

Pelican Island Audubon Society

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- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -



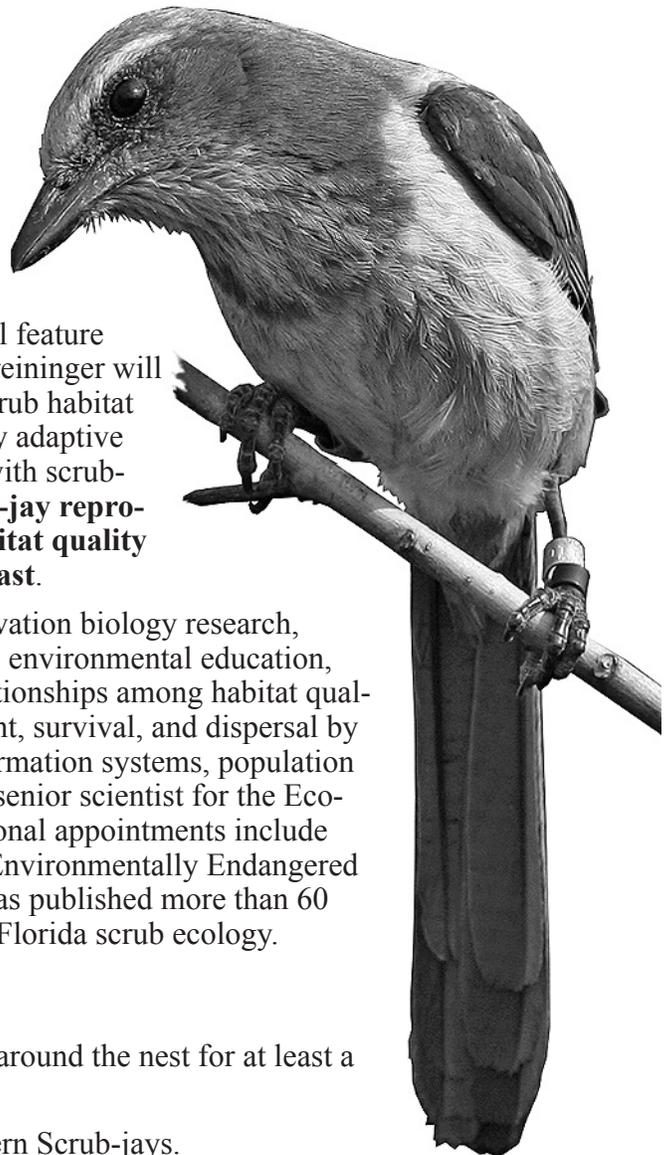
P.O. Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org

Our 44th Year Vol. 44 No. 7 September 2008

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

Learn about the fascinating life of the **Florida Scrub-Jay**

September 15, 2008 - 7:30 p.m.
Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach



Pelican Island Audubon's September 15 general meeting will feature wildlife and conservation biologist Dave Breininger. Dr. Breininger will detail his ongoing work in Florida scrub-jay demography, scrub habitat quality monitoring, scrub-jay population modeling, scrub-jay adaptive resource management and strategic decision making along with scrub-jay recovery studies in a presentation entitled **Florida scrub-jay reproductive success, survival, and dispersal in relation to habitat quality and landscape change along central Florida's Atlantic coast.**

Dave Breininger has 26 years of experience bridging conservation biology research, natural resource management, conservation land acquisition, environmental education, and environmental regulation. Research focused on the relationships among habitat quality, habitat management, landscape arrangements, recruitment, survival, and dispersal by combining field data with remote sensing, geographical information systems, population viability analyses, and landscape modeling. Breininger is a senior scientist for the Ecological Program at Kennedy Space Center. Current professional appointments include the Florida Scrub-Jay Recovery Team and Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Selection and Management Committee. Breininger has published more than 60 scientific articles on biological diversity with half related to Florida scrub ecology.

Light refreshments will be served following the program.

Did you know? Most offspring of Florida Scrub-jays stick around the nest for at least a year to help their parents raise the next generation of young.

Florida Scrub-jays are genetically quite different from Western Scrub-jays.

A Scrub-jay acting as sentinel keeps an eye out for predators while the rest of the family forages for food. Scrub-jays have different calls to signal different types of danger approaching either in the air or on the ground.

Scrub-jays will often land on a person's hand, arm, or head, especially if tempted with food.

Florida Scrub-jay photo by Bob Montanaro.

Visit Cape Cod

with Pelican Island Audubon
October 15 - 20, 2008

Join Pelican Island Audubon on a trip to Cape Cod from October 15 – 20, 2008. The well-known Centerville Motor Lodge, centrally located to our planned excursions, is offering a special rate of \$40 a night. Planned field trips (subject to change) include visits to the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, and Osterville Inlet Bird Sanctuary to view seals, sea lions, birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Other activities include a choice of hiking, kayaking/canoeing, fishing/clamming, or sight-seeing boat tours around the Cape Cod area. Enjoy fine dining at area restaurants culminating in a clam bake with lobsters at the historic Cape Cod home, built in 1793, of Pelican Island Audubon board member Joel Day.

Trip details:

A tax-deductible donation of \$50 paid to Pelican Island Audubon Society is required from each participant to cover organizational expenses.

Participants will be responsible for their own travel arrangements to and from Cape Cod.

Pelican Island Audubon will arrange a carpool or van rental for those interested in sharing costs.

Please call the office at 722-567-3520 for a complete itinerary and breakdown of expected fees and other expenses (excluding airfare).

September Field Trips

September 13, 2008—Forster's Preserve in Wabasso. Meet in Forster's parking lot at 8:00am. Directions: US 1 to CR 510, East to Jungle Trail, South to Forster's Preserve. Leader: Rick Lucas

September 20, 2008—Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay. Carpoolers meet at McDonalds located at I-95 and County Road 512 (Sebastian/Fellsmere exit) at 7:05am. We will leave McDonalds at 7:15am. Directions: I-95 North to Malabar Rd exit in Palm Bay, East to Babcock St, North to Port Malabar Blvd, East to Turkey Creek (behind Civic Center and next to Library). Alternate route is US 1 to Port Malabar Blvd West to Turkey Creek. Leader: Rick Lucas

Please call 772-567-3520 for more information and reservations.

Indian River County Coastal Cleanup

Saturday
September 20, 2008
8:00-11:00 a.m.

Sponsored by
Pelican Island Audubon
&
Keep Indian River
Beautiful

International
Coastal
Cleanup



To volunteer call
772-567-3520

Keep up-to-date with
all the latest
news & information from
Pelican Island Audubon
on the web at

www.pelicanislandaudubon.org



*Forging a New Partnership
for the Benefit of Indian River County.*



OUTREACH CENTER DONORS

We continue to recognize the generous donations made toward building the new Audubon Outreach Center.

July & August donors include:

David Brower
Clarence Conover, Jr.
Henry Doremus
Frances Grocholl
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Pamela King
Sue & Kelly Mather
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Thank you to all who contributed so far! If you have not done so, please consider giving to this wonderful cause to enhance environmental education in Indian River County.

A Hoot for Rachel Carson



This year marks the 100-year anniversary of the birthday of Rachel Carson, the author of *Silent Spring*, a book published in 1962 that pointed out the dangers of chemicals impacting the world, especially pesticides and is widely credited with starting the contemporary environmental movement. The recovery of the brown pelican, bald eagle, osprey, and peregrine falcon from near extinction is to a large extent due to the work of Carson and others who realized that the pesticides did harm if not used responsibly.

As a young graduate student studying mosquitoes, I was introduced to Rachel Carson, in Miami, when she gave a keynote speech at the Entomology Society of America meeting in 1962. Needless to say, she was very controversial in that setting. On one side were many toxicologists who were saying DDT was a very safe chemical. In fact, one scientist even suggested that you could drink DDT with no harmful effects, although it is found in our fat tissue even today and in breakdown products in the muck of our lagoon. There is some evidence that these chemicals affect endocrine and reproductive systems.

In public health and in agriculture, DDT was considered a miracle chemical. It killed viruses and insects causing head lice, malaria, and other disease bearing insects as well as agricultural pest insects. But, it was overused especially in agriculture where it ended up in our streams, rivers, and oceans, eventually getting into the food chain of birds, fish, and crabs. Birds were particularly affected by the thinning of their egg shells that broke during incubation.

Vero Beach's Florida Medical Entomology Lab (FMEL) scientists contributed some of the evidence used by Carson in *Silent Spring* of the bad effects of pesticides. In 1955 Dr. Robert Harrington, Jr. and Professor William Bidlingmayer observed 2000 acres of saltmarsh treated with dieldrin at 1 lb/acre in an attempt to eliminate sandfly larvae in St. Lucie County. The treatment was not done by the FMEL, but they saw the carnage and decided to document it. By sampling, they estimated that 20-30 tons of fish or 1,175,000 of at least 30 species, including snook, were killed. No live specimens could be found. All crustaceans were virtually exterminated including aquatic and fiddler crabs.

With such wide spread use, most insects became quickly resistant to the chemical. Resistance was first found in malaria carrying mosquitoes in Greece in 1946. While I was doing research in El Salvador, I observed that one cotton crop was being sprayed 14 times to kill the cotton weevil. While the ban on DDT occurred in 1964, the major reason for the ban was that DDT was no longer very effective against insects, not that it was harming our wildlife. Even today some advocate using DDT for malaria, but the resistance genes are still found in nature and will be selected for in a few generations.

On publication of *Silent Spring*, President Kennedy ordered a special commission to review the use of pesticides and we now have the protection for humans and wildlife that we have today. It stimulated the passing of The Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency. Much of our labeling of our chemicals have improved and much of agriculture is using "best management practices."

While Rachel Carson got the attention of the world, there is still much to be done. Scientists are still trying to determine which pollutants have led towards increased testicular and breast cancer, reduced fertility, and lower sperm counts. And of course, we humans have continued polluting our water and our air with greenhouse gases, rapidly inducing global warming, thus endangering our existence.

Let's be aware of all unnatural substances we ingest, spray in our homes and spread in our yards...water and air carry them far.

Richard Baker, President

"Man has lost the capacity to foresee and to forestall. He will end by destroying the earth."
---Albert Schweitzer

"I am pessimistic about the human race because it is too ingenious for its own good. Our approach to nature is to beat it into submission. We would stand a better chance of survival if we accommodated ourselves to this planet and viewed it appreciatively instead of skeptically and dictatorially." ---E.B. White



Rachel Carson photo: USFWS

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Who is this? The melodious whistle-like call of this medium-sized stocky songbird is a distinguishing sound in Florida pasture land where they are year-round residents. While its upper parts are streaked brown, black, and white, its throat, breast, and belly are a brilliant yellow, making a colorful contrast as it searches the grass for insects. Though the sexes look alike, the female is smaller with shorter wings. The female, also, weaves the nest on the ground from grass, often including a roof for added protection. The male is too busy to help since he may have two to three mates at a time around the pasture to attend to. According to National Audubon, the overall population has declined by 72% over the past 40 years due to habitat loss.



Answer: Eastern Meadowlark

*Bird info from Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.
 Photo from Treasure Hammock Ranch by Bob Montanaro.*



Florida Cattle Ranch

Follow along with the activities at the historic Treasure Hammock Ranch in Indian River County, everything from working the cattle to viewing the diverse array of wildlife that live on the ranch, at

www.floridacattleranch.org

A photo-documentary project by Bob Montanaro.

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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.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PELICAN ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership benefits include subscriptions to Audubon magazine, Florida Naturalist, and the PIAS newsletter The Peligram. Additionally, members have full borrowing privileges to the PIAS nature library and much more!

- \$20 one-year membership
 Donation \$ _____
 \$20 Friend (receive The Peligram only)
 Check box if a MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL.

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**