



P.O Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org

Our 44<sup>th</sup> Year Vol. 44 No. 4 April 2008

*Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities in Indian River County through advocacy, education, and public awareness.*

## Audubon Public Lecture & Concert

Saturday, April 5, 2008

Vero Beach Community Center  
2266 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**7:00 p.m. - Lecture on Planning for Growth**  
Phil Laurien, Executive Director of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, will speak on the issues of growth in Florida and the importance of building relationships between local officials, developers, and citizens, to develop a common vision for a community.

### 8:00 p.m. - Florida Folk Music Concert

Join the "Father of Folk in Florida" Frank Thomas along with renowned folk singer/songwriter Jeanie Fitchen for an evening of songs and stories about Florida's history and natural beauty. *"Her songs have a quality and freshness that are as lovely as nature itself. The sounds emanating from her guitar, and her exquisite voice, are like water flowing free in a brook."* ---Orlando Sentinel. Donations will be happily accepted.

## Critical Fish Habitat in the Indian River Lagoon

by Dr. Grant Gilmore

*General Meeting*

April 21, 2008 - 7:30 p.m.

Vero Beach Community Center  
2266 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**Dr. Grant Gilmore**, Fish Ecologist and Senior Research Scientist with Estuarine Coastal & Ocean Sciences, Inc., writes that he will be addressing the direct value of larval and juvenile fish habitat to regional fisheries. Loss of juvenile fish habitat is rarely recognized as a reason for fisheries decline. Often the fishermen is the one that suffers by having their fishing limited due to a decline of fish numbers. Unfortunately, coastal Florida has lost significant juvenile fish habitat due to explosive coastal population growth. State laws do not always protect fishery habitat.

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## April Field Trips

Call  
**772-567-3520**  
to make  
reservations

**Saturday, April 5 - Captain Forster Hammock Preserve** - Meet in Forster's parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Directions: US-1 to CR510, east to Jungle Trail, south to Forster's Preserve. Leader: Tim Towles

**Saturday, April 12 - Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay** - Carpoolers meet at McDonalds located at I-95 and County Road 512 (Sebastian/Fellsmere exit) at 7:05am. We will leave at 7:15 a.m. Directions to Turkey Creek: I-95 north to Malabar Rd., east to Babcock St., north to Port Malabar Blvd., east to Turkey Creek (behind Civic Center and next to library). Alternate route is US-1 to Port Malabar Blvd., west to Turkey Creek. Leader: Rick Lucas

**Saturday, April 20 - Sebastian Inlet State Park** - Enter south entrance in Indian River County. We will meet in the "L dock" parking lot across from the campground. Directions: US-1 to CR510, north on A1A to Indian River/Brevard County line. Leader: Rick Lucas

**Saturday, April 26 - Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay** - same directions above.



Frank & Kathy Wegel

Alice Rowe

Judy Orcutt

Joel Day

Rick Lucas

## Annual Awards Night - March 17, 2008

*Pelican Island Audubon honors those in the community who have made a difference for the environment in 2007.*

**Phyllis Stockburger Award**

Helen Potter

**Special Service Award**

Neil Stalter – for successfully organizing the Pelican Island Audubon affiliate at Grand Harbor.

**Board Member of the Year**

Dr. David Cox – for Spoonbill Marsh and Corrigan land swap

**Maggy Bowman Conservation Award**

Bob Adair – for water issues in Indian River County



**Environmental Educator**

Debby Ecker (pictured above with Jens Tripson) – for her program explaining the water issues facing Indian River County.

**Special Recognition**  
For working to save Sand Lakes

- Sabin Abell
- Andrea Coy
- Ken Daige
- Michael Ertel
- Bill Fish
- Debra Fromang
- Ann Moore
- Sal Neglia
- Al Paternoster
- Dale Simchick
- Tom White
- Eugene Wolff

**Environmental Citizen – for Indian River Green Team**

- Peter O'Bryan
- Judy Orcutt
- Amy Thoma

**Special Recognition**

Dr. Grant Gilmore – for his survey work of ORCA.

**Eleanor Kleckner Award**

- Joel Day- for fundraising trips to exotic locations.
- Rick Lucas – for leading our field trips around Florida.
- Alice Rowe – for years of volunteering on the canoe trips.

**President's Award - for working to save Sand Lakes.**

- Frank & Kathy Wegel
- George Glenn
- Will Collins



**Environmental Landscaping**

Richard Baker & Jens Tripson present the award to Janice Broda for the \$117,000 grant to enhance ORCA.

► **Fish Habitat...continued from page 1**

The expansion of the Oslo Road boat ramp area is a perfect and well documented example of the great value of a specific location to local tarpon, snook, spotted seatrout and red drum fisheries. Local fishermen are unknowingly supporting the destruction of vital and critical juvenile sport fish habitat and thus reducing the numbers of fish recruiting to their own fishery.

I will stress that this permanent destruction has little or no mitigation and that many, if not most, mitigation schemes practiced today do not replace the juvenile habitat "hot spot". Most fishermen should realize that not every mangrove or seagrass meadow is the same. Some locations produce more fish than others. The Oslo boat ramp area is juvenile fish habitat that represents such a "hot spot", good as gold to the fishery and should not be destroyed for greater Lagoon access.

These comments are based on 55 yrs of ichthyological research conducted by me and my colleagues and some work specific to the Oslo Boat Ramp location. *Light refreshment will be served following the program.*

**Thank you to Bill Menzies for providing the Awards Night photos.**



# The President's Hoot

## Life Support for a Languishing Lagoon

This morning from the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge tower, we watched some wonderful birds. In fact, all but one of the bird species depicted on the tower's display board reminded us that Pelican Island and the birds were preserved by Paul Kroegel when he became the first Audubon warden of the first National Wildlife Refuge. Paul Kroegel is an example of how one person, especially working with others, can change the course of this country, county, and our Lagoon.

Our U.S. Rep. Tom Mahoney, to the south of us, would like to see our 156-mile Indian River Lagoon receive more federal protection and is proposing designating it a National Marine Sanctuary. He, like many of us, is concerned with the declining quality of our Lagoon's water, recent algae blooms and Red Tide, dwindling seagrasses and mangroves, and sick dolphins, turtles, and fish. Mahoney's plan needs serious consideration. Our Lagoon is a precious resource, not only for our own emotional restoration, but valuable for attracting tourism, providing food for our tables, a nursery for our fish and sustenance for our nesting birds, in addition to providing our recreation and pleasure. The mangroves in the Lagoon also protect us against hurricanes inundating our homes.

At the moment we have many government agencies involved in trying to protect the Lagoon:

Two water management districts (St. Johns & South Florida)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

National Marine Fisheries

National Estuary Program

Many buffer preserves, state parks, and aquatic preserves

Six county governments (health and environmental departments)]

Six mosquito control districts

Numerous local water control districts

Nevertheless, we do need one governmental organization, perhaps the National Marine Sanctuary headed by one person, a "Lagoon Czar," to be responsible for coordinating the drastically needed actions, policies, resources, and activities essential for the recovery of our Lagoon.

Even before Mahoney's proposal, our Audubon chapter under Joe Carroll's leadership has been discussing forming an Indian River Lagoon Coalition composed of interested Audubon Chapters (Martin and St. Lucie), non-Audubon groups (i.e. Marine Resources Council, Indian River Keeper, Sierra Club), and including our commerce, fishing and boating communities to promote the health and welfare of the Lagoon.

Under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 14 National Marine Sanctuaries work cooperatively with the public and federal, state, and local officials to promote conservation while allowing compatible commercial and recreational activities. The primary objective of the sanctuaries is to protect their natural and cultural features while allowing people to use and enjoy them in a sustainable way. Much of the Florida Keys are under their protection.

Our Lagoon is so unique and diverse that everyone should be able to enjoy its beauty. We support Rep. Tim Mahoney's effort to provide Life Support for a Languishing Lagoon.

Richard Baker, President



Anhinga photo by Bob Montanaro.

### Officers

President, **Richard H. Baker**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, **Jens Tripson**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, **Susan Boyd**

Recording Secretary, **Darlene Halliday**

Corresponding Secretary, **Jean Catchpole**

Treasurer, **Robert Adair**

### Elected Directors

**Joe Carroll '08**

**David Cox '09**

**Debby Ecker '08**

**Nancy Irvin '10**

**Vacant**

**Susan Richardson '10**

### Appointed Board Members

**Joel Day**

**Tina Marchese**

**Neal Stalter**

**Melissa Tripson**

**Craig Weyandt**

### Advisory Board Members

**Janice Broda**

**Kevin Doty**

**Lynne Larkin**

**Bob Smith**

**Paul Tritaik**

**Billi Wagner**

Pelican Island Audubon Society, Inc. is registered with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Div. of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within Florida 1-800-435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.

Pelican Island Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 1833  
Vero Beach, FL 32961-1833

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Vero Beach, FL  
Permit No. 101



Who  
Is  
This?

A native of Africa and Asia, this small white heron suddenly appeared in northeastern South America in 1877. By 1941, the bird had moved northward into North America where it has since become one of the most abundant herons successfully breeding in nearly all of the United States. Found in Florida throughout the year, the bird forages in pastures and alongside

Answer: Cattle Egret

roadsides. A favorite hunting technique is to follow behind livestock or tractors to catch stirred up insects.

*Bird info from the Cornell Lab Bird Guide.*

*Photo by Bob Montanaro.*

## OUTREACH CENTER DONORS

We continue to recognize the generous donations made toward building the new Audubon Outreach Center to be located at the Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area.

March donors include:

Susan Boyd  
John & Dorothy Carney  
Dr. Keith Kalish  
Ellie & Andy Van Os

Thank you to all who contributed so far! If you have not done so, please consider giving to this wonderful cause to enhance environmental education in Indian River County.

### *In Memoriam* by Jens Tripson

We are sad to have learned of the deaths of two of our former board members Marian Bria and Allison Brody. Marian and Allison were diligent office volunteers and devoted a great deal of time, energy and money to the success of PIAS. Both attended the programs and greeted regulars and newcomers alike with warm, welcoming smiles and went out of their way to help run our organization smoothly. They were missed when they retired from the board and they will be missed as part of the Audubon extended family. Our heart-felt sympathies go out to their families and friends.

## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PELICAN ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership benefits include subscriptions to *Audubon* magazine, *Florida Naturalist*, and the PIAS newsletter *The Peligram*. Additionally, members have full borrowing privileges to the PIAS nature library and much more!

- \$20 one-year membership  
 Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$20 Friend (receive *The Peligram* only)  
 Check box if a *MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL*.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your name and address along with a check payable to the "Pelican Island Audubon Society" to: Pelican Island Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1833, Vero Beach, FL 32961