

Pelican Island Audubon Society

Peligrum

- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -



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

Our 53rd Year Vol. 54 No. 2 February 2018

Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities, and the land and water on which they depend in Indian River County through education, advocacy, and public awareness.

February 12, 2018 ❖ 6:00 p.m.
Coyotes with Tom Shupe

North Indian River County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd. (CR 512), Sebastian

Tom Shupe, a wildlife biologist with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, will present a program on coyotes in Florida. This will be a follow-up to his excellent program on black bears last season.

February 19, 2018 ❖ 7:00 p.m.
Magical Lake Malawi:
Where Fishes Behave Like Birds
with Bill Loftus, Ph.D.

Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach

Come explore one of Africa's Great Lakes in the Rift Valley in the small country of Malawi. Malawi's national parks are home to many interesting birds and other wildlife, while Lake Malawi has been called the aquatic equivalent of the Galapagos, where evolution has produced a diverse community of fishes that rival marine fishes in color. Recent discoveries show that some fishes behave like birds when nesting and feeding their young. Lessons from the Lake may help us in learning to protect the Indian River Lagoon.

February 26, 2018 ❖ 7:00 p.m.
Modeling Little Blue Heron
Foraging Habitat In Dynamic
Intertidal Systems
with Marissa Martinez

Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach

Marisa Martinez received a dual B.S. degree in Animal Sciences and Natural Resources at Cornell University in 2011 and her M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences in 2014. Currently, she is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Biological Sciences at Florida Atlantic University working on a project developing a habitat model for Little Blue Herons by researching natural and anthropogenic pressures on Little Blue Heron foraging and nesting habitats in Florida Bay and the Keys.

Audubon Advocates
Spring Semester Kickoff
by Katheryne Nix

We are off to a great start with the Audubon Advocates this spring semester! This wonderful after-school program brings fifth grade students from four nearby elementary schools to the Audubon House. Each school comes on a different day of the week for a two-hour period each week for 14 weeks. We have completed our first few weeks of the program already and are enjoying getting to know our new students. The first week, our Audubon Advocates learned about earth manners and how to practice mindfulness while observing nature. They also began to explore our nature trails behind the Audubon House, as well as see the impact of invasive species, such as caesar weed and the air potato plant, first hand. The following week we had guest speakers Mary Lou Mullan and Bob Montanaro teach the students about art and photography. The students were ecstatic to use cameras and photograph their observations in nature. The students also loved learning how to sketch, and practiced their skills while sitting around the butterfly garden or out on the trails. Investigating the trails behind the Audubon House is one of their favorite activities and we had a few students spot a bobcat in the wild and find a zebra longwing butterfly roost! In February, the students will have the opportunity to go birding, learn about storm water pollution, and hike through the scrub habitat. This program provides these students with a unique opportunity to interact with nature, which plants the seeds for a love of nature at a young age.

Support
Pelican Island Audubon.
Shop our new nature store at
Audubon House.
Open Wednesday & Saturday
10AM - 3PM

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

A Migrant Just Passing Through

Notice that very sharp, thin bill of this 5-inch Blackpoll Warbler, especially shaped to capture insects from leaves in the canopy of trees. Weighing 0.5 oz., about as much as a mailed letter, this Blackpoll Warbler flies from the boreal forests of Alaska and Canada where it breeds, stopping to refuel while migrating through Florida in October. It is likely to get to its migration destination, the Amazon Rainforest in Brazil, faster than the US post. It takes advantage of the northerly air currents to fly over the Atlantic Ocean, sometimes 1800 miles nonstop, the longest over-water journey of any songbird. On its return flight north in April, as there are no southerly winds to help its return, it takes a different route, most likely up the west coast of Florida, but still must fly across the ocean via Cuba. Birds are amazing! This species, after circumnavigating the continents, will likely find its way back to the very same tree in which it nested the previous year.



Blackpoll Warbler at Turkey Creek in April © Mark J. Eden Cannon 7D with sigma flash and better beamer, Canon L glass 100-400 zoom

Thus, preserving this warbler from extinction requires established protective habitats, not just in the U.S. but in Canada and South America. Development in this country, and cutting both boreal and tropical forests, impacts many of our long-distance migrants. Global climate change pushes birds farther north to breed, a major problem for birds like the Blackpoll that will be pushed into tundra, where, without trees, it cannot breed. Mark J. Eden had much patience and outstanding skill in being able to find, direct his long lens, and focus on a variety of beautiful warbler and vireo visitors. In our yards, let's plant native trees and plants to provide food/insects to give sustenance to these and other migrant warblers on their long journeys.

Airboat Ride by Linda Chancellor

The boat glided close to the island of grass and then I saw, in the center, the long body of a large alligator. His wet, black leathery skin sparkled in the sunlight! Earlier that morning I had arrived at the Blue Cypress Recreation Area to join Captain Lawrence, owner of Florida Cracker, for my first airboat ride. Eleven of us boarded the airboat. Life jacket - check, headphones - check, gear stowed - check. We were ready to go! Motor roaring we skimmed along the surface of the dark water. I held on tight but found myself mesmerized by the beautiful watery landscape. Captain Larry skillfully guided us in and around the many floating islands of native yellow bonnet lilies and invasive blue water hyacinths, all the while relating to us the history of the area and pointing out plants and wildlife. He explained how once this area had looked different as the water had been drained and raised roads were built but the area has since been returned to its original watery state. The submerged roads have now become small islands where giant leather ferns, cabbage

palms and even invasive Brazilian pepper have taken hold. Alligators, attempting to raise their body temperatures by absorbing heat from the sun, lounged on some of the small islands of grasses. I saw beautiful blue herons, elegant great white egrets, anhingas, coots and moorhens. We cruised close enough to several purple gallinules to check out their yellow feet as they stepped gingerly over the lilies. Around the corner of one island several osprey pairs were rebuilding their nests in the tops of contorted bald cypress trees draped with Spanish moss. I could have spent another hour out there in that watery world but our tour had ended.

FYI: Airboat riding is thrilling, fun and popular. Several airboat companies launch from the Blue Cypress Recreation Area off of Route 60. Busy season is from November through May so make your reservations early. Airboats come in several sizes depending on number of passengers. The Florida Cracker is a smaller boat and gave us a great experience to remember.

Nature Education, Advocacy, & Volunteer Opportunity Classes: How to be an Audubon Activist!

A New Monthly Free Course Series!

At the Audubon House

195 9th St. SE (Oslo Road), Vero Beach, FL
32962

Friday Mornings 9 am -12:00 pm

Attend classes & field walks
to enhance your

Environmental Understanding and Skills
to lead communities to:

- Plant native gardens
- Attract wildlife
- Decrease fertilizer & toxins
- Conserve water
- Remove CO₂

Feb 16, 2018	Butterfly/Pollinator Native Gardens - Ken Gonyo & Invasive Plants & their Control - Beth Powell & Wendy Swindell
March 16, 2018	Being an Audubon Activist followed by a walk to the ORCA Tower - Dr. Richard Baker & Ken Gonyo
Apr 20, 2018	Flora & Fauna of the Indian River Lagoon followed by seining for fish in the IRL - Dr. Grant Gilmore
May 18, 2018	Blood Suckers followed by finding them at ORCA - Dr. Nathan Burkett-Cadena

All classes held are taught by dynamic guest speakers on topics related to our local natural habitats and associated flora and fauna. Each class will have a classroom segment of interactive lectures followed by outside field excursions relating to the classroom topics. The class will give you opportunities for hands-on learning of various habitats.

Pre-register at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org | Phone: 772-567-3520 | Email: piaudubon@yahoo.com

Transforming Landscapes to Sustain Us!



Many thanks to those 362 folks who attended our terrific January 2018 conference: "Transforming Landscapes for a Sustainable Future." While one of the aims of the conference was to teach residents to enhance our yards with native plants for butterflies and birds, most importantly we learned that we must do this for human and wildlife survival, and to help the Lagoon,

our county's economic driver. The 2014 book, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Pulitzer Prize author Elizabeth Kolbert, stated that Earth is undergoing a modern, human-caused extinction event resulting from the collapse of terrestrial and marine ecosystems; a great number of plant and animal species, including ourselves, are in serious jeopardy.

We are paving over nature, increasing impervious surfaces that allow waters and the chemicals we use in fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to runoff into our rivers and Lagoon, poisoning them and allowing algae and bacteria to grow.

Global warming from increased carbon dioxide and methane outputs are warming and acidifying our oceans, increasing forest fires, dust storms, and mudslides while melting freshwater glaciers are causing oceans to rise. Widespread use of chemicals like glyphosate and chlorpyrifos are killing plants and our insects that form the basis of our food chain. The loss of those species translates into fewer birds and animals, resulting in a massive decline in the Earth's biodiversity. Humans may be next if we ignore what is happening.

Dr. Edie Widder, CEO and senior scientist at Ocean Research and Conservation Association (ORCA), gave us examples of the deterioration of Indian River Lagoon, explaining that we are shifting to an algae-dominated ecosystem. The hypotoxins in the system are strongly associated with human disease such as Parkinson's, dementia and Alzheimer's.

Our Keynote Speaker, Prof Doug Tallamy, from the University of Delaware showed how replacing native plants with alien landscaping species, especially in the suburban gardens, affects the food on which our wildlife increasingly depends. Most of our native plant-eaters (insects and other animals) are not able to eat alien plants. The essence of his presentation was:

- Insects are beautiful and critical to our survival, as they pollinate 80% of all plants, including our crops.
- Native plants are needed to attract insects.
- Insects specialize on only a few types of plants and thus we need to have much diversity of native plants to get diversity of insects needed to feed different species of birds.
- 90% of the insects that eat plants can develop and reproduce only on the plants with which they co-evolved.
- Every native species is an essential part of the food web.
- Even seed-eating birds depend upon insects, especially caterpillars, to feed their chicks.
- Insects are quickly disappearing since we are losing our native plants.
- Lawns plus 3,300 species of introduced plants are replacing our native plants.

- Our landscapes must support life, sequester carbon, clean and manage water, enrich soil, & support pollinators.
- 432 species, 37%, of North American Birds are at risk of extinction.
- Think of native plants in your yard as bird feeders.
- There is hope if we can reduce our lawns by planting natives.

Steve Turnipseed, President of the Villages Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS), gave examples from the Villages of the transformation of turfgrass lawns into attractive native-plant landscapes in just two years. Their high-end development now accepts these changes so homeowners are transforming their yards at the rate of one yard per month.

Change to native landscapes was also supported by Tod Winston, Program Manager from National Audubon Society, who showed that by entering your 5-digit zip code to use Audubon's native plant database (<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>) or National Wildlife Federation's database (<http://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder>), you can explore the best plants for birds in your area, as well as find local resources and links to more information. **Dr. Juanita N. Baker** showed photos of amazing Florida birds, illustrating why we should, and how we can attract birds to our yards so we can save them.

Taryn Evans, President of Marion County FNPS Chapter, talked about creating a sustainable backyard to attract Native Pollinators. Her family's business, Creative Garden Structures, garden store and one-acre demonstration garden teaches homeowners to create backyard habitats with native plants. Additional information for your landscape can be found at <https://www.plantrealflorida.org/county/indian-river/3>

Robin Pelensky, a local Landscape Architect, Surlatterre Landscape Architecture, showed us how to plant a rain garden in our yards to minimize runoff to our Lagoon. She called them Lagoon Gardens explaining that if we all planted them, we'd help save our lagoon.

Nickie Munroe, Indian River County Environmental Horticulture Agent, and **Jacob E Ensor**, a local attorney at Ross Earle Bonan & Ensor, talked about Florida Friendly Landscaping and Homeowners Associations (HOA) rules, which limit landscaping options for residents. With 630 HOA's in Indian River County, most of our residents live in a HOA, which can be very restrictive on the types of plants and trees one can plant in their yard. Educating HOA members and managers is essential so that boards will encourage Native Plant Landscapes.

Unfortunately, there are no strictly native-plant nurseries in Indian River County. Let's all change that by requesting native plants from our local nurseries so they can see the demand and begin to carry native plants. The nearest two nurseries are Butterfly Flowers, (321) 626-73866, in South Brevard which bring native plants on Saturdays to the Oceanside Farmer's Market at Humiston Park, and Maple Street Natives, (321) 729-6857, in West Melbourne. Both nurseries consult, design, and install plantings. Plant Native plants! Increase the demand and they will come.

Our next big task is to get everyone in our community to start planting natives in their gardens. Folks, let's act locally while thinking about restoring our natural landscapes one home, one garden, at a time.

Field Trips 2018

For more information, call 772-567-3520
or email piaudubon@yahoo.com

February 2 - Friday - Toni Robinson Waterfront Trail - Offered in partnership with the Indian River Land Trust - Guide: Nancy Soucy - Start time 9:00AM - This 50-acre block of conservation lands is situated on the west side of the Lagoon a mile south of the Wabasso Causeway. It contains oak trees, scrub forest, mangroves, and views of the Indian River Lagoon. Location: Toni Robinson Waterfront Trail: 79th Street, east off U.S. Highway 1 - No signup required.

February 9 - Friday - Round Island - Guide: Diane Morgan - Start time 9:00AM - This tour will take you through a park with boardwalks and natural trails along the Lagoon rich with wetland birdlife and often offers viewing of manatees. Directions: Meet at the park on the west side A1A approximately 7.5 miles south of the 17th Street Causeway intersections. No

signup required.

February 13 - Tuesday - Lagoon Greenway - Offered in partnership with the Indian River Land Trust - Start time 9:00AM - Guide: Felicity Rask - Start time 9:00AM - This property boasts an ecologically diverse three-mile trail system for hiking, jogging or bike riding. Location: Lagoon Greenway - NE Intersection of Indian River Blvd & 8th Street - No signup required.

February 17 - Saturday - Fort Drum Marsh Conservation Area - Guide: George Glenn - Start time: meet at first gate at Fort Drum at 7 AM. Entrance to Fort Drum: go west on Rt. 60. The entrance is on the South side of the road, and is roughly 15 miles from the I-95 interchange and right before you get to the "bend" on Route 60. Call 772-567-3520 to sign up and for more information.

February 21 - Wednesday - Bee Gum Point - Offered in partnership with the Indian River Land Trust - Guide: Rody Johnson - Start time 9:00AM - Situated on the Atlantic Flyway, this 111-acre property acquired by the Land Trust along the Indian River Lagoon in 2011 is one of the last unprotected wetlands on the barrier island and includes a mile of Lagoon shoreline. DIRECTIONS - At the blinking light on A1A in Indian River Shores, turn west onto Fred Tuerk Drive and proceed to the end of the road. Entrance is on the left by the electrical substation. - No signup required.

February 27 - Wednesday - Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area / Joe Overstreet Landing - Guides: Carolyn Cimino - Meet at 6:00 a.m. at the TA Truck Stop, corner of SR 60 and 90th Avenue, for carpool. Call 772-567-3520 to sign up

Audubon invites you to join our 2018 Intensive Beginning Birding Course

with Juanita Baker, Ph.D. & David Simpson.

Learn basic knowledge to understand birds through four "indoor field trips" (Feb 6, 8, 20, 22, 6-8:30 pm) with many beautiful photographs representing Indian River County's variety of Bird Families, plus two "outdoor field trips" (Sat. Feb 10, 7 am-12 pm & Sun. Feb 25, 7 am-1 pm) to local birding Hotspots. Learn what to look for, understand and appreciate our Florida wonders. Limited to 30 participants. Learn more & sign up at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org. \$95 for members.

Join or renew your membership in Pelican Island Audubon Society

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly Peligram newsletter
- Monthly meetings on the environment and wildlife
- Birding field trips led by expert guides
- Opportunities to volunteer to help the environment
- . . . and much more!

For more information and to join, visit

www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

or mail in the application ⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨

Pelican Island Audubon Society Officers & Directors

Officers	Elected Directors:
President	Graham Cox, Ph.D. '20
Richard H. Baker, Ph.D.	Bill Halliday '20
1st Vice-President	Nancy Irvin '19
Donna Halleran	Bill Loftus, Ph.D. '18
2nd Vice-President	Toni Robinson '19
David Cox, Ph.D.	Bonnie Swanson '18 —
Recording Secretary	Appointed Board Members:
Darlene Halliday	Susan Lovelace
Corresponding Secretary	Tina Marchese
George Glenn	
Treasurer Steve Goff	

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 Membership

\$100 Florida Scrub-Jay Level \$200 Osprey Level

\$25 Individual \$30 Family

Is this a membership renewal? Yes No

Join National Audubon Society for an additional \$20 a year.

I want to make an additional tax deductible donation of \$ _____

Total \$ _____

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**

or join online using your credit card at:

<http://www.pelicanislandaudubon.org/membership.html>

Questions: call 772-567-3520 or e-mail piaudubon@yahoo.com