

# White Bird

September 7, 2006 Volume 30, Issue 1 Frank Walker, Editor



From the president.

We are about to begin the 2006/2007 season, so I thought I would remind you of what we achieved in 2006 and tell you about our plans for 2007.

The overall objective all Audubon chapters is to, "Conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity". Our chapter will continue to promote that objective in the coming year.

The attendance at last year's September meeting was very disappointing, so this year our first meeting will be in October. As an experiment, we tried holding a meeting the same month as the annual banquet, (An Evening with Audubon,) but that too was very poorly attended. So this year there will only be seven meetings

As in previous years, all our meetings will be announced in both of the local papers, in the Charlotte County nature alerts list, and on the website: [www.peacriveraudubon.org](http://www.peacriveraudubon.org).

For those that have not visited our website lately, you really should.

Bill Coombs and Gregg Klowden, are doing an excellent job and our website is now an excellent tool to promote Peace River Audubon Society.

We will continue to support the Charlotte County nature alerts e-mail list, which reaches over 200 local environmentalists. The nature alerts are used by organizations such as the Sierra Club, parks department and of course Audubon to provide information concerning the environment in Charlotte County. This includes notices of meetings, field trips and other events, as well as interesting nature sightings. If you do not receive the nature alerts, send your e-mail address to me at [president@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:president@peacriveraudubon.org) and I will add you to the list.

Last year, in conjunction with Charlotte County Parks Department and the visitors Bureau we organized four field trips to local parks, under the title off 'Walkabout with Audubon.' They were very successful attracting an average of 30 people to each walk. This year we will have eight 'Walkabouts with Audubon,' all in our local parks. I sincerely hope that this year even more of you will join us, in what is as much a social occasion, a chance to get out in the fresh air and stretch your legs, as it is bird watching.

On the other hand, there are many of our members who are both experienced birdwatchers and still able to do a couple of miles walk with frequent stops to enjoy the birds, butterflies, wildflowers and other Florida specialties. For this group as we do every year

we have organized seven field trips and four photography trips for some serious birding.

During last season Jan and Phyllis, two of our board members who are both former educators put in a lot of effort to revitalize our education programs. We also donated \$1,500 to CHEC (Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center) for use in their educational programs. Once again this year we will be aiming to raise money to continue these worthwhile environmental education programs.

As part of our contribution to citizen science, our members once again took part in the Christmas Bird Count. This year's count will be on Saturday December 16th and if you would like to take part then please contact, Tony at [xmas@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:xmas@peacriveraudubon.org).

It is with mixed feelings that I report the end of ELAAC, the Environmental Lands Acquisitions Advisory Council, on which P.R.A.S. has held a seat since its conception. In recent years with no funds available for the purchase of environmentally sensitive land, ELAAC became totally ineffective. It also probably annoyed several county commissioners by strongly recommending that the county did not change its comprehensive plan to enable Kitson and partners to build a city on Babcock Ranch. Following a successful outcome to the environmental lands referendum in November, a new body will be created to replace ELAAC. The worrying thing is, that while those who served on ELAAC were all appointed by groups such as Audubon, now they will be appointed directly by the County commissioners. We expect our Conservation chair Gregg Klowden to be one of those selected to serve on the commission which means there will be at least vote for the birds. Please read Gregg's article for more information.

Among our other achievements, we successfully dedicated an Historical Marker to the local Audubon warden, Columbus McLeod. The marker stands in Ponce Park.

Our president attended a workshop on Population growth and its effect on habitat at Audubon's Washington office.

So now at the start of the new season, with over 500 members and strong active Board of Directors, we hope to achieve at least as much this season as we did last. Of course this depends almost entirely on you our members. If you turn up for meetings, take part in field trips and other activities so that it is worthwhile organizing them, we will continue to do so.

If on the other hand, if you actually volunteered to help and become an active, not just a passive member of Peace River Audubon Society then we will have a really outstanding year ahead. Think about it.

Paul Holmes, President.

**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 2006-07 meeting place. The December meeting will be on Dec. 13. No regular meeting in March**

## Would You Pay a Dime a Day To Preserve Your Quality of Life?

This is essentially the question on which Charlotte County residents will vote this November. On the ballot this year will be a referendum asking Charlotte County voters to authorize a modest property tax increase to issue a bond with funds to be used to preserve environmentally sensitive lands. Why purchase environmentally sensitive lands you say? Well for one, as the population size has increased, most of us have begun to notice effects such as increased traffic congestion. With an average of 5000 new residents expected to move to Charlotte County each year, our population size is predicted to more than double by the year 2030. While growth can have positive effects on our economy and lifestyle, one can also imagine how this might affect traffic, water quality and quantity, recreational opportunities, and your overall quality of life if the impacts of future growth are not properly considered. While many other communities have begun to address these issues, Charlotte County is currently the only coastal county in south and central Florida without a local land conservation program. The purchase of environmentally sensitive lands will help stop some of the overcrowding and traffic congestion we experience by taking environmentally sensitive lands out of the path of development and by directing growth into appropriate areas. Further, their protection will help prevent flooding, filter our drinking water supplies, protect Charlotte Harbor, keep our air clean, and provide additional open spaces and recreational opportunities.

The time to act is now.

If these lands are not purchased soon, many of the county's most precious natural lands will disappear and others will become too expensive to purchase in the future. If this referendum passes, the cost to an owner of a home valued at \$200,000 minus the homestead exemption would be \$35 per year. A dime a day is certainly a very modest amount for all of the benefits we would receive. However, the fate of this referendum is now in your hands. Vote Charlotte Conservation urgently needs your contributions to spread the word about the benefits of establishing this environmentally sensitive land acquisition program. Please send checks made out to "Vote Charlotte Conservation" to: 1847 Old Englewood Road, Englewood, FL 34295-0508. Contributions of all sizes are desperately needed. As an added incentive to dig deep, The Nature Conservancy will match all contributions of \$1000 or more (up to 15k).

So get out your check book and send \$20, \$50, \$100, \$1000 or whatever you can afford and call your friends and relatives and encourage them to do the same. Due to legal reporting requirements, please in-

clude your name and address with all contributions and for those \$100 or more also include your occupation.

We have the chance to preserve the Charlotte County way of life by protecting our special places forever. PLEASE HELP NOW.

Gregg Klowden  
Peace River Audubon Society  
Conservation Committee Chair

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

**Publicity Chair**—Work with local media to publicize PRAS events and activities.

**White Bird Editor**—Assemble and mail four editions of the White Bird per year.

**Hospitality Co-Chair**—Assist with the setup and refreshments for monthly meetings.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of the positions above, please send an e-mail to: [president@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:president@peacriveraudubon.org).

Anyone desiring to assist with education activities such as CHEC Family Days and Girl Scout education, please send an e-mail to: [education@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:education@peacriveraudubon.org)

## Is your membership current?

The "Exp Date" on your address label indicates the date your local or national membership expires. Please renew your membership if it has expired. If you have any questions, please send an e-mail to: [membership@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:membership@peacriveraudubon.org)

## Electronic White Bird

If you would like to receive the White Bird via e-mail, please send a request to: [whitebird@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:whitebird@peacriveraudubon.org)

## 2006-2007 General Meeting Speaker Schedule

Date	Speaker, Topic or Affiliation
October 18	JoAnna Kincaid, Peace River Wildlife Center
November 15	Monica Dorkin, Water Issues
December 13	Lynn Wittmeier, Lions Tigers and Bears
January 17	Bird Count, Members Share Photos
February 21	Brooke George, Red Cockaded Woodpecker
March 21	Annual Banquet, Speaker TBD
April 18	Mark Renz, Babcock Ranch
May 16	Annual Meeting, Members Share Photos

2006-2007 Walkabouts and Field Trips			
MONTH	WALKABOUTS 1st Tuesday Meet at entrance at 8 AM unless otherwise noted.	Field Trips Usually 3rd Saturday Meet at designated place (*see below) at 7 AM unless otherwise noted	
October	CHEC Walk and Pot Luck 10/03 Leader: CHEC volunteer PRAS Rep: Cady 9:30 AM Walk, 11:00 Lunch	CELERY FIELDS 10/21 Leader: Youso * North	
November	TIPPECANOE 11/07 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS rep: Holmes	FT. MYERS BEACH 11/18 Leader: Walkers * South	
December	OLLIE'S POND 12/05 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS Rep: Holmes	Christmas Bird Count 12/16 Coordinator: Licata	
January	AUDUBON—PENNINGTON PARK 1/02 Leader: Lancaster	PRAIRIE PINES PRESERVE 1/20 Leader: Olson (limit 15 Persons) * South	
February	OYSTER CREEK 2/06 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS Rep: Marr	BABCOCK/WEBB 2/17 Leader: Marr Meet by pay station at Babcock/Webb (Tuckers Grade: I-75 Exit 158, head 1/4 mile east	
March	HATHAWAY PARK 3/06 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS Rep: Marr	STA#5 3/10 (Note Date) Stormwater Treatment Area Hendry Co. Leader: Marr *East	
April	AMBERJACK 4/03 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS Rep: Marr	FT. DESOTO 4/21 Leader: Marr *North	
May	CHARLOTTE FLATWOODS 5/01 Leader: Tina Powell PRAS Rep: Cady	MYAKKA RIVER 5/19 Leader: Youso *North	

2006-2007 Nature Photography Group Trips		
October 24—26	3 Day trip to Cedar Key in conjunction with Charlotte Digital Art Photographers.	Reservations must be made by October 1.
January 9	Sarasota Jungle Gardens	Meet at north site at 7:00 AM
March 13	Koreshan State Park	Meet at south site at 7:00 AM
April 10	Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center	Meet at south site at 7:00 AM

#### Field/Photography Trip Meeting Sites

- NORTH** The parking lot by McDonalds at Peachland Mall near I-75 and Kings Highway in Port Charlotte (24133 Peachland Boulevard)
- SOUTH** The parking lot of Sweetbay on US 41 south of the Burnt Store Road intersection in Punta Gorda (10175 Tamiami Trail)
- EAST** The parking lot of Winn-Dixie on US 17 east of Punta Gorda. (27680 Bermont Road)

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](http://www.peaceriveraudubon.org)



September 2006  
*White Bird*



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

**2005-06 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:**

(941)

President	Paul Holmes '07	833-3337
Vice President	Frank Walker '07	639-3879
Secretary	Mary Ann Hughes '06	637-7855
Treasurer	Walt Williams '07	235-3352
Additional Directors:	Phyllis Cady '06	575-4009
	Gregg Klowden '08	613-6753
	Eleanor Marr '07	624-4182
	George Ruby '08	571-8046
	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  
Phyllis Cady at 575-4009

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](http://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](http://www.audubon.org)