



PRAS meetings are held on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY** of the month from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. The Palm Room at the **Charlotte County Cultural Center** located at 2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte FL will be the 2005-06 meeting place.

Columbus McLeod Historical Marker

The dedication ceremony for the Florida State Historic Marker for Columbus McLeod was held Friday, January 20, at Ponce De Leon Park in Punta Gorda. McLeod was the Audubon Warden who died in 1908 trying to protect the wading birds in Charlotte Harbor from plume hunters. There were about 40 people in attendance.

PRAS President, Paul Holmes was the MC and gave an eloquent final tribute. Also making presentations were: Dave Anderson (Executive Director Audubon of Florida), George Marks (Former President of PRAS who initiated the project), Dave Phelen (Punta Gorda Councilman), and Adam Cummings (Charlotte County Commissioner). Other city representatives included: Mayor, Steve Fabian; Council Members, Marilyn Smith-Mooney and Larry Friedman; City Manager, Howard Kunik; Parks and Grounds Chief, Mary Cromwell; and Police Chief, Charles Rinehart. Also in attendance were Carol Mahler, the person who got the project started in the city and gained city support for it and Larry Linn, the PRAS member who saw the project through to completion..

The project was started by PRAS in April 2001, and was funded by contributions from Peace River Audubon members, outside contributors, and a large \$755 grant from the State of Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources.



Larry Linn, Dave Anderson, Paul Holmes, Carol Mahler, George Marks

February 2006 Events

Saturday, February 4th

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

CHARLOTTE HARBOR NATURE FESTIVAL

Charlotte Sports Stadium

Tuesday, February 7th – Walk-about

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

*Amberjack Park

Naturalist – Charlotte County Parks

Meet at the park entrance: The park is on the southern half of the Cape Haze peninsula. Travel west on highway 776 and turn left on highway 775 (Placida Road). Drive approximately 4.3 miles and turn left on Gasparilla Pines Boulevard (look for the Wildflowers Country Club sign). Drive to the end of Gasparilla Pines (it will dead end at the park) and park on the right side of the road.

Wednesday, February 15th – Meeting

6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Cultural Center, Palm Room

Dave Matheson – Birds/Art/Eco-tourism

February 17—20 Great Backyard Bird Count

Visit: www.birdsource.org/gbbc for details

Saturday, February 18th – Field Trip

7:00 a.m.

Corkscrew Swamp – Swamp Buggy Tours

Note: Only 19 people for swamp buggy tours

PREPAID RESERVATIONS REQUIRED (\$20)

Tuesday, February 28th

PREPAID RESERVATION DEADLINE

PRAS BANQUET AND SILENT AUCTION

P. Doggett – 941-575-4009

DONATIONS – B. Talburt, 941-766-0354

Coming Events

Saturday, March 4th – Family Day at CHEC
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 7th – Walk-about
8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Cecil B. Webb
Meet at the parking lot of Sweetbay at
US 41 south of Burnt Store Road intersection

Thursday, March 9th -
BANQUET AND SILENT AUCTION
6:00 p.m.
Charlotte County Cultural Center
PREPAID RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
See details on the next page.

Wednesday, March 15th – Meeting
6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Cultural Center, Palm Room
Betty Godacre – Estero Bay Foundation

Saturday, March 18th – Field Trip
7:00 a.m.
DeSoto Park – Spring Migration
Meet at the parking lot near McDonalds at
Peachland Mall

Tuesday, March 21 – Photography Group
7:00 a.m.
Six Mile Cypress Slough
Meet at the parking lot of Sweetbay at US 41
south of Burnt Store Road intersection
M.A. Hughes

Sunday, March 26th
6:00 a.m. – Noon
Charlotte Harbor 100/Birdaton



Christmas Bird Count

Christmas Bird Count held on Saturday December, 17th. It was a cloudy and windy day. We saw 127 species down from 2004's 132 species. We saw 40,173 birds up from last year's 24,636. The difference in the count was primarily due to Lesser Scaup (15,019 vs 6033) and Tree Swallows (6941 vs 1577).

There were six species seen this year that we did not see in 2004. They are Northern Bobwhite, American Oystercatcher, American Redstart, Northern Shoveler, Chipping Sparrow, and Summer Tanager.

There were ten species which we saw in 2004 but not in 2005. They are Least Bittern, Indigo Bunting, Purple Gallinule, American Goldfinch, Broad-winged Hawk, Eastern Kingbird, Limpkin, Northern Oriole, Grasshopper Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Greater Yellowlegs.

Even though the number of species declined, and some of our major birds were down significantly, we still had a surprising number of new high counts. We had new high counts for the following 12 birds: Northern Cardinal 75, Gray Catbird 111, Mourning Dove 2623, Great Crested Flycatcher 3, Cooper's Hawk 8, Brown-headed Nuthatch 12, Brown Pelican 379, Bachman's Sparrow 6, European Starling 1211, Eastern Towhee 55, Willet 34, and Red-bellied Woodpecker 126.

In 2005 we saw an all time high of 126 Red-bellied Woodpeckers. The number of birds seen for most species are down from last year, in some cases 50%, especially crows, (6 vs 20 American and 19 vs 190 Fish), herons, and shore birds. We did not see any Goldfinches this year while in 2004 we saw 32.

Thanks to Tony Licata for organizing the Christmas Bird Count and to all of you who participated in the event.

Audubon Education

First of all, "Thank you" to Dave and Jackie Lancaster, Carol McDougal, Phyllis Dogget, and Frank Walker (he had no choice) for weathering the coldest day of the year for our first Family Day at CHEC. We did have one family who braved the cold, rain, and wind for a day of birding.

We hope to try again on March 4th from 10 A.M. – 2 P.M. with a little different format. We will be available during that time for guided walks on any of the trails with an emphasis on birding. CHEC will provide binoculars and we will need to bring field guides to demonstrate their use on the trail.

I will need volunteers on the 4th for all or part of the day to register people as well as go out on the trails with them. If you are available and interested call or email me at: 941-639-3879 or walkerj@peacriveraudubon.org

Jan Walker

Peace River Audubon Society Invites You To Attend

"AN EVENING WITH AUDUBON"

To celebrate PRAS 29th ANNUAL BANQUET AND SILENT AUCTION

Thursday, March 9, 2006

At Cultural Center of Charlotte County - 2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte

Cash bar: 6:00 p.m.; dinner at 7:00 p.m. Catered by the Cultural Center

Menu options: Chicken Marsala or Stuffed Grouper



--- Program Features ---

Speaker: Mr. Mark Renz, "Florida Through Native Eyes"

Auction: Silently bid on many wonderful items



Contest: Photographic contest for those "perfect wildlife shots"

(Entry fees: \$5 for one or \$10 for three)

RESERVATIONS: by February 28th - \$20.00 per person

Mail check to PRAS to confirm your reservation in c/o of Ms. Phyllis Doggett

425 Fireball Court - Punta Gorda, FL 33950. Or call, 941-575-4009

TICKETS ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR



Money raised from the auction will assist PRAS Youth Environmental Education Programs. PRAS - a non-profit 501(c)3, 59-2190872



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

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Punta Gorda, FL
Permit No. 100

View the White Bird on:
www.peaceriveraudubon.org



February 2006
White Bird



Printed on Recycled Paper
C & R Graphics (folding donated)

2005-06 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

(941)

President	Paul Holmes '05	833-3337
Vice President	Carol MacDougall '07	629-9120
Secretary	Mary Ann Hughes '06	637-7855
Treasurer	Walt Williams '07	235-3352
Additional Directors:	Phyllis Doggett '06	575-4009
	Betty Talburt '06	766-0354
	Frank Walker '07	639-3879
	Jan Walker '07	639-3879

Please:

Check the "Exp" date on your address label!

"0405" means your PRAS and/or National membership expires in Apr '05 (both organizations stop mailings after 2-3 months). To save the cost of sending reminder post cards, if your expiration date has or will expire, **please** use the application below to renew your membership.

MEMBERSHIP

Please direct all membership changes, etc. to Chairman Betty Talburt at 766-0354.

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.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

Join us to protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the wildlife we love...help us protect Florida. Members receive the "White Bird" newsletter with local news articles, local meetings, field trips, bird walks, and special events.

Visit our web site: www.peaceriveraudubon.org

Name: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **State:** ____ **Zip:** _____ - _____
Phone: () _____ **E-mail:** _____

MAIL \$10 CHECK WITH THIS FORM DIRECTLY To:
PRAS, PO box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760

To join National Audubon: Visit their web site: www.audubon.org