

Pelican Island Audubon Society

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- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -



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

Our 52st Year Vol. 52 No. 7 October 2016

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

October 10, 2016 ❖ 6:00 p.m.

The Trail of Trees with Tim Womick

North Indian River County Library

1001 Sebastian Blvd. (CR 512), Sebastian

In the Trail of Trees with Tim Womick, participants will hear biology basics explained and get a knowledge of trees, learn the value of trees and why we should plant more trees and are encouraged to learn to care for the trees where they live. Audiences are exposed to scientific concepts about earth materials, trees, water, and air. With an emphasis on the value of the "trees where you live," learn why trees are not only good for personal health and the environment, but why caring for trees is good citizenship by enhancing individual and neighborhood character.

Via jokes, props and song, Tim Womick exposes his audiences to the natural world around them. Like the 19th century Johnny Appleseed who pioneered Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Northern Indiana planting his famous seeds and speaking most poetically about apple trees, since 1990, Tim has traveled much further and wider, sharing his own brand of tree imagery. His fast-paced and highly animated program is "performance art" that includes audience participation.

A Taste Of Honey From Around The World

- Friday, November 4 - doors open at 7:00PM

- Audubon House - 295 9th Street SE (Oslo Rd.) -

Proceeds benefit Pelican Island Audubon Society -

Tickets \$25 in advance/\$30 at the door

Honey tastes very different depending upon where the bees collect their pollen. Using crackers, cheese, chocolate, etc., you will have the chance to try different honeys from around the world including local honey. Reserve your place today! Space is limited. This event is family friendly with raffles, gifts, & prizes. For tickets, go online to PelicanIslandAudubon.org or call 772-567-3520 or email piaudubon@yahoo.com

Upcoming Events & Field Trips

Call 772-567-3520 for reservations and directions.

Oct 30 - Barrier Island Sanctuary with Karen Schuster

October 17, 2016 ❖ 7:00 p.m.

Blooms, Bugs, Berries & Birds with Janice Broda

Vero Beach Community Center

2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach

More than 80% of the flowering plants are pollinated by butterflies, bees, beetles, moths, bats, hummingbirds, and other insects. Less than 1% of all insects are harmful, and many insects provide valuable ecosystem services. Nearly all birds feed their young soft-bodied insects. *Blooms, Bugs, Berries & Birds* looks at some of the co-evolved interrelationships between plants, insects, and birds.

Mosquitoes and public health have long been an interest of your presenter Janice Broda. She has served an elected commissioner of the Indian River Mosquito Control District for twenty-four years and worked at the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory for twenty-five years. A past president of the Florida Native Plant Society, she is now secretary of the Indian River County chapter, the Eugenia chapter. She was the PIAS 1st Vice President & Program Chair from 1994 to 1998.

Birding Trip to Ecuador Raffle!!!

Tickets only \$10 each!

Fundraiser for Pelican Island Audubon!

Learn more and buy tickets at

www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Audubon House Open House

Saturday, November 12, 2016 - 11AM - 2PM

195 9th Street SE (Oslo Road), Vero Beach

- Food & fun for the whole family
- Learn about landscaping for butterflies
- Kayak the Indian River Lagoon
- And more!

For more information call 772-567-3520

Masthead photo: Black Vulture by Bob Montanaro.

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

Have you heard this dove? From a perch, it makes a repetitive, monotonous hollow ‘woo-o’ ‘woo-o’ ‘woo-o’ ‘woo-o,’ mechanical-like sound, repeated a dozen times, followed by a pause, then two to three more series of calls. The Common Ground-Dove is a small dove, usually occurring in pairs that bond for life. A non-migratory resident, it ranges from the southern U.S. and Caribbean to northern South America, inhabiting dry flatwoods, scrub, citrus groves, or coastal areas. Its camouflage coloring hides it as you approach, until with whirring wings, it flutters out of danger. It may be observed in suburban or agricultural areas walking with its characteristic head bobbing, or feeding on seeds beneath feeders.

Notice the unique scaling on crown and breast, the black-tipped orange bill, and short tail. When it flies, chestnut-colored wings become apparent. Like other doves, it pants and flutters its gular or throat sac to cool itself when hot.

Typical of grain-eating doves, it stores food in its crop to eat later. One individual had 700 seeds in its crop. Ideal, as scientists have determined that a dove must eat about one fifth of its weight daily to maintain itself. As a Ground-Dove weighs only 1.3 oz., it must ingest about 2,500 seeds daily! Fortunately, for survival, its crop is an evolved adaptation, a built-in backpack.

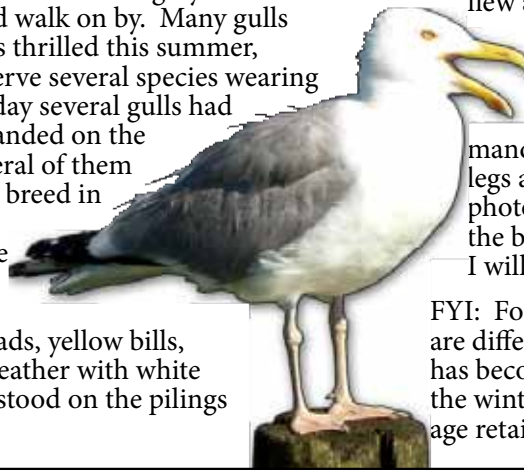
View a large color image and learn how to enter your own photos at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org



Photo credit: Joseph F. Pescatore Canon EOS 7D Mark II, f/5.6, 1/800, ISO 320, Canon EF300mm +1.4x III.

Check out those legs by Linda Chancellor

When I see gulls on the beach, in their drab gray winter plumage, I just ignore them and walk on by. Many gulls do not breed in Florida so I was thrilled this summer, while visiting up North, to observe several species wearing their breeding plumage. One day several gulls had flown into the small cove and landed on the pilings of one of the piers. Several of them were Laughing Gulls, which do breed in Florida, and so I recognized their solid black heads. But the other birds I was not familiar with. These gulls were much larger. They had pure white heads, yellow bills, slate gray wings and black tail feather with white dots. They look stately as they stood on the pilings looking out over the water.



I grabbed my camera and took several photos before they flew away. Looking in my Birds of North America book I was able to identify them as Herring Gulls. The book noted other identifying marks included pink legs and feet. It also noted a red spot located on the bottom mandible. When I reviewed my pictures I saw the legs and feet were a light pink! Then I enlarged the photo and could see the red dot on the bottom of the bill. Next winter when I see a gull on the beach I will look for pink legs!

FYI: For the first four years a Herring Gull's feathers are different shades of brown and gray. Even when it has become an adult it still molts to a drab gray during the winter in Florida. However, herring gulls of any age retain their pink legs year round.

Utility-backed Amendment 1 Blocks The Sun

by Alik Moncrief, Florida Conservation Voters

Have you heard about the utility-backed Amendment 1? It's awful for Florida's environment and seriously threatens our chance for a clean energy future.

Florida Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente said it better than anyone: Amendment 1 is a “wolf in sheep's clothing” backed by big utility companies like Duke Energy and Florida Power and Light to maintain their monopoly on electricity and unfairly raise fees for customers who want to go solar.

If it passes, Amendment 1 would limit our solar growth and increase our dependence on fossil fuels.

The big, investor-owned utilities want to block the sun and maintain their monopoly on Florida's energy markets.

But if Amendment 1 fails and solar is allowed to grow, Florida could be at the forefront of shaping the nation's clean energy future. We have the potential to be among the top three solar-producing states in the country, yet the Sunshine State has been held back by monopoly utilities that profit more from continuing our dependence on fossil fuels.

Reminder, this amendment will be on the November 8, 2016 General Election ballot. In many Florida counties, the early voting period begins as soon as October 24. So please help us spread the word!

Learn more about Amendment 1 at the Florida Conservation Voters web site:

<http://www.fcvoters.org/solar-pledge-no/>

Visit Pelican Island Audubon online at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Lawns into Gardens

Did you know Florida has over 3000 different species of plants? When Ponce de Leon discovered the beautiful Flora here, he named it Florida! Looking at most yards, one does not see a trace of this old Florida Flora. Yet many of the flowers are delicate, varied in color, and have interesting leaf patterns that could make yards more attractive. Executive Director of the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (www.floridanativenurseries.org), Cammie Donaldson, invited Juanita and I to visit native home landscapes in The Villages, a premier active 157,000-person adult retirement community in central Florida covering three counties—Sumter, Lake, and Marion. The Villages is one of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S and a mecca for golfers as almost everyone has a golf course in their backyard. There are 12 clubhouses in five square miles.

In 2015, a few homeowners formed a new chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, and now The Villages Chapter has over 100 members. Ten homes have converted their landscape from lawns to native gardens and were available for our tour. See what they are doing at <http://thevillages.fnpschapters.org/>. In just three of the ten homeowners' landscapes, I wrote down about 100 different species of natives out of approximately 2,700 plus Florida native plants found in our woods, swamps, groves, fields, and roadsides. Some of the owners did the conversion themselves. Others hired professionals with native plant experience to come in and remove the sod, design the landscape, and install the native plants for about \$10,000. Some natives, i.e. Walter's viburnum were allowed to grow into a tree and some were trimmed into a shrub. Both are beautiful. Chapter President Steve Turnipseed produced a YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9Eb7MIkYHM>, of conversion from lawn to garden in one year and has added many new natives since the video was made.

Cammie, also Executive Director of the Native Plant Horticulture Foundation (www.nativeplanthort.org), was very excited about the possibilities of this high end community eventually encouraging many homeowners wanting to make their yards more interesting, save on water, fertilizers and eliminate the need to constantly manicure grass lawns. She pointed out to us that large numbers of butterflies and bees were buzzing around the native plants and gardens we visited, but when we passed a village's entrance where imported flowering plants and shrubs sat like a northern garden, we saw no butterflies or pollinators anywhere. Our native butterflies and pollinators do not recognize nor are drawn by the nectar and leaves of these foreign plants. The native gardens are certainly more sustainable as well. They do not use any poisons, little or no fertilizers, and less water.

It was refreshing to see a development with homeowner associations allowing homes to have no lawns, interesting flowers, and attractive designs! Once planted with native plants interspersed with pathways, mulched beds, sometimes a small pool, some have a statue, others have decorative walkways, and sculptures. Some have put in various shaped mounds to artistically set off the plants and the flat pathways. The Villages appeared to be flexible in what they allow to be planted by the homeowner as long as it met a decorative, neat standard. This is quite different from many

other homeowner associations who do not seem to know the environmental and aesthetic value of native plants nor allow even non-native flowers to replace their sod. Larry Reisman, Press Journal Community Editor, last month reported that the Bradford Place homeowners association landscapers yanked out marigolds, impatiens, begonias, and more-including staghorn ferns." The owner of the home has since put his home on the market. His realtor is quoted, saying, "You had the nicest landscaped property...with amazing curb appeal. [Sadly, now] We certainly need to lower your asking price." It is critical to our environment that homeowner associations lighten up and allow natives and gardens to be installed replacing sod.

If you want to plant a lawn or you like the looks of grass lawns, remember, it is a huge waste of water and both petrochemical and human energy and all your runoff pollutes our canals, ditches, rivers and lagoon. Unbelievable that a homeowner's plants or garden can be removed by the association's lawn care folks, let alone be fined for one's garden producing flowers, fruits and vegetables.

To some including me, grass is a weed! What is wrong in having a homeowner planting some vegetables in their front or backyard? Lawns are our biggest crop! Three times bigger than corn! 50,000 square miles! What would happen if we planted only 1% in a garden?

If you want to plant a native garden, we have many enthusiasts in our county who have planted their gardens partially and fully with native plants, most are members of the Eugenia Chapter of the Native Plant Society that have tours to these yards too. Join them at <http://www.fnps.org/chapters/chapters>.

Pelican Island Audubon is also trying to change this:

- We have started a new project to make the "landscape" just around our Audubon House into a model homeowner landscape using natives to be artistic and decorative that will be attractive to homeowners. This includes a butterfly and pollinator garden. Ken Gonyo, Robin Pelensky (our landscape architect), and volunteers started this make over. They removed sod and planted a number of native plants. We can use your help in this project by volunteering on Wednesday and Sunday mornings from 8:30 to 11 am.
- For the last three years, we've gotten kids involved in planting 90 4x4 ft. square gardens in 13 elementary schools to raise vegetables.
- National Audubon Society has a new program "Want to bring more birds to your home?" By growing bird-friendly plants, you give birds the food and shelter they need. Bring more birds to your yard and find the best plants for the birds in your area: audubon.org/native-plants.

If you would like to volunteer for either project, please call our office at 772-567-3520.



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**, **Karen Schuster**
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!

- \$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

Plant of the Month by Janice Broda
Curious Coral Beans

Long spikes of scarlet tubular flowers attract hummingbirds and long-tongued butterflies to our native coral bean (*Erythrina herbacea*) trees. Tropical treelet might be a better characterization. In much of its U.S. range from North Carolina to Texas, coral bean dies back to the ground each year when freezing temperatures arrive.



In Indian River County, “where the topics begin”, coral bean will grow to be a small tree, a treelet, up to about 20’ tall with pale gray-green bark marked by vertical striations. It sports distinctive trifoliate compound leaves with arrowhead shaped leaflets, and its stems have short recurved spines.

Flowering follows a loose schedule depending on



genetics and weather and can occur anytime from December to April in our area. Often, but not always, the treelet will be deciduous and lose all of its leaves prior to flowering.

If pollinated, the coral bean will bear constricted “bean pods” with hard, shiny coral colored seeds inside. Coastal thickets, hardwood hammocks and disturbed areas are the places where you will find coral bean growing. But, how does it get there? Herein lies the curiosity. Frugivorous (fruit-eating) birds disperse the hard and fleshless seeds, apparently the victims of clever mimicry; The showy and shiny seeds resemble fleshy fruits.

Cardinal spear, redbird, and Cherokee bean are other common names for this drought-tolerant plant that does well in sun or partial shade. Place it in your yard where its spines and seeds that are poisonous to people and pets will not be a problem.



Photos by Janice Broda.