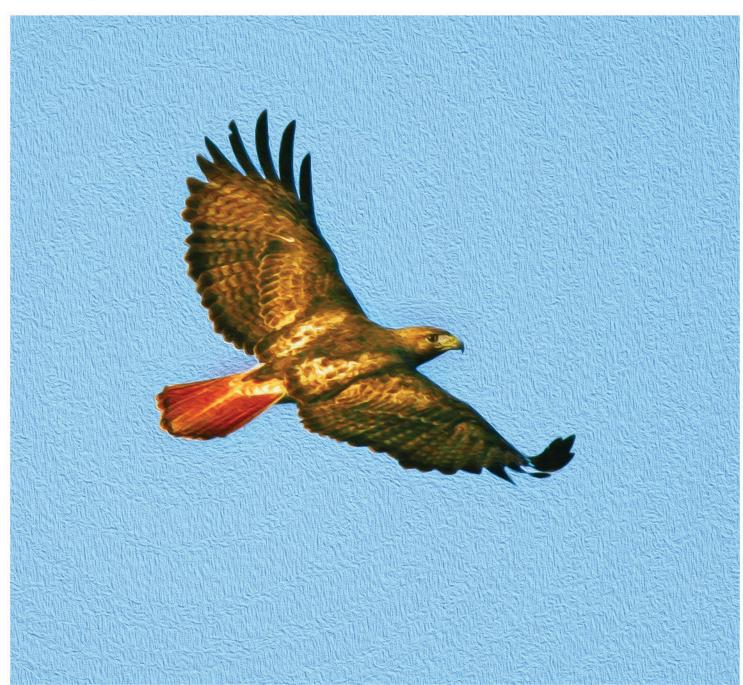


Peligram

March **2024**



Upcoming Meetings & Field Trips

Field Trips are space limited & require registration in advance. For more details & to register please visit PelicanIslandAudubon.org

- March 2 Field Trip: Audubon House Native Plant Nursery Guide: Steve Palmquist
- March 4 Field Trip: Sebastian Inlet State Park Guide: Robin Cox-Laird
- March 5 Field Trip: Seminole Ranch Conservation Area -Guide: Ricky Ray
- March 12 Field Trip: St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park - Guide: Samantha McGee
- March 14 Field Trip: Sebastian Inlet State Park Guide: Steve Palmquist
- March 19 Field Trip: Herky Huffman/Bull Creek WMA -Guide: Ricky Ray
- March 21 Field Trip: Osprey Acres Stormwater Park & Nature Preserve - Guide: Lani York
- March 24 Field Trip: Kashi Ashram Guide: Felicity Rask
- March 26 Field Trip: Wakodahatchee & Green Cay Wetlands - Guides: Bill & Becky Lofus
- April 12 Field Trip: SUMICA Wilderness Preserve Guide: Ricky Ray
- April 30 Field Trip: SUMICA Wilderness Preserve Guide: Ricky Ray

Riverkidz Events

All events are FREE and open to the public. Register by emailing piaudubonedu@gmail.com

- Feb 24 Birding for Kidz 3-5PM 7305 4th St., Vero Beach
- March 16 Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge Field Trip - 10-11:30AM - 4055 Wildlife Way, Vero Beach
- April 27 Kayaking at Round Island 9-11AM 2175 SR-A1A, Vero Beach
- May 11 Migratory Bird Day Poster Making Party 1-3PM -Audubon House, 195 9th St. SE (Oslo Rd.), Vero Beach
- June 15 Jaycee Park Beach Clean-up 9-10:30AM 4200 Ocean Drive, Vero Beach

Now Registering for Summer Adventure Camp at Audubon House



Pelican Island Audubon Society is offering weekly science-based summer camps for students entering 5th through 8th grades. Give your child a summer of outdoor adventure, exploration, and education. Sign up for Pelican Island Audubon Summer Adventure Camps in June and July.

Activities include kayaking, birdwatching, wildlife & plant identification, hiking, science education, and more!

Plus a special camp is being held June 24-28 for younger campers 7-9 years old.

Learn more & register at PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Tram Tours of Pelican Island NWR

Registration is open for the 2024 wildlife tours at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. Free tram tours are offered every Wednesday from 8-10 a.m., beginning January 3 through April 24. Tour guides will share information about the history of Pelican Island - the nation's first wildlife refuge - and the many species of birds and other wildlife found at the refuge. Reservations are required because of limited space. Please call (772) 581-5557, leave your name and phone number and a refuge volunteer will contact you to schedule a tour.



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.

Executive Director **Donna Halleran**Environmental Educator **Lauren Reeves**Office Manager **Bob Montanaro**

Officers & Directors Officers

Board Chair **Richard H. Baker, Ph.D.** 1st Vice-Chair **Bill Halliday** 2nd Vice-Chair **Steve Palmquist** Recording Secretary **Darlene Halliday** Corresponding Secretary **OPEN**

Treasurer Steve Goff

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.
Judy Davis
Nancy Irvin
Nick Polge

Morgan Rockwell Hadi Shalhoub, DO

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

It's Only A Tree. If you don't need it leave it!

My Hoot

* Pichara H. Baxes

MuHoot My favorite species in the world are trees. In addition to humans, trees are the most important organisms influencing the future of our Earth. Trees are essential to the well-being of humans and wildlife.

I also love music! One of my favorite songs is "It's Only A Tree" by one of my favorite folk singers, Okefenokee Joe (Dick Flood) who lived in the Okefenokee Swamp and died at 90 in 2023 (https://okefenokeejoe.com/who-is-okefenokee-joe). His song describes why we must protect our trees. I was fortunate to meet him at the famous Florida Folk Festival at the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park in White Springs. It takes place along the historic and beautiful Suwannee River on Memorial Day weekends where you can hear over 300 performances that give voice and meaning to Florida's heritage and environment (https://www.floridastateparks.org/FloridaFolkFestival). In his book *Swampwise* written in 2018, he writes "If the plants and creatures of the natural world could speak, each and every one of them would ask of the human race the same thing! Stop the waste, the destruction, and the pollution all across the earth!"

Okefenokee Joe's song starts: "It's only a tree. Just one more tree. Who cares if it lives or it dies? It's only a tree. What's one less tree? Who'd miss it? You'd be surprised! The graceful white-tailed deer nibbles on the leaves of the purple flower growing in the shade. Take away the tree, the flower grows no more. The deer must find another place to graze. Tiny insects dwell in the shelter of its bark. Graceful songbirds flock each day to feed. Take away the tree their shelter will be gone. The insects and the birds will have to leave. It may be just a tree, but it amazes me how much would be missing if that tree should cease to be. The otter eats the fish that ate the dancing fly born in the cocoon up in that tree. It leaves will shade the ferns. It seeds will feed the mouse. Its branches reach out to all those in need. A spider spins its web. A squirrel can do its nest. There is nothing a tree will not befriend. It may be just a tree, but it amazes me how important to all life on Earth one single tree can be. From the Earth and from the Sun, it takes just what it needs and shares with all its neighbors willingly. It gives us medicine, shelter, food, and tools, and every book we read was once a tree. Life is intertwined and somewhere down the line somehow we are all connected to that tree. Otters, fish, and deer, spiders, ferns, and squirrels, flowers, birds, and even you and me. It may be just a tree, but it amazes me how it can serve for life on earth with such diversity. It adds beauty to the earth, cleanses air for all to breath, asks nothing in return from those it shelters in its leaves. Its golden leaves can reach the soil that fertile energy, and all God's creation depends upon the tree... Who would miss it? God would and so would I."

Another of his important song/message about "trees: "If you don't need it leave it." "Every single day in the life of a tree takes from the earth and the sun what it needs nothing more will it ask for. That's its philosophy. What a lesson we can learn from a tree. If you don't need it, leave it. Don't be greed it, leave it. That's the golden rule in nature's plan for all living things including man. If you don't need it, leave it. Every wild creature in the swamp out here from the tiniest ant to biggest black bear is born to heed nature's creed without a thought of greed. It will take only what it needs... It just good common sense not to waste, whatever we take we should replace... All living things have a job to do. That includes me, that includes you. The job of man is keeper of the land. We got to understand and do the best job that we can.... If you don't need it, leave it."

Let's use our power together to keep our trees and Earth a wonderful place to live. Why are Trees essential to our Earth and make it a wonderful place to survive? Besides being beautiful, they provide:

- the oxygen we breath and the removal of carbon dioxide, ozone and other greenhouse gases, and air pollutants.
- shade and wind breaks to our homes, cooling of our neighborhoods, and cleansing of our stormwaters.
- · materials for tools and shelter.
- food, fruit, nuts, maple syrup, chewing gum, crayons paint, soap, dyes, medicines and paper.
- jobs, and better health.
- habitats comprising healthy ecosystems for us and our birds, fishes, and all living animals.

Trees do this and only wish to thrive. Let's value a tree like a person. One of the Ten Commandments is "Thou shall not Kill." Unfortunately, we do not even follow that dictate as people are being killed all over the world by shootings and the horrible wars in the Middle East and Ukraine. We have the United Nations and World Court to solve issues, but wars still go on and on. We also are killing trees worldwide for development and agriculture but are not replacing them where they could be planted. Aren't we in a Holocaust to kill nature, especially trees? Why not a law to plant two trees for every one cut? Let's make a law to not clear cut land of all trees on any lot.

Come get a Free tree at our Audubon House to plant in your yard and enjoy it's cooling shade and bringing oxygen to breath.

To hear the two entire song words and music, free, click or copy on your computer:

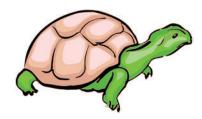
Overnight Field Trip to Gainesville Birding Hot Spots



Tuesday-Wednesday, 9-10 April 2024: Pelican Island Audubon Society will offer an overnight field trip for members only to Gainesville, Florida in the Society's passenger van. We plan to visit Sweetwater Wetland Park and the La Chua Trail in Payne's Prairie State Preserve on Tuesday, and, if time permits on Wednesday, we may also visit a different section of the Preserve. Payne's Prairie is a massive landform in North Florida visited and written about by William Bartram in 1774. On the evening of the 9th, we will watch the spectacle of the emergence of thousands of Brazilian Free-tailed Bats from a Gainesville building.

Space in the van is limited to 10 people. We will stay at the Hampton Inn Hotel-Gainesville, 4225 SW 40th BLVD, Gainesville, FL. There will be a booking link available upon sign up, where you will make your reservation for the night of April 9th. Complimentary breakfast foods are available, other meal costs will be your responsibility. The cost of transportation by van is \$50 round-trip per person. We will depart Audubon House at 6:30 a.m. for the approximately 3-hour drive to Gainesville. For more information & to register, visit www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

by Diane Morgan



Plants for Gopher Tortoises You can help our gopher tortoises by growing dinner for them, while at the same time adding to the beauty and environmental friendliness of your own yard. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has classified forage into four classes, not all of which are available in every part of the state. If you are planting for gopher tortoises, make sure you're planting something native to your area. Below are some plants you may consider adding to your yard, remembering that they mostly dine on native grasses. It often does not make any difference to a tortoise whether a plant is native or not, but environmentally speaking, native plants are often the best choice. And of course, not everyone is crazy about the idea of a lot of ragweed (or weeds in general) in their yard, but you have lots of other things to choose from. This list includes trees, shrubs, vines, flowers, and "weeds."

Very high level forage species that produce high biomass and which tortoises seek out. These plants include summer grape (Vitis aestivalis); wild grape (Vitis rotundifolia); cultivated grapes (Vitis spp); paintbrush (Carphephorus spp); portulaca (Portulacca spp); beggar's ticks (Bidens alba); Spanish needles (Bidens bipinnata and pilosa); poor Joe (Hexasepalum teres); Virginia buttonwood (*Diodia virginia*). I will add Mexican clover (*Richardia spp*) here—it is non-native, indeed invasive, but it's everywhere and it's a valuable diet item to gopher tortoises.)

High level forage species, also produce high biomass and which are sought out by tortoises. These plants include dwarf huckleberry (Gaylussacia dumosa); blue huckleberry (Gaylussacia frondosa); blackberry (Rubrus spp); blueberry (Vaccinium corymboom, V. darrowi, and V. myrsinites); aster (Symphyotrichum spp); greeneyes (Berlandira spp); pineland daisy (Chaptalia tomentosa); golden aster (Chrysopsis spp); coreopsis (Coreopsis spp); dayflower (Commelina spp excluding C. benghalensis); blanket flower (gaillardia spp); gopher apple (Licania michauxii); prickly pear (Opuntia spp); violets and pansies (Viola spp); hairsedge (Bulbostylis spp); sedge and flatsedge (Cyperus spp excluding C. involucratus and C. prolifer); nutrush (Scleria spp); blue maidencane (Amphicarpum muhlenbergianum); thistle (Cirsium spp); capeweed (Phyla nodiflora); beach creeper (Ernodea littoris).

Moderate level forage species. Tortoises will seek them out, but they either produce only a moderate amount of biomass, or in the case of seasonal fruits, a high biomass for a very short period of time. These plants include pawpaw (Asimina spp), winged sumac (Rhus copallina); saffron plum (Sideroxylon celastrinum); beautyberry (Callicarpa americana); weeping lantana (Lantana depressa); Lespedezas (Lespedeza spp); sparkleberry (Vaccinium arboretum); butterfly pea (Centrosema spp); lupine (Lupinus spp); woodsorrel (Oxalis spp); groundcherry (Phrysalis spp); wild petunia (Ruellia caroliniensis); spikerush (Eleocharis spp); fimbry (Fimbristylus spp); umbrella sedge (Fuirena spp); spikesedge (Cyperus spp); plantain (Plantago spp); beaksedge (Rhynchospora spp); upland bent grass (Agrostis perennanas); ragweed (Ambrosia artemisfolia); pitted stripeseed (Piriqueta caroliniana); dock (Rumex spp); seagrape (Coccoloba uvifera); hibiscus (Hibiscus spp); beardtongue (Pentstemon spp); verbena (Verbena spp); moss verbena (Verbena tennisectal); woodland sedge (Carex spp); coastal ragweed (Ambrosia hispidal); pigeon plum (Coccoloba diversifola); cocoplum (Chrysobalanus iaco); sea oxeye (Borrichia frutescens).

Low level forage plants are those which a tortoise will eat if available (or perhaps because it is all that is available). They may ignore these foods when preferred plants are available, or because they are very rarely available in quantity. These plants include persimmon (Diospyros virginiana); chickasaw plum (Prunus augustifolia); American plum (Prunus americana); flatwoods plum (Prunus umbellata); Spanish bayonet (Yucca aloifolia); passionflower (Passiflora spp); maypop (Passifora incarnata); sunflower (Helianthus spp); gayfeather (Liatris spp); yellow-eyed grass (Xyrus spp); white stopper (Eugenia axillaris); dwarf palmetto (Sabal minor); scrub palmetto (Sabal etoni); saw palmetto (Serenoa repense); railroad vine (Passiflora spp); red stopper (Eugenia confusa); Spanish stopper (Eugenia foetida).



May 4 & 5, 2024

Audubon House

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

For More Information

Email: info@isolaarts.org

Website: www.isolaarts.org

Proceeds to benefit Pelican Island Audubon Society

The Spring 2024 semester of the Audubon Advocates is off to a great start.

by Lauren Reeves, Environmental Educator

So far, our advocates have learned what it means to be an advocate, how to observe like a scientist, and how to be a photographer. While the word "advocate" is a novel word for the students, upon reflection they find that they have already been an advocate in one way or another.

THE BEFFE

Daniel from Citrus Elementary
writes on an experience he had
being an advocate for what he
believed was right during a football
game: "I advocated for my team in
a football game when the other team
got a foul. I told the refs to call a
foul and watch the replay. I showed
them and he said I was a smart kid
for telling him to watch the replay."



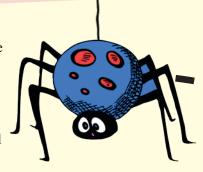
Cameron from
Citrus Elementary
Writes, "I was an
advocate for my
brother because he
by someone. I told
him alone."

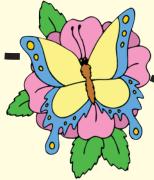


Pelican Island Audubon Society's awesome board member and educator Ms. Susan Lovelace awakened the students' inner scientist through a lesson about making observations in nature. They observe a strawberry using their five senses, then Ms. Susan challenges them to go beyond, to think of some questions they have about the strawberry and to think of what it reminds them of. Some observations are obvious, such as "It tastes sweet" or "It feels smooth". Others more profound and abstract:" It reminds me of childhood", "I wonder how strawberries were domesticated" or "It tastes like the color red".

While they were initially a source of fear for many students, the bugs that live at the Audubon House have become the center piece of many stories and pictures.

Kylie-Rae from Indian River Academy writes, "The spider I took a picture of was taking a nap to get ready for a party—but not just any party—a special fairy party with Tinkerbell. The spider's name was Smiley and Tinkerbell is his BFF and they will party all night long."





Aleah from Indian River Academy, upon encountering the flocks of butterflies inhabiting the garden, was reminded of her late grandmother, since butterflies were her favorite.

In the coming weeks, we will learn about stormwater, reptiles, and go birding!



A Taste of Honey

Saturday, March 9, 2024 - 1PM - 3:30PM Audubon House - 195 9th St. SE (Oslo Rd), Vero Beach

Come join us for a honey tasting party to support the non-profit Treasure Coast Community Fridges and enjoy food accompaniments and beverages. The idea is to have fun and get you excited about honey, while also learning about its vast flavor profiles. It will be a 'feel good' event because you will be supporting an important community resource.

Honey tastes very different depending upon where the bees collect their pollen. Using crackers, cheese, chocolate, herb, etc., you will have the chance to try different honey. Reserve your place today!



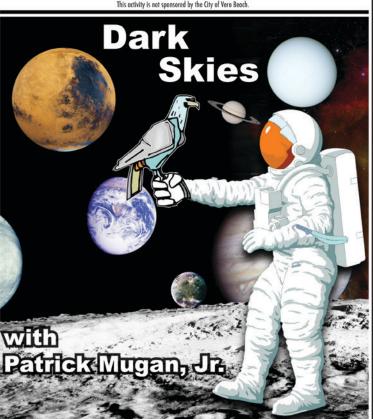
Space is limited. This event is family friendly with raffles, gifts and prizes.

Register at

PelicanIslandAudubon.org - Tickets: \$45 per person

March 25, 2024 Meeting 7:00 P.M. - Vero Beach Community Center

2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach
This activity is not sponsored by the City of Vero Beach.



Pelican Island Audubon Society

March 11, 2024 Meeting

6:00 P.M. - North County Library 1001 Sebastian Blvd. (CR 512)

Biology, Ecology, Management and Monitoring of the Amazing Red-cockaded Woodpecker

with Samantha McGee

Environmental Specialist
St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park



March 27, 2024

7:00 P.M. - Audubon House

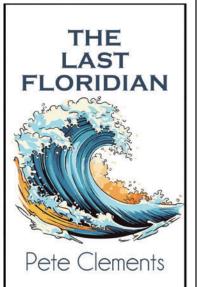
195 9th Street SE (Oslo Road), Vero Beach

Book Signing & Talk with Pete Clements
Author of *The Last Floridian*

Plus a Wine & Cheese Reception

Tickets are \$30 per person and includes a copy of the book, The Last Floridian by Pete Clements. Sign up now! Space is limited!

Register at PelicanIslandAudubon.org

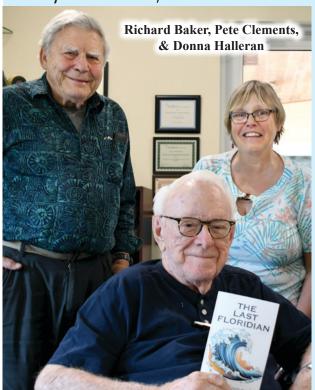




It was the first nice day in February when we decided to drive to the Jones' Pier Conservation Area located near the south end of the Historic Jungle Trail. From the parking lot we could see the large beautiful wetland. Behind us were the restrooms and an old dilapidated house that had been elevated on pilings. Across the road and overlooking the Indian River Lagoon was Jones' Fruit Dock with its colorful historical building. The wetland walk could wait while we learned more from the information signs located in the parking area and near the old bungalow. The signage was impressive with its large detailed map of the property, and information including the history, the acquisition of the property, beautiful photos of wildlife and more. Signage at the bungalow included its history, photos of the old Jones' home being moved and elevated as well as plans for the its future to become an interpretive center. After visiting the dock we walked back to the wetland and learned from the signage there about the marsh's design and function. The trail follows the perimeter of the property but we decided to take the shorter trail that circled around the 4 acre salt marsh. All of the plantings were native shrubs, trees, marginal plants and wildflowers. Small colorful, revolving signs displayed information on different plants and animals. It was after 2 pm and I did not expect to see any wildlife but we did! A blue heron stepped slowly through the shallows of the marsh and a bold tricolor heron flew to the split rail fence bordering the trail. A fearless little green heron join us by landing on the railing of the dock overlook and we saw several moorhens swimming near the reeds. We continued around to the other side of the marsh where I spotted an adult Little Blue Heron foraging near the Black Needle Rushes. The next time I will be sure to bring my binoculars and water.

FYI- Water is brought into the marsh from the Indian River Lagoon by means of a device that works like an "Archimedes Screw". From the walking trail you can watch the process of the water being lifted up by the spiral screw and deposited into the salt marsh.

The Last Floridian by Pete Clements by Donna Halleran, Executive Director



In early November, 2023, I received an advanced copy of the novel with a lovely letter from Mr. Clements. His letter really caught my attention as Pelican Island Audubon Society acts to defend the environment on many fronts, the Indian River Lagoon, plants and animals, the aquifer, uncontrolled loss of greenspace, water quality, and the health and wellbeing of the people.

"A new study suggests in five years, half a million acres of green space will be lost"; states Pete and "aspects of Florida's ecology are interdependent: as green space shrinks, water quality diminishes".

The Last Floridian was engaging from the first page. The book is filled with mixed emotions as you want to believe people want to preserve and protect Florida's natural resources and also see; "all the mananas of kicking the can of 'fixes' down the road are gone, and all the tomorrows to act are behind us".

The books tell the story of a young man's journey through Florida's habitat destruction and what we can do to help preserve native Florida for the future.

Pete Clements asked if I found the book helpful in informing the Florida citizens, friends, and visitors about how close we are to the brink of disaster, do not lend your book; instead, recommend it. Or better yet, come hear him in person at the Audubon House on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, from 7-9PM that will feature wine & cheese along with a book signing. Tickets are \$30 per person and includes a copy of the book, *The Last Floridian* by Pete Clements. Space is limited! Sign up now at PelicanIslandAudubon.org

Organizations are always planting saplings that their board members may never see grow into mature trees. The shade of those trees is for the next generation.

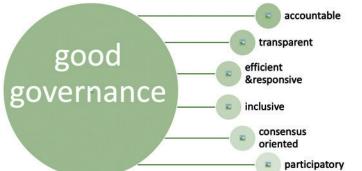
Pelican island Audubon Society's Roadmap: 2024

The Pelican Island Audubon Society's Working Strategy Group Roadmap will determine the actions, steps, and resources needed to take the initiative from vision to reality in the next two-three years and beyond.

Vision Our vision is an ecosystem that sustains and nurtures native communities of plants and animals and provides for the health and happiness of people. PIAS will continue as the preeminent voice for conservation in Indian River County by educating local governments and citizenry to make conservation a priority in balancing the environmental, economic and social forces at work in our community.

Mission 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.

Pelican Island Audubon would like to invite you to participate in a very important Working Vision Strategy Group – it is a short-term commitment – approximately two to three months with lifelong impact for the environment and the organization. Meeting approximately every two weeks. Homework is expected in-between meetings. The important service you provide will move the mission forward. We need to be BOLD, AMBITIOUS, but ACHIEVABLE. We will answer tough questions, and plan where we are headed. Would you consider being an AMBASSADOR for Pelican Island Audubon Society? No special talents are needed, just a desire to make our (& your) organization more effective and impactful. Interested parties can email piaudubon@yahoo.com or call 772-567-3520.





Pelican Island Audubon is holding its Annual Meeting on Monday, March 25, 2024, at the Vero Beach Community Center, 2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach, starting at 7PM. Business includes the election of new officers. Help guide Pelican Island Audubon into the future by making the Society's presence have an even greater impact on our community.

The evening also will feature a great speaker!

Don't miss it!

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!" Wed/Fri/Sun 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 20,600 native plants & |
|---|
| trees distributed so far! |
| Free Native Trees Available |
| in 1 gallon pots - Live Oak, Bald |
| Cypress, Mahogany |
| A selection of native plants are |
| 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

| Pelican Island Audubon Society Membership Form | |
|---|--|
| NAME | Enclosed is my: |
| | \$\$30 for annual membership |
| | \$\$35 for family membership |
| ADDRESS | . \$ \$100 Scrub-Jay sustaining membership |
| | \$\$200 Osprey sustaining membership |
| | \$ contribution |
| CITY, STATE ZIP | \$ TOTAL Please mail this completed form with a check made out to: Pelican Island Audubon Society P.O. Box 1833 |
| E-MAIL | Vero Beach, FL 32961 |
| Or join online using a gradit gard at www. Palican Island Auduhan arg | |