

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 52st Year Vol. 52 No. 6 September 2016

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

September 19, 2016 ❖ 7:00 p.m.

SNAKES ALIVE

with Jerry Walls

Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach

Want to learn about Florida's slithery residents? Now is your chance. Jerry Walls will be bringing live snakes to the Vero Beach Community Center to provide an up close and personal look at these fascinating and often misunderstood creatures. Adults and children alike will enjoy this live snake show. Don't miss it!

Jerry Walls is a professional Naturalist and served as the Chief Naturalist for the City of Houston, Texas. He is a freelance nature writer & professional birding guide with a Bachelor of Science Degree from Florida State University. Jerry has written articles about nature for several newspapers including the Georgetown Times and Houston Community Newspapers. He has also appeared on numerous network television programs across the southeast U.S. (including Carolina Safari on CBS) talking about amazing animals. He is passionate about sharing the wonders of nature with others of all ages!

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

SAN JORGE ECO-LODGES

BIRDING & PHOTOGRAPHY TOURS

DEDICATED TOURS IN ECUADOR SINCE 1989



Birding Trip to Ecuador Raffle!!!

Tickets now available!

4 Night/5 Day Deluxe Magic Birding Circuit Tour package for (2) two people, based on double occupancy.

Tour dates to choose from:

December 2 - 6, 2016; January 16 - 20, 2017; February 16 - 20, 2017; March 2 - 6, 2017; October 2 - 6, 2017; November 2 - 6, 2017

Example of Itinerary

Day One - Evening airport to San Jorge Eco-Lodge & Botanical Reserve/Quito; overnight San Jorge de Quito Lodge, no meals included

Day Two - Yanacocha old road, Nono Tandayapa Road (HIGHLAND RAINFOREST/CLOUD FOREST), overnight San Jorge de Tandayapa Lodge, includes 3 meals

Day Three - Birding San Jorge de Tandayapa Hummingbird Sanctuary, Lower Tandayapa Valley (CLOUD FOREST), overnight San Jorge de Tandayapa Lodge, includes 3 meals

Day Four - Birding Milpe Road, overnight San Jorge de Milpe Lodge, includes 3 meals

Day Five - Birding San Jorge de Milpe Orchid & Bird Reserve (UPPER TROPICAL RAINFOREST), later afternoon transfer to San Jorge Eco-Lodge & Botanical Reserve/Quito for dinner. Relax in restaurant or lounge until evening airport transfer, includes 3 meals. The winner may then choose from a selection of our pre-scheduled tour dates listed below, which are all in prime birding season offering the most birds and hummingbirds, and visiting 3 of our private birding reserves and lodges. Winner can add additional days to their trip at their own expense.

Tickets only \$10 each!

Fundraiser for Pelican Island Audubon!

Buy tickets at

www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Masthead photo: Northern Cardinal by Bob Montanaro.

Bird of the Month by Juanita Baker

The artistic black lines of the bill, facial mask extending beyond the gape along with the subtle apricot shading between crown and its long white body are striking features of the Northern Gannet. A most remarkable sight is the feeding behavior of large flocks of gannets as they plunge-dive at 60-mph from great heights (50-130 feet), intent on catching schooling sardines, mackerel and herring 10-15 feet deep. These large seabirds are confined to the Atlantic Ocean, coming to land only when chasing fish, during gale-force winds, or when breeding in large colonies. Only six colonies are established in North America, along the coasts of Newfoundland and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Separate populations breed at 32 sites along eastern Atlantic coasts from Norway to France, especially in Scotland.

The male gannet finds a nesting site on a rocky cliff, attracts a mate, and bonds monogamously for life, assuming equal parenting duties. The female lays one egg that both parents take turns incubating with specially vascularized (and thus warm) feet. By late September, the chick, 13 weeks old and covered with brown feathers, leaps from the cliff into the sea. Because its wings are not yet full grown for another week, it swims with other juveniles migrating southward to the mid-Atlantic along reef edges. By December, the western North Atlantic gannets reach Florida's east coast wintering grounds, some on to the Gulf and Mexico. All gannets begin their return migration by April.

In February, when fishes at low tide were concentrated and plentiful, the Sebastian Inlet attracted many diving, feeding Gannets. Cara Woods using her Canon 5D Mark III photographed this Northern Gannet lifting off. Notice the black wing tips of the primary and secondary feathers. Many white birds have black wing-tips as black pigment strengthens, reducing feather wear.

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



Photo credit: "Off to Lunch" © Cara Woods, Canon 100-400 II lens @400mm, f/8, 1/2000 sec, ISO 640.

An Unexpected Sighting by Linda Chancellor

The Lagoon Greenway trail had finally reopened after the county had closed it to chemically treat many of the invasive non-native plants that had settled in this beautiful, native oak and cabbage palm hammock. I arrived on a very hot, humid day last May to see the results. Chemical treatment is effective in killing established plants but it does not prevent new seeds from germinating. Scattered here and there were shrubs and trees with brown leaves. Then I approached the monoculture forest of Australian pines. The dense green needles were now gray but still hanging from dead branches. I crossed the bridge and followed the loop trail which was hemmed in on both sides by masses of red mangroves. Finally there was an opening and I could see the beautiful Indian River.

The air was still with no breeze or sound and I turned to continue my walk. I spotted a large bird standing in the path - I grabbed my camera but the sound of turning it on caused the bird to fly. Why hadn't I grabbed my binoculars instead? When it flew away I thought I had seen yellow legs. Could it be a Yellow-crowned Night Heron? I turned the corner to go



west and there was another bird in the path. This time, using the binoculars, I confirmed it was a Yellow-crowned Night Heron and he was beautiful. White breeding plumes hung down the back of his head. I could clearly see the red iris of his eye in his boldly marked face. He had beautiful slate blue feathers with a few white bars. Next I grabbed my camera and this time he let me take his picture. Ten more steps another picture. Ten more steps another picture and then he lifted his wings, flew farther down the path and landed again. We replayed the routine again and then I spotted another heron in the path ahead but this time the colors of that bird were muted. A juvenile or a female? That bird immediately flew over the top of the mangroves but he flew up to the next tree and posed for several minutes while I took several more photos. Was he trying to distract me from her? Then he too flew over the trees.

FYI - Florida's parks and natural areas are being invaded by non-natives that often replace natives. If you would like to join the Tuesday morning volunteers in their efforts to remove invasive plants contact Ken Gonyo - Indian River Land Trust Volunteer Coordinator at Kengonyo@aol.com

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



NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS

Make a note that Pelican Island Audubon has a new e-mail address: **PIAudubon@yahoo.com**

A Great Year for Us! Come join us! We need your help and skills!



Tired of hearing our Indian River Lagoon and Everglades are dying? No secret- we and now the Whole World know! Too many manatees, dolphins, pelicans and other birds, millions of fish, and our seagrasses have disappeared. Not just in Florida, but worldwide. According to an Audubon report, Climate Change and pollution will lead over 314 U.S. bird species to decline or become extinct

in the next 50 years!

Pogo said "We have met the enemy, and he is us." We have transformed our Earth: drilled it, mined it, burned it, drained it, built on it, 'fracked' it, driven on it, put grass, sugar, and other crops and farm animals everywhere on it, all with little concern for where the fertilizers, oil, brine, other chemicals, and poop end up.

BUT, can we as individuals do something beneficial, anything to remedy the situation at this late stage? YES! There are solutions, but they will require determination, education, acting together, and money! Actions we can take immediately:

1. Support Sen. Joe Negron's \$2.4 billion proposal to buy 60,000 acres of sugar land to build a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to prevent continued massive discharges of polluted water to the Lagoon. TC Palm's unscientific poll said 70% of respondents do not support it! Yet 75% of citizens voted for Amendment 1 to purchase key conservation lands. Money is there, waiting to be spent!!!
2. Raise funds locally through taxes/long term bond issues to remove septic tanks and encourage hybrid systems near all water bodies. Robert Bolton, City of Vero Beach's Director of Water and Sewer is leading the way in installing these. Brevard's County Commission voted 5-0 to raise the sales tax 1/2% for funds to remove septic tanks and dredge the Lagoon.
3. Stop watering, fertilizing, and installing turf grass and replace your lawn with butterfly- and bird-friendly plants. Do we need to follow the British and European royalty's penchant for large

4. Hire lawn-care folks who care for and enhance butterfly- and bird-loving plants instead of those who Mow, Blow & Go.
5. Vote for those who support the above actions.

PIAS has led the county to pass stronger ordinances for landscaping, tree, fertilizer use and protection of sea turtles. All of these efforts are important to fostering wildlife and clean water. Now that we have built the Audubon House, one goal is to exhibit examples of native landscaping, especially wildflower and butterfly gardens.



Steve Goff & Ken Gonyo working on the butterfly garden.

Janice Broda provided a wildflower workshop last winter, which we hope to offer again along with UF's Florida Medical Entomology Lab ORCA Volunteer Stewardship Class in January, 2017.

Recently, butterfly-garden expert Ken Gonyo joined PIAS as our Landscape Volunteer Coordinator to help us maintain and improve our native landscape. Ken will also hold Landscaping and Butterfly Gardening learning experiences for volunteers. These programs are scheduled for 8:30 am on Wednesday and Sunday mornings at the Audubon House. As a member, you

can also co-lead a nature walk at the adjacent Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area with Ken Gonyo. This is a great way to learn the local plants and animals.

We broke ground on the Butterfly Garden on August 17th (see photo of PIAS Treasure Steve Goff and Ken Gonyo). We greatly appreciate the donation of the pavers by Atlantic Hardscapes Supply in Ft. Pierce; the pavers will show the path through the garden. We are also planning to emphasize a "native plants for birds" program.



Kim Prado of Marine Bank and Richard Baker with Marine Bank's mascot Mariner Pete & Georgia Irish.

Your membership is crucial to supporting our projects. Soon PIAS will roll out a **Business Membership, which will add broader community support to our work..** One of the first business interested in joining is Marine Bank and Trust, whose mascot is Pelican Marine Pete. If you know of any business that might want to become a business member with PIAS, or if you would like to volunteer

to support our various programs including afterschool, women's workshops, or school square-foot gardens, please call 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.

Plant of the Month by Janice Broda
Gorgeous Gaillardia

Blanket flower, firewheel, sundance, and rose-ring gaillardia are among the many common names given to a delightful daisy, *Gaillardia pulchella*, that grows throughout most of the U.S. Its species name, *pulchella*, means pretty, and its species name honors, M. Gaillard de Marentoneau, an 18th-century French magistrate and patron of botany.



Its pinwheel flowers are quite variable, usually combinations of reds, oranges, and yellows, the result of natural hybridization. What we colloquially call petals are really bracts (modified leaves). The “disk” center is a collection of many, many tiny flowers that open individually from the outside to the inside and can be reddish-purple, orange-red, or yellow.

Daisy-type (composite) flowers, provide an ongoing source of nectar for butterflies, bees, and other pollinators. Each individual flower, when pollinated, produces a dry fruit (achene) that will germinate if the necessary soil and moisture conditions prevail. -- if not eaten by a granivorous bird.

Gaillardia begins as a rosette of lobed leaves and, depending on conditions, grows to 1 to 2' tall and 2 to 3' wide. Its grey-green leaves are alternate and hairy. Flowering is copious, especially from March through July with showy flowers held on long pedicels (stems).

Very hardy, gaillardia thrives in sunny, well-drained conditions. It can be seen growing on the backside of beach dunes and along roadsides. Gaillardia will be among the plants featured in my talk – **Bugs, Blooms, Berries & Birds** – on Monday, October 17 at 7pm at the Vero Beach Community Center.

Gaillardia

Photos by Janice Broda.

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