

White Bird

September 30, 2003

Volume 27, Issue 4



"HARVEST SUPPER" MEETING—OCTOBER 16, 2003



"Bald Eagles and the Eagle Watch"

Our annual Harvest Supper will begin on Thursday, October 16, at 6:15 pm. Please bring a dish to share and plates, utensils, and napkins. Coffee, tea and other beverages will be provided.

After dinner, Bobbi Rodgers of the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) will present "Bald Eagles and the Eagle Watch." Bobbi manages Cedar Point Park at 2300 Placida Road in Englewood, FL 34224 (mailing address. P.O. Box 5197, Englewood, FL 34224). To reach her, call (941) 475-0769.

Meeting site is: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2565 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte.

Extra! Extra! New Activity, Just For Fun!!

85% of the members at the September meeting voted to go "Wading" at Ponce de Leon Park. So guess what, at 9:30 AM on Tuesday November the 25, you and your friends are all invited to come "Wading With CHEC." If you could not make the meeting to vote, you are still more than welcome.

Monica Dorkin, CHEC's Naturalist, has arranged for us to use CHEC's nets and jars to catch some of the amazingly varied creatures that call our Estuary Home. Then Monica will tell us what these creatures are and how they fit into life in Charlotte Harbor. Bring something old for your feet in case you tread on a Crab.

We have reserved the picnic shelter so we all have somewhere to sit or if it rains to keep dry. Afterwards we will have a Pot Luck Picnic Lunch together...I hope the first of many. Just bring a food item suitable for a picnic and we can all share. Please also bring a paper plate, a plastic glass, knife, fork and spoon. (You just know someone will bring dessert.) We will provide the sodas.

Please support the members who are trying to put the Fun Into Audubon by making the effort to be there. If you need a ride, call us and we will do our best.

October 18th – Field trip to Sanibel Island

On Saturday, October 18th, we will visit Sanibel Island. Our first stop will be the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge. We will drive along the 4-mile scenic Wildlife Drive, which usually provides good viewing of water birds. After a brief stop at the Visitor's Center (restrooms and store), we'll drive to the east end of the island. Migrant birds frequently stop and rest in this area before continuing their journey south. Bill Havill (941-625-8096) will lead this exciting trip. The group will meet at 7:30 in the parking lot of the old K-Mart located on the northwest corner of the US41 and Burnt Store Road junction. On the way home, we'll stop on the Sanibel Causeway by the picnic tables. So, pack a lunch.

November 5th – Field trip to Bunche Beach and Estero Lagoon

On Wednesday, November 5th, Dave Smith (941-697-0529) will lead a birding trip south to the Fort Myers area. The first stop will be Bunche Beach, located about a mile before the Sanibel Causeway. We will then continue south to Fort Myers Beach and stop at the little Estero Lagoon (by the Holiday Inn motel). Both of these stops require walking to view the birds. After birding, we'll stop at some picnic tables along San Carlos Boulevard for a quick lunch before returning home. The group will meet at 7:30 in the parking lot of the old K-Mart located on the northwest corner of the US41 and Burnt Store Road junction.

Field Trip to the Laurel Landfill and Celery Fields

The Peace River Audubon Society held their first field trip of the 2003-2004 season on September 20. Fifteen members met at the Peachland Mall in Port Charlotte at 7:30 for a trip north to Sarasota. The weather was ideal with the temperature in the 70's with a slight breeze and partly cloudy skies.

The first stop was the Laurel Landfill, where we drove around the perimeter road. We observed quite a number of birds from the car; we also stopped at several locations to get out, walk, and get closer to the birds. Notable species observed included Bluebirds, Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles, Egrets (Great, Snowy), Flicker, Red-shouldered Hawks, Herons (Great Blue, Green, Little Blue, Tricolored), Ibis (Glossy, White), Killdeer, Kingfisher, Shrike, Sandpipers (Pectoral, Western), Black-necked Stilts, Wood Storks, Barn Swallows, Brown Thrasher, and Lesser Yellowlegs. Thirty-eight (38) different species were observed around the perimeter road.

Our next stop was the Celery Fields, arriving there about 10:30. We spent some time at Ackerman Pond, where a single Black-bellied Whistling Duck was observed, a first for several members of the group. We also saw several Golden-winged Skimmers (a very colorful dragonfly) in this area. We then made a stop on Palmer Road near the bridge that crosses the drainage ditch. Our final stop was the gazebo on Palmer Road, where we ate our lunch. In addition to the Black-bellied Duck, other notable birds observed included Egrets (Cattle, Great, Snowy), Herons (Great Blue, Green, Little Blue, Tricolored), Ibis (Glossy, White), Osprey, Least Sandpipers, Shrike, Spoonbills, Blue-winged Teal, and Forster's Terns. Altogether, 54 different species of birds were observed during the trip. The group arrived back at the Peachland Mall around 1:00.

Tom Zinneman, Leader

PHOSPHATE UPDATE...

Since the last newsletter, two more things have happened:

- Lee County has publicly supported Charlotte County's position in the legal battle fighting phosphate-mining permits, and has committed an additional \$900,000 toward this effort.
- Department of Environmental Protection Secretary David Struhs, in a somewhat surprising move, decided to deny the Altman tract mining permit, confirming Charlotte County's favorable Court ruling. This bodes well for the County's fight against the Ona mining permit, a 10-fold larger mine.

Larry Linn, Conservation Committee

PRAS website construction

The PRAS website has been moved to: **www.peacerriveraudubon.org**. Many thanks go to our webmaster Bill Coombs and Gregg Klowden for the changes. If you would like to serve on the web page committee or have suggestions, contact Bill Coombs at wecoombs@comcast.net

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED...

The PRAS website committee is planning to include a segment on the web site that has LOCAL birding areas. Do **you** have a site that you would like to include (besides those listed below)? If so, please forward it to Cathy Olson at cathyolson@comcast.net or 613-6753. A list of species that can be found at the site would be very much appreciated.

Local Birding Areas (places we have so far—need species seen):

Amberjack Environmental Park
Bayshore Linear Park
Cecil B. Webb Wildlife Management Area
Cedar Point
Charlotte Harbor Environmental Park (Alligator Creek)
Deep Creek
Kings Highway wetlands
Ollie's Pond
Ponce de Leon Park
Prairie Creek
Rotonda Community Park
Stump Pass State Park
Tippecanoe Environmental Park
Tippecanoe Scrub Environmental Park II

AND YET ANOTHER CHALLENGE...

Peace River Audubon Society is looking for a new Banner for their web-site.

Bill Coombs PRAS Web-Master has challenged the members to come up with a new exciting Banner to head up the home page on PRAS brand new web site, www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

SO, put on your thinking caps (after looking at the current web site), and contact Bill Coombs at wecoombs@comcast.net with your suggestions!

WHAT THE PRAS BOARD IS DOING...

- Web site development by Gregg Klowden and Bill Coombs was discussed and monies were appropriated for that (about 70% of attendees at the September meeting indicated they would like to "receive" the newsletter on line as well as see the latest happenings.)
- Field trips and programs - the Annual Banquet has been changed to March 16 at Maple Leaf Estates, with catering by Cap'n and Cowboy...it will be called "An Evening with Audubon" for publicity in newspapers, etc. Jim Beever will speak about scrub jays. Ongoing discussion about where funds will be applied.
- Columbus McLoed (Charlotte County Audubon warden who disappeared) memorial marker—ongoing request to place it in Bayshore Linear Park while pursuing the State Historic Marker designation.
- Conservation—Paul Holmes reported on the Calusa Regional Committee meeting discussion of development encroachment and many areas where the environment loses.
- Chapter revitalization—Paul requested help from the Calusa Committee; George Marks indicated that a conscious decision was made to have Florida Audubon handle chapter development because those committees spend time/energy on conservation updates. A decision is expected soon regarding Babcock—John Aspiolea will write a letter supporting acquisition showing PRAS support.
- ELAAC update was given by John Aspiolea; a presentation will be given at the general membership meeting.
- Paul showed walkie talkies that will be used for field trips so all cars/vans can hear what birds are sited, etc. Cyndi will donate two more.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE AREA??

At the September meeting, there was a request for a listing of all events in the area. There is no way to put everything in the newsletter or to stay on top of it all, so here's a list of websites you may wish to search:

www.pureflorida.com (very inclusive!)
Go to "what to do," then "calendar of events"

www.charlotte-florida.com/
Go to "calendar" (shows many organizations)

www.charlottecountyfl.com
Go to "public meetings and hearings"

www.checflorida.org
Info on each site (Alligator Creek & Cedar Point)
Watersheds
What is a watershed?
Florida Yards
Water quality
Weather or not
Plus lots more.

SO, put some of these sites on your favorite list and enjoy!

2003/2004 Membership Drive

Below are listed the results of the survey carried out of the last monthly meeting. This is what you asked for:

- * 100 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of continuing and improving the Field Trips.
- * 100 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of improving the Christmas Bird Count Social.
- * 96 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of inviting the public to come Birding with Audubon.
- * 96 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of creating and running a Bird Identification Class.
- * 86 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of organizing a Mini-Birdathon.
- * 85 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of starting A Nature Photography Section.
- * 85 % were **Very Strongly** in favor of a wading trip with CHEC.
- * 77 % were **Strongly** in favor of an e-mail list for Alerts.
- * 73 % were **Strongly** in favor of Audubon Alphabet game.
- * 73 % were **Strongly** in favor of the Picture in Pennington Park competition.
- * 64 % were **Strongly** in favor of establishing Audubon assets on our web site.

This is what we are doing:

As I am sure, you are aware by now we have doubled the number of field trips and are trying to make them more adventurous and exciting. At the October monthly meeting, we will have sign-up sheets for the 10 other top projects.

At this point, we are not asking people to sign up to take part in the projects, but to sign-up to be involved in creating and running the projects.

Our aim is to offer a new, extra activity, at least once a month during the winter season. To accomplish this, it is obvious that we need the help of as many members as possible, especially those with past experience organizing event's similar to those listed above.

The November event will be "Wading" at Ponce de Leon Park in Punta Gorda Isles. This activity will start at 9:30 AM on Tuesday, November 25, and will be led by experts from CHEC. We have reserved the picnic shelter from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM so that we may enjoy a pot-luck picnic lunch together after the wading. This will be a fun morning, so please try not to miss it.

We hope to be ready to hold our 'Just for Fun Mini-Birdathon' in December.

Improving the Christmas Bird Count Social and creating Bird Identification Classes are dependent on us obtaining access to a digital video projector. So if any of our members have any ideas on how we can accomplish this, please let us know.

We can start the Nature Photography Section as soon as volunteers step forward to organize it. So it is entirely up to you, the members, how soon we start this exciting activity.

Please consider how you can volunteer!

The Peace River Audubon Society
PO Box 510760
Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760

www.peacriveraudubon.org

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October 2003
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NOTE: Calendar information is on the enclosed "Schedule of Events"

MORE KEYS TO PRAS SUCCESS ...
WELCOME TO NEW SEPTEMBER
MEMBERS:

Robert Mitchell Elliot
Mary Fitzgerald
Diane Hughes
K R Kelle
Kim & Cliff Langenbach
Mary Moreau
Ralph Rotondo
Ms Gena Ryan
Caroline Schild
Karen Starr



2003-04 OFFICERS:

President	Cathy Olson '05	613-6753
Vice President	Kathi Rader-Gibson '04	474-3065
Secretary	Peggy Kampert '05	235-3160
Treasurer	Larry Linn '05	637-8160
Additional Directors:	John Aspiolea '04	575-7788
	Chuck Froman '04	743-5204
	Joan Froman '04	743-5204
	Paul Holmes '05	833-3337
	Dennis Hungerford '05	627-5405
	Joy Linn '05 (editor)	637-8160

For any newsletter comments, etc., please contact Joy Linn at 637-8160 or linn59@comcast.net

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.

YES, I want to join or renew my membership in Peace River Audubon now for \$10!

Every Peace River Audubon membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect local birds, wildlife and natural habitats. Members will receive:

- 1-year "White Bird" newsletter subscription (10 issues) with:
- Local news articles;
- Local meetings, field trips and bird walks; and,
- ONLY provide your email here if you want to receive the White Bird online:

MAIL CHECK DIRECTLY to:

PRAS, P O Box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760.

OR, I want to join National Audubon...

- _____ \$15 - 1-year Student/Senior Rate (62+)
- _____ \$20 - 1-year Introductory National Audubon Rate
- _____ \$30 - 2-year Special National Audubon Rate
- _____ My check is enclosed. _____ Please bill me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____

City, State, Zip _____ **E14-7XCH**

Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center,
P.O. Box 51003, Boulder, CO 80323-1003

I do not wish to receive "Audubon" Magazine

Every Audubon National membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, wildlife and natural habitats. As a member, you'll receive the following:

- * A 1-year subscription (10 issues) of the White Bird by mail;