



The Pelican Island Audubon Society

Peligram

- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -

P.O. Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 Fax 772-567-3521 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org
Our 42nd Year Vol. 42 No. 9 December 2006

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

More information on all these events may be found at www.pelicanislandaudubon.org

Sun Jan 7 – 8:00am to 12:00pm ORCA canoe trip. Meet at the FMEL boathouse 200 9th St. S.E. (Oslo Rd.) east of U.S.1. Reservations are required. Call 772-567-3520 to sign-up.

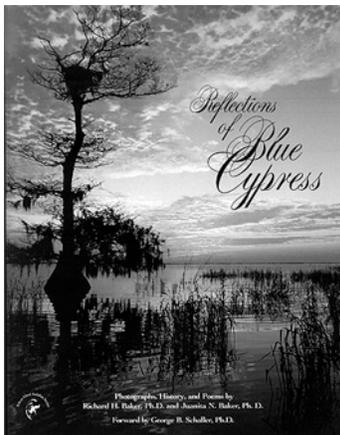
Mon Jan 15 – 7:30pm general meeting, Vero Beach Community Center, 2266 14th Ave.

Fri Jan 19 – Walking tour of historic downtown Vero Beach with Joan Edwards. Call 772-567-3520 for reservations and directions.

*The perfect gift
for the
Holidays....*

Reflections of Blue Cypress by Richard & Juanita Baker makes the perfect gift in which to share the natural wonders of Blue Cypress Lake right here in Indian River County with someone you love. Filled with beautiful color photographs, evocative poetry, and the natural and man-made history of Blue Cypress Lake, **Reflections of Blue Cypress** is a book that will be treasured for years to come.

To purchase a copy online, go to www.pelicanislandaudubon.org or visit the Society office at 1931 14th Avenue in Vero Beach.



Bob Montanaro

**VEGETARIAN POTLUCK
& HOLIDAY BAZAAR!
DECEMBER 11, 2006
STARTING AT 6:00 P.M.**



**VERO BEACH
COMMUNITY CENTER
2266 14TH AVENUE
IN DOWNTOWN VERO BEACH**



**ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY THE
GIFFORD YOUTH SYMPHONY**



We ask that those attending bring a vegetarian dish that will serve eight people. All those attending should, also, bring their own place setting. A variety of beverages will be provided.

Pelican Island Audubon Society

Officers

President, **Richard H. Baker**
1st Vice President, **Lynne Larkin**
2nd Vice President, **Robert Adair**
Recording Sec., **Darlene Halliday**
Cor. Sec., **Deborah Ecker**
Treasurer, **Andrew Barr**

Directors

Jens Tripson	'09	David Cox	'09
Nancy Irvin	'07	Robert Smith	'07
Susan Boyd	'08	Joseph Carroll	'08

Board

Janice Broda	Kevin Doty	Melissa Tripson
Joel Day	Tina Marchese	Paul Tritaik
	Sue Richardson	

Founding Member & President Emeritus Maggy Bowman
Office Manager **Bob Montanaro**

Pelican Island Audubon Society, Inc. is registered with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and 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.

NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

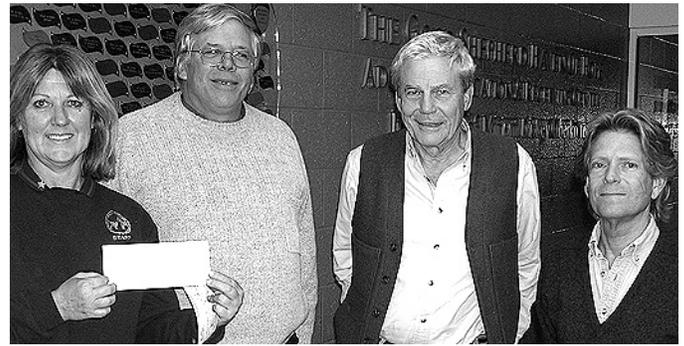
by **Tina Marchese**

The thoughtful, generous wishes of Maggy Bowman and the good offices of her niece (and a past PIAS president) Donna Anderson, have resulted in a large portion of Maggy Bowman's library being given to the PIAS library. The library committee has been processing these books into our collection---books about birds, nature, and conservation. Some are old standbys, others are more recent publications. Some have warm dedications from the authors to Maggy, who over the years came to know many of Florida's leading birding experts.

Among the books now on our circulation shelves are:

Brett, James. THE MOUNTAIN AND THE MIGRATION.
Delacour, Jean. BIRDS OF MALAYSIA.
Dunn, Pete. THE FEATHER QUEST.
Gill, Frank. ORNITHOLOGY.
Gore, Al. EARTH IN BALANCE.
Harrison, Peter. SEABIRDS: AN IDENTIFICATION GUIDE.
Kaufman, Wallace. THE BEACHES ARE MOVING.
Kavanaugh, James. THE NATURE OF FLORIDA.
Lentfer, Hank. ARCTIC REFUGE.
Morrin, Harold. BIRDING THE 49TH STATE.
Rickett, Harold. NEW FIELD BOOK OF AMERICAN WILD FLOWERS.
Roberson, Don. RARE BIRDS OF THE WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA.
Scherman, Katharine. SPRING ON AN ARCTIC ISLAND.

Stop by the office and check out some of these or other titles.



SAVING THE GOPHER TORTOISE FROM LIVE ENTOMBMENT

Ilka Daniels, Outreach Coordinator of the Indian River Humane Society receiving a \$1,051.19 check from Jens Tripson, Richard Baker, and David Cox of PIAS at a recent meeting of the newly formed Gopher Tortoise Coalition. Jens Tripson matched the "pass the duck" offering at our November 20th meeting. Thank you Jens and PIAS members for the generous contribution to help save gopher tortoises at the new facility on 77th St.

Photo by Janet Winikoff.

eBird by Jack Taylor

Sit down at your computer, get comfortable and "Go to" www.ebird.org. You'll open an entirely new world of birding activity! This is a "web site" which is jointly operated by National Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It couldn't be more user friendly --- I've been hooked for a number of years and I'm far from "computer literate".

I mostly use it to submit observations and on occasion read the outstanding articles found on the web page. I started using eBird to record our monthly Golf Course Survey findings. In this regard it has been extremely useful. Before we conduct the April Survey at the Indian River Club, I'll download our 2005 Report. We then have a rough idea of what species we are likely to see in 2006. When we enter the current survey --- eBird sends me an email copy of the report. I can then send copies to the concerned individuals. I was able to use our "Golf Course" reports to determine that we hadn't lost any "species" as a result of the 2004 hurricanes, but had lost about a third of the individual birds. Far from "scientific" but a slight bit of science, thanks to the reports.

I've also been reporting the results of our "field trips", thus allowing us to predict what we might expect to see on our next trip to Belle Glade or Joe Overstreet Road. I haven't attempted to post my "life list" to eBird, but I do keep a record of "yard birds".

"Go to" www.ebird.org and see for yourself.

Where cometh and goeth our water? Find out at the Dec 6th Workshop.

Indian River County Commissioners and the county's utility department are holding a belated, but much-needed workshop, on our future water supply needs 3-5 pm on December 6th in the county commission chambers. This is a very important workshop, and you may be surprised to hear from St. Johns River Water Management District about the difficulty our county will have in providing water after 2013 from ground water or deep wells. Indian River County is in especially bad shape since it now depends totally on deep wells and does not use surface water at all for public drinking. Melbourne and Brevard County are lucky to have Lake Washington and support from a water management district that is looking out for their interests by supplying our county's water to them.



The President's Hoot!

The 2013 date resurfaced again from a September 18, 2006, action plan report by three water management districts (St. Johns River, South Florida, and Southwest Florida). It was initiated because these traditional deep wells cannot meet current and future demands. Also actions in one district can impact water resources and water users throughout central Florida.

Previously, there were apparently mixed signals from St. Johns. As of last year they had indicated that our county had a "sustainable water supply plan based on drilling 6 new artesian wells at their North County Well Field." This is surprising since Dr. David Toth, a hydrologist, also from St. Johns, stated in a couple of reports (all the way back to 1994!) that there would be a loss of artesian flow and salination at current usage of artesian water by the county. His concerns were similarly express last year at our general meeting.

Actually, our own county utility department must have also been aware of our county's water problems because St. Johns had already imposed restrictions on the use of water for watering our lawns and many private shallow wells were drying up or becoming unusable as salt intrudes. More disturbing, the South Florida Water Management District had prohibited any increases in pumping from our county's south well field to protect St.

Lucie County's water supply! The September inter-district action plan states, "...there is an immediate need to develop and implement alternative water supply projects in addition to continued aggressive conservation and reuse of reclaimed water."

The year 2013 is tomorrow! What is the solution? Desalination of lagoon and seawater, a frequently proposed solution, is extremely costly and has serious technical and environmental problems where it has failed in Tampa Bay. Our county's Soil & Water Conservation District simply recommends storing the 50 inches of rain we receive on average every year, which now goes into the lagoon or to the St. John's River marsh. We need to stop the regular flow of our canals into the Indian River Lagoon and divert the water into storage reservoirs. Parts of the old master storm water plan should now be dusted off, reviewed, expanded, and implemented to save our storm water for our water supply. Storing and using surface water from a reservoir will also be expensive. This is, of course, another hidden cost for our "out of control county growth," for which we all will have to pay more with our taxes. The days of cheap water are disappearing like cheap gas.

Also the Dec 6th workshop will provide an opportunity to express your concern with St. Johns for trading off public conservation lands (Berry Groves) to a private corporation, Fellsmere Joint Venture, who insist on converting these conservation lands to agricultural lands to facilitate a bad land deal for Indian River County. The Berry Groves land involved in the swap is directly west of I95 and south of Fellsmere and may in fact provide an important site for a future county reservoir. This land was on the County's list of environmental lands to purchase, at bargain rates a few years ago, but St. Johns went ahead and purchased them without the county's participation. Now St. Johns wants to trade public owned conservation lands to privately owned Fellsmere Joint Venture, who certainly will eventually turn it into a large residential development. This sets a dangerous precedent of selling off already public preserved lands for future development.

If you come to the Dec 6th workshop, you might also ask, "Why doesn't Indian River County have a representative on their Governing Board?" Our county is home to the headwaters of the St. Johns River and soon will need this water for our burgeoning population. Yet, St. Johns owns one-third of our county. This workshop will give you an opportunity to find out and voice your concern about our water problems. Hope to see you there.

In spite of our water problems, enjoy the Holidays, Richard Baker, President

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

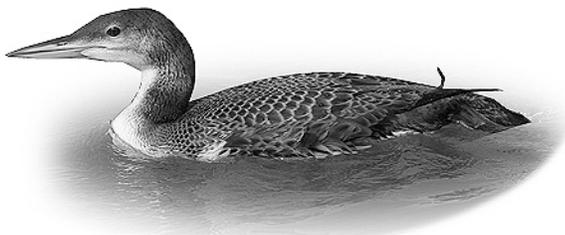
Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage Paid
Vero Beach, FL
Permit No. 101



LOCAL CALENDAR GIRLS

While on a kayak/yoga retreat on the Indian River Lagoon back in 2005, a group of local women lamented the murky and debris-filled waters and wondered what they could do to improve the water quality, especially the health of the seagrass beds that nourish and shelter a variety of marine life. Thus, like in the 2003 movie, *Calendar Girls*, the idea of the Seagrass Awareness Calendar was born. The women range in age from their 20's to 60's and are from such diverse professions as marine biologist to landscaper. Through the efforts of volunteers and sponsors, the women have published a colorful and somewhat discrete 2007 calendar to highlight the impact human activities have on seagrasses. All proceeds will be donated to organizations involved in restoring our Indian River Lagoon, St. Lucie and St. Sebastian Rivers.

The calendars are available by mail with a \$20 donation to Seagrass Awareness Calendar, P.O. Box 64417, Vero Beach, FL 32964 or at the Vero Beach Book Store for \$15.00. For more information please visit <http://www.tropicalkayaktours.com/tours.htm>



This Loon in its winter plumage was photographed amidst the mass of boaters fishing the Sebastian Inlet channel during the Thanksgiving holiday.

Photo by Bob Montanaro.

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