

Peligram

February
2025

Meeting
Monday, February 10, 2025
6:00PM
North County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd (CR 512), Sebastian

Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
7:00PM
Vero Beach Community Center
2266 14th Avenue, Vero Beach



I pledge to use a
reusable straw.
#onelagoon



**Discover
the Hidden
Truths of
Single-Stream
Recycling and
the Power of a
Plastic Diet**

with Heather Stapleton
Community Engagement Coordinator
Indian River Lagoon Council

Lagoon-Friendly™

Join Heather Stapleton on an eye-opening journey as she uncovers the surprising realities of single-stream recycling. Initially designed to simplify recycling and increase participation, this system has unfortunately led to a decrease in actual recycling rates. Most plastics are either downcycled or not recycled at all. Heather will share her inspiring story of drastically cutting down her plastic use. Through each successful change, she found a sense of empowerment and a deeper connection to the environment. Learn practical tips and strategies to reduce your plastic footprint and join a community of like-minded individuals committed to making a positive impact. Don't miss this chance to transform your habits and contribute to a cleaner, healthier planet. Your choices matter, and together, we can inspire change! Show & tell included!



War Along The Indian River Lagoon: A Temporal Travelogue

with Bob Montanaro

Bob Montanaro takes you on a historical journey visiting places of conflict and war along the Indian River Lagoon region that range through the American Revolutionary War, the Seminole Wars, the Civil War, World War II, and more. Today the Indian River Lagoon is a place of quiet retirement communities and tourist destinations that give little indication that the region is at the forefront of United States national security both for current and future wars.

These meetings are FREE and the public is invited to attend.



RiverKidz is a nature club that meets twice a month for the WHOLE family to enjoy. Our meetups consist of guest speakers, field trips, educational activities, service activities, kayaking, and more! If you ever wanted to be involved in helping your environment or you just want to explore the outdoors more, this is the group to join. **For more info, email piaudubonedu@gmail.com**

- 2/8 - Air Potato Roundup
- 2/22 - Manatee Fest (help with the booth or stop by and visit us)
- 3/8 - Cleanup - Location TBD
- 3/22 - Nature Journaling Workshop
- 4/12 - 10am to 12pm - The Great Florida Eggscursion @ IG Center (Event for the whole family)
- 4/12 - 1pm to 3pm - TEEN RIVER KIDZ - Chill out zone - an afternoon of Lego building, puzzle building, and game play
- 4/26 - Hike - Location TBD
- 5/10 - Recycled crafting
- 5/24 - Kayaking @ Round Island

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

FIELD TRIPS

Space is limited. Registration is required.
 For more information & to register visit

PelicanIslandAudubon.org

- Feb 6 Indrio Savannahs Preserve with Nick Polge
- Feb 8 Pelican Island NWR with Will Johnson
- Feb 12 Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge with Becky Loftus and Ann Esmas
- Feb 19 Osprey Acres Stormwater Park & Nature Preserve with Lani York
- Feb 20 Jones Pier Conservation Area with Linda Chancellor and Bill & Becky Loftus
- Feb 26 Orlando Wetlands Park with Susan Drew & Lani York
- March 2 - Fort Drum Marsh Conservation Area with George Glenn
- March 18 Wakodahatchee & Green Cay Wetlands with Bill & Becky Loftus
- March 18 Sebastian Inlet State Park with Steve Palmquist
- March 20 Joe Overstreet Landing with Lani York
- April 10 St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park with Lani York

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 **Jennifer Satterly**
 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
Susan Lovelace '25
Bill Loftus, Ph.D. '27
Ricky Ray '25
Bonnie Swanson '27
 Appointed Board Members:
Judy Davis
Nancy Irvin
William Johnson
Nick Polge
Hadi Shalhoub, D.O.

Visit the Audubon House Native Plant Nursery on Monday-Wednesday-Saturday 9AM - 11AM

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

The Nursery will no longer be open on Sundays.

Tram Tours of Pelican Island NWR

Registration is open for the 2025 wildlife tours at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. Free tram tours are offered every Wednesday from 8-10 a.m., beginning January 8 through April 30. 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.



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

Winter Break Camp Highlights

by Jennifer Satterly

Environmental Educator

We had a wonderful time hosting winter break camp for the kids from The Homeless Children's Foundation during the week of December 30th. We had beautiful weather so we were able to get outside and explore without being uncomfortable. Daily snacks and morning goodies were baked by a long standing supporter; Colleen Cleavenger, who is a great baker!

We started our week by getting to know each other. We designed signs to be hung at our tables that represented who we are and what we like. The students did great with this activity, some focusing more on drawing their favorite book/movie characters while others focused on all the amazing words that represented them like courageous, smart, and ambitious. This was a great way for the kids to be creative and introduce themselves to the group. Very quickly after that activity, we focused on learning how to use our cameras and we embarked on the trail to get some experience taking pictures before attending our field trip to Egret

Marsh that afternoon.



After lunch, we visited with Alexis Peralta from Indian River County Stormwater Division at Egret Marsh where we learned all

about stormwater, how it is treated to lessen the nutrients entering the Lagoon, and about all the animals that use this facility including birds and alligators. We finished our day by playing our favorite game, Mantis by Exploding Kittens.

Tuesday we were visited by artist, Lou Mullan. She brought an immense amount of nature items such as different colored mulch, white and black rocks, colorful feathers, bird seed, pine cones, and more for us to use on our art installations that we were going to be working on. Everyone spread out in the back of the

Audubon House and found a perfect spot for themselves to create art. They prepped the areas and then they ran back and forth from their chosen spots to the pavilion with all the nature items gathering items and putting them into their art. Every piece of art was different and amazing. The kids worked diligently adding more and more and eventually ended up with feeling accomplished and done. We left our art up for the animals to enjoy on New Years Eve and day. We pondered what animals would visit, what would they mess with, and what would they eat. These were all great questions to get our curiosity brewing. After lunch we had a free flowing afternoon where everyone was able to choose what activity they wanted to do. Some built a praying mantis Lego set, others checked out all the insects artifacts we have and had some relaxing down time. It was a great way to round out the busy morning of creating.

Very shortly after arriving on Thursday the kids were excited to head out and check on their nature art. Everyone was shocked to see how much the animals messed with their creations. We all joked that they must have had a New Year's Eve party at each art installation. The rocks and mulch were flung all over, holes were dug, corn was gone, and the bird seed was gone or spread out. We wondered together what animals visited and we discussed that we should add sand around our art projects next time so we could see the footprints of the animals entering our areas. No one was upset to see their art destroyed but instead they were excited to know that the animals enjoyed what they made. After the excitement died down from our art projects, we got our cameras and binoculars and hopped in the van to head to Indrio Savannah's where we spent a couple of hours exploring and photographing. We came back and had lunch and then had a visit from Rebecca with RESINating Artwork. She taught us how to work with resin and

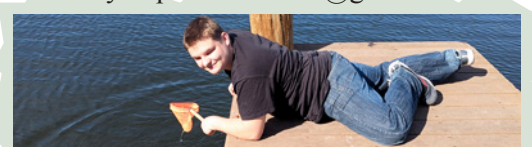
helped us create our very own bracelets that we could take home. We finished the day with a lively game of Bird Bingo where the kids were able to win prizes for getting bingo's.

Friday was another amazing day. We



headed out to Round Island first thing in the morning. Our education intern, Rory, taught the students how to make a homemade minnow trap and set it up and left it while we went and hiked the island. Everyone enjoyed finding spiders, fish, crabs, birds, and more. We checked the minnow trap when we were done hiking but found that we didn't catch anything. We then took our dip nets and caught comb jellies and little fish off the docks before heading back to the Audubon House for a pizza party and gift exchange. The students received gift cards to go to the movies and Burger King. They also received gift bags provided by Circle of Friends from Sebastian Women's Group with a fuzzy blanket, 2 games, and a sketch book with colored pencils. The kids loved the gifts and were very appreciative of everything. A special gift received was a Grinch made from a seashell, with delicious peanut butter/chocolate chip squares! We finished out the day learning all about reptiles and got to do a meet and greet with Noodle the albino cornsnake. Everyone took turns holding and touching Noodle who is a wonderful reptile ambassador helping kids and adults overcome their fears of snakes.

Overall, our week was wonderful. The kids and adults all had a blast doing all the fun activities. If you are interested in camp, check out our summer camp options on our website or feel free to email environmental educator, Jennifer Satterly at piaudubonedu@gmail.com.



Sorry, Mr. President, Climate Change is Real.

My Hoot



Sorry Mr. President, you pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Agreement, placing us in the company of only three other nations that did not sign it: Yemen, Iran and Libya. Presidents Obama and Biden had joined the nearly 200 countries that agreed to work together to limit Climate Change, which is responsible for increasing numbers of costly disasters and loss of life globally and at home. 2024 was the world's hottest year on record, beating out the hottest year in 2023. Most years since 1940 have been getting hotter, bringing conditions more difficult for humans and for ecosystems to adapt. Last year, there were 85 named storms globally. In the Atlantic, of 18 named storms, there were 11 major-status hurricanes that killed 401 people across 6 states, costing \$130 Billion. Catastrophic floods in Spain killed 230 people, the worst drought on record for the Amazon dried wetlands and rivers, and the Philippines had an extraordinary typhoon season.

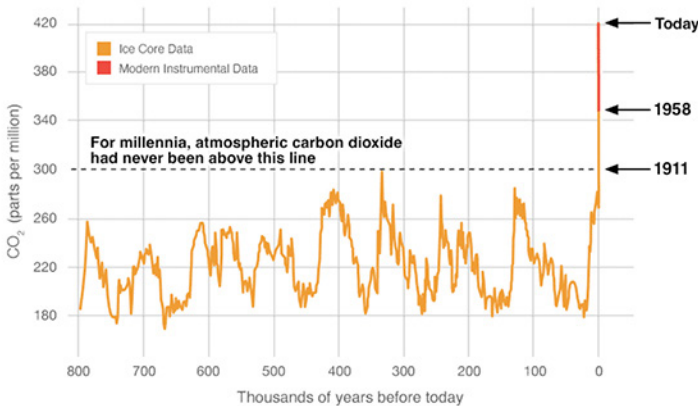
Why Mr. President do we have climate change? **There is unequivocal evidence that the Earth is warming at an unprecedented rate. Human activity is the principal cause.** Earth-orbiting satellites

and new technologies have helped scientists see the big picture, collecting many different types of information about our planet and its climate all over the world. Those data, collected over many years, reveal the signs and patterns of a changing climate (see NASA-<https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/>).

Scientists have determined there is a direct correlation between burning fossil fuels starting in the late 1800s with coal to heat houses, factories, and trains and increasing Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions. We must transition from fossil fuels while not drilling for more gas and oil.

PROXY (INDIRECT) MEASUREMENTS

Data source: Reconstruction from ice cores.
Credit: NOAA



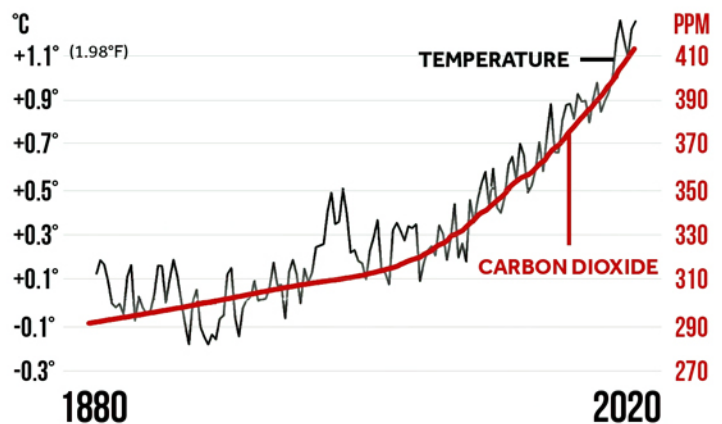
Trees and forests are essential for our life on Earth. They provide us with oxygen to breathe, regulate our climate, and provide habitat for our animals and plants. They also hold rainwater to prevent flooding. Sixty percent of earth's forests have been destroyed by human activity. Some have been destroyed by wildfires related to Climate Change, as seen in California. We humans in Florida cut the lovely trees for agriculture, timber for buildings, furniture, paper, and to mine gas and oil. Trees produce fruit, seeds, feed bees and animals and provides shade to cool the earth and our homes. If you think deforestation only happens in the Amazon, take a look at the developments around our county now!

Mr. President, human water consumption has also soared greater than our rivers, shallow aquifers or rainwater can sustain (<https://worldwatermap.nationalgeographic.org>). Industries need clean water to make paper, cars, and chemicals, while nuclear power plants use water to cool reactors to power our homes and businesses. Every time the Florida homeowner waters the lawn; 1000 gallons are used. And the average home wastes 9,400 gallons a year through leaky pipes and faucets.

Mr. President, in your home state of Florida, a major environmental factor has been huge human population growth. Most

Mr. President, Climate Change also affects our fresh and marine waters. The warming causes the glaciers to melt, the ice in glaciers and in both the Arctic and Antarctic that had stayed frozen for millennia have receded, thus the oceans have risen 8-9 inches since 1880. In 2023 the average global sea level set a new record high of 3.99 inches above 1993 levels. When the sea rises, the saltwater filters through the soil to Florida's aquifer and contaminates our drinking water. This is happening in south Florida, necessitating the moving of wellfields inland. Many places around the earth do not have such clean, pure drinking water and must either haul or pipe it miles, take contaminants out, or desalinate it. Saudi Arabia used their ground water to grow crops in the desert, until the water ran dry. Remember, we can't drink oil, and fresh water is limited.

GLOBAL TEMPERATURE & CO₂



Global temperature anomalies averaged and adjusted to early industrial baseline (1881-1910)
Global annual average carbon dioxide
Source: NASA GISS, NOAA NCEP ESRL

CLIMATE CENTRAL

homeowners cover their lawns with turfgrass that consume and waste 65%-88% of our drinking water. The solution? An ordinance: Reduce all turfgrass to 15% of property, do not clear-cut trees on 15% of the lot, and plant trees to reduce water use and help combat climate change. Homeowners could save money on mowing, blowing, water, and chemicals.

The State of Ohio saves over \$2 million in one year in mowing costs and has over 120 roadside prairies covering 1,200 acres in 88 counties. Migratory birds also use these habitats as pit stops for resting and feeding. Several studies show that more butterflies are killed on right-of-way with grass than those bordered by native vegetation. State- and County-maintained roads should be planted with native trees, flowers and plants that are critical for the survival of many species, including the monarch butterflies, bees and even fireflies, which we don't see anymore.

Mr. President, with your "let's do it!" and Elon Musk's genius, you can find scientific innovative ways for the U.S. to gear up rapidly to reduce the U.S. carbon emissions. Lead the way for the world to bring down carbon emissions to prevent further warming, thus saving water. You two could succeed and forever make your mark in history as heroes in saving humanity, thus saving the U.S. money in helping others drowning in rising waters. The lack of understanding or interest in climate change by much of earth's population, coupled with ever-increasing global populations and demands for resources means that the next extinction is well under way. Science can show the way if you will only listen, Mr. President.

Poison in the Indian River Lagoon:

This is the fifth of six articles that started in the June 2024 Peligram.

Abbreviated History of Public Action

by Michael Walther, M.S., P.E.



Recognition of Lagoon decline is not new. Formal concern for the future of the lagoon system by the scientific community culminated in a 1981 Symposium where [MW1] participants met to exchange their knowledge and ongoing research in the Indian River, Banana River, and Mosquito Lagoon. The Marine Resources Council of East Central Florida was formed in 1983 to involve the general public, elected officials, recreation and commercial fishermen, managers, engineers, and attorneys. In 1985, the Indian River Resources Symposium was held to assess the condition of the lagoon's resources and seek direction for management of the estuary in the future. Three issues emerged related to the lagoon:

- "a lack of coordination in the management of the lagoon's resources";
- "incomplete understanding of the physical system, the impact of freshwater inflow, water movement, and circulation" and
- "limited understanding of the relationship of the physical processes to the biological system, particularly the submerged aquatic vegetation, the basis of all life in the lagoon."

In 1995, Dr. Grant Gilmore characterized the diversity of fish species supported by seagrass meadows and the threat posed by coastal urbanization with "little hope for conservation of the region's fish diversity at historical levels".

In 2009, FDEP initially developed Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) intended to restore water quality within impaired water bodies by targeting reductions in Nitrogen and phosphorus pollutant loads to the Lagoon. Indian River County is within the Central Indian River Lagoon (CIRL) basin that extends from the Melbourne Causeway to Fort Pierce Inlet. The 2021 CIRL BMAP update identifies (a) a reduction of Total Nitrogen pollutant loads at less than 1/3 of the BMAP targeted reductions and (b) a reduction of Total Phosphorus pollutant loads at less than 1/2 of the BMAP targeted reductions.

Since 2012, the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute has held an annual Indian River Lagoon Symposium. The February 2024 theme was relative to fish in the Lagoon – an indicator of the overall Lagoon health where changes in fish populations signal environmental pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change.

In 2019, Florida's Governor DeSantis took a major step forward in combating Blue-Green Algae within Florida through the creation of the Blue-Green Algae Task Force, which seeks to provide objective and sound science to inform Florida's environmental decision-making process. Input from the task force is used to support key funding and restoration initiatives and guide regulatory changes that are needed to improve water quality for the benefit of all Floridians.



UNDERSTAND YOUR SOILS

Hamilton Freeman, a certified master gardener and organic landscaper, will discuss the need to understand your soils to achieve successful lawns and gardens. His discussion of soil structure and soil biology will give you a new perspective on how to approach the health of your lawns and gardens.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 starting at 9:00AM

Audubon House

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

February is National Invasive Species Awareness Month

The North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA)

by Donna Halleran, Executive Director

What if addressing the major concerns of U.S. citizens and policymakers improved biodiversity simultaneously? The North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) advocates for including policy and legislation geared toward increasing the capacity for invasive species managers to ensure that North America's lands and waters remain resilient in the face of climate change and other resource challenges.

The annual National Invasive Species Awareness Month (week) (NISAW) is an international event that raises awareness about invasive species, their threat, and what can be done to prevent their spread. Representatives from local, state, federal, and regional organizations discuss legislation, policies, and improvements that can be made to prevent and manage invasive species.

The term "invasive" refers to aggressive non-native species that spread and reproduce rapidly, displace native species, and cause major disturbances in their habitats. Invasive species can cause irreversible harm to the environment and the economy and often threaten plant, animal, and human health.

Local environmental organizations are concerned with the air potato plant, which, despite their heart-shaped leaves, are unfortunately not a friend of our local ecosystems. Air potato plants sprout new plants from their aerial tubers and can thrive in various conditions and habitats. This plant can quickly take over tracts of land, smothering our precious local landscapes. The new leaves are opening in time for Valentine's Day, coincidentally heart-shaped. We must strongly advocate that the general population continue to help eradicate them and not entertain growing them.

"Governmental and legislative advocacy is only as strong as the constituents behind it," said Mara Cunningham, Government Relations Manager for NAISMA. "We encourage organizations and individuals to support their representatives at the local and national levels to influence a dynamic approach to invasive species management and prevention."

This is just one of many invasive species. To learn ways to get involved and learn more about the initiative, go to: <https://naisma.org/programs/nisaw/>

And join Pelican Island Audubon Society and support their efforts. www.PelicanIslandAudubon.org

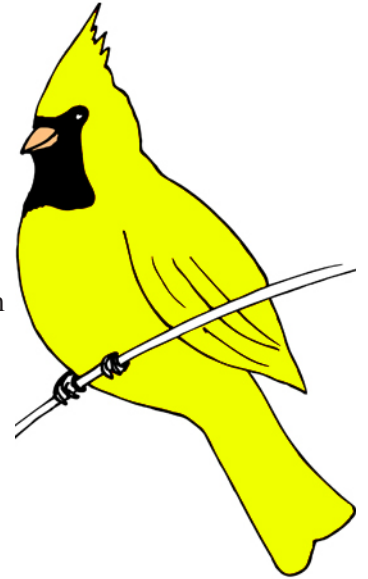
Some aggressive invasive plants and trees in our area. *Photos by Janice Broda.*



Serendipity by Linda Chancellor

Male, red feathered, cardinals are a delight to spot whether it is in my backyard or in Northern yards filled with snow. But could a cardinal be another color? Articles have been popping up on the internet of a male Cardinal with yellow feathers that was spotted and photographed in St. Louis, Missouri! On December 26, 2024 Taka Yanagimoto, the St. Louis Cardinals' director of Photography, spotted a male, yellow feathered cardinal in his backyard and took photos. This was big news because spotting a yellow Cardinal has been referred to as "one in a million birds". I won't be hopping a plane to St. Louis to add a yellow Cardinal to my life list but it did intrigue me. So I began my search, on the internet, to find out more about this phenomenon. Truly this was a rare spotting but not the first. Other sightings had been recorded before this one. A few days before Christmas Arlene and John McDaniel spotted one in their backyard in Bath, Michigan. Yellow cardinals have also been spotted in Alabama. One in 2018 was given the name "Mr. Yellow" and another in 2019 was named "Sunshine". In 2019 and 2023 a yellow cardinal was reported in Tennessee. One was given the name "Woodstock".

Apparently one even has a chance to see a yellow cardinal here in Florida! Tom Dotson, who lives in Florida and is the field editor for Birds and Blooms, learned from Facebook groups that a yellow cardinal had been spotted in Gainesville on the University of Florida campus. He made the trip in March of 2022 and found it! Other sightings have also been recorded in Boynton Beach and Port St. Lucie, Florida.



So keep your eyes open and perhaps you may spot a yellow cardinal in your backyard!

FYI- Cardinals get their red color from pigments in their food called carotenoids. Enzymes change the yellow pigment to red in their bodies. When that enzyme is missing the cardinal's feathers stay yellow. This condition is called xanthism.

AIR POTATO ROUND-UP Saturday February 8, 2025 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Despite their heart-shaped leaves, air potato plants are unfortunately not a friend to our local ecosystems. Air potato plants sprout new plants from their aerial tubers and can thrive in various conditions and habitats. This plant can quickly take over tracts of land, smothering our precious local landscapes and disturbing the ecological balance. You might find them crawling up your favorite palm tree or sprawling across the vacant lot next door.

Pelican Island Audubon Society and the Natural Resources Board need your help removing this invasive species from Stormwater Park, 297 Englar Drive, Sebastian, FL. Learn more and sign up at: <https://form.jotform.com/243525980406055>

Save The Date Under The Stars Gala

Pelican Island
Audubon Society's 60th
Anniversary Celebration



Saturday
April 12, 2025
at Schacht Groves

More information
coming soon.

Adopt an Advocate! Please help support our 14-week outdoor science, after-school Audubon Advocates program, which focuses each year on 5th graders from four underserved elementary schools.

Goal: Improve science vocabulary, mental health, and opportunities for under-represented minorities and girls to be comfortable outdoors and become Environmental Advocates for Indian River County.

Focus: Introduce students to outdoor, hands-on Lagoon science, help them understand the interconnectedness of life and the value of all native species, and help them be good stewards of the environment.

The environmental educator takes students outdoors into nature to kayak, photograph, sketch, meet a variety of scientists in the field, familiarize themselves with scientific methods, collect specimens, document their

experiences, and educate others at school and their parents, family, and friends. While learning "leave no trace & earth manners."

Results: Educated, healthier, empowered students; new aspirations and possibilities for underrepresented students; and, over time, a healthier Lagoon.

It will be transformative for the students, their parents, our community, and our environment—and for you as a sponsor!

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!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

My check is enclosed. Make check payable to Pelican Island Audubon Society, or donate online at PelicanIslandAudubon.org

1 Student \$500 any amount

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



Pelican Island Audubon Society is looking for Volunteers to help in the following areas:

- **Native Gardens – Help watering plants and/or selling plants**
- **Bird Walks – Lead walks - Kayak Tours – Lead tours**
- **Outreach – Help with events such as Festivals, Landscape Conference, help with movie nights, greeting people at monthly meetings**
- **Teaching a course of interest**
- **Grant writing**

If you have any questions or the time to help with any of the above, please contact Lorna Thibeault at piasvolunteer@gmail.com or (203) 687-7156.

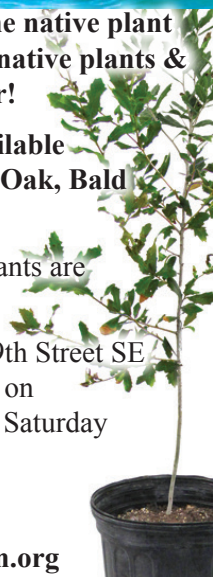
Stop by and browse the native plant nursery - over 20,600 native plants & trees distributed so far!

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 Monday - Wednesday - Saturday from 9AM to 11AM

More at PelicanIslandAudubon.org



Pelican Island Audubon Society Membership Form

Enclosed is my:

NAME _____ \$ _____ \$30 for annual membership

ADDRESS _____ \$ _____ \$35 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