

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 50th Year Vol. 50 No. 1 January 2014

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

January 13, 2014 ❖ 6:00 p.m.

**Roseate Spoonbills
with Jerry Lorenz, Ph.D.**

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

In his presentation, Dr. Lorenz pulls together Audubon's 80 year record on spoonbill nesting patterns in Florida Bay with his personal experience in studying the fish on which spoonbills feed, thereby constructing a story of how the human population explosion in southern Florida has had a multilevel effect on spoonbills. During the development boom, seemingly unrelated events serially reduced the spoonbill's foraging habitats in domino like fashion resulting in a dramatic decline in spoonbill nesting success that continues today. His most recent work of banding and tracking spoonbills finally explains why it took so long for spoonbills to recover from the plume hunting and why spoonbills in Florida Bay continue to decline while most other wading birds in the Everglades region are increasing. Dr. Lorenz demonstrates how the destruction of wetlands for urban and agricultural use have not only endangered spoonbills, but myriad other creatures and entire ecosystems. Ecosystems that drive our tourist based economy. Like the canary in a coal mine, Roseate Spoonbills are letting us know that there is something drastically wrong with our environment and that continued runaway development will not only ruin our remaining wildness areas but our lifestyles as well.

Jerry Lorenz received a BS in biology from Northern Kentucky University in 1987 and a Masters Degree in Zoology from Miami University (Oxford, OH) in 1990. Since 1989 Jerry has been a staff scientist for the Audubon Society and has been primary investigator of the National Audubon's Florida Bay Estuarine Research Project since 1992. In August 2000, Jerry received a Ph.D. in Marine Biology and Fisheries from the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. Upon completion of his Ph.D. Jerry became Research Director at Audubon of Florida's Tavernier Science Center. In 2005, he became the state research director for Audubon of Florida. He serves as a member of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council and is a founding member of the Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council.

January 20, 2014 ❖ 7:30 p.m.

**Square Foot Gardening
with Peter Sutherland & Graham Cox, Ph.D.**

**Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach**

The simple act of getting young people out in a vegetable garden to grow their own food, get their hands dirty and enjoy the outdoors has been the goal of a program Pelican Island Audubon Society has been working on for the past year. Getting out in the garden -- small, 4 by 4 square foot gardens -- has many conservation and nutrition benefits -- conserving on water use and energy, cutting down on use of fertilizers and pesticides, changing student and family diets, for example. And with teachers in 13 elementary, middle and charter schools we have linked their gardens to their science classes-- biology, math, critical thinking -- and as an extra bonus in one school the teachers linked gardening to their art, poetry and dramatic arts classes.

Our goal in 2013 was to build and install 40 square foot gardens in half the county's schools. Instead we have established more than 80 gardens. For 2014 we would like to reach more classrooms but also ensure that we keep the existing gardens going. Initial funding of \$9,980 for this project came from the National Audubon's Toyota TogetherGreen grant program. For our second year and beyond we are looking to raise funds locally.

Project leader is PIAS board member Peter Sutherland, with help from Adam Sutherland, David Peabody and Desha Baker, and support from fellow board members Bill Loftus, Steve Goff, Richard Baker and Graham Cox as well as crucial help from Bob Montanaro, video producer and PIAS office manager. Tonight's program will include a short video of the students and teachers talking about their gardens and a discussion about their garden plans for the coming year.

Field Trips For more information call 772-567-3520.

January 4 - Saturday - Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area at 9:00AM - guide Ken Gonyo

January 16 - Thursday - Florida Scrub-Jay Excursion - guide Joe Carroll

January 18 - Saturday - Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area at 9:00AM - guide Ken Gonyo

February 1 - Saturday - Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area at 9:00AM - guide Ken Gonyo

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

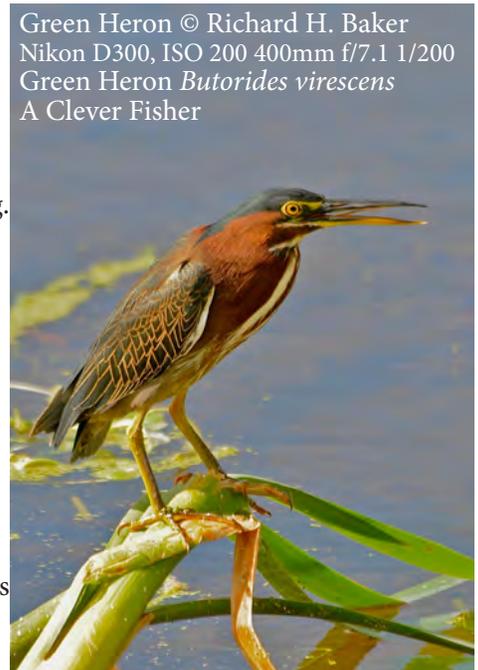
Have you ever spotted a furtive Green Heron lurking along the shoreline of a pond or ditch, skulking amongst reeds in shallow water or fishing from an overhanging stalk or mangrove branch?

This small heron is unique and very clever as it can solve complex problems by utilizing a “tool,” unlike many mammals. Green Herons fabricate various lures (e.g. twig, feather, insect, leaf, berries, bread crust, or even earthworm dug from mud divided into smaller pieces) to attract fish prey, live bait being most effective. The heron floats the bait on the water to entice, waits patiently poised to surprise, then with feet clinging to the branch, rapidly extends its legs, stretches out its body and neck to nab its prey. Upon takeoff, this heron emits a characteristic “skeow.”

One early, sunny morning, Richard H. Baker took this photo with a Nikon D300 and 80-400mm lens that brings out the striking golden-edged wing pattern, lovely rufous brown neck with contrasting yellow markings, and greenish head and back. The photo was taken at the West Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility, the kind of freshwater wetland where herons thrive, easily finding shelter and food in the form of fish, frogs, insects, snails, snakes, crabs, lizards and worms.

Unfortunately, the North American Breeding Bird Survey shows that Green Herons have declined 1.6 percent per year from 1966-2010, mainly from human destruction of their habitats. We have resident Green Herons year-round, nesting in March/April. Migrants from the northern states come through Florida to winter here south to northern South America. Preserving wetland habitats is essential to the survival of these beauties.

So, next time you are near water's edge, look carefully for the crouched, neck-retracted Green Heron holding still amongst the plants, camouflaged from the fish, peering into the water, ever vigilant, ever hopeful.



Green Heron © Richard H. Baker
Nikon D300, ISO 200 400mm f/7.1 1/200
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*
A Clever Fisher



Tricolored Heron © 2013 Susan King,
Pelican Island Audubon Member, IRC
Photo Club. Taken with a Canon T2i;
55-250 mm zoom, Manual, 1/500sec, f13,
ISO 200.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*

Tricolored Heron in Display

What is this Tricolored Heron doing? Perhaps, purposefully engaging in the Greeting Ceremony they use when exchanging places to care for their nestlings. The arriving bird with feathers fully erect passes a twig to their mate, points its head upwards, then down towards the nest...what might it be communicating?

“Honey, I’m home!” “Hi, remember me?” “My turn!” or “How’re the youngins?”

The male Tricolored Heron is larger than the female and has a darker magenta iris during courtship. Seeing a single heron without comparing them, the sexes are indistinguishable. Using a Canon T2i; 55-250 mm zoom, Manual, 1/500sec, f13, ISO 200, Susan King photographed this bird in early April in full breeding plumage as indicated by the bright blue bill and lores (skin from bill to eye), white head feathers, and red legs. Outside of the February-May mating season, they normally have yellow bills, lores and legs, but the characteristic white belly remains.

Though this bird is so handsome fluffing its beautiful deep purple feathers with white erect headdress in full breeding display, the species apparently was not as commercially attractive as other egrets to the plume trade in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. Nonetheless, its numbers were also decimated because it was easily killed while communally nesting with the valued Great and Snowy egrets. Fortunately all egrets have recovered with our protection, but now they face new threats. Herons go wherever they can find food...along the shoreline of salt marshes, coastal mudflats, mangrove swamps, and wade up to their belly feathers in freshwater cypress swamps, canals, ditches, freshwater marshes, and lake edges with thick aquatic vegetation. The Tricolored Heron depends upon thriving freshwater and coastal habitats for its diet of small fishes. However, these habitats threatened by pollution, dying sea grasses, and habitat destruction; all caused by human enterprises. *View a large color image and learn how to enter your own photos at www.pelicanislandaudubon.org*

Biking/birding field trip to T.M. Goodwin Waterfowl Management Area – Sunday – Jan. 26, 2014 – Meet at TA Truckstop (8909 20th St [Route 60]) at 7:15AM for car pool - Vehicle access is limited and bicycles provide a way to cover distances more quickly than by walking. Biking will be on levees around the impoundments, which are unpaved and uneven, so “fat tire” bikes and helmets are recommended. Total distance covered will be between 6 miles

(observation tower only) to 20 miles (observation tower and Broadmoor Unit). For insurance reasons, all participants must be members of PIAS; group size limited to 10. Call 772-567-3520 for more information.

Volunteer guides needed for the annual Indian River Charter High School birding field trip. Please contact Leah Blythe for more information lblythe@irchs.org

Hurray!!! Pelican Island Audubon celebrates our 50th Anniversary!



What if you were worried that Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge would be crowded by boat traffic and development disturbing wildlife? **Joe Michael** and Ryall, Kennedy, Vincent, and Lier families and a few more who produced prime citrus and lived nearby were concerned about the future around the refuge. Joe assembled local citrus growers, commercial fishermen, sportsmen and

concerned citizens, and formed in 1961 the Indian River Preservation League to stop a bad dredge & fill housing project adjacent to our nation's first Refuge. In 1959 Florida Audubon got a lease around the refuge for 1000 acres, but this was not enough protection. Nearly two miles of waterfront property awaited development at this site. Joe wanted 422 acres that would not be dredged and filled.

He knew he was in for a big fight with two major developers, First Realty, Inc., of Boston, MA and Rio Corporation of Miami. They wanted to dredge and fill around what is now known as Pete's and Bird's Impoundment. In those days, the League was up against a long tradition where even state owned bottomlands were given to the closest landowners for dredging and filling their wetlands. In fact, this was always the case especially in Miami where there was tremendous growth in the city and into the coastal wetlands.

Some of the county commissioners favored the dredging and filling, but that's not new even today. Fortunately, women's and other Indian River County (IRC) organizations joined the concern:

**Wabasso Woman's Club,
Woman's Club of Vero Beach
Junior Woman's Club of Vero Beach
Gardenia Garden Club of Sebastian
Orchid Isle Garden Club of Vero Beach
Sebastian River Inlet Conservation Club
Beach Business Bureau of Vero Beach
Rotary Club of Vero Beach
Taxpayers Association of IRC
Rod & Gun Club of IRC
IRC Farm Bureau
Sebastian City Council
Presidents Council of Vero Beach
Sebastian American Legion**

Joe Michael, president of the Indian River County Farm Bureau, was an inspirational leader who brought the community together to oppose and stop giving these bottomlands to these two large developers who proposed

building the subdivision. The community leaders of the Indian River Preservation League who deserve much thanks are:

1. **R. J. Amos**, President- a retired banker and citrus grower
2. **Joe W. Michael**, Vice President
3. **Bill Payne**, Secretary- also President of the Indian River Rod & Gun Club
4. **Dudley Clyatt**, Treasurer- local Farm Bureau
5. **Ralph Peterson** - Chairman of the Sebastian River Inlet Area Conservation Club
6. **Fred Harden** - Nature Conservatory State secretary, formerly Mosquito Director of St. Lucie County, and later worked with Disney to develop that Disney World in an environmental way.
7. **Alma Lee Loy** - community civic leader
8. **Mary Lou Durance**
9. **Mrs. W. E. Orth**, wife of Mr. Orth who ran a flying service
10. **Stanley Buss**
11. **Joe Egan**, a major citrus grower
12. **Thomas Coxon**, President of Florida Audubon and a quiet, but effective speaker
13. **Don Sembler** - fisherman
14. **Stanley Carter** - citrus grower who loved nature
15. **Fred Weick, Ph.D.** - Piper, crop dusting

Finally, on December 10, 1963, Florida's Trustees of the Internal Improvement Board decided unanimously not to sell the property to the private developers who had applied for their approval. Present at the meeting were representatives from state and federal agencies, Florida Audubon, Florida Nature Conservancy, The Florida Wildlife Federation, Southeastern Fishers Conference, and the League.

After being successful in stopping this development, the League chose to continue its mission to protect wildlife through advocacy, education, and public awareness by becoming a Chapter of Florida Audubon and the "Voice of Conservation" in Indian River County in April 1964, one of 500 Chapters and Centers within the National Audubon Society. Therefore, this is our 50th Anniversary.

The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service recognized Joe Michael on May 22, 2010 by dedicating a beautiful trail and observation platform at the Refuge located on North Jungle Trail after him .

Pelican Island Audubon, believe it or not, is still fighting to stop dredge and fill projects on conservation lands! The County wants to dredge out to the Intracoastal and fill of mangrove wetlands at Oslo Road Boat Ramp, which has been preserved as conservation lands, next to an aquatic preserve and bird rookery, a plan, which goes against the County's own Manatee Protection Plan, and has the best seagrasses in the Indian River Lagoon.

Pelican Island Audubon Society awarded \$5,000 grant to work with Fellsmere and Gifford to develop 'quality of life' sustainable community indicators

Pelican Island Audubon Society (PIAS) has been awarded a \$5,000 planning grant to work with two communities in Indian River County – the City of Fellsmere and Gifford – to develop 'quality of life' sustainability indicators to complement each community's own comprehensive planning programs.

The grant is from the National Audubon Society's Toyota TogetherGreen program. Audubon and Toyota founded Toyota TogetherGreen in 2008 to foster diversity, jump start innovation and invest in conservation leaders and projects. PIAS began to develop sustainability indicators for Indian River County in 2009, using them to mark progress in the three key sustainability categories – environmental, social and economic. Indicators show the intertwined links between the environment, the economic and social well-being of community residents.

For this project PIAS has the active support of leaders in the two community – Mayor Susan Adams and City Manager Jason Nunemaker in Fellsmere and Mr. Freddie Woolfork at the Progressive Civic League of Gifford. Indicators provide the means to connect the present condition of a community to the 'desired future state' -- a sustainable community. In so doing, they link community well-being and sustainability to TogetherGreen goals -- habitat conservation and restoration, water conservation and energy goals.

In supporting the PIAS project Mr. Nunemaker said: "We believe there would be considerable benefit in blending elements of the city's comprehensive plan with the PIAS project to develop very specific sustainable community indicators for Fellsmere." He continued: "Our plan is oriented to physical facilities, land uses and processes, rules and standards. The PIAS's identified indicator topics – though there is considerable overlap – would take us a little further in our thinking to look at more human and social measures....What is apparent to all of us as we consider indicators is the interwoven nature of the task and the outcomes – for example, jobs relate to education, to transit needs, to library and computer services available, to

housing, immigration and special education services for our large Latino population...and all are supported on a need for conserving precious water resources and protecting conservation lands in our midst."

Mr. Woolfork, for the Progressive Civic League of Gifford, supporting the project, explained: "The League ... has been instrumental in getting paved roads, water and sewer facilities in Gifford. However, we know we have a way to go to regain some of the community cohesion which we enjoyed many years ago. So we ask that when you consider what kind of 'quality of life' indicators that are appropriate for the whole county, you recognize the special needs – the social, the educational, public health and public safety needs, for example – of this very distinct community....We are proud of the improvements we are making but we know there is much to be done."

Dr. Richard Baker, president of PIAS, said: "This grant will enable us to conduct planning workshops with community residents; to consult with community leaders; to prepare a set of indicators unique to the two communities; to prepare targeted surveys appropriate for the communities; and develop a communications plan to reach community members not readily inclined to respond to surveys."

Now in its sixth year, Audubon's Toyota TogetherGreen has invested \$23.5 million in community-based conservation, engaging more than 420,000 people in 295 cities and all 50 states. Toyota TogetherGreen fellows and grantees have partnered with more than 3,000 organizations across the country—from Native American tribes to schools to corporations— and have leveraged their funding to raise an additional \$9.1 million to support conservation.

For more information about the local project, contact Dr. Graham Cox at glcox@audubon.org, 772-388-5394 or 518-729-6869 (cell), coordinator of PIAS's Indian River County quality of life project. Readers are invited to complete a preliminary county-wide survey which can be found on the Pelican Island Audubon Society web site at www.pelicanislandaudubon.org.

Birding Treasure Hammock Ranch



Tour leaders Jens Tripson, Susan Boyd, and Sean Sexton. Photo by Bill Menzies.

Eighteen people took part in the Treasure Hammock Ranch birding trip on December 14, 2013.

Birds seen included:
Great blue Heron
Cattle egret
Glossy ibis
Turkey vulture
Bald eagle
American kestrel
Sandhill crane
Greater yellowlegs
Wilson's snipe
Mourning dove

Red-bellied woodpecker
Eastern phoebe
Northern shrike
Blue-gray gnatcatcher
American robin
Northern mockingbird
Yellow-rumped warbler
Palm warbler
Northern cardinal
Boat-tailed grackle
Brown-headed cowbird
*Mottled duck Seen only by Sean as everyone was leaving



2014 Volunteer Stewardship Core Class Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	Instructor(s)
January 18	Welcome History Land Conservation in Our County Hammock Loop Stroll	<i>Dr. Walter Tabachnick</i> , Director, FMEL <i>Dr. Richard Baker</i> , President, PIAS <i>Janice Broda</i> , Class Coordinator, FMEL
January 25	Basics of Botany: Plant ID Hike to ORCA Observation Tower	<i>Janice Broda</i> , Class Coordinator, FMEL <i>Doug Carlson</i> , Director, Indian River Mosquito Control District
February 1	Life in the Pits & Treetops	<i>Dr. George O'Meara</i> , Professor Emeritus, FMEL
February 8 (at ELC)	Indian River Lagoon Basics, Seagrass Update & What YOU Can Do Ethnobotany: Past, Present & Future?	<i>Heather Stapleton</i> , Education Coordinator, Environmental Learning Ctr <i>Janice Broda</i> , Class Coordinator, FMEL
February 15	Local insects that bite and sting: Their medical importance & how to avoid them Ticks and Tick-borne disease in Florida	<i>Dr. Roxanne Connelly</i> , Extension Entomologist, FMEL <i>Dr. Cynthia Lord</i> , Entomologist, FMEL
February 22	Scrub Jay Show Woodpecker, Eagle & Owl Hike	<i>Bob Montanaro</i> , Office Manager, PIAS <i>Dr. Richard Baker</i> , President, PIAS

- Classes are conducted on **Saturday** afternoons from **1:30 to 4:30pm**.
- Each class begins in the Boathouse of the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, University of Florida, 200 - 9th Street SE (Oslo Road), Vero Beach, unless otherwise noted
- Contact *Janice Broda*, Class Coordinator, with any questions: jcbroda@comcast.net, 772-538-5223



Squirrel Proof by *Linda Chancellor*

I am sure the tag on the bird feeder must have said it was “squirrel proof” or why would my neighbor buy it and hang it from her tree. Certainly after the fiasco with the beautiful hanging basket last summer she should have realized she was not dealing with ordinary squirrels.

Three species of squirrels can be found in Florida. They are the southern flying squirrel, the fox squirrel and the eastern gray squirrel. The eastern gray squirrel has adapted the best to urban settings. He has embraced the large variety of foods that are available in these new habitats. Bird feeders hold a readily available source of food and the squirrels in my neighborhood are unequalled in their ability to obtain seed from so called squirrel proof feeders. I believe their unique abilities are due to the rigorous training exercises they have participated in Squirrel Boot Camp. My backyard is the camp location that has provided a unique opportunity for these squirrels to perfect their problem solving skills and improve their physical prowess. At the crack of dawn the squirrels start their training.

First they complete the obstacle course where they must navigate a route from my east side neighbor’s pecan tree to my northwest neighbor’s oak tree without touching the ground nor dropping the fresh shelled pecan they are carrying in their mouth. The squirrels choose between several paths but the current favorite is to jump from the pecan tree to the Chinese Fan palm, inch out onto the large fronds, jump to the pool screen, run to the other side, up the roof, jump to the White Bird of Paradise, to the ten foot cro-



ton, to the cabbage palm, to the sea grape and then to the neighbor’s oak. I have added some challenges by pruning all branches away from the screen but this has only induced them to attempt and complete longer airborne jumps. This activity has produced very agile, lithe bodies and an attitude of complete fearlessness. This rigorous routine also seems to have increased their speed in seeking out romantic opportunities thus ensuring their will be another group of recruits next year.

Secure food storage and searching for new food sources are two skills they also they work on daily. They locate every potted plant and then bury their acquired acorns and pecans in the soft soil, sometimes dislodging the original plant from the pot. Blossoms from orchids, gingers and bromeliads are tasted and accepted or rejected. The current flowers of choice are from my double red hibiscus and the White Bird of Paradise. The Florida Fish and Wildlife website reports that squirrels will try and eat anything including plastic wiring and often are not deterred by taste repellants.

Like it or not squirrels are part of my life. Here is a picture of one of the recent graduates.

FYI – Eastern gray squirrels are considered scatter-hoarders. These animals collect food and store it in small caches for later retrieval. They have a very accurate spatial memory for the stored locations and will use landmarks to help them remember locations where they have buried food. When they are within a few inches of the cache they will then use their sense of smell to pinpoint the location.

Pelican Island Audubon Society Officers & Directors
Officers: President **Richard H. Baker, Ph.D.**, 1st Vice President **Bob Bruce**, 2nd Vice President **Susan Boyd**, Recording Secretary **Darlene Halliday**, Corresponding Secretary **Peter Sutherland**, Treasurer **Steve Goff** — Elected Directors: **Joe Carroll '14, David Cox, Ph.D. '14, Nancy Irvin '16, Bill Loftus, Ph.D. '15, John Orcutt, Ph.D. '15, Toni Robinson '16** — Appointed Board Members: **Graham Cox, Ph.D., Bill Halliday, Jim Kirley, Tina Marchese, David Peabody, Jane Schnee, (Billi Wagner - Ornithological Consultant)** 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.

Birds migrate-and members can too!
Please consider “migrating” up to one of our Sustainable Memberships- Scrub-jay (\$100) or Osprey (\$200).

Anyone who contributes \$100 or \$200 per year to the Annual Fund is automatically recognized as a Pelican Island Audubon Society Sustaining or Double Sustaining Member. Think about a \$25 or \$50 per quarter donation, which works out to only \$2 to \$4 a week to support our mission.

Sustaining Members are critical to the Society. If every Society member contributed \$100 or \$200 every year, PIAS could increase its efforts to help fulfill our mission in Indian River County and support the continued growth of our programs. This is a tax-deductible contribution to a 501(c)(3) organization and includes your membership renewal to Pelican Island Audubon and a free gift cookbook!

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

Other Annual Membership Options:

- \$20 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

Credit card payments call (772) 567-3520 M-F 9AM-1PM

Please email us if there is a local environmental issue which concerns you at piaudubon@bellsouth.net

Plant of the Month by Janice Broda
Spanish moss – *Tillandsia usneoides*

Spanish moss graces many of the stately live oak trees that grow upon the higher ground in the hammocks (“woods”) along the Indian River Lagoon. This curious grey plant may, at a cursory glance, appear to be of little use or consequence, but appearances can be deceiving.

Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*) miraculously flowers using nutrients absorbed from the air and from rainfall – without any attachment to the soil. It is not a parasite or a lichen. This flowering plant is an epiphyte: Its uses live oaks, other plants, and structures for support, taking no nutrients from them. Its inconspicuous flowers, smaller than a dime, bear tiny seeds that are spread by the wind and germinate excellently in the crevices of the furrowed bark of our live oak trees.



This plant serves as a very important nesting material for birds, squirrels, and other animals. Humans also once used this plant as a ‘nesting material’ stuffing their mattresses, sofa cushions, and car seats with its coarse black inner fibers that proved softer than horse-hair stuffing. Aboriginal people are said to have used Spanish moss to clothe themselves.

Chiggers, jumping spiders, mites, and a variety of insects find cover in Spanish moss. Warblers and other insect-eating birds then forage for food in Spanish moss.

Despite its understated and stringy appearance, Spanish moss is a valuable and uniquely adapted part of the web of life along the Indian River Lagoon – used by birds, other animals, insects, and humans. You can learn more about the web of life associated with the Indian River Lagoon at the eighteenth volunteer stewardship class offered by the Pelican Island Audubon Society in collaboration with the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, University of Florida. This free, six-week afternoon class begins on Saturday, January 18. Class participants, it is hoped, will share their what they learn with the community in a manner that suits them. This class is a great way to prepare to volunteer at the soon-to-be constructed Audubon House.

To learn more about this class or to register, please visit: <http://ourorca.wordpress.com/volunteer-class/>

