



September 2023

Peligrain

Join Peli's 80 days Outdoors Adventure Challenge

Peli is heading out on an epic outdoor adventure for 80 days and She wants YOU to join her journey across Indian River County visiting the various historical sites, natural areas, and other wondrous places in this tropical paradise we call home. Follow the fun on social media starting Sept. 21 and find out where and when you can MEET PELI in person. In the meantime, get out there and spend some time outdoors. More at PelicansIslandAudubon.org

We get it. It's tough balancing all the demands of work, school and family activities. That's why it's so nice to know research shows that just 20 minutes outside works wonders for your stress levels and overall feelings of well-being.



Education and Demonstration Gardens at the County Commission and UP Against Poverty Entrances

by Richard H. Baker, Ph.D., Board Chair

Pelican Island Audubon Society (PIAS) volunteers planted an Education & Demonstration Native Gardens at Indian River County Commission Building A in March 2022, and in January 2023, gardens at the United Against Poverty building. As part of the PIAS Trees for Life/Plants for Birds project to plant 100,000 native trees and plants, our vision for these gardens was to educate and demonstrate to the public that native-plant gardens can be both beautiful and beneficial. Many people in their daily lives come to the county complex to attend commission and other meetings, pay taxes, or visit the county health department and extension offices. Bob Montanaro, our Office Manager, made a 5-minute video showing the creation of the County Commission garden <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH1cZwNqQ20&t=59s>.

After completing this garden, Matt Tanner, Executive Director of Up Against Poverty (UP) building in Vero Beach, requested that we plant a similar Education and Demonstration Native Plant Garden at their entrance. Twenty-three of our dynamic volunteers in five hours planted the 232 plants of 27 species at three separate areas, two at the entrance and one in front of a large major mural near the entrance, after killing the turfgrass by covering it with recycled cardboard and pine straw. The plantings were done with the help of an FPL/Audubon Florida grant. In addition, we gave away 416 native trees and plants to the visitors on four Wednesdays with instructions on planting. We also placed medal plant ID signs with QR codes providing information for all plant species along with pamphlets on-site that recommend native plants for birds, butterflies, and bees. References to the Florida Native Plant Society and National Audubon Society websites show how to select native plants for their yards. Visitors can come to our PIAS Nursery in Vero Beach to select free trees and native plants at low cost.

Up Against Poverty in Indian River County, a nonprofit, helps families to succeed by becoming economically self-sufficient through various enrichment services. Its mission is to provide crisis care, case management, transformative education, mentorship and resume building, food and household subsidies, employment training and active referrals to other collaborative social-service providers. They also provide counseling for substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence and Veterans assistance. They run a large grocery of community-donated items for those below the Federal Poverty line, and the UP center has hundreds of daily visitors, with more than 10,000 visitors to the 46,000 sq. ft. building annually.

Now visitors to UP can see that by planting native trees and plants, they can play a role in helping solve the crises facing our climate and lagoon. Besides being beautiful, the native plants provide food for birds and wildlife and help maintain clean water for fish and manatees. So far, to meet our 100,000 native trees and plants goal, we have distributed over 18,800 native trees and plants. Many of the free Live Oak and Mahogany are grown from acorns and seeds. We appreciate the generous contributions from Sebastian River Farms and Cherry Lake Nursery.

A very special thanks to Stephanie Dunn of Cadence Landscape Architects who did a terrific job of designing the native garden, planting many of the plants, directing our volunteers in planting, and continuing to provide advice.

Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities, and the land and water on which they depend in Indian River County through education, advocacy, and public awareness.

Officers & Directors

Officers

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1st Vice-Chair **Bill Halliday**
2nd Vice-Chair **Fred Poston, Ph.D.**
Recording Secretary **Darlene Halliday**
Corresponding Secretary **George Glenn**
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Elected Directors:

Albert Alley, M.D. '26
Graham Cox, Ph.D. '26
Susan Lovelace '25
Bill Loftus, Ph.D. '24
Ricky Ray '25
Bonnie Swanson '24

Appointed Board Members:

Nathan Burkett-Cadena, Ph.D.
Nancy Irvin
Steve Palmquist
Morgan Rockwell
Hadi Shalhoub, DO

Executive Director **Donna Halleran**

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.

Audubon House

195 9th Street SE (Oslo Rd.), Vero Beach
M - F | 9AM - 1PM

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 1833, Vero Beach, FL 32961

Phone: 772-567-3520

E-Mail: piaudubon@yahoo.com

Website:

www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org



Audubon Florida Assembly: Conservation in a Changing Landscape

Save the Date! October 26-28, 2023.

Audubon Assembly will be held in-person October 26-28 at the Sheraton Tampa Brandon Hotel. This year's theme is Conservation in a Changing Landscape - click here to register. A link on our registration page will take assembly participants to the hotel's special room reservation block.

With learning sessions, a keynote presentation, awards, and field trips to some of the birdiest hotspots in the region, Assembly is a great opportunity to network with Audubon members, staff, and volunteers across the state.

Keynote: A Conservation Photography Conversation

When does wildlife photography become conservation photography? The best nature photography doesn't just capture the imagination—the images both educate the viewer and inspire action. Hear from three photographers leading the charge to use nature photography for conservation, harnessing the power of the lens to create change for birds and wildlife: Kirsten Hines, Gabby Salazar, and Preeti Desai.



Kirsten Hines/Photo: Roseate Spoonbill/Audubon Photography Award

Learning session topics:

- Creating Habitat in Unconventional Ways to Maximize Connections for Conservation Lands
- Perspectives from the Next Generation of Conservationists
- From Birding to Conservation: Bringing Birders into the Conservation Movement

Learn more and register at <https://fl.audubon.org>

Adopt an Advocate! Please help support our outdoor science, Audubon Advocates after-school program

Please help support our outdoor science, Audubon Advocates after-school program, focuses each year on 104 5th graders from four under-served elementary schools to improve science scores, mental health, and opportunities for students, particularly under-served minorities and girls to be comfortable outdoors and become an Environmental Advocate for Indian River County.

The Environmental educator and scientists take students outdoors into nature to kayak, photograph, sketch, meet a variety of scientists and learn about our county's diverse habitats, the role of seagrasses, mangroves, mosquitos, snakes, fish and birds.

Children are given the opportunity to explore and develop their natural curiosity. This experience is encouraging students to be strong environmental advocates now and in the future!

**Please Adopt
an Advocate:
Do Something
Extraordinary!
\$500 Supports
One 5th Grader
per term,
or consider
giving what you
can.**



Help fund one or more students to attend our 14-week after-school program at Audubon House. Thank you!

1-student \$500 _____ any amount

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

My check is enclosed. Make check payable to Pelican Island Audubon Society and mail to P.O. Box 1833, Vero Beach, FL 32961
Or donate online at PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Please check if you would like an update on your sponsored student.

The IRC Lagoon Management Plan can Help Stop Deadly Heat, Floods, Fires by Planting Trees!



The Indian River County (IRC) staff and commissioners have put much work into this Lagoon Management Plan <https://www.irccgov.com/Lagoon-Management-Plan.htm>, and that is appreciated as Global Warming and Sea Level Rise should be priority #1 for us all. It is critical for not only the survival of the Lagoon and the plants and animals found there, but essential for our survival. All conservation is local and thank you for addressing this. If the manatees, fishes, and birds survive, then we will survive. We humans are in control and can make a difference.

Florida, and especially IRC, is doing a great job in saving critical lands for conservation. Yet our county is unique and critical with the headwaters to the St. Johns River system impacting a quarter of our state. Our county land is unequalled with so many different habitats to preserve: ocean beach homes for nesting birds and turtles, Lagoon with dense mangroves, coastal Oak hammocks, the high, dry scrub ridge with unique species, grasslands, open swamps, and Longleaf Pine forests. Each of these varied habitats should be preserved to protect the dwindling biodiversity remaining in each. 90% of our Florida Scrub-Jays are gone as scrub habitat is still being lost to development. We have passed three bond referendums (1992 for 26 million, 2004 for 50 Million, and 2022 for 50 million) to provide funds for land conservation, but we need to do more. Our manatees, fishes, and birds are dying.

Political Leaders! Get serious about protecting our home, our county, and our Earth. You were elected to serve and protect us. The climate crisis is here, now, not in the future! Thousands of lives could be lost as our community too could be ravaged by wildfires, floods, droughts, heat waves, and hurricanes. Billions of people are being harmed by human-caused climate change affecting our environment by heating up the planet, which is killing our fishes and causing sea level rise to flood our homes. Coastal Florida ocean waters are over 100F! We've hit record-high temperatures, the hottest in recorded history. How can we stop from further damaging our county? Huge green areas are being clear-cut to the ground not only for homes, roads, and parking lots, but to construct huge storage buildings for all the extra stuff we buy but have no place for! A big waste of land, soaking up and holding our sun's heat.

While we need to install wind turbines and solar panels, and to remove septic tanks, one of the best ways to stop the Earth's heating is to save and plant more trees, something that we all can do. For starters, let's update our tree and landscape ordinances. Most importantly: stop clearcutting our forests for development. Leave the big trees! Build around them. In the U.S. we plant three times more turfgrass acreage than corn but we cannot eat it. Mowing grass with noisy gas-power tools has produced a desert of grass. Americans burn 800 million gallons of gas/year trimming yards and spill 17 million more when refueling equipment. Astounding, 64% of our disappearing drinking water goes on lawns (88% in summer). Maybe more with this year's heat. Turfgrass roots are only 2 in. long and so require frequent watering.

Each of us can make a difference! Native trees and plants are key. Let's set aside lands for diversity: replace 80% of turfgrass by rapidly rewilding lands by using the Miyawaki Method where different native trees and plants are planted close together. This provides shade and evapotranspiration that lowers temperatures, absorbs CO2 to reduce climate change, and lowers home energy costs. Evapotranspiration alone can reduce cities' peak summer temperatures by 2-90 F. Trees capture gallons of rainfall, reducing flooding.

Let's make more parks in our cities for residents to enjoy, plant more trees to shade parking lots, and use less concrete and more impermeable-surface parking lots. Replace the number of cut trees along edges of roads to have shady welcoming neighborhoods. At least save one large tree on each lot. Planting trees in a new yard is required, but frequently the trees are replaced with palms that provide little shade. A palm is NOT a real tree but a glorified grass, providing little environmental benefit especially if a non-native palm. Low-impact developments are key to preserving our future. Require each development to have an acre of forested or natural habitat park preserved for every 50 homes.

Originally, huge 300-year-old pine, oak, and cypress trees graced our lands, but now 34% of our native plants are at risk of extinction. Native trees are good for our environment while non-native plants can be toxic to our insects, birds, and wildlife. Native plants provide food and habitat for many animals, especially our birds, which, since 1970, have decreased by nearly 30%, that's Three billion birds gone! The best tree for birds is our Southern Live Oak that Pelican Island Audubon gives away free along with other native species.

In Indian River County, 395 species of butterfly and moth caterpillars that 80% of our birds feed to their young use Southern Live Oaks as food and protective shelter. Some 90% of our insects are beneficial or benign, and many Florida pollinator insects raise their young underground. However, we use insecticides that target all insects and soil microorganisms regardless of whether they are beneficial. Herbicides also kill beneficial plants. If left alone, their remains of which enrich our soils with nutrients and feed pollinators. After killing the plants that supplied natural nutrients, we then add

fertilizers that run off into the Lagoon, providing excess nutrients that cause algae blooms that suffocate our seagrasses, thus starving Manatees. For every ton of fertilizer produced, two tons of CO2 are released. Most native plants, after they are established, do not require fertilizer and extra water (as their roots go deep).

In addition to homes, our county and cities can plant many trees and native plants along our roads, especially in the medians, for example 66th Avenue where hundreds of native trees were and are being removed to four-lane it. Find the best native trees and plants for your area at <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/Plants/2804>.

Indian River County is now working on a Lagoon Management Plan. Let's include revising our tree and landscape ordinances to protect our native trees, plants, animals, and ourselves. We need to treat our Lagoon like a person and give it its Rights of Nature and Rights to Clean Water.

Let's aspire to become green citizens—essential to save the world for our descendants. Let's change how we live immediately to protect ourselves and the wonderful beauty of nature. Don't consume so much, conserve what we have and reuse and recycle. Our future and that of our children depends on that. We don't have much time. We all must act now in the next few years. It is that bad. Join Pelican Island Audubon's efforts to tree our county. Let's collaborate!



Join Pelican Island Audubon at **Schacht Groves**, 6100 12th Street, Vero Beach, FL, for a festival perfect for the whole family!

- Inflatable obstacle course
- PIAS movie preview
- Petting zoo
- Food truck
- Kona Ice
- And More!

FREE ADMISSION!
NOV. 11, 2023
11AM-2PM

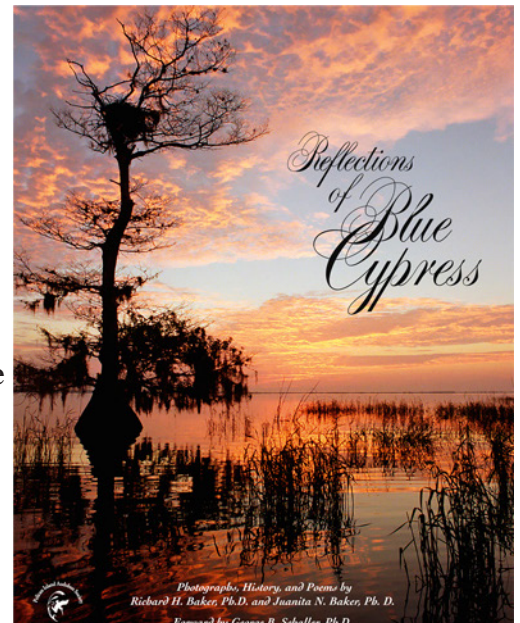
Add these books to your library!



Reflections of Blue Cypress: Photographs, History, and Poems of the Headwater Lake of the St. Johns River by Richard H. Baker & Juanita N. Baker with a Forward by George Schaller. [124 pages]
\$25 - Price includes tax

Florida Birds Exposed: Pelican Island Audubon Society Photos of the Month Introducing Florida's Birds by Juanita N. Baker
\$32 - Price includes tax.

Purchase online at PelicanIslandAudubon.org or at Audubon House, 195 9th St. SE (Oslo Rd), Vero Beach



Come Visit Pelican Island Audubon's new Little Free Library for kids & adults!

Take a Book,
Leave a Book.
Love a Book,
Keep a Book.



In addition to our main library where titles and authors can be found on our website <https://pelicanislandaudubon.org/library/>, we have started a new Little Free Library at the entrance to our Audubon House. Anyone may take a book - neighbors, friends, and passerby. The books are always free and book donations are welcome at this Little Free Library.

The Circle of Life

by Linda Chancellor

Numerous small black butterflies flitted around the flowering stalks of the cabbage palms. One landed on a flower and appeared to be drinking nectar. When motionless it kept its wings folded above its red orange abdomen. Blue iridescent spots and a single red spot were the only markings on its velvety black wings. They were Atala butterflies! The coontie plants, at the base of the palms, had been almost completely defoliated. I searched for caterpillars and found several nestled together under a leaf as if avoiding the hot sun. They were red orange with seven pairs of yellow spots. I bent down to take a photo and saw dozens of half inch orange chrysalises hanging under some partially defoliated fronds. Each chrysalis hung from a small black dot and was anchored by a few silken threads. There were dozens and dozens of them attached to the undersides of the fronds and I could still see the caterpillars through the almost transparent orange chrysalises. A few

chrysalises were darker, and I realized that I was seeing black wings. They were ready to hatch! Over the next twelve days several butterflies hatched each morning and hung there until their wings were dry. Then they would fly up to a nearby tree. A new generation would begin their search for mates.

FYI – The Atala butterfly is the largest hairstreak butterfly in Southeast Florida. The adult butterflies drink nectar and prefer the flowers of cabbage palm, shiny-leaf wild coffee, Beautyberry, native blue Porterweed and the wildflower Spanish Needles. The caterpillar's primary food source is the young leaves of the Coontie plant. The leaves, tuberous roots and female cones contain the natural poison Cycasin. When the caterpillars eat the leaves they absorb the poison and it remains in their body through out their life span as adults. The bright red orange color is an example of aposematic coloring which serves as a warning sign to predators that it is dangerous to eat them.



Linda Chancellor



Linda Chancellor



Bob Montanaro

The Wrack Line is Natural and Necessary

by Donna Halleran, Executive Director

The wrack line is the area on the beach where organic material and other debris is deposited at high tide. Typical debris includes seaweed, algae, seeds, mangrove leaves and propagules along with sponges and shells. There are two high tides each day that bring in seaweed and other debris to form this important part of the ecosystem.

At first glance, one might think the wrack line isn't very appealing and that it ruins the beach aesthetic to have seaweed on the beach. But understanding how important it is makes it into a welcomed site. The seaweed provides shelter for various animals. Among the wrack line you'll find small crustaceans. As these creatures feed among the seaweed, the shorebirds come along and feed on them.

All this foraging breaks down the seaweed, and the particles become nutrients for the dunes. The wrack line also helps stabilize the sand, which in turn promotes dune life.

In addition to these benefits, the wrack line is a treasure trove for those who take time to look. The seashells and the drift seeds have all made a journey and tell the story of this wonderful cycle. It serves as an ecological bridge between the land and sea. [Photos by Bob Montanaro.]



Ruddy Turnstone foraging in the wrackline.



Ghost Crab foraging in the wrackline.

Summer Camp Adventures

by *Lauren Reeves,*
Environmental Educator

This year's Audubon Adventure Summer Camps went wonderfully. We had 5 weeks of camp this year, each filled with litter pick-ups, hikes, field trips, and science education. It is amazing and so fulfilling to witness the ability of children to always find some way to play outside, despite the heat, despite mosquitoes, despite having just spent hours hiking or kayaking.

One moment that touched my heart this summer was kayaking at Round Island with campers from the Homeless Children's Foundation. Joined by Alexis Peralta, Stormwater Educator for Indian River County, and Ladd Borne, one of PIAS's amazing volunteers, this was for many participating children their first-time kayaking. Right as we disembarked, we were greeted by a herd of manatees hanging out near the boat dock. One swam right up to one of the kids' boats, slightly bumping it, then putting its nose up to the surface to get a breath of air. The kid said he could feel its breath! After the herd swam further down the lagoon, our group came upon a smack of comb jellies. After

being informed that they do not sting, the children were ecstatic, one child claiming it was the best day of her life. The children gently scooped the gelatinous creatures out of the water to observe briefly before giving them an individual name and returning them to the water.

As a nice relaxing get together before the start of the school year, the IRC RiverKidz met on August 8th to paint rocks. The children were instructed to paint a positive, encouraging message or image on each rock. A lot of the children were simply content with painting a rock a single color, but there are a couple butterflies, fish, and kind messages on some. Come see them in person at the Audubon House! Join the IRC RiverKidz on September 9th for a presentation on the biological control of invasive species by Sara Salgado, a doctoral student from University of Florida's IFAS and recent recipient of the International Organization for Biological Control's Global Early Career Award. The presentation will be followed by an air potato round-up contest. All IRC RiverKidz events are free and for all ages, including adults and seniors.



Wild Native Plant Warriors Needed! SAVE THE DATE - Day of Caring - Saturday, October 21, 2023

9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

Audubon House 195 9th St. SE (Oslo Rd.), Vero Beach

Pelican Island Audubon Society will be participating in the **United Way-Day of Caring** event. We will have several teams working on a variety of outdoor clean-up projects. We have adult, youth and family teams: Thorn Clan, Invasive Vine Clan and the Kindness Crew. The teams will be working to take down invasive air potato vines, clearing trails, pulling weeds and invasive grasses.

Bring your friends & family for a fun day in the woods help clear the trails! Become an advocate for the Indian River Lagoon.

There will be hourly prizes!

Have a good time with like-minded nature loving folks.

For those wanting a more Zen experience - weeding the on site native gardens may be for you!

Sign up at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

For questions call the office M-F, 9-1 at 772-567-3520



Upcoming Events

Get more details for each event [and register, if required] by visiting the Events Calendar at **PelicanIslandAudubon.org**

1. Oct 13 - Game Night At Audubon House - 6:30-8:30PM
2. Oct 16 - Welcome Back! Audubon House Open House 7-9PM - Everyone Welcome! Light refreshments served.
3. Oct 21 - United Way Day of Caring
4. Oct 23 - General Meeting - Vero Beach Community Center - *Creepy Crawly Land Crabs of Florida - And Beyond!* with Bob Montanaro - 7-9PM
5. Nov 11 - Schacht Farms Family Farm Day - 11AM-2PM
6. Nov 13 - General Meeting - North County Library - 6-8PM
7. Nov 27 - General Meeting - *Confronting The Fear Of Sharks* with Lauren Reeves - Vero Beach Community Center - 7-9PM



WELCOME

to the 48 new members from the Indian River County Schools!! Visit our website at **PelicanIslandAudubon.org** and explore our field trips, talks, and other events.

Volunteer!

Visit

PelicanIslandAudubon.org

to view the list of volunteer positions. Fill out the form online and let us know what you are interested in.

Working together we can do great things for the environment

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Office help, Newsletter: fold, stuff envelopes
- Join the air potato pullers
- Audubon House Maintenance- classroom, bathrooms, breezeway
- Landscaping, Trees for Life Project, watering plants
- Field Trip Leader
- Fundraising
- Come join the Tree/Native Plants Team! Sun/Wed/Fri 9AM-11:00AM Help Green IRC!!!

A big thanks to everyone who makes it all work!

Stop by and browse the native plant nursery - over 16,000 native plants & trees distributed so far!

Free Trees Available in 1 gallon pots:

Southern Live Oak

Attracts insects for birds

Mahogany

Nice tree

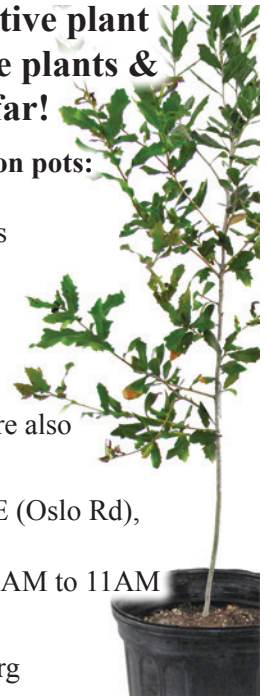
Bald Cypress

Also grows in dry soil

A selection of native plants are also available at low prices.

Audubon House - 195 9th Street SE (Oslo Rd), Vero Beach, on Wednesday - Friday - Sunday from 9AM to 11AM

More at PelicanIslandAudubon.org



Go Green!

Members may sign up to have the Peligram emailed to them. Saves postage and paper. Email piaudubon@yahoo.com with your name & email address with "Peligram" in the subject line.



Pelican Island Audubon Society Membership Form

Enclosed is my:

NAME _____ \$ _____ \$25 for annual membership

ADDRESS _____ \$ _____ \$30 for family membership

CITY, STATE ZIP _____ \$ _____ \$100 Scrub-Jay sustaining membership

E-MAIL _____ \$ _____ \$200 Osprey sustaining membership

_____ \$ _____ contribution

_____ \$ _____ TOTAL

Please mail this completed form with a check made out to:
Pelican Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1833
Vero Beach, FL 32961

Or join online using a credit card at www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org