 2016 Schedule**

June 11  
July 9  
August 13

**Meetings** - 7:00 p.m. third Monday of the month September - May Meetings held at the Dallas Townsend Bldg., located at 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle.

No meetings scheduled until September

**Monday September 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**7pm "Visit to Amazonia"**  
**with Janet Falk and Marty Valiant**



### **President's Message**

Summer Greetings,

The 5 year Breeding Bird Atlas II Survey ends this year. You can help collect data by sending me the date, location, and species of breeding birds or fledglings that you have observed in 2016. This data will be entered using to the corresponding 11 square mile survey blocks as the location. Your address will not be posted on the website. To view data that has been reviewed go to <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/>. During the past 4 years Glades Region has recorded 105 breeding species observations, 106 for the Hendry region, and 110 for the Okeechobee Region.

Migratory species including Swallow-tailed Kites, Purple Martins, Chimney Swifts, and Common Nighthawks and resident owl, wading birds, rails, raptors, and upland birds have been reported in inland Florida nesting or with young.

Hendry County Tourism recently hired Evok Marketing to create a new tourism website and a birding brochure featuring Hendry County.

The Hendry-Glades Audubon PowerPoint presentation "Hendry County Birding and Wildlife Hotspots" presented to LaBelle Heritage Museum and LaBelle Rotary is available to interested organizations upon request.

At the May meeting the HGAS Board approved donations to the Hendry County Cattlemen's Association Scholarship Fund and the Hendry County 4-H Bird Camp. HGAS will continue its membership in the Greater LaBelle Chamber of Commerce, Clewiston Chamber, and Glades County Economic Development.

Please, continue to send your articles, photos, and suggestions for the quarterly Caracara newsletter to Kim Willis at [kimwillis@centurylink.net](mailto:kimwillis@centurylink.net).

For current updates and photos like Hendry-Glades Audubon Society on Facebook.

*Margaret*

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

# Summer Birding and the June Challenge

By Kim Willis

Now that summer is lurking at our door and spring migration is all but over, many think that the birding "season" is over. Sadly, the migrants that we have been so happy to grace our garden feeders, parks and natural areas have gone back to their breeding grounds to spend the summer.

I say to you, it is not over! There are many wonderful birds that both visit for summer and are permanent residents year round that are a joy to see.

First that comes to mind and one of the best in my opinion are the Swallow-tailed Kites. Who among us has not paused to watch this magnificent spectacle of black and white gracefully soaring against a cloudless blue sky? Summer also brings the Common Nighthawks with their erratic pattern of flight as they snatch insects from an evening sky. If you find yourself in the Florida Keys, Gray Kingbirds are as plentiful as the Northern Mockingbird perched high on the powerlines calling to all who will listen in a loud rolling trill. Summer also brings the Purple Martins back to our backyard gourd homes as the joy of watching them raise their families fills our days with delight.

Let's too not forget about the birds that call Florida home; the many herons, egrets, wading birds, Jays, Cardinals, owls, hawks and woodpeckers that reside in our backyards and neighborhoods every day.

With summer also comes the June Challenge. Started in Alachua County, Florida by the Alachua County Audubon Society to get more people birding in the month of June. For those not familiar with the June Challenge it is simple. The June Challenge is a friendly competition designed to keep us birding through the summer heat rather than cowering indoors. The aim of the competition is for each individual contestant to see as many species as possible within the boundaries of his or her county between June 1st and June 30th. The rules were laid down in 2004 by Alachua's Becky Enneis, who originated the Challenge:

1. Count only birds found within a single county, ideally the one you live in. Explore your home turf and find some new birding spots. (Doing more than one county is permissible, but each must be reported separately.)
2. Each bird on your list must be seen, not just heard. Respect the birds. Use tapes cautiously and avoid harassment. Rely on patience and birding skill.
3. You'll be competing with birders in your own county to see who can amass the longest individual list, but let the others know if you find something good so they can go out and look for it. It is, after all, a *friendly* competition. Any free-flying bird is countable for the purposes of the Challenge, but keep track of how many ABA-countable and non-countable species are on your list. Report them in this format: "Total number seen (number that are ABA countable / number that are not)," e.g., 115 (112 / 3). If your local population of an exotic species is recognized as established by the ABA, then any member of that population is an ABA-countable bird. Otherwise put it on your non-countable list. For instance, a bird belonging to an established population of Monk Parakeets would be ABA-countable. An escaped Monk Parakeet, or a Mute Swan in a city park, would not be.
4. Send your list to Rex Rowan [rexrowan@gmail.com](mailto:rexrowan@gmail.com), for the final compilation by midnight on Friday, July 1st.

The prize is the recognition in the official June Challenge record for your county. I however, believe the real prize is challenging yourself to get outdoors in June and search for the many beautiful birds that call Hendry County home.

## STA 5/6 Update

**No scheduled trips for June, July or August. The next scheduled trip will be September 10<sup>th</sup>.**

Thanks to everyone who volunteered to help with sign-in and lead the caravan group trips at STA 5/6 this past year. It has made trips more enjoyable and more birds are being observed when the number of cars in each caravan group is 8 or fewer. Through a partnership with the South Florida Water Management (SFWMD) HGAS has lead 245 escorted trips to STA 5/6 for nearly 9,400 birders, photographers, or nature enthusiasts since November 2005. Over 205 bird species have been confirmed at STA 5/6, Deer Fence Road, L-1 Dike Road, Blumberg Road, and Manley Ditch Road. Registration for the driving trips is through the Eventbrite link on the Hendry-Glades Audubon website. Registrations for 2017 are already being submitted. With the unpredictable weather during the 2015 "El Nino" year the June, July, and August trip for 2016 driving trips have been cancelled, however hiking and bicycle access is available Friday-Monday during daylight hours. Early morning and late afternoon are the best times to observe birds and wildlife.

For schedule or registration for the free driving trips hosted by Hendry-Glades Audubon volunteers go to:

[www.hendrygladesaudubon.org](http://www.hendrygladesaudubon.org) Contact: [sta5birding@embarqmail.com](mailto:sta5birding@embarqmail.com)

# Species Spotlight



Photo by Kim Willis

## Did you know...

Pileated Woodpeckers "drum" on hollow trees with their bills in order to claim territory.

They dig rectangular holes in trees to find ants.

These excavations can be so broad and deep that they can cause small trees to break in half.

They will make up to 16 holes in each tree to allow escape routes should a predator enter the tree. They peck the bark around the entrance holes to make the sap run from the tree. This will keep some predators, such as snakes, from entering.

A group of pileated woodpeckers are collectively known as a "crown" of woodpeckers.

The Pileated Woodpecker is the largest North American Woodpecker species and has a wingspan of up to 30 inches wide.

## Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

The Pileated Woodpecker is a large bird, nearly crow sized, black with bold white stripes down the side of its neck with a flaming red crest. The male bird has a red whisker stripe on either side of the face. The female lacks this red stripe or malar.

With its thick chisel-like bill, the Pileated Woodpecker pounds away at dead wood in search of their main prey of carpenter ants. Pileated Woodpeckers leave distinctive rectangular holes as they search for food.

They are forest birds that require large standing dead trees or fallen trees. Forest can be mixed, evergreen or deciduous and are often mature woods. They are often seen in partially wooded suburbs and backyards and sometimes will visit bird feeders, especially for suet.

During nesting season, the male begins excavation of the nest cavity and does most of the work. The hole into the nest cavity is oblong as opposed to round like other woodpeckers and construction is under way for 3 – 6 weeks and nests cavities are reused for several years. Cavity depth can range from 10 to 24 inches. Cavities are places in dead trees within mature forest stands of coniferous or deciduous trees. Dead trees are a valuable resource as nest sites or shelter for woodpeckers and other small mammals. Consider leaving snags for this purpose and to attract wildlife to your yard. Pileated Woodpeckers are monogamous and have large territories.

The nesting period is 24-31 days with incubation being 15 -18 days and is carried out by both parents. Typically, there is only one brood with a clutch of 3-8 eggs.

Of the 7 species of woodpecker nesting in Florida, the Pileated is the third most common, exceeded in abundance only by the Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers.

# Photos



"Hey, I'm trying to sleep here! Keep it down out there".  
An Eastern Screech Owl peeking from under the eave. –  
Photo by Kim Willis



Large & in charge, the Gray Kingbird sits perched on the wire waiting for its next snack of bug on the wing. Photo by Ann Starck



A first Florida recorded sighting of a Pacific Golden Plover had birder's flocking (no pun intended) to Palm Beach County sod fields in April. Photo by Kim Willis



STA 5/6 resident Red-shouldered Hawk feeding anxiously waiting chicks and nice juicy lunch of insect A' La' Mode. Photo by Tom Pulice

## 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 member ship 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 E51 is on the membership form or the Chapter E51 Hendry-Glades AS is selected from online menu.

☐ National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually E51

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 E51**

**380 Riverview Dr. LaBelle, FL 33935**

**863-674-0695**