

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. 53 No. 1 January 2017

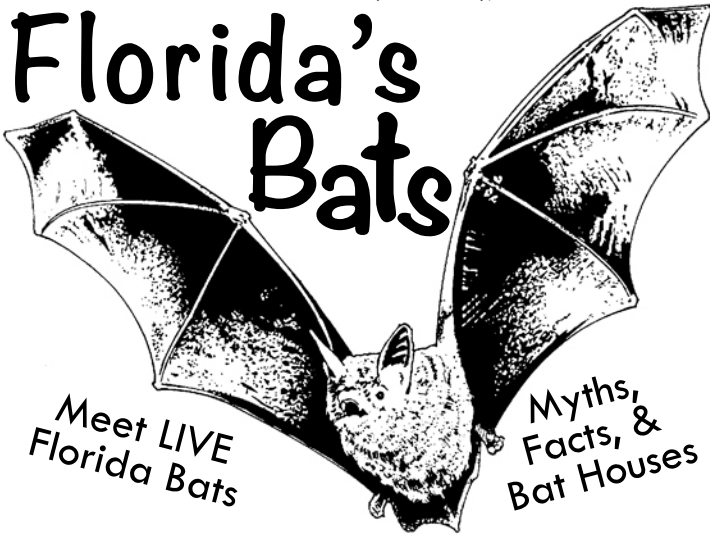
Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities in Indian River County through advocacy, education, and public awareness.

January 9, 2017 ❖ 6:00 p.m.

North Indian River County Library

1001 Sebastian Blvd. (CR 512), Sebastian

Florida's Bats



Meet LIVE
Florida Bats

Myths,
Facts, &
Bat Houses

Shari Blissett-Clark of the Florida Bat Conservancy debunks common myths and misconceptions about bats and features species commonly seen in Florida's urbanized landscape. Backyard bats have adapted to living in close proximity to people and all our trappings: high-rise buildings, automobile and truck traffic, mosquito control, pollutants, trash, and sewerage. Learn the survival tactics these intelligent flying mammals employ while playing important roles in food production, insect control, and human health. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet living Florida bats after the presentation.

January 16, 2017 ❖ 7:00 p.m.

**Birds of Indian River County
with Joseph Pescatore**

Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach

Wildlife photographer Joseph Pescatore presents a program on the birds of Indian River County, including shorebirds, warblers, raptors, and waterfowl. As a new resident to Indian River County, Joe will discuss where he took the photographs and the challenges involved. He will also discuss digiscoping and demonstrate how he uses a spotting scope and a pocket camera to take many of his images. For an example, see the Bird of the Month on the next page.



Many thanks to TCPalm (Press Journal) for selecting PIAS as one of their **12 Days of Christmas Wish List** to promote our need for a pontoon boat to educate adults and watch birds on Blue Cypress Lake and the Indian River Lagoon.



**12 Days of Christmas:
Pelican Island Audubon
Society**



Wish: 11-person pontoon boat with 90-horsepower motor



Cost: about \$30,000



To donate: Contact the Audubon office at 772-567-3520 or piaudubon@yahoo.com



Graphic: TCPalm/Press-Journal

Upcoming Events & Field Trips

Call 772-567-3520 for reservations and directions.

Jan 22 - Orlando Wetlands Park - Guide: Steve Goff & Bill Loftus

Feb 12 - Fort Drum Marsh Conservation Area - Guide: George Glenn

Masthead photo: Purple Gallinule by Bob Montanaro.

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

It is surely springtime in Florida, when we hear these tiny warblers sing so very loudly at the top of oak tree canopies - to establish their territory, deter other males, and attract a mate. Or maybe this Northern Parula is singing just because he is savoring life! What is also amazing is being able to capture this photograph. Joseph F. Pescatore using his Sony RX100M2 mounted to a Swarovski ATS 80HD spotting scope at 20X power, 1) knew what was singing, 2) found the warbler in the tree canopy at the end of a branch, 3) set up his equipment, 4) aligned scope, camera, and bird, 5) sharpened its focus, and 6) triggered the shutter. Bird watchers have trouble finding these singing warblers, let alone lining up the camera and scope to take a Northern Parula singing with such gusto. You can even see his tiny tongue!



Photo credit: Singing His heart out! © by Joseph Pescatore
Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*

A bird's beak is shaped to capture and devour particular foods. In this case, a parula's is pointed and sharp for probing, finding, and devouring insects and spiders. The Northern Parula, one of the few warblers that breeds in Florida, often winters in Bermuda, Cuba and southeastern Mexico along the coast. How lucky we Floridians are to be able to hear this warbler's song. Most warblers are just passing through our lush hammocks on the major Atlantic Flyway. Hurrying, stopping to refuel here, they fly only at night to be safe from hawk predators. These 4.25 inch loud songsters weigh only 1/3 ounce but return from wintering areas in the springtime thousands of miles north, some stop here, others fly to their breeding areas north of us, all the way to Canada.

View a large color image and learn how to enter your own photos at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

People hunt turkeys, goose and duck by Linda Chancellor

Recently I watched an episode of "Bizarre Foods" hosted by Andrew Zimmern. It included a segment on the hunting and eating of Sandhill Cranes. The bright red breast meat, when cooked, was described as "rib eye in the sky". My reaction to the show was disbelief. I thought of the stately Sandhill Crane pair that walks in our neighborhood and has even raised young here. I certainly did not think of them as game birds.

The next day still pondering the subject, I decided to research more about the hunting and consuming of Sandhill Cranes. The TV episode had been filmed on a private farm adjacent to the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Tennessee. Sandhill Cranes that winter in north Florida are part of the eastern population that migrates through Tennessee. In 2015 that population had



increased to 94,869 birds. For years several refuges had been feeding the cranes but the increased population had now started feeding on nearby farms and causing damage to their crops. This led to discussion and the passage of hunting seasons in several states in order to manage the Sandhill populations. The Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge still attracts enough Sandhill Cranes to hold a festival every year. So what was my problem - was it the hunting of these beautiful birds for sport or was it the actual consumption of them? After all humans have hunted and cooked many avian species including pigeons, quails, pheasant, partridge, doves and grouse for years. I am still thinking it over.

FYI: Every January the eastern population of Sandhill cranes migrates to Paynes Prairie located near Gainesville, Florida. They begin their spring migration north in February and March. South Florida is home to another subspecies that does not migrate and usually travels in pairs.

Photo: Sandhill Crane by Bob Montanaro.

Artist at Work!

Come help or watch the progress of the
Audubon House Habitat Mural
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday
from 1-5pm!!



facebook

Like Pelican Island Audubon on Facebook at
www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org
for all the latest news and information

Making Lawns into Gardens - You too can enjoy beauty and help the environment!



Happy New Year!

The October 2016 Peligram Hoot described some great efforts to

- convert sod, grass, or turf into native gardens for birds and butterflies that require less fertilizer and herbicide.

At our November 12th Open House, we officially opened up a new trail connecting the north Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area (North ORCA)

with the south side of Oslo Road (South ORCA). Also at the open house we had three excellent speakers: **Wendy Swindell**, Indian River County Conservation lands Program, spoke on *Our county's conservation lands*; **Nickie Munroe**, Indian River County Environmental Horticulture Agent, University of Florida IFAS talked about the *Master Gardeners and Florida Friendly Certification*; and **Robin Pelen-sky**, ASLA, Landscape Architect, Surlatterre Landscape Architecture covered *Rain Gardens and saving the Lagoon*. One major theme of the three talks was reducing the use of lawn fertilizers and herbicides and help save the Indian River Lagoon from pollution. A suggestion was made to rename the "Rain Gardens" as "Lagoon Gardens" as these gardens will help save the Lagoon.

Thanks for **Robin's** advice and her and **George Glenn, Jr.'s** labor, along with the **Garden Club of Indian River County** providing native plants and mulch from **DIGG Gardens**, we have started the native plant landscaping in front of the Audubon House. We will be adding more plants to provide a "Homeowner Friendly Garden" that can compete in attractiveness with nonnative gardens and lawns in Indian River County and much more likely to attract butterflies and birds and help the Lagoon.

Moreover, Ken Gonyo has started a beautiful butterfly garden with 29 species of native plants that have already attracted eight species of butterflies (e.g. Monarch, Julia, 3 species of skippers, Zebra Longwing, Great Southern White). The plants were purchased in part with funds

provided by **FPL** and the efforts of **Florette Braun**. **Ken** also donated an elegant solar water fountain to the garden for birds. Many have helped plant and weed, but **Felicity Rask** and **Diane Humann** have expressed interest in keeping the garden going. **Ken** is also planning a scrub garden next to the south side of the Audubon House.

In addition, we will start planning for the Lagoon Gardens in the Audubon House dry retention area as a demonstration project and a model for homeowners. At the Audubon House, **Nickie** will also be offering Florida Friendly Landscaping Workshops January 11th at 12-1:30 pm every other week. She plans to begin "Snowbird Gardening" next November.

Many thanks to **Michael Estabrook** who volunteered and put our well water system underground, which will be use to start the Lagoon Gardens. He also has started making a huge dent in removing the exotic air potato vine.

Preserving and learning about our county's conservation lands is also important to protecting the Lagoon. Starting on February 11th, PIAS is collaborating again with our neighbor the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, University of Florida, to sponsor another series of six **free** Volunteer Stewardship & Environmental Education Classes. Six Saturday classes from 1:30-4:30 pm (February 12, 18, 25, March 4, 11, 18) taught by dynamic guest speakers who are experts in their fields will present our local unique 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. Those who have taken the class before are also welcome to attend and assist with the course. We are planning to follow the Volunteer classes with workshops on related subjects.



Ken Gonyo, Richard Baker, and Wendy Swindell at the opening of the new trail connecting north and south ORCA. *Photo by Donna Halleran.*



Zebra Longwing butterfly at ORCA.
Photo by Bob Montanaro

To sign up for the Volunteer Stewardship & Environmental Education Class (limited to 25 persons) and/or volunteer for and be a part of the other projects, please call our office at 772-567-3520. The Beginning Birding Course has been filled.

Pelican Island Audubon Society Officers & Directors

Officers: President **Richard H. Baker, Ph.D.**, 1st Vice-President **Donna Halleran**, 2nd Vice-President **David Cox, Ph.D.**, Recording Secretary **Darlene Halliday**, Corresponding Secretary **George Glenn**, Treasurer **Steve Goff** — Elected Directors: **Graham Cox, Ph.D. '17**, **Nancy Irvin '19**, **Bill Loftus, Ph.D. '18**, **Toni Robinson '19**, **Bonnie Swanson '18** — Appointed Board Members: **Bill Halliday**, **Tina Marchese**

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.

Annual Holiday Potluck

The annual holiday potluck was held at the Vero Beach Community Center on December 12, 2016. Around 260 people attended for good food and entertainment, provided by the graduating class of Audubon Advocates who presented skits on the environment and protecting the Indian River Lagoon based on what they have learned this past semester.



Dr. Baker welcomes everyone at the start of the evening.



Vero Beach Elementary



Citrus Elementary



Indian River Academy



Glendale Elementary

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!

- \$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

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