

Peace River Audubon Society

White Bird

March 2010 Volume 33, Issue 7

Dave Lancaster, Editor

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www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

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	Starr Zachritz '10	941-766-7686

Babcock-Webb Field Trip Saturday 20 March at 7 AM

We will meet at the park entrance Pay Station at 7:00 AM. Our target birds will be the red-cockaded woodpecker who leaves the nest shortly after 7:15 (sunrise), brown-headed nuthatch and bachman's sparrow. We will also be looking for other birds and creatures of the Pine Flatwoods.

The park entrance fee is \$3.00 per person with a maximum \$6.00 charge per vehicle, Florida residence over 65 are free.

Babcock- Webb is east about a quarter mile from I-75 at Tuckers Grade exit 158 .

For info call Dave Lancaster ,phone 586-214-0203.



Tuesday, April 6, 2010 Walkabout Yucca Pens with Eleanor Marr

Yucca Pens– Walkabout Tuesday, April 6
The April Walkabout will take place at the Yucca Pens unit of Babcock-Webb WMA. Located on Zemel Road, the road to the entrance drives past the sanitary landfill. Not only do we find birds in Yucca Pens, the landfill provides additional opportunities as we pass by, particularly when the winds are from the south and the birds are overhead! To get there, head south of Punta Gorda to Zemel Road on the right. Zemel Road is about 8 miles south of Burnt Store Road (or 3 miles past Tuckers Grade). Yucca Pens is about a mile down Zemel Road, on the right, There is a \$6 per car fee, unless the car has a Florida plate and the driver is over 65. Meet at the entrance on Zemel Road at 8 AM.

PRAS Banquet Thursday 18 March 7PM

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. 941-613-6753

The price for the event will be \$33 per person. 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. Cash Bar-6:00 pm / Dinner-7:00 pm. Call Phyllis Cady at 941-286-7638 to make your reservations.



February Walkabout Report

The skies were threatening with rain but 16 birders showed up for the 2 February walkabout at Tippecanoe I...The rain held off long enough for us to get 45 species. The Great Horned Owl was on its nest that they stole from a pair of Ospreys. Many Yellow-rumped Warblers were feeding on the bayberry bushes, and a Brown Thrasher made his appearance. Several people saw the Clapper Rail, but we all heard him. We all had a nice morning of birding and got back to the cars fairly dry.
Dave Lancaster

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

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

2010 Walkabout & Field Trip Schedule

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 CharlotteCountyNatureAlert.

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

BIRDATHON – MARCH 27, 2010

The 9th annual BIRDATHON will be held in March this year to avoid conflicting with Easter week-end. For this fundraiser, teams comb Charlotte County anytime between 12:01 AM and 4 PM to find as many species as possible. Alternative ways of participating include combing a restricted area of your choice, including your backyard, for a period of your choosing, or photographing as many species as you can, again in an area of the county of your choosing. Participants solicit sponsors like they do for Walkathons, who pay based on the number of species found, or who contribute a fixed amount. The teams meet at a park afterwards to compile and compare results, and for pizza. Those of us who participate regularly look forward to a day of fun for a good cause. Please consider participating this year! If you do not participate, at least consider sponsoring one of the teams. Money collected is used in a variety of ways through our Youth Environmental Education fund. For more information, including rules and an application, see the PRAS Website. Click on “Activities” on the home page, and BIRDATHON is one of the choices, or e-mail Eleanor Marr, ekmarr@earthlink.net

Punta Gorda eagles

If you haven't hear about the Punta Gorda eagle nest that was blown down in a storm Dec.08.

They built a new nest in Jan.09 at The History Park (501 Shreve St.) They finished the nest & left the area around the end of Feb.09.

In April of 09 I spotted a Great Horned Owl in the same tree on a branch above the nest.

She sat there all day to make sure the cozy, new nest was free.

From April till June we watched one owl grow up & fledge.

In Sept.09 both Eagles came back & started making the nest bigger.

At The History Park Art Gallery we started a Birding Journal Where each day we recorded behaviors of the eagles, what time they came & went, what tree etc...

There is a large collection of photos in the Art Gallery at the park.

Their new little Eaglet hatched on Dec.20th, 1st sighting of the eaglet was on Jan.11th as far as we know.

It's been a wonderful, educational, experience watching this everyday.

The eaglet is about 8 weeks old now, lots & lots of photographers & curious people crowd around the park to see them bring in fish & feed the eaglet.

Last week an Osprey was flying by with a fish & the eagle flew over & took it midair!

I'm sure they're hoping for take-out delivery again!

Stop by & see the show, there's always something to see.

At 8 weeks the eaglet has his largest appetite & feeding by both parents will be constant.

Starr Zachritz

Volunteer of the Month-Gil MacAdam

Gil MacAdam is our Volunteer of the Month for his work with DeSoto County Environmental Learning Lab, his informational contributions to the January 5th Walkabout which was at the Lab, and for volunteering to be the Master of Ceremonies at our Annual Banquet.

Gil spent several hours prior to the Walkabout to explore the area's flora and fauna. His expertise always makes walks more interesting. He also spent time with Anita Forester, the Science Teacher at the Lab, to help in identifying the various plants and trees on the site.



Thank you all for helping on the **2009 Christmas Bird Count.**

Due to the windy weather, our total count was down by 22% -- 19,075 versus 24,516 in 2008; 26,564 in 2007; 40,536 in 2006; 40,173 in 2005.

Of note, we saw only 124 Lesser Scaup as opposed to 2,762 last year.

Again, thank you all for helping on the count this year. Tony Licata– CBC coordinator



Anhinga 143	Flycatcher Great Crested 3	Merlin 3	Stork Wood 95
Blackbird Red-winged 33	Gnatcatcher Blue-gray 74	Mockingbird Northern 171	Swallow Tree 2780
Bluebird Eastern 21	Goldfinch American 4	Moorhen 74	Teal Blue-winged 31
Bobwhite Northern 4	Grackle Boat-tailed 876	Night-Heron Black-crowned 1	Tern Forster's 72
Bunting Indigo 6	Grackle Common 2220	Night-Heron Yellow-crowned 16	Tern Royal 84
Bunting, Painted 2	Grebe Horned 3	Nuthatch Brown-headed 2	Tern Sandwich 4
Cardinal Northern 29	Grebe Pied-billed 40	Osprey 60	Thrasher Brown 1
Catbird Gray 57	Gull Herring 24	Ovenbird 1	Titmouse Tufted 1
Coot American 63	Gull Laughing 427	Owl Burrowing 9	Towhee Eastern 5
Cormorant Double-crested 1574	Gull Ring-billed 541	Owl Eastern Screech 4	Turnstone Ruddy 3
Cowbird Brown-headed 456	Harrier Northern 4	Owl Great Horned 1	Vireo, Solitary (Blue-headed) 1
Crane Sandhill 100	Hawk Cooper's 10	Owl, Barred 1	Vireo White-eyed 2
Crow American 2	Hawk Red-shouldered 37	Parakeet Monk 32	Vulture Black 394
Crow Fish 84	Hawk Red-tailed 5	Pelican Brown 141	Vulture Turkey 610
Dove Common Ground 25	Hawk Sharp-shinned 2	Pelican White 1	Warbler Palm 275
Dove Eurasian Collared 98	Heron Great Blue (Blue form) 95	Phoebe Eastern 28	Warbler Pine 75
Dove Mourning 1493	Heron Green 6	Plover Black-bellied 78	Warbler Prairie 1
Dove Rock (Rock Pigeon) 317	Heron Little Blue 132	Plover Semipalmated 22	Warbler Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) 318
Dove, White-winged 18	Heron Tricolored 84	Rail, King 2	Warbler Yellow-throated 6
Duck Mallard 2	Ibis Glossy 126	Robin American 169	Waxwing Cedar 1
Duck Mottled 211	Ibis White 719	Sandpiper Least 92	Woodpecker Downy 4
Duck Muscovy 31	Jay Blue 42	Sandpiper Spotted 13	Woodpecker Hairy 1
Duck Ring-necked 37	Jay Scrub 28	Sandpiper Western 30	Woodpecker Pileated 2
Dunlin 62	Kestrel American 42	Scaup Lesser 124	Woodpecker Red-bellied 82
Eagle Bald 25	Killdeer 213	Shrike Loggerhead 181	Woodpecker Red-cockaded 4
Egret Cattle 277	Kingfisher Belted 38	Skimmer Black 165	Woodpecker Red-headed 1
Egret Great 183	Kinglet Ruby-crowned	Sparrow Bachman's 2	Wren Carolina 3
Egret Reddish 2	Limpkin 4	Sparrow Grasshopper 1	Wren House 3
Egret Snowy 252	Loon Common 2	Sparrow House 95	Wren, Marsh 1
Falcon, Peregrine 1	Meadowlark Eastern 3	Sparrow Swamp 4	Yellowlegs Greater 1
Finch, House 5	Merganser Hooded 99	Spoonbill Roseate 25	Yellowlegs Lesser 17
Flicker Northern (Yellow-shafted) 6	Merganser Red-breasted 1	Starling European 1131	Yellowthroat Common 2

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The group had two great photo shoots in February. On the regular 2nd Tuesday (postponed to Wednesday due to weather) the group went to Immokalee where there is an amazing backyard full of feeders displaying painted and indigo buntings. On Monday the 15th, the group traveled to STA-5 to take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count and photo contest. Included among the birds seen and photographed were white morph of Great Blue Heron, Snail Kites, Peregrine Falcon, and three kingbird species – Western and Cassin's which have been seen at STA-5 for a couple of years now, and some in our group spotted a probable Tropical Kingbird. That bird, which cannot be separated from Couch's Kingbird except by call, had never been seen there till this point.

Because weather and unexpected opportunities can change plans, the Photo Group does not publicize events well in advance. An e-mail list of members is used to announce trips and workshops about a week in advance. Events are usually on the 2nd Tuesday (photo shoots) and 4th Tuesday (workshops). To get on the e-mail list, send your name and address to ekmarr@earthlink.net, or call Bill Marr at 624-4182.



Welcome New Members

Helen Jo Pierce
Kathy & Pat Traster
Karen McKim
Diny Bailey
Janice Jaen
Corina Leonard
Dianne Hughes
Albert Schwerin
Arlene A. Wild
Gracelyn Andreae



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

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Punta Gorda, FL
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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: WESTERN KINGBIRD (Tyrannus Verticalis) by Cathy Olson, PRAS President

The western kingbird is a common western bird, wintering in Central America and here in south Florida. Although not a common wintering bird throughout south Florida they are regularly seen in the interior part of the state, where there is open palmetto prairie and pastures. This flycatcher hunts its insect prey from a perch. It takes off from a perch to aerially pursue (hawk) after an insect. Much to a photographer's delight, they tend to return to the same hunting perch after each foray. Members of the photography group were fortunate to see western, Cassin's and tropical kingbirds on their recent trip to STA-5 in Hendry County.



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: **C0ZE140Z**

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

Additional Gift for PRAS

Please help PRAS continue our educational and conservation programs with a tax deductible contribution.

Total Enclosed \$ _____

MAIL CHECK WITH THIS FORM TO:

PRAS, PO box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760