

Peace River Audubon Society

# White Bird

November 2007      Volume 31, Issue 3  
Sandy Artman, Editor  
Dan Artman, Dispatcher



www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

## 2007-08 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

		(941)
President	Gregg Klowden '08	613-6753
Vice President	Stu Lewis '09	235-2590
Secretary	Mary Ann Hughes '08	637-7855
Treasurer	Walt Williams '09	235-3352
Additional Directors:	Phyllis Cady '08	575-4009
	Mike Krzyzkowski '08	812-0764
	Eleanor Marr '08	624-4182
	George Ruby '08	432-0174
	Sandy Artman '09	575-0651
	Cathy Olson '09	613-6753



## PRAS 30th Anniversary Celebration - November 17 at Ponce de Leon Park

Wow, PRAS turns 30!!!  
Come celebrate 30 years of fun, conservation, and education on November 17 at Ponce de Leon Park in Punta Gorda. While the gate officially opens at 10:30, don't miss the pre-celebration wading trip at 9:30 sponsored by the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center.

Walks and talks (see schedule) are from 10:30 to 2:00 and food will be served from 11:30 - 1:00. For more details contact Gregg at (941) 613-6753 or [president@PeaceRiverAudubon.org](mailto:president@PeaceRiverAudubon.org).

Sponsored in part by the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program and Publix.

**Directions:** from US41 in Punta Gorda, go north on W. Marion about 3 miles til the road ends in the park.

### Walks:

**9:30 am: Charlotte Harbor Wading Trip** - Wade in the shallows with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. Search for crabs, whelks, conchs, pin fish & more. Learn about food webs, sea grasses, mangroves, and estuaries. Nets provided. Wear old tennis shoes or closed toe water shoes, a swim suit or shorts. Bring sunscreen, hat, towel, and a change of clothes. Snorkelers may bring their gear. Trip will take 90 min.

**11:15 am: Ponce de Leon nature walk** - Walk with expert naturalist Gil MacAdam and explore the birds, bees, and plants of Ponce de Leon Park.

**1:15 pm: Peace River Wildlife Center Tour** - see orphaned or injured native wildlife and hear about their care and protection from Center staff.

### Talks:

**11:00 am: Columbus Macleod Protector of Birds** - listen as Paul Holmes discusses how the murder of this Charlotte Harbor Audubon warden sparked early conservation efforts in Florida and nationally.

**11:45 am: Water Conservation** - From drinking to fishing to wildlife to tourism, water is the life blood of our area. Come hear C.H.E.C. discuss how you can help protect and conserve this precious resource.

**12:30 pm: Birds we know & love** - presented by JoAnna Kincaid of the Peace River Wildlife Center

**1:00 pm: Landscaping for Wildlife** - Gil MacAdam will discuss what you can do in your yard to benefit and attract wildlife. Examples of native plants will be on display.

**Next Meeting: November 15**

**Speaker: Andy Stevens, Conservation Charlotte**

Our next meeting is Thursday, November 15 at 7:00 pm (6:30 snacks/ social) **at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church** (2565 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, just south of Midway Blvd). Andy Stevens, Charlotte County Natural Resources Division Manager, will explain how Conservation Charlotte, Charlotte County's environmentally sensitive land acquisition and management program is progressing. He will explain how the program works and which pieces of land are being looked at for purchase. Despite having to move the last meetings due to construction delays, we promise we really will be at the church this month.

### Photos Needed

Do you have any photos of past PRAS members? We are trying to assemble a photo history of PRAS. If you have any photos or slides of past board members or other members please contact Gregg at 613-6753.

**Next Walkabout: December 4**  
**Myakkahatchee Park**

Join Stu Lewis on December 4th during Peace River Audubon Society's first walkabout to Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park. The park is located in North Port at 6968 Reisertown Road and contains some excellent birding areas; oak hammock, the creek etc. Meet at the park entrance at 8:00 am. Call Stu at 235-2590 for more information.

### Did you know that PRAS has 2 Email Groups?

**Keep up with PRAS Activities**

Subscribe to 'PRAS Update' to receive 2 or 3 monthly email reminders of upcoming meetings and field trips.

To sign up or for more information contact [web@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:web@peacriveraudubon.org) or visit <http://www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org/>

**Stay in touch with our conservation community**

Subscribe to 'Nature Alerts' to communicate with others concerned with nature, wildlife, and protecting the environment in the Charlotte County area.

## 20 years of the Christmas Bird Count

How exciting! On December 15, PRAS is proud to be participating in our 20th annual Christmas bird count. To mark this occasion, we are hoping for our biggest turnout yet and need your help. Contrary to popular belief, to participate you do not need to be an expert birder. If you are a novice birder, we will pair you with more advanced birders, making this an excellent opportunity to hone up on your skills. Even if you have virtually no birding skills at all, your help writing down the birds as the observers call them out or driving the observers (not necessarily in your own car) would be a great help.



What is the Christmas Bird Count you say? Well for 108 years, Audubon chapters across the US and more recently the globe have participated in this annual 'Citizen Science' event. Closer to home, for 20 years, 12 teams of PRAS members, their friends, and members of the public have counted all the birds they could find within a 30 mile diameter circle centered around Punta Gorda. Participants drive, walk, and boat for much of the day all the while recording the number of each bird species seen. The total is then sent to National Audubon who compiles the data to compare trends over time. We will present our local data at our January meeting.

To help out, please contact Tony Licata at (941)505-9775 (after Nov 15) or xmas@PeaceRiverAudubon.org.

## PRAS Garage Sale to benefit CHEC

PRAS will be hosting a garage sale in early December to benefit the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center. Please look around your house for items you no longer want and donate them for our sale. Items may be dropped off at Cathy & Gregg's house (1522 Dewitt St, Port Charlotte) or call us (613-6753) and we can pick up your items. The sale will have to be canceled if donations are not received. Thanks to those who have already donated items!



## Volunteers Needed

Our activities could not happen without the generous help of volunteers. Please consider serving on the PRAS board or helping with one of our many activities. We need help on our conservation, web, banquet & fundraising committees and our...

### Birding Hotspot Brochure

PRAS has assembled quite a bit of information on our website and would like to put together a booklet on birding in Charlotte County.

If you would like to help out please contact Gregg Klowden (941-613-6753 or president@PeaceRiverAudubon.org)

## Conserve and Save by Stu Lewis, Vice President

Global warming is here!  
What can we do about it?

There are many things each of us can do that may seem small but can make a real impact. Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas. The amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere directly influences how much of the sun's heat stays in the atmosphere, which is a key factor in climate change. The good news is that we can do several easy things to trim our energy use, thereby conserving energy and slowing global warming. The cost for most of these ideas is minimal compared to the money each of us will save by "going green".

- 1. Relight Your Life:** Replacing 5 incandescent bulbs with compact florescent bulbs can save 50% on your annual lighting bill. If every U.S. household did this, it would prevent the release of as much greenhouse gas as removing 8 million cars from the road for a year. Some electric companies are offering purchase rebates through local retailers such as Home Depot.
- 2. Use a Programmable Thermostat:** This is a cheap and easy fix to bring down your energy use. You can get one for about \$50 and it can save more than \$100 a year on energy bills. There is no reason to heat or cool an empty house, so set your thermostat to kick on when you are at home. If only 10% of households did this it would prevent 17 billion lbs of greenhouse gases, according to The Energy Star Action Guide.
- 3. Fix Drafts:** Drafty windows and doors can be fixed with caulking and weather stripping purchased from any hardware store. The cost is low and you can instantly save money while improving the comfort of your home.
- 4. Park Your Car:** In lieu of buying a more fuel efficient car, including hybrids, using your car less and more efficiently is the biggest single thing you can do to reduce carbon emissions. Check out Ride-Along or look for a car-pool. To run short errands near your home, walk or pedal your bike. When you have to drive, drive efficiently by running errands on your way to and from work, to an appointment or any other time that you must drive your car.
- 5. Pump Them Up:** Keeping your tires inflated to manufacturers recommendations will improve your gas mileage by more than 3%, saving you money on gasoline.
- 6. Shop for A Star:** When buying new home appliances or electronics, check out the models that have an Energy Star Seal of Approval which use up to 50% less energy. Retailers and electric companies often offer discounts or rebates for Energy Star rated products.
- 7. Turn Off Your Electronics:** In the average home, 40% of the power used for electronics is consumed while they are turned off. When possible, unplug electronics when not in use.
- 8. Eat Fresh:** Buy produce from local farmers rather than the grocery store. Not only are they fresher, they won't have made a gas-guzzling journey cross-country to get to you.

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**Myakka River Kayak/ Canoe Trip  
January 12, 2008  
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**

PRAS is sponsoring a kayak trip down the Myakka River on Saturday, January 12, 2008. Kayaks rental is \$25. If you use your own kayak it is \$5. This is an easy 2 hour paddle and a good one for beginners as it will be entirely in the park through some nice water bird country. The trip leader, Jon, can provide up to 13 kayaks, three of which are 2 person kayaks. He also volunteered to buddy up with an inexperienced paddler. We will put in at the upper lake, paddle down the Myakka and take out where we met in the a.m. This trip depends on adequate water in the Myakka, so depending on rainfall we may have to cancel or make alternate plans. Audubon members have first dibs on the kayaks, but if you have friends who wish to come and there are open slots, they are most welcome. It should be a fun trip – I've done several trips with Jon and he does a nice job. For more details and to register please contact Mike Krzyzkowski at (941) 812- 0764 or by email at mkrzyzk@embarqmail.com.

**Babcock Ranch Preserve Public Meetings**

The Babcock Ranch Preserve Conceptual Management Plan will be online at <http://www.babcockcmp.org> by mid November. Public input will be taken at meetings on November 28 at the Tringali Recreational Center (3460 North Access Road, Englewood) and November 29 at the Buckingham Community Center (4940 Buckingham Road, Fort Myers. Both meetings will be held from 6 to 9 pm. Public attendance is crucial to proper protection of this land. To read the PRAS position paper sent to the commissioners please visit our website at [www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org](http://www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org)

**Conserve and Save  
Continued from page 2**

9. **Reuse and Recycle:** Whenever you have a choice, purchase products that use recycled materials. Products made from recycled paper, glass, metal and plastic reduce carbon emissions because they use less energy to manufacture than products made from new materials. For example, you'll save 2 lbs of carbon for every 20 glass bottles that you recycle. By using recycled paper, you save our trees.

10. **Harness the Sun:** Though this would entail some expense, Florida is the ideal place to consider solar energy, especially when building a new home. In an existing home, consider using solar panels to heat a pool. The use of solar energy is becoming more efficient and cost-effective. The Federal Government is offering tax credits to encourage the use of solar power.

Check your "carbon footprint" at [www.nature.org/climatecalculator](http://www.nature.org/climatecalculator). Set a goal to lower your footprint to at least 50% less than the footprint of the average American. You may be surprised to find that the rest of the world's footprint is dramatically lower.

**Speaker Schedule**

December 13: POTLUCK with Gil MacAdam - Gardening For Wildlife  
January 17 : Tony Licata - Christmas Bird Count results  
February 21: Pascha Donaldson - Burrowing Owls  
March 20: Annual Banquet, silent auction and photo contest  
April 17: Missy Christie - Sea Turtles & Shorebirds  
May 15 : Members night: PRAS members present slides

**Field Trips and Walkabouts**

December 4 *Walkabout:* Myakkahatchee Park  
Contact: Stu & Louise Lewis 941-235-2590  
December 15 *Field Trip:* Christmas Bird Count  
Contact Tony Licata 941-505-4775  
January 8 *Walkabout:* Cedar Point Environmental Park  
Eleanor Marr 941-624-4182  
January 19 *Field Trip:* Laurel Road Landfill & Carlton Reserve  
Stu & Louise Lewis 941-235-2590 (North carpool)  
February 5 *Walkabout:* Lemon Bay Park  
Stu & Louise Lewis 941-235-2590  
February 16 *Field Trip:* Station # 5 Stormwater Treatment Area  
Eleanor Marr 941-624-4182 (East carpool location)  
March 4 *Walkabout:* Hathaway Park  
Eleanor Marr 941-624-4182  
March 15 *Field Trip:* Babcock Ranch Preserve  
Paul Holmes 941-833-3337 (East carpool location)  
April 1 *Walkabout:* Audubon-Pennington Park  
Dave Lancaster 941-625-0979  
April 13: *Shorebird identification* at Bunche Beach  
Kevin Edwards (South carpool location)  
April 19 *Field Trip:* Corkscrew Swamp  
Eleanor Marr 941-624-4182 (South carpool location)  
May 6 *Walkabout:* Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center  
Phyllis Cady 941-575-4009  
May 17 *Field Trip:* Fish-Eating Creek  
Mike Krzyzkowski 941-812-0764 (East carpool location)

\*\*\*For Walkabouts: meet at the park entrance at 8 AM \*\*\*

\*For Field Trips meet at designated place (\*see below)  
at 7 AM unless otherwise noted

**Carpool locations:**

**North:** Peachland Mall:24133 Peachland Blvd., Pt Charlotte  
**East:** Winn Dixie lot: 27680 Bermont Road, Punta Gorda  
**South:** Sweet Bay lot: 10175 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda

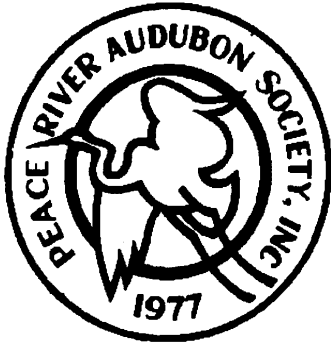
**October Field Trip Report**

By Cathy Olson

Nine people traveled an hour south to Daniels Preserve at Spanish Creek, a Lee County Conservation 20/20 preserve. The weather wasn't great, but the rain held off and a double rainbow was seen by all. By the end of the morning 23 birds, 2 mammals and 5 butterflies were identified. We were hoping to see oodles of warblers in the oak hammock and cypress, but only three were seen: yellow-throated, black & white and palm. We had a wonderful display by a brown thrasher who sat at the top of a live oak and gave everyone wonderful looks. We were able to add 4 to the preserve's wildlife: cooper's hawk, ground dove, yellow-throated warbler and tropical checkered skipper.

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



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

Check the "Exp" date on your address label!

"1207" means your PRAS and/or National membership expires December 2007. To save the cost of sending reminders, please use the application below to renew your membership. If you have questions please call Phyllis Cady at 575-4009 or send an email to: [membership@peacriveraudubon.org](mailto:membership@peacriveraudubon.org)

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.

**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)

Bird of the Month: Brown thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)  
by Cathy Olson, PRAS Board member

The brown thrasher, a large, rufous backed songbird with a mostly white with brown streaked breast, is common in eastern and central North America. This bird is most often seen on the ground foraging for insects, fruits and nuts except during the breeding season when it sings its rich territorial song from the tops of trees. Here in Florida, we have resident and winter migrant brown thrashers. Nesting birds typically lay 2-6 eggs in a bulky nest on the ground or in dense shrubs. These nests are aggressively defended. Adult brown thrashers have yellow eyes while immature brown thrashers have gray eyes. The brown thrasher is closely related to the northern mockingbird and gray catbird, two other songbirds with amazingly rich songs, including mimicking other bird songs or noises.



## Peace River Audubon Society Membership Application / Renewal

Join us for some fun and birding. Help protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, & the wildlife we love...help us protect Florida.

New Membership  
 Renewal

Chapter Code: **E14-7XCH**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- \$10 Local Audubon Membership Only  
Includes the "White Bird" newsletter with local news articles, local meetings, field trips, bird walks, & special events.
- \$20 Local and National Audubon  
Includes all of the above plus National Audubon magazine.
- Additional Gift for PRAS  
Please help PRAS continue our educational and conservation programs with a tax deductible contribution.

**MAIL CHECK WITH THIS FORM TO:**  
PRAS, PO box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_