



January 6, 2001

Volume 25, Issue 6

## “POPULATION AND HABITAT” JANUARY 17, 2002 - MEETING

“Population and Habitat” will be presented by Corry Westbrook from National Audubon's Washington D. C. office. Corry is a native Floridian with a degree in Environmental Studies from Florida International University and a Masters in Environmental and Resource Policy from George Washington University. Before working with Audubon, Corry worked for the Environmental Protection Agency in their Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, and the American Indian Environmental Office.

National Audubon's Population and Habitat Program began in the mid 1970's with the realization that no environmental victory would be permanent as long as population growth remained unchecked. Corry will talk to us about Audubon's program and the connection between population and its effect on the environment. You are sure to learn some fascinating facts about the world's population.

Human Population growth is the most pressing environmental problem facing the U. S. and the world" - John Flicker, President, National Audubon Society.

Corry is looking forward to coming back to Florida to speak at our meeting. So, please join us at 7:00 on January 17 for refreshments followed by our meeting and program!

Location: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2565 Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR BIRDERS.....1/17/02**

Have you wanted to go birding, sometimes at the drop of a hat, with some excellent birders? The current calendar has one Field Trip scheduled per month, but some folks would like more.....how about a “Birding Group” which you could “join” and then be notified of a birding trip maybe this weekend, or tomorrow?

Join Randy immediately after the business meeting on the 17th with other interested birders and get on the list of birders, wanna-be birders, and join in the fun!

### ***FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP***

The February Field Trip is with Charlie Sample, Venice Audubon President and birder extraordinaire, to Casperson Beach. We will meet in the Peachland Publix parking lot behind McDonald's at 7:30 AM and carpool to the beach.

### **January 5, 2002 - Field Trip to Laurel Landfill and Celery Fields**

Seventeen members of the Peace River Audubon Society participated in this field trip to the Laurel Landfill area and the area known as the Celery Fields in Sarasota. The group met at the Peachland Mall parking lot behind McDonald's at 7:30. We reached the Laurel Landfill area, located at the north end of Knight's Trail Road (Interstate Exit 35A), around 8:00 and spent about 1 to 2 hours around the peripheral road. The Group then traveled to the Celery Fields area (Interstate 75 Exit 39) where we stopped at several locations along Coburn Road and Palmer Blvd.

Much of the area was covered with ponds or marsh. As a result, a large number of water birds were seen. Sixty-eight different species of birds were noted in the two areas. Most notable was a flock of 49 Sandhill Cranes feeding in a field, a flock of 20 - 30 White Pelicans, and a Caracara being chased by an Eagle. The group also saw at least 7 different eagles (immature and adult). Following are a few images of birds taken during the trip.

Thanks to Dillys Randall for a great birding trip and to Tom Zinneman for his writeup on [www.zinnysworld.com](http://www.zinnysworld.com) (where you can see some beautiful pictures of our experience on the trip and much, much more).

# 2001 PRAS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

The Peace River Audubon Society's 15th annual Christmas Bird Count was held on December 15 covering the area generally defined as a 15-mile diameter circle (the center of which is located at US 41 and Henry Street in Punta Gorda). Tony Licata provided the following information with: **Total species 131. Total birds 30608.**

100	Anhinga		52	Gull, Herring
??	Blackbird, Brewer's		746	Gull, Laughing
63	Blackbird, Red-winged		273	Gull, Ring-billed
30	Bluebird, Eastern		4	Harrier, Northern (Marsh Hawk)
11	Bobwhite, Northern		3	Hawk, Cooper's
40	Canvasback		25	Hawk, Red-shouldered
71	Cardinal, Northern		11	Hawk, Red-tailed
101	Catbird, Gray		2	Hawk, Sharp-shinned
45	Coot, American		143	Heron, Great Blue
1079	Cormorant, Double-crested		20	Heron, Green
2	Cowbird, Brown-headed		158	Heron, Little Blue
6	Cowbird, Shiny		95	Heron, Tricolored
52	Crane, Sandhill		89	Jay, Blue
38	Crow, American		36	Jay, Scrub
241	Crow, Fish		47	Ibis, Glossy
24	Dove, Common Ground		458	Ibis, White
214	Dove, Eurasian Collared		39	Kestrel, American
1037	Dove, Mourning		242	Killdeer
54	Dove, Rock		51	Kingfisher, Belted
133	Dowitcher, Short-billed		1	Kinglet, Ruby-crowned
43	Duck, Mallard		135	Knot, Red
259	Duck, Mottled		2	Limpkin
103	Duck, Ring-necked		2	Loon, Common
7	Duck, Ruddy		25	Meadowlark, Eastern
1	Dunlin		1280	Merganser, Hooded
15	Eagle, Bald; Adult—11; Imm.—4	4		Merganser, Red-breasted
263	Egret, Cattle		1	Merlin
162	Egret, Great		208	Mockingbird, Northern
216	Egret, Snowy		8	Night-heron, Black-crowned
26	Flicker, Northern		35	Night-heron, Yellow-crowned
3	Frigate-bird, Magnificent	6		Nuthatch, Brown-headed
123	Gallinule, Common		75	Osprey
102	Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray		34	Owl, Burrowing
8	Goldfinch, American		5	Owl, Great Horned
1190	Grackle, Boat-tailed		2	Owl, Screech
867	Grackle, Common		11	Oystercatcher, American
6	Grebe, Horned		257	Pelican, Brown

2001 PRAS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS (continued)

14	Phoebe, Eastern		292	Tern, Royal
1	Pintail, Northern	564		Tern, Sandwich
127	Plover, Black-bellied (Gray Plover)		27	Towhee, Rufous-sided (Eastern)
21	Plover, Semi-palmated		14	Turnstone, Ruddy
1	Rail, Clapper		4	Vireo, Solitary
20	Robin, American		1	Vireo, White-eyed
272	Sanderling		151	Vulture, Black
23	Sandpiper, Least		505	Vulture, Turkey
1	Sandpiper, Solitary		5	Warbler, Black-and-white
13	Sandpiper, Spotted		366	Warbler, Palm
83	Sandpiper, Western		277	Warbler, Pine
8835	Scaup, Lesser		3	Warbler, Prairie
5	Shoveler, Northern		601	Warbler, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle Warbler)
113	Shrike, Loggerhead		2	Warbler, Yellow-throated
68	Skimmer, Black		1	Waxwing, Cedar
2	Snipe, Common	23		Willet
1	Sora		19	Woodpecker, Downy
1	Sparrow, Bachman's		11	Woodpecker, Pileated
1	Sparrow, Chipping		80	Woodpecker Red-bellied
5	Sparrow, House		2	Woodpecker, Red-cockaded
1	Spoonbill, Roseate		5	Woodpecker, Red-headed
649	Starling, European		7	Wren, Carolina
63	Stork, Wood		3	Wren, House
11	Swallow, Barn		1	Yellowlegs, Greater
5798	Swallow, Tree		21	Yellowlegs, Lesser
1	Tanager, Scarlet		14	Yellow-throat, Common
17	Teal, Blue-winged		1	Common Goldeneye

**PROPOSED EXPANSION OF DING DARLING NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX**

After attending one of the three public input sessions held by US Fish and Wildlife and reading the Draft Environmental Assessment and Land Protection Plan, I concluded the following:

The projected expansion looks like it should achieve its objective of protecting additional fish and wildlife habitat in Lee and Charlotte Counties without really impacting fishing and boating interests. Although there is a lot of open water inside the boundaries of the refuge complex, those waters are specifically excluded from refuge control except for potential 100-meter buffers around breeding-colony islands during nesting season. Fish and Wildlife's original plan had much of the waters restricted, but after vigorous citizen dissent, open waters were specifically excluded, resulting in boating and fishing being unaffected.

Perhaps the biggest feature of the expansion is that additional land can be preserved for wildlife through a combination of conservation easements with willing landowners and fee title purchases from willing sellers. Since the lands are within Refuge boundaries, Federal funds can be used in addition to State funds for acquiring parcels.

You may comment to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the proposed expansion until January 31, 2002. Comment forms will be available at the January 17 meeting. The expansion plan is available over the internet at: <http://planning.southeast.fws.gov>. Call me at 637-8160 if you have any questions.

Larry Linn

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*White Bird*

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**2002 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

- 1/17 Meeting 7:30 (Refreshments at 7)—"Population and Habitat" with Corry Westbrook, National Audubon Society
- 2/2 Casperon Beach Field Trip- Leader: Charlie Sample, Venice Audubon Society
- 2/21 Meeting 7:30 (Refreshments at 7)—"Oystercatchers" with Nancy Douglass, Nongame Regional Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- 3/2 Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival
- 3/9 Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary Field Trip - Leaders: Bill & Eleanor Marr 624-4182
- 3/28 Annual Banquet—Celebrate Peace River Audubon's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!
- 4/6 Tippecanoe Scrub Field Trip - Leader: Cathy Olson 613-6753
- 4/18 Meeting 7:30 (Refreshments at 7)—"Warbler Migration" with Lee Snyder, St. Petersburg Audubon Society
- 5/16 Member's Night—Annual meeting, election of officers, and special presentations by our own talented members!

**AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (optional) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please enroll me as a National Audubon Society and Peace River Audubon Society member. I will receive Audubon and The Florida Naturalist magazines as well as the Peace River White Bird newsletter.

One year - \$20 Two years - \$35

Send this completed application with your check to:

The National Audubon Society  
 Membership Data Center  
 P.O. Box 51003 E14  
 Boulder, CO 80323-1003 7XCH

**OR . . .**

Please enroll me for a 1-year White Bird subscription.

Please mail this application with your \$10 check to:  
 The Peace River Audubon Society, PO Box 510760,  
 Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760.

The following information must now appear on all solicitation requests:  
 "The Peace River Audubon Society is a 501 ( c )(3) non-profit organization. Our Federal tax ID number is 59-2190872. We do not engage a professional solicitor and 100% of the funds generated by this request will be used to support our Chapter programs. Our registration number with the FDA Division of Consumer Services is SC-040701. "