

Peace River Audubon Society

White Bird

January 2010 Volume 33, Issue 5

Dave Lancaster, Editor

Dan Artman, Dispatcher



www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

2009-10 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

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Secretary	Sandy Artman '11	941-575-0651
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	George Ruby '10	941-423-0174
	Chuck Steele '11	941-875-9244
	Starr Zachritz '10	941-766-7686

Next Meeting: 21 January, 2010 at 6:30 PM
Christmas Bird Count Results
Speaker, Tony Licata

Tony Licata will be presenting the 2009 Christmas Bird Count for our PRAS area. Hear about the latest trends and sightings of birds during the count on Saturday the 19th December. Remember social and cookies at 6:30 and meeting starts at 7:00 PM



Tuesday, February 2, 2010 Walkabout
Tippecanoe-I
with Dave Lancaster

Join us on Tuesday the 2nd of February at 8AM for the Tippecanoe-I walkabout. The park has scrub, pine flatwoods and tidal creeks with many birding possibilities.

Tippecanoe-I is connected to the Charlotte County Sports Park (baseball stadium). Enter off 776, the park is located to the right at the far end of the stadium's parking lot. For information call Dave Lancaster at 586-214-0203.



President's Message By Cathy Olson, PRAS President

President's Message

The Christmas Bird Count is over, the holidays are ending and 2009 has come to a close. I would like to thank each of you who helped PRAS this year. It is members like you that make our organization a fun and vibrant part of our community. The upcoming year will provide you with additional opportunities to volunteer and perhaps meet new friends. Upcoming events beyond the monthly walkabouts, field trips, Pennington Park workdays, and monthly meetings include a birding trip and workday at Pennington Park, the Great Backyard Bird Count, the Birdathon and of course the silent auction and banquet. All are different and fun events!

Please join me at 8 a.m. on Saturday January 23 for a quick birding trip and then an air potato round up at Audubon Pennington Park (1153 Alton Road, Port Charlotte FL 33952). Air potatoes are invasive exotic plants that occur at the park. We will pick up the "potatoes" and bag them thereby reducing the plants from spreading. Over time, we hope to eliminate air potatoes from the park. Last year during our bird walk we saw quite a few common forest birds and two gems: a limpkin and a very cooperative great horned owl.

The Great Backyard Bird is being held February 12 to 15. For more details please visit www.birdcount.org. Help make Florida the number one state for lists and put Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda on the map!

Our silent auction and banquet are quickly approaching in March. This year Dennis Giardina from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will speak to us about his field work and efforts to protect the Florida panther, one of North America's most endangered mammals. Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the Friends of Fakahatchee in order to help protect the panther's habitat here in south Florida and the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center for their environmental education efforts. It is not too soon to start gathering items for the silent auction. If you have items in good condition please bring them to a meeting and I will organize and sort them for the auction. The earlier the better! Early bird tickets for the banquet will be available soon at a reduced cost. The winner of the photo contest from our December meeting will be announced too. Don't miss this event!

Happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you in 2010.

**2009-2010 Program Schedule
3rd Thursday of the Month at 6:30 PM**

November 19, 2009	Mike Owens Fakahatchee State Preserve
December 17, 2009	Christmas Potluck Andy Stevens Florida Scrub-Jay Habitat Conservation Plan
January 21, 2010	Tony Licata Christmas Bird Count
February 18, 2010	Bill Dunson Myakka State Forest
March 18, 2010	Audubon Banquet / Dennis Giardina Florida Panther
April 15, 2010	Gina Zimmerman Swallow-tailed Kites
May 20, 2010	Film on life of James Audubon



**PRAS Banquet
Thursday, 18 March
2010**

Mark your calendars for the PRAS 2010 "Evening with Audubon". This year's event will be held on Thursday, March 18, 2010 at the Charlotte County Cultural Center. Our guest speaker will be Dennis Giardina, an Everglades Region Biologist who works for the preservation of Florida Panthers. We will also be announcing the winners of our Photo Contest held in December. As usual we will hold our annual silent auction. Proceeds from the auction will go to the preservation of Florida Panthers and for various educational purposes. If you have any items for the auction please contact Cathy Olson.

The price for the event will be \$30 per person if you make your reservation by February 18, 2010 and \$33 after that date. Make your reservations early. All reservations must be made by March 4, 2010. Food choices must be made at the time of the reservation. Choices include Prime Rib and Mahi Mahi. Call Phyllis Cady at 941-286-7638 to make your reservations. Phyllis will also be available at the January and February meetings to accept reservations.

**VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH
By Starr Zachritz**



This month we are lucky to have 3 members to thank. I manned the table for the 10th annual Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival. I thought I might be alone on that hot day but with help from Bonnie Steele, Phyllis Collos, and Edith Wilbour. We talked to a lot of people about PRAS & signed up many new members that day. A special "Thanks" to Bonnie, Phyllis & Edith for Volunteering their time to tell others about PRAS.

Starr Zachritz

Correction:

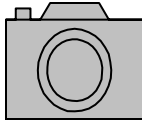
In last month's PRAS spotlight of Bob and Joanne Winter, the brochure advising people of what to plant along their shorelines, was part of a grant by CHNEP, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, not from CHEC as reported in the article.

Have you seen a tagged Magnificent Frigatebird?



You can help with a project investigating Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) movements. They have been marked with yellow wing tags, one on each wing, and black numbering, using a number-number-letter combination. Wing tags numbered 00H to 99H were put on birds in February 2009 on Barbuda Island, in the Lesser Antilles. There have already been reports of wing-tagged birds in the West Indies, Venezuela, and off French Guyana. If anyone hears of or spots a Frigatebird with wing tags, please email [Sarah Trefry](mailto:Sarah.Trefry) or call 506-452-6033. Even if you can't read the wing tag, knowing the sex and location of a tagged bird is great. Taking digital photos of the bird's wing can sometimes allow Sarah to read the wing tag later.

PRAS Photography Group



The PRAS Photography Group meets twice a month from January through April. Everyone is welcome.

On the 2nd Tuesday of the month there is a photo shoot. The time depends on optimizing lighting for the particular shoot, and may be in the morning or afternoon. Time and place will be announced in the White Bird that precedes the event, as well as at the preceding PRAS meeting, and about a week in advance in the Charlotte Sun, PRAS Updates and CharlotteNatureAlerts. An e-mail list of interested persons is maintained for notification of the occasional extra photo op.

On the 4th Tuesday of the month there is an informal workshop where techniques and equipment are discussed and photos are shared. Special projects are also undertaken, such as working on individual slide shows for our monthly PRAS meetings. Photography group meetings have taken place at 2 PM in the Watershed Building at CHEC, Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda. A more central location is being sought. Be sure to check up-to-date information for a possible move.

16 January Field Trip With Eleanor Marr

JANUARY FIELD TRIP – Bunche Beach

On Saturday, January 16 a field trip will take place to Bunche Beach in Ft. Myers. This is a great spot to see wintering shorebirds, and the tide should work in our favor that day. We will go from there to a Ft. Myers area park for our picnic and more birding, time permitting. Meet for car pooling at 7 A.M. at our South meeting spot, the Sweetbay parking lot on Rt. 41 about a mile south of Burnt Store Road. In addition to the usual lunch, binoculars, field guide, hat and sunscreen, you might want to bring beach shoes, as the walk will be mainly on the beach, possibly in mucky areas. If you don't want to do much walking, bring a folding beach chair!

2009 Photo Contest Report

PRAS Photo Contest 2009

The annual photography competition was moved to the December PRAS meeting and potluck dinner. Forty-one photographs were submitted by 9 photographers. The quality of the photos gets better each year. The attendees commented often on how difficult it was to decide which one to vote for as their favorite. The photos were auctioned off, and between the entry fees and the auction proceeds, \$170 resulted for PRAS.

To find out who won and to see the winning photographs, come to the annual banquet on March 18!

Walkabout & Field Trip Schedule 2009-2010

Please check the Whitebird close to the trip date for additional information, including directions to Walkabout sites, and for POSSIBLE CHANGES. Announcements will also be made about a week in advance in the Charlotte Sun, PRAS Updates and CharlotteCounty-NatureAlert.

- October 6: *Walkabout* Prairie Shell Creek Conservation Lands
Phyllis Cady 941-286-7638
- October 17: *Field Trip* Celery Fields
Don Youso *North
- November 3: *Walkabout* Ollie's Pond
Don Youso
- November 21: *Field Trip* Harms Marsh
Cathy Olson *South
- December 1: *Walkabout* Amberjack Environmental Park
Chuck and Joan Froman
- December 19: Christmas Bird Count
Tony Licata
- January 5: *Walkabout* Desoto County Env Learning Center
Stu and Louise Lewis
- January 16: *Field Trip* San Carlos Bay-Bunche Beach
Eleanor Marr *South
- February 2: *Walkabout* Tippecanoe Environmental Park
Dave Lancaster
- February 20: *Field Trip* Myakka State Forest
Stu and Louise Lewis *West
- March 2: *Walkabout* Sleeping Turtle Preserve South
Stu and Louise Lewis
- March 20: *Field Trip* Babcock-Webb Wildlife Mgmt Area
Dave Lancaster (meet at entrance station)
- April 6: *Walkabout* Yucca Pens
Eleanor Marr
- April 17: *Field Trip* Fort DeSoto Park
Eleanor Marr *North
- May 4: *Walkabout* TBA
Phyllis Cady
- May 15: *Field Trip* TBA
Mike Krzyzkowski/Jim Bonk

*NORTH—the parking lot by McDonalds at Peachland Mall near I75 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

Welcome to New Member

Therese Costos
Harold Johnson
Kathleen Potts
James Edward Jacobs
Marilyn West
Jose Tolosa
Steven & Janine Vito
Arlene Tims
Susan Cheever
Cynthia Topp



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



January 2010
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Check the "Exp" date on your address label!
"1210" means your PRAS and/or National membership expires December 2010. 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

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



Printed on Recycled Paper
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: **Blue winged Teal** by Cathy Olson, PRAS President

The blue-winged teal is North America's 2nd most common duck (behind the mallard). This petite rich brown duck dabbles in shallow ponds and marsh edges eating plants and invertebrates and has a small powder blue wing patch obvious in flight. Males have a white crescent on the head and females a small white patch at the base of the bill. More vocal than most ducks, drakes have a low whistle peep and hens quack more rapidly and higher in pitch than mallards. They breed throughout most of the central U.S. and Canada and migrate as far south as Peru, further than any of our ducks. They are the first ducks south in the fall and the last to head north with some staying in Florida until late spring. In our area they are common in winter on Ollie's Pond.



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: **C9ZE140Z**

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

E-mail: _____

() \$20 Local Audubon Membership (PRAS)

Includes the "White Bird" newsletter with local news articles, local meetings, field trips, bird walks, & special events.

All proceeds stay within local chapter

****Checks payable to PRAS

() \$20 Local and National Audubon Membership

(\$20 New Members Only, \$35 Renewals)

Includes all of the above plus National Audubon magazine.

**** Checks payable to National Audubon Society

() 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 \$ _____