

Peace River Audubon Society

# White Bird

December 2008 Volume 32, Issue 4

Sandy Artman, Editor

Dan Artman, Dispatcher



www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

## 2008-09 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

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	Starr Zachritz '10	941-766-7686

### Next Meeting December 18, 2008 at 6:30 PM POTLUCK with Speaker, Marianne Korosy

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church 2565 Tamiami Trail,  
Port Charlotte (just south of Midway)

Please join us for Marianne Korosy's talk entitled "What's for Dinner? Winter diets and habitat associations of Florida grasshopper sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, and Bachman's sparrow in dry prairie". Marianne Korosy is currently a PhD. Candidate in Conservation Biology at University of Central Florida. She began birding in 1982 during her MS program in geology at Florida State University. Marianne has worked extensively with beach-nesting birds as a volunteer with Clearwater Audubon Society.



In addition to Marianne's talk it is time for our annual holiday potluck. Please bring your appetite, food to share, a plate, silverware and a cup.

### A Message from the President by Cathy Olson

PRAS volunteers attended booths at two events in November:

The Charlotte RV Outdoor Show and the Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival. Both events allowed us to meet potential new PRAS members, raise some money, and the community know what we are doing. Starr Zachritz volunteered two, long days at the Charlotte RV Outdoor Show. She spoke to quite a few people, raffled one of her own beautiful photographs, and even was interviewed on Clear Channel radio, where she talked about PRAS and all that we do. Similarly Don Youso, Stu and Louise Lewis staffed the PRAS booth at the Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival. As a result of their efforts we have six new members! I look forward to meeting them. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer at similar events.



PRAS Board members will continue to work on the details for our Silent Auction and Annual banquet. Please let me know if you are willing to try to get restaurant gift certificates or have other items for the silent auction. This year, proceeds from the silent auction and photography contest will help support The Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership's (WCEP) "Bringing Back the Cranes" in their quest to help whooping cranes migrate from Wisconsin to Florida and PRAS's environmental education program. It is estimated to cost \$204 per mile for the 1260 mile ultralight flight.



I hope to see you at our annual holiday potluck this December 18<sup>th</sup>. Marianne Korosy will speak to us about sparrows as we munch away on delicious food. Please bring food to share and do your part to be "green" by bringing your own plate, silverware and cup which can then be taken home, washed and reused.

### Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 14th



The 2008, Peace River Audubon Society, Christmas Bird Count is set for Sunday, December 14. We will be counting the number of birds and bird species within an area defined by a 15-mile diameter circle the center of which is located at US 41 and Henry St in Punta Gorda. To facilitate the count the circle has been divided into twelve areas. A team will be assigned to each area. We are now in the process of appointing team captains and assigning team members to each of the ten teams. If you participated in the count last year, your name will already be on the list. Your team captain will be contacting you with details on when and where to meet. You will only need to call in if you want to change your area or cannot participate this year. If you did not participate last year and want to be included, please contact Tony Licata (941-505-9775 or [alicata@dcwis.com](mailto:alicata@dcwis.com)) or Cathy Olson (941-613-6753 or [cathyolson@comcast.net](mailto:cathyolson@comcast.net)).

Most teams will begin counting by 7:00 AM. Hopefully, the weather will be good and we will have a delightful day in the field counting and watching our local wild birds. As before, team captains will collect a \$5.00 fee from each participant which will be forwarded to National Audubon to fund the compilation of the results on a national basis and make the results available in published form.

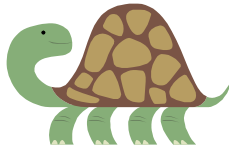
### January 6th Walkabout— Amberjack Led by Chuck and Joan Froman

Come and join us! We'll meet at 8 am in the parking lot. The highlight of Amberjack is Lemon Pond where there are two observation decks overlooking the pond. Frequently there are white pelicans, spoonbills, wood storks, blue wing teals, various ducks, wading and shore birds, and with luck, rails. Directions: Take Rt. 776 toward Englewood, then onto Rt. 775/Placida Rd for 4.3 miles. Go right onto Gasperilla Pines Blvd, all the way to the end. The entrance to the parking lot is on the right. For questions, call Chuck or Joan at 743-5204.



## November Walkabout Report Sleeping Turtle Preserve By Stu Lewis

Fourteen people led by Stu Lewis gathered to walk the preserve trails on the south side of Border Road. The birds stayed quiet in the cool first hour of the morning. At the start, an immature red-headed woodpecker sat on a utility pole and we heard several chirring Carolina wrens, and the pileated's call. As we came back to the trail head, an oak tree became abuzz with many birds: the blue-headed vireo, pine warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, and many blue-gray gnatcatchers.



We enjoyed the many lush gardens of epiphytic plants growing along the limbs of live oaks and also found a group of terrestrial *habenaria floribunda* orchids in bloom along the trail. The group did a side-trip to Carleton Reserve where we once again saw a red-headed woodpecker in the parking area, allowing a good look and some photo ops. We walked some of the perimeter trail and ran into Sarasota County Naturalist Richard Storsberg. He joined us for the rest of the walk, explaining the prescribed burns being done there and identified many flora for the group.

He noted that the red-headed woodpeckers have dispersed more due to food availability and bluebirds seem to currently be in a decline due to change of habitat. He was a wealth of information and offered to join future PRAS walks in Sarasota County preserves. We saw a total of 25 species of birds.

## Address Alert By Phyllis Cady



Have you moved recently? Are you spending time up north during the summer? Please notify us so you can receive your Whitebird newsletter at the correct address. A new post office policy is charging our local Audubon .50 for each undeliverable newsletter. If you are a member of either our local PRAS group, or the National Audubon and are affiliated with our local group (E-14) please call Phyllis Cady at 941-575-4009 or send an e-mail to [ps\\_cady@yahoo.com](mailto:ps_cady@yahoo.com), telling us your correct Florida address. Tell us when you are heading north and when you plan to return. Remember you can always read the Whitebird online at [peacriveraudubon.org](http://peacriveraudubon.org). Help us cut down on unnecessary post office costs. Thank You!



## Calling All Florida Bird Watchers Provided by Patricia Leonard, Cornell Lab

Bird watchers in Florida are fortunate to have an amazing diversity of birds to observe, from the stunningly beautiful, rainbow-colored Painted Bunting to exotic parrots from South America. Many of these species readily visit bird feeders, and may be attracted to your own backyard. Scientists are asking Florida bird watchers to report what they see through **Project FeederWatch**.

"We need to hear from more bird watchers in Florida to get an accurate picture of what's happening with bird populations from year to year," says project leader David Bonter from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "Scientists learn something new from the project each year, whether it's about the movements of common backyard birds or unusual sightings of rarely seen species."

For example, Florida is at the epicenter of the recent colonization of the United States by a dove originally from India. The Eurasian Collared-Dove can now be found throughout the state, and researchers are examining FeederWatch data from Florida to better understand how this species will spread and affect native species.

The 2008-09 season of Project FeederWatch is underway and runs through April 3. Participants can sign up at any time. FeederWatchers track the numbers and kinds of birds at feeders each week and then send the information to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The information they provide helps generate the world's **largest database on feeder-bird populations**.

"Participating in Feeder Watch has helped me pay more attention to the birds at my feeders. It gives me a good excuse to sit at the kitchen window and watch birds," says **FeederWatcher Alice Smith of McAlpin, Florida**. Smith has been participating in the project 20 years.

FeederWatchers across North America submitted more than 115,000 checklists during the 2007-08 season, documenting unusual bird sightings, winter movements, and shifting ranges—information scientists use to monitor the health of the birds and of the environment.

Project FeederWatch welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels. To learn more and to sign up, visit [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org) or call (800) 843-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, a bird-identification poster, a calendar, instructions, and the FeederWatch annual report, *Winter Bird Highlights*, which summarizes the season's findings.

**Note:** Photos are available at [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org) and on request. To **find local participants** for stories, contact David Bonter at (607) 254-2457 or email [dnb23@cornell.edu](mailto:dnb23@cornell.edu). Visit the "Explore Data" section of the web site to find the top 25 birds reported in your state, rare bird sightings, and bird summaries by state.

*The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a membership institution dedicated to interpreting and conserving the earth's biological diversity through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. Visit the Lab's web site at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>.*

**Band Codes**  
 excerpted from Kathryn Young, editor BP



More and more listers and birders are using band codes when referring to birds seen in the field. Some of the general basics are as follows:

If the name of the bird consists of only one word, the code is taken from the first 4 letters, such as , DUNL for Dunlin or ANHI for Anhinga.

If the name of the bird is two words the code is taken from the first 2 letters of the first word and the first two letters of the second word, as in AMBI for American Bittern and EAME for Eastern Meadowlark.

If the name is 3 words the code is taken from the first letter of the first word and the first letter of the second word and the first 2 letters of the third word as LBHE for Little Blue Heron.

For four word names, the code takes one letter from each word. BCNH is Black-crowned Night-Heron and LBBG is Lesser Black-backed Gull.

Check out the following website for more on Band codes.  
<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/MANUAL/aspeclst.htm>

**Donate to PRAS and  
 give a gift to future generations**

Your gifts are tax deductible and will help PRAS carry out its mission to protect the air we breathe, water we drink, and wildlife we love.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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College Scholarship Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 To encourage exceptional college students interested in a career in the environmental sciences.

Audubon Adventures \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Environmental educational materials for area grade schools.

PRAS Environmental Education Programs \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Such as Girl and Boy Scout birding programs, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, lectures to schools and organizations, etc...

PRAS General Needs \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Such as Audubon-Pennington Park, festival displays, literature printing, or based on need any of the funds above.

Send this form along with your gift to PRAS at P.O. Box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951 or call Cathy Olson at 941-613-6753

**Walkabouts and Field Trips  
 2008-2009**



- December 14: Christmas Bird Count  
 Tony Licata
- January 6: *Walkabout* Amberjack  
 Chuck and Joan Froman
- January 17: *Field Trip* Harns Marsh  
 Cathy Olson \*South
- February 3: *Walkabout* Yucca Pens  
 Eleanor Marr
- February 21: *Field Trip* Palm Island  
 Kevin Edwards \*West
- March 3: *Walkabout* Tippe II  
 Stu and Louise Lewis
- March 21: *Field Trip* Babcock-Webb  
 Dave Lancaster (meet at entrance station)
- April 7: *Walkabout* Shell Creek Preserve  
 Eleanor Marr
- April 18: *Field Trip* Fort DeSoto  
 Eleanor Marr \*North
- May 5: *Walkabout* TBA  
 Phyllis Cady
- May 16: *Field Trip* TBA  
 Mike Krzyzkowski/Jim Bonk

\*NORTH—the parking lot by McDonalds at Peachland Mall near 175 and Kings Hwy 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 State Route 17 east of Punta Gorda (27680 Bermont Road)  
 \*WEST the parking lot of Charlotte Stadium, Rt. 776

**2008-2009  
 Speaker Schedule**



- December 18: Marianne Korosy - Southwest Florida Sparrows Holiday Potluck
- January 15 : Tony Licata - Christmas Bird Count results
- February 19: John Cassani - Frogs and Frogwatch of Southwest FL
- March 19: Annual Banquet, silent auction and photo contest
- April 16: Gil MacAdam - Southwest FL Butterflies & their habitats
- May 21 : Members night: PRAS members present slides and stories

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



December 2008  
*White Bird*

Check the "Exp" date on your address label!  
"1209" means your PRAS and/or National membership expires December 2009. 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: membership1@peacriveraudubon.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



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C & R Graphics (folding donated)

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.

Bird of the Month: House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) by Cathy Olson, PRAS Board President

The house wren is a familiar winter bird in our backyards and in areas with thick vegetation. They are often first identified by their harsh chattering calls coming from the underbrush. This small, brown, nondescript wren often holds its tail cocked over its back. They feed on insects that they catch on the ground or in medium sized shrubs. House wrens have been able to expand their numbers since they readily nest in suburbs and among human development.



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

- \$20 Local Audubon Membership Only  
Includes the "White Bird" newsletter with local news articles, local meetings, field trips, bird walks, & special events.  
All proceeds stay within local chapter
- \$20 Local and National Audubon (new members only, renewals \$35)  
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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_