

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 49th Year Vol. 49 No. 7 October 2013

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

October 14, 2013 ❖ 6:00 p.m.

**Bird Art Through The Centuries:
Humans Conveying Their Love of
Birds with Juanita Baker, Ph.D.**

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

From early primitive art 40,000 years ago through Western and Eastern history, bird art reflects our human sensitivity and growing understanding. Birds are important parts of our lives, can be seen daily almost anywhere we are outdoors...a source of food, beauty, curiosity and wonder. Portrayed in symbol, myth, and art in all their diversity in a



Jacques Barraband (1767 - 1809)

great range of bird art with different styles from elaborate exotic birds to detailed scientific illustrations. Even ornithology illustrations, some of the most artistic and beautiful volumes in printing history, have evolved depicting the evolving human knowledge of birds. Come hear stories and appreciate art of artists and ornithologists, pioneers in creativity and exploration of the world of birds.

Professor emerita Juanita Baker, Ph.D. joined Florida Tech in 1984, the Department of Psychology whose focus is training graduate students to be psychologists. She taught, carried out research, supervised clinical work, and founded in 1991 and was Director of the Family Learning Program until 2007, a sexual abuse treatment program for children and adolescents who were victims of sexual abuse, their nonoffending caregivers, siblings and their offenders. Her new project is launching the Psychology Science Minute on WFIT. Getting out in nature observing birds always has been a restoring retreat. As a youth, showing an early interest in birds...marveling at back yard birds, collecting bird nests, going on field trips with a science teacher, and loving art, a friend started her on an interest in bird art when she gave her a book of Audubon's bird prints. With the internet, a world of bird art has opened to humankind, leading her to study and "collect" bird art throughout art history. She will share this stunning artwork that reflects the history of art as well as ornithology.

October 21, 2013 ❖ 7:30 p.m.

**Days of our Lives: Dolphins in the Indian
River Lagoon with Marilyn Mazzoil**

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

This lecture follows a day in the life of an Indian River Lagoon dolphin, from a collection of stories derived from a long-term study of individual dolphins. Resident dolphins have been followed from birth to death, providing unique insights into behavioral variability throughout each life stage.

Marilyn Mazzoil has dedicated her career to wildlife studies with an emphasis on dolphins inhabiting the Indian River Lagoon. In 1997, Marilyn joined Harbor Branch and was instrumental in establishing the Marine Mammal Research and Conservation program working to build programs that support multi-faceted scientific and conservation initiatives. In order to fund such initiatives, she spearheaded the passage of two Florida laws, creating top-selling specialty license plates that support research, conservation and education activities throughout the state: Protect Wild Dolphins and Protect Florida Whales.

Accolades to the Coastal Conservation Association Treasure Coast Chapter President Lange Sykes for a statewide statement: "strongly opposes any and all proposed expansion of the Oslo Road boat ramp based on scientific data illustrating the prolific significance of the post-larvae and juvenile fish nursery at the current boat ramp location."

Florida's Water and Land Legacy Campaign

Protecting our waters, cherished natural areas and wildlife are fundamental to a healthy and vibrant Florida. That's why Audubon Florida and Pelican Island Audubon Society are working with **Florida's Water and Land Legacy Campaign** to place a critical conservation amendment on the November 2014 ballot.

We need to gather 550,000 more signatures from Florida voters in the next 5 months. Will you help us reach that goal by signing a petition today? Please go to <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/pages/171/audubon-florida-partners-with-the-legacy-campaign/>

Masthead photo: Green Heron by Bob Montanaro.

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

Barred Owl- *Strix varia* Order STRIGIFORMES – Family STRIGIDAE

If you are near our dense, swampy woods in habitat dominated by bald cypress and old-growth oak, you are likely to hear, hoo-hoo-to-hoo-ooo, hoo-hoo-hoo-to-whooo-ooo or “Who cooks for you?” - the melodious call of the Barred Owl. Less likely seen than heard, the Barred Owl hunts most actively at night, mainly just after dusk and just before dawn. Its rounded head distinguishes it from the slightly larger Great Horned Owl with its ear tufts and only a single repeating note “whooo, whooo.” Reinier

Munguia took this dramatic photograph in the late afternoon light, using a Nikon D70 on a tripod, with a fill flash.

The Barred Owl's range in the Eastern US has recently expanded into western North America. A non-migratory species, they vigorously defend their established territory (about one square mile), returning year after year to the same nesting cavity in old-growth trees.

During mating season, if your windows are open to allow the night sounds to penetrate, you may have been startled awake by, the maniacal cries and screams of courting Barred Owls, which would make you wonder at first if someone is in distress!

Preferring mammal prey, they silently swoop to snatch a rabbit or rodent at the edge of the forest or in the suburbs. However, the Barred Owl is an opportunistic predator, pursuing any suitable prey that comes their way, including robbing bird nests to feeding on crayfish and snakes. One morning I was awakened by raucous calls of Blue Jays and Red-bellied Woodpeckers mobbing two Barred Owls that had alighted on a branch of a pine snag. The Barred Owls were too close to the woodpeckers' nest in a cavity in the deteriorating bare tree. Ignoring continued harassment, eventually one Barred Owl and then the other flew off to a quieter roost to perch for the day.

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



Barred Owl © Reinier Munguia

Guided Pontoon Boat Tours Blue Cypress Lake



For information and reservations, call 772-567-3520 or e-mail piaudubon@bellsouth.net

Morning Tours 7-10AM

Evening Tours
4:30-7:30PM

\$85 donation per person

All proceeds benefit Pelican Island Audubon

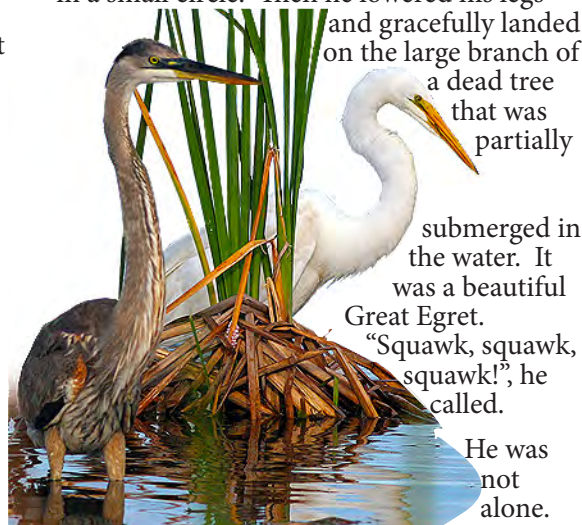
Limited to 8 persons per trip.

Includes food & drinks.

Tour Leaders:
Richard Baker
Bob Bruce

Twilight sight by Linda Chancellor

The sun had set but there were still a few rays of coral pink in the twilight blue sky. The fading light made it harder to distinguish the individual trees on the opposite bank. The tree's leaves had darkened to a black green and the golden marsh grass now appeared a darker brown. The surface of the water, in the cove, had turned dark gray with a few ripples of slate blue. A white shape, in the back of the cove, caught my eye. There stood a large bird with pure white feathers. He spread his wings and without a sound lifted and glided slowly in a small circle. Then he lowered his legs



and gracefully landed on the large branch of a dead tree that was partially

submerged in the water. It was a beautiful Great Egret.

“Squawk, squawk, squawk!” he called.

He was not alone.

Three feet below him a Great Blue Heron waded in the shallows searching for a late evening snack. The Great Blue Heron moved slowly away as if to imply he was not one to be bullied. The Egret squawked again as if to say this was his cove. He tilted his head this way and that as he preened his breast feathers. Then he tucked his head under his wing and stood still. His white silhouette appeared as an apparition in the dim light. The light continued to fade and yet he seemed to be illuminated as his white feathers literally glowed in the last remnants of light. I was surprised he had chosen such an exposed area to roost and yet maybe it was safer to perch over the water than in the dark woods. I have been documenting my bird sightings in this area for a number of years and this was only the second time I had seen this lone Great Egret in our cove.

Did you know? The Great Egret is the symbol of the National Audubon Society. The first Society was formed to protect and stop the slaughter of millions of waterbirds, whose feathers were used in the millenary trade. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century more than 95% of the Great Egret populations were killed for their breeding plumes. These special white feathers that grew from their backs during breeding season were called aigrettes.

The President's Hoot by Richard Baker

Jane Schnee, PIAS Board Member to receive the USFWS Regional Director's Conservation Award

Congratulations to Jane Schnee who will receive the **Regional Director's Conservation Award** from the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region**, October 30, 2013 in Atlanta. They recognize her commitment and dedication and extraordinary contributions to fish and wildlife conservation. Jane deserves this national award for her many conservation activities:



- **Restoration of a 10 acre Scrub Jay Habitat.** Two years ago, Jane purchased with her own money (\$100,000) a 10-acre scrub habitat in Sebastian that has a producing Scrub Jay family. She along with PIAS and USFWS volunteers removed

hundreds of pine trees to improve the habitat and gave them away for a donation during the holidays. We produced many "Charlie Brown" Christmas trees in our community and raised some funds for restoration. Jane herself and sometimes with volunteers found and marked Gopher Tortoise burrows and removed invasive plants. Eventually, she also hired a company to get rid of all the tall slash pines and purchased and planted Scrub Oaks. **Jane Schnee** has encouraged many **PIAS and community volunteers** to help in these restoration efforts. Anytime Waste Systems provided the dumpsters pro bono.

- **JayWatch.** Jane monitors the Scrub-Jays at: Sebastian Airport, North Sebastian Conservation Area, Pelican Island Elementary School Preserve, Wabasso Scrub, and even on private property at Broxton & 66th Ave. her Bristol/Barber property, and Vero Lake Estates. She also helped trap-train the Jays that had no bands and helped band them. Thanks to Jane, we now have over 80% of the Jays in Indian River County banded.
- **PIAS Boy Scout Merit Badge.** Following a request from a parent at our Audubon meeting, **Jane** became a "qualified" Boy Scout Counselor and got scouts out into the natural world, helping them with conservation projects, and working on their Nature and Bird merit badges. Three scouts completed the Bird Study Merit Badge, and one scout was awarded the Nature Merit Badge. Eight more scouts continue working on them.
- **Former chair and member of the City of Sebastian Natural Resources Board.** Jane has made a number of presentations to the Sebastian's City Council to protect their Scrub Jay habitats.

Jane received the PIAS Environmental Citizen award last year, and the USFWS award justifiably recognizes her nationally for her great work to save our environment and birds. Wonderful, Jane!

Boots on the Ground: Audubon Assembly 2013-Oct 25-26

Why is it good for PIAS to be a part of Florida and National Audubon? Have you ever attended one of the best state meetings on the environment and had a really good time with great guest speakers, one of a kind field trip experience, and opportunities to socialize and network with other hard working conservationists who want to make a difference? I find it very inspirational. This is an opportunity to learn new conservation, educational, and advocacy techniques in hands-on workshops. You too can attend.



This year the 2013 Audubon Assembly Oct 25-27, at the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Palm Harbor is a celebration of people like you who put their "boots on the ground" for conservation. This meeting and one other, the Florida Folk Festival at Stephen Foster State Park where folks celebrate Florida and its environment in song, get me motivated, energized, and enthusiastic to participate in Audubon every year, and I try to make a difference in our community. You should join us, too.

Audubon Florida's signature conservation event brings together representatives and dedicated volunteers of Audubon's 44 chapters that include conservation leaders, scientists, educators and policy makers. Through nature-inspired walking workshops, speakers, and thought-provoking learning sessions to help us with Grassroots Advocacy, Citizen Science, and Habitat Stewardship.

The following choices of beautiful Field Trips with great birding in Pinellas County: Honeymoon Island, Brooker Creek Preserve, Anclote Gulf Park, Wall Springs Park, Possum Branch Mitigation Area, John Chestnut Park (now reporting warbler migrants). Field Trips details can be found at fl.audubon.org/field-trips-2

Dr. Reed Bowman, Director of the Avian Ecology Program at Florida's celebrated Archbold Biological Station, will be the Friday night keynote speaker. PIAS will have an exhibit at the Assembly and show videos of the square foot garden project and the QR codes project at the refuge.

For more information see: <http://fl.audubon.org/audubon-assembly-2013-boots-ground>
Come join us!

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, 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.

Plant of the Month by Janice Broda

Seasons in Florida are more subtle than in northern climes. So, look carefully to enjoy the fall color of red maple, cypress, tupelo, and winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*).

Winged sumac, a small tree (to 20') native to the eastern and central U.S., sometimes out-reds the red maple, and, for this reason, is sometimes known as flameleaf sumac. Brilliant red and yellow colors saturate the compound, finely toothed leaves of this deciduous tree.

Winged sumac is the only sumac with “wings”, leafy ridges, along its central leaf stems. Its leaflets are shiny green above, and paler below, so this plant also is commonly called shiny sumac.

Though botanically related to poison ivy and poison sumac, this plant is not poisonous. It is a member of the cashew family, Anacardiaceae, along with poison ivy, poison sumac, mango trees, pistachio trees, and the pernicious invasive pest plant tree, Brazilian pepper.

Bees and butterflies are very attracted to the copious nectar and pollen of winged sumac. Dense, pyramidal terminal clusters of tiny greenish yellow flowers festoon this plant sumac in the summer and early fall and are followed by clusters of single-seeded red, hairy fruits on female plants. Winged sumac is dioecious: Male and female flowers are borne on different plants. The non-poisonous berries can be made into a jelly and are used to make a flavored “lemonade” drink.

Winged sumac is a pioneer plant and will not persist in shady places. Pinelands, hammock edges, and sunny disturbed areas are where you will encounter this fast-growing, sometimes suckering plant.

Gray catbirds, cedar waxwings, northern mockingbirds, blue jays, quail, and turkeys are among the many birds consume that fruits of this plant. It is a larval host and nectar plant for red-banded hairstreak butterfly.

Winged sumac can be a wonderful landscape addition for sunny locations with acid soil – to provide food for butterflies, birds, and other wildlife and for fall color.



**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