

The Peace River Audubon Society's

# WHITE BIRD

1982

Vol. 6 No. 4

Merry Christmas

Bill Davis, Editor

## Waterfowl Slide Show at Dec. 16 Meeting

### Walter Crissey to Explain Migration

Walter Crissey, formerly with the U.S. Wildlife Service, will present a highly interesting and educational slide program on the migration of waterfowl at our next regular meeting to be held on Thursday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 PM in the parish hall of the Church of the Good Shepherd located at Shreve and Henry Streets in Punta Gorda.

Walter Crissey has done considerable studies of waterfowl and their migration habits. He will talk about many of the birds that we see in the Peace River area. Guests are welcome as usual and it should be an enjoyable evening.

### Bird Walk on December 10th

Dr. Oliver Hewitt will lead a bird walk on Saturday, December 10th. We will visit the Shell Creek area and get a chance to visit Bob Gidel's property and possibly see some of the ospreys that his place is famous for. Bob, as you probably know, is our new board of directors member. We will meet at the Lindsley's Lumber parking lot at 8:00 AM. Bring lunch if you wish. Call Louisa Hilenski at 625-6432 for more details.

### Next Field Trip by Boat Jan. 29

Our next field trip, on Saturday, January 29, will be by boat to Cayo Costa. This will be an all-day trip starting at 9:00AM and returning at 5:00PM. We will be met at Cayo Costa by a ranger who will take us on a

tram trip around the island. We hope to see many white pelicans on the boat trip and on the island. There are also many other waterfowl to be seen.

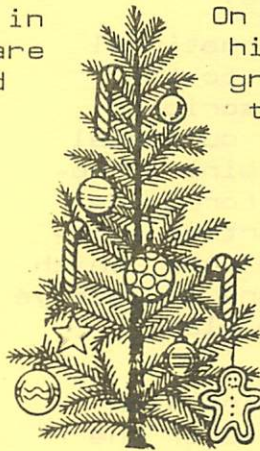
Cost for the all-day trip is \$10.50, which must be paid in advance since we have the boat under charter. Bring a picnic lunch. Sign up at our Dec. 16 meeting or call Louisa Hilenski at 625-6432.

### Sanibel Bird Trip Rewarding

On November 12th, Dr. Hewitt and his guest, Malcom Simon, led a group of 14 on a delightful bird trip to the Ding Darling Sanctuary on Sanibel Island. We saw one white pelican and redish egret that were a thrill plus many anhingas, cormorants, great blues, great white egrets and more, plus a few greedy alligators. Some of us also visited the CROW Refuge for injured wildlife.

### Good Skates at Mote Marine

16 members visited the Mote Marine Laboratory Science Center on Saturday, November 20. We were treated to a slide film presentation plus a guided tour of the many tanks that contain sea life from the Sarasota Bay area. Especially interesting was the skate tank that reminded us of the project going on at the laboratory to find a sea animal that will be more suitable than the shark for their cancer research. We also saw the sea turtles that are being raised and released into the gulf.



## President's Corner by Charlie Caniff



So far —

### 14 Groups See PRAS Slide Show

Our Society's first venture into an organized community education program on the environment is an outstanding success.

At our annual meeting last May, Dr. Jerry Gingerich presented a preview showing of our slide presentation, "The Peace River Basin - Uplands to the Gulf". Since then, the show has been re-edited, provided with a taped music and narration background, and packaged for presentation to local community groups.

Its first public showing was last July, to an audience of approximately 150 persons at the Isles Yacht Club. Without any further publicity or promotion except word-of-mouth praise, the show will have presented to fourteen groups by the end of the year, including civic clubs, social groups, high school students, yachting and sailing clubs, etc.

We have developed an informational leaflet to be distributed to the audience at the shows, describing our program and goals for our local environment. It also contains an application for membership form. We are also planning on a further editing and tightening of the show, which features two projectors and a dissolve unit, so there is never a blank screen.

Concurrently, we are working with the Environmental Committee of the League of Women Voters on an updating of an older slide presentation on the water resources of the Peace River Basin, pressures on its use and dangers of pollution. We expect to add this show to our community education program within the next six months.

Why don't you suggest our show as a program to one of the community groups you are active in? A call to me or Jerry will get it on the schedule. Also, if you have or

know of a friend that has an idle collection of nature-related slides, why not consider donating them to the Audubon Slide Library for use in building further programs?

If I don't get to see you during our December 16th meeting, may I take this opportunity to wish you a most Merry Christmas and Happy and Prosperous New Year.

### Arts-Crafts Group in Village Show

Liz Raterman's Arts-Craft group has just completed Fund Raising activity at the Village Artisan's Show held at Fisherman's Village Dec. 4 & 5. While the full count is not in as yet, it appears that they raised from \$100.00 to \$125.00. Liz will give a full report at our Dec. 16th meeting.

The natural handcraft construction artists will continue to create and build an inventory for future sales. Liz still needs natural items such as shells, stones, driftwood, small cones, colorful dried flowers and weeds, berries, etc. and lots of CREATIVE VOLUNTEERS!

### FUTURE FUND-RAISER

Liz has plans for a good money-making Trash-A-Thon. She will need many volunteers for this fun project and is hoping many of our younger members will take part. Call Liz Raterman at 639-8193 to tell her you'll help.

### Osprey at Next Wildlife Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 16, Jerry Gingerich will talk about BIRDS OF PREY and he will have some living examples on hand. The session starts at 6:30PM, one hour before our regular meeting.

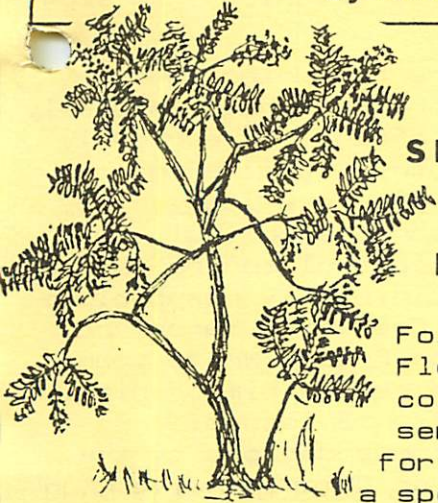
Larry Montague, chairman of the Wildlife Rescue Committee, reports that 25 wildlife pick-up calls were made and 10 information calls were answered during the month.

### Bob Hopwood Resigns as Treas.

The PRAS Board of Directors regretfully accepted the resignation of Bob Hopwood as treasurer. Bob was forced to resign because of family illness. He will be missed for the fine job he has performed for PRAS. Anyone interested in applying for the treasurer's job can call Charlie Caniff at 639-0295.

# Native Tree of the Month

by Dave Wilson



## SHINING SUMAC

*Rhus copallina*

Folks who say that Florida has no fall color should observe more closely for Shining Sumac is a spectacular addition

to the landscape. This adaptable shrub ranges all over the eastern United States and lives all over Florida at the edges of oak and sabal palm Hammocks, is interspersed among the pine-palmetto woods, and forms nice clusters along roads and on disturbed ground. Sumac never gets very tall this far south and grows to only about 10 to 12 feet on a thin woody trunk covered with gray to red-brown fine textured bark. Short irregular branches and twigs spring from this trunk and from a sparse crown. [Another name for it is Dwarf Sumac]

Sumac's 12 inch compound leaves are composed of around 15 shiny green leaflets attached directly opposite each other to flat winged stems. [Still another name is Winged Sumac.] The sap is clear and the leaflets are more pale and fuzzy on the under side.

In late summer, delightful clusters of yellow centered light green petaled flowers spring forth from the twigs in the center of a cluster of the compound leaves of both male and female Sumacs. These mature in the fall to dark red, sticky, furry clusters of fruits that birds and small critters love to eat. These fruits stay on well into the winter. Florida deer love to eat the twigs.

In autumn, the shiny green leaflets turn a beautiful red to purple hue, and stay on well into the winter.

The Audubon Field Guide mentions that "Shining Sumac is...planted as an ornamental for shiny leaves and showy fruit...which can be nibbled or made

into a drink like lemonade." I've seen them used quite effectively in gardens around Strathmore Riverside Villas in Sarasota.

If you miss fall color, this is a nice shrub to rescue. Just make sure the specimen is small, [knee high] and the roots are kept moist.

Sumacs are doing fine in the Kiwanis Park on Midway and they need to be preserved.

QUOTATION .....

"We treat this world of ours as though we had a spare in the trunk."

Al Bernstein

REFERENCE .....

The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees - Eastern Region by Elbert L. Little



## THANKS to our DONORS



Our sincere appreciation to the people who have donated money to help the PRAS cause.

### GENERAL FUND

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Richard Fry    | Maurine George    |
| Carolyn Wilson | Ginney Tift       |
| Chuck Caniff   | Bob Hopwood       |
| Phil Lord      | Joseph Courant    |
| Mr. Brown      | Charles E. Foster |
| Ida Eglis      | Florida Audubon   |

### WILDLIFE FUND

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Bernard Rude | Eleanore Elmore |
| Chuck Caniff | Jerry Gingerich |
| Geo          | Alison Kelly    |

### SCHOLARSHIP FUND

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| Maurine George | Doreen Legg   |
| Phillip Lord   | Chuck Caniff  |
| Bill Davis     | Mrs. W. Bauer |
| Fred Drew      |               |

## Nature Photography Contest

The Tampa Audubon Society is holding an amateur photography contest open to all. Any color slide taken after Jan. 1, 1980, depicting nature in any form is eligible. Eight prizes will be awarded. An entry fee of \$3.00 per slide (or 4 for \$10.00) must accompany the entries. Deadline is March 25, 1983. Entries should be sent to Tampa Audubon Society, P.O. Box 320025, Tampa, FL 33679.

# Conservation Concerns

by Steve Osborne

In this new monthly addition to your White Bird, we will try to alert you to upcoming issues, votes and agency decisions which may need your support and letters as concerned and affected citizens.

Many of you have expressed a desire to help but don't know whom to write, what address to use or how to word your letters. So, this month, compliments of the League of Women Voters, we are enclosing a list of your legislators and other information to help you make your voice heard.

We will also publish news of important issues as they come up. Remember, we now have a "HOT LINE" telephone group which will enable us to call you if a crucial issue comes up that can't wait for the next White Bird or Audubon meeting. This HOT LINE will be used only RARELY and only on important,

immediate issues. The sign-up roll is always available at our regular meetings or call Steve Osborne at 629-7546 [days] or 625-9625 [evenings] to sign up.

This month we are featuring your County Commission. This group probably has more direct effect on your daily lives than any other level of government, and since they are local, they can be very responsive to individual contacts. They control zoning, housing and are most directly responsible for keeping our Charlotte Harbor resources pollution-free. Write your Commissioner and remind him of his responsibilities on 3 issues:

Follow the recommendations of the Charlotte Harbor Comprehensive Plan. Keep zoning variances to a minimum, and only in cases where it serves the public good.

Support the preservation of native vegetation and encourage the use of native plants in landscaping.



**Peace River Audubon Society, Inc.**  
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## Welcome New PRAS Members

Our best wishes to the new members listed below:

John M. Louis  
Eleanor Clark  
James & Mizzie Whiton  
Chester & Betti Paull  
Theodore & Francis Spicer  
Mrs. Kit Munson  
John & Ethel Abell  
Ada & David Scott  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Kneller