



Crested Caracara

April/June 2015

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.

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President's Message

Greetings!

Hendry-Glades Audubon is a 501c3 Florida non-profit organization established in 2006 which represents over 100 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 her new email: kimwillis@centurylink.net

In the late spring and early summer months wintering songbirds and raptors are returning north. I'll miss hearing the repeated notes of the Indigo Buntings and seeing the brightly colored Painted Buntings when they leave in late April. The migratory Swallow-tailed Kite and Chimney Swifts have returned to their summer breeding grounds in Florida. The Kites are often seen throughout the day gently flying over local roadways or above the tree canopy. The chirping of the Chimney Swifts is often heard before these "flying cigars" are seen flying overhead or frequenting their roost sites. Researchers are requesting that "citizen scientists" report their Swallow-tailed Kites sightings on the Avian Conservation Center for Birds of Prey website at: <http://www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org/swallowtail-kite.php>

Hendry-Glades Audubon volunteers did an outstanding job of helping at this year's Big "O" Birding Festival setting up, greeting, helping with carpools, and other jobs at the events. Plans are underway for upcoming Big "O" Birding Festival events. Volunteers are needed to help plan a fall and next year's event.

Volunteers have started Breeding Bird Atlas II Surveys in our area. Most of the aliasing 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/> Email me for a data entry form if you would like to report breeding birds in your area.

Happy Birding!

Margaret

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

STA-5 2015 Schedule

April 25

May 9

June 13

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.

April 13: Charlie Ewell "Shorebird Identification" and Election

May 11: Mary Giddens & Sandy Woodall – Annual trip to Whooping Crane Festival and Annual Covered Dish Dinner and Installation of Officers

June – August – No program

September 14 – "Audubon's Hog Island Camp" – Margaret England

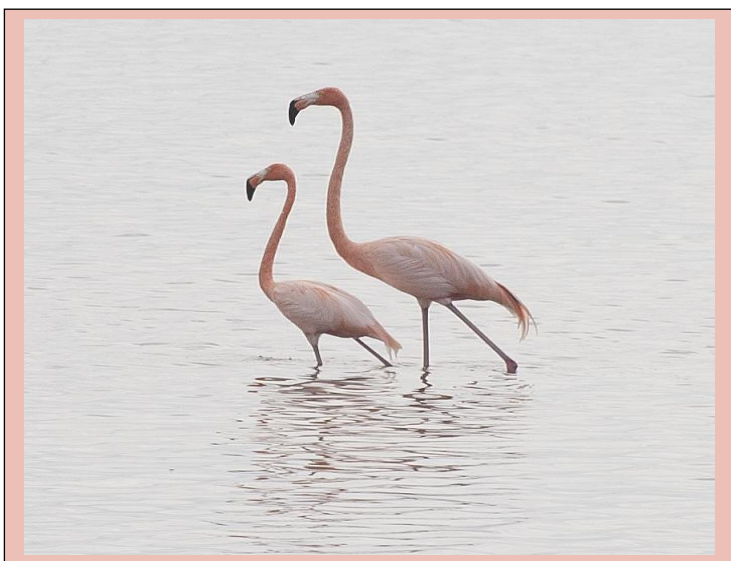
American Flamingos – SFWMD STA 2



Photo by SFWMD

If one is interested in nature or birding at all, you have certainly heard of the eight American Flamingos that have come to STA 2. Believed to be from the larger flock (147 birds) from last spring, these beauties have returned for another stopover and this time they have a public audience.

Field trips to see these magnificent birds have been ongoing since early March and are continuing through April. The next field trips to see the Flamingos are scheduled for April 12, 18, and 25. These trips have reached capacity and there is a waiting list. Birders interested in attending one of the upcoming trips can email asetripinfo@gmail.com to request a spot. [More information is available on the ASE website.](#)



2016 STA 5/6 Schedule

January 2 – Christmas Bird Count

January 16, 30

February 13 – 16 “Great Backyard Bird Count”

March 12, 19

April 2, 16

May 14

June 11

STA 5 Update

We were asked to start using the official name STA-5/6 in all materials and information about Stormwater Treatment Area 5/6. The public access area encompasses over 10 square miles. Currently all levees except the north side of cell 3B are open for walking/bicycle access during daylight hours Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday except for the posted duck harvesting Sundays in the fall and winter.

Two new species have been added this year to the ever growing list of birds species observed at STA-5/6. Species 204 was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird and 205 Chuck-will's-widow on Deer Fence Road.

Thank you to the volunteers who have lead and helped with the STA-5/6 this past year. Since November 2005 HGAS volunteers have lead over 220 trips with 8,500 total participants.

Big O Birding Festival wrap-up

Over 120 participants traveled by boat, bus, carpool, and swamp buggy during the March 11-16 Big "O" Birding Festival.

New this year was a trip with Felda Swamp Buggy Tours, LaBelle Farm Ranch Tours, visits to Archbold Biological Station, and airboat trips to the Audubon Sanctuary with Jason Williams, Dr. Paul Gray, and Gene McAvoy.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Reed Bowman, Mark and Selena Kiser, Paddy Cunningham, and Dr. Paul Gray.

Over 25 volunteers, guides, and prestigious birders lead trips to over 20 birding hotspots in Hendry, Glades, and Hardee Counties.

July 9

August 13

September 10

October 8

November 5, 19

December 31 “Christmas Bird Count”



Bulletin Board

Volunteers invited – May and June sessions for 2015 Jay Watch

Monday, May 11— Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park and Caloosahatchee Regional Park, Lee County
Contact: Jacqui Sulek jsulek@audubon.org

Saturday, June 6—Royce Ranch/FWC, Highlands County Contact: Jacqui Sulek jsulek@audubon.org

Learn about Florida Scrub-jay cooperative breeding behavior, population trends and factors affecting population stability and standardized survey methods employed statewide June 15 – July 15

Summer Opportunities

Are you looking for summer birding/photography opportunities? 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 offers 1 hour airboat rides customized to their guest's interests <http://www.rolandmartinmarina.com/>.

Billie Swamp Safari offers airboat rides, swamp buggy rides, and nature shows <http://www.billieswamp.com/>.

Gatorama in Palmdale is always an adventure <http://gatorama.net/>.

Check out the new attractions Felda Swamp Buggy tours at 863) 843-2989 <http://www.feldaswampbuggytours.com>

There are also a number of public parks and wildlife management areas in inland Florida.

Hummingbirds at Home

The start of spring is the perfect time to inspire bird lovers and nature enthusiasts to join Audubon in protecting hummingbirds, and the Hummingbirds at home app (<http://www.hummingbirdsathome.org/>) make it easy and fun to do.

A toolkit of promotional materials is now available on [Audubon Works](#), which is your online community and one-stop-shop for discussion, resources and latest updates.

Earth Day 2015



Earth Day is April 22nd. Celebrate Earth Day by attending a local event. Here are links to a few in the area.

<http://www.conservancy.org/EarthDay>

<http://www.floridaearthfestival.com/>

http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0312/03-21-12_earth_day.htm

<http://www.news-press.com/story/life/coastal-life/2015/04/13/cool-ways-celebrate-earth-day-southwest-florida/25609621/>

Audubon's complete set of The Birds of America on exhibit in Miami - February 27, 2015 - May 31, 2015

For the first time, HistoryMiami will display the entire Elephant Folio in one exhibition. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see all 435 prints in one blockbuster exhibition. The prints will be arranged as John James Audubon intended them to be seen, in their original order, in the sets of five he selected for their aesthetic appeal. The show will open with print 1, the Wild Turkey, and work its way to the final set of five prints—including the spectacular American Flamingo (print 431) and the improbable American Dipper (print 435).

In addition to the complete first edition of The Birds of America, the second edition will be shown. The seven volumes of the Octavo Edition will be displayed in cases, each open to one of the lithographs. Every few days, a curator will turn the pages, so that by exhibition's end, all 500 lithographs will have been shown.

<http://www.historymiami.org/museum/exhibitions/details/the-complete-audubon/>



Photo by Larry Frogge

Did you know...

The Wood Duck is the only North American duck that regularly produces two broods in one year.

The Wood Duck was hunted to near extinction during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Management practices have been successful and there are now well over a million Wood Ducks in North America.

A group of ducks has many collective nouns, including "a brace of ducks", "flush of ducks", "paddling of ducks", "raft of ducks", and a "team of ducks."

In many areas, wood ducks have difficulty finding suitable natural nesting sites. Wood duck boxes provide a man-made alternative.

Wood Ducks are strong fliers and can reach speeds of 30 miles per hour.

Wood Ducks only live in North America.

The Wood Duck is also known as the Carolina Duck

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

The Wood Duck is one of the most ornate of all duck species. The male is stunningly beautiful with his iridescent chestnut and green coloration and ornate patterns on nearly every feather. The females have a distinctive elegant profile and delicate white pattern around the eye. Juvenile birds are very similar to the females. Unlike most waterfowl, Wood Ducks perch and nest in trees and are comfortable flying through woods. They are quite maneuverable. Their head jerks back and forth much as a walking pigeon's does while they are swimming.

Often you will see Wood Ducks in small groups (fewer than 20), separating themselves from other waterfowl in a small exclusive clique. Wood Ducks can be found throughout the year in the United States, with some individuals breeding in Canada, and some wintering in Mexico. Florida is home to both year-round (resident) and migratory wood ducks. Wood Ducks live in wooded swamps, marshes, streams, beaver ponds, and small lakes. They tend to stay in wet areas with trees or extensive cattails where they will nest in holes in trees or in nest boxes put up around the borders of lakes. They are one of the few duck species with strong claws that can grip bark and perch on branches.

Wood Ducks forage in the water by taking food from the surface and up-ending to reach food underneath. They also graze on land. They eat variety of foods. Seeds, fruits, insects and other arthropods, acorns, soybeans, water primrose, duckweed, millet, water lily, blackberries and wild cherries, as well as flies, beetles, caterpillars, snails and other invertebrates are typical of their diet. However, plant material makes up about 80% of their diet.

Wood Ducks are cavity nesters but cannot make their own cavities. Typically they choose a tree more than 1 to 2 feet in diameter, with the cavity anywhere from 2–60 feet high, seemingly preferring higher sites. The nest tree is normally situated near or over water, although they will use cavities up to 1.2 miles from the water. Nest cavities can have openings as small as 4 inches across, and this may be preferred because they are harder for predators to enter.

Individual females typically will lay 10-11 eggs per clutch, but some very full nests have been found containing 29 eggs. This is a result of egg-dumping. Egg-dumping is common in Wood Ducks. Females will visit other Wood Duck cavities, lay their eggs in them, and leave them to be raised by the other female. Incubation is for 25 to 35 days after which ducklings jump down from the nest tree and make their way to water. The mother calls them to her, but does not assist them in any way. The ducklings may jump from heights of over 50 feet without injury. Amazing! The young can swim and feed themselves, but the female continues to tend them for 5 to 6 weeks. She leaves them before they can fly. They fledge when they are 8 to 9 weeks old.

Global population of this bird is estimated to be around 3.5 million individual birds. Population trends for the Wood Duck have a present evaluation level of Least Concern.

http://www.ducks.org/media/Conservation/Conservation_Documents/documents/duck_box_plans.pdf

Photos



Pretty in pink; birder's from all around are making the trek to STA -2 for the return of these beauties. Photo by Judith Bird



One of Hendry County's staple species; we love our Crested Caracara. Photo by Rick Bunting



Hermit Thrush sent to us by Ann Starck.



This pair seems in deep conversation. Now what do you suppose they are conversing about? Photo by Diane Hamilton



Purple Gallinule; regal as ever Photo by Larry Frogge



King Rail at STA 5/6. Photo by Ed Doyle

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 C5ZE510Z is on the membership form or the Chapter E51 Hendry-Glades AS is selected from online menu.

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually C5ZE510Z

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 C5ZE510Z

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