

Peace River Audubon Society

White Bird

May 2010 Volume 33, Issue 9

Dave Lancaster, Editor

Dan Artman, Dispatcher



www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

2009-10 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

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	Mike Krzyzkowski '10	863-244-2652
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	George Ruby '10	941-423-0174
	Chuck Steele '11	941-875-9244
	Starr Zachritz '10	941-766-7686

May 15 ,Saturday Field Trip-Kayaking

Please join the Peace River Audubon Society for a field trip on May 15th for kayaking FishEating Creek in Palmdale. FishEating Creek is the only free flowing tributary that runs into “Big O” – Lake Okeechobee. Kayaks are available at FishEating Creek Outpost in Palmdale for \$35. rental and transport to the put-in spot at Burnt Bridge is provided for \$15 per individual. Burnt Bridge is a private campground and only allows access to the Outpost. If you own your own kayak please bring it. The run from Burnt Bridge is only 8 miles and should take 3-4 hours at a leisurely pace.

FishEating Creek is narrow for much of the distance. Banks are surrounded by towering cypress trees and wonderful for providing shade on hot summer days. Alligators and turtles are a common sight as are many water birds.

The water level is critical to being able to navigate this creek. This winter we've had more rain than usual and presently the water level is about 4 feet, with 2 feet necessary for kayaking. The water level may be checked at fisheatingcreekoutpost.com's webpage at “water level” on the left hand side of the page. Obviously if the level drops below this we will need to have a “plan B” in place, but there are not very many good birding spots here at that time of the year. I'll need to know how many people are planning to attend and how many kayaks are necessary – singles and tandems are available – about 10 days before May 15th. It should be an interesting trip if the water level holds up as it goes through some pristine area. Keep your fingers crossed! Please respond back to Mike Krzyzkowski at mkrzyzk@embarqmail.com or leave a message at 863-494-0196.

We will meet at the WinnDixie parking lot on US 17 east of Punta Gorda at 7am on the 15th. All of our trips are free to the public and non-members are welcome. For our complete schedule please visit PeaceRiverAudubon.com

May 20 ,Thursday Evening Meeting Film of the life of James Audubon

The story of John James Audubon is a dramatic and surprising one. He saw more of the North American continent than virtually anyone of his time, and came to stand for America - the America of wilderness and wild things. Audubon was a self-taught artist and a self-made man whose life was rife with action and contradiction. He played the debonair European when he visited the American frontier, and then the wild woodsman in the drawing rooms of Europe.

As an artist and a naturalist his achievements are monumental. *The Birds of America* - an astonishing collection of 435 life-size prints - was the largest book printed in the 19th century. Audubon was not only the artist; he was the writer, publisher and promoter. His early subscribers included the kings of England and France.

Audubon continued to draw, creating a smaller folio of even more birds, and embarking on a major study of mammals. This book, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of America*, was only half-done in 1846, when he turned the work over to his son. His eyesight was failing, as was his mind.



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

May 20, 2010 **Film on life of James
Audubon**

**Meeting are held at the Holy Trinity Lutheran
Church at 2565 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte.**

**Remember social at 6:30 and meeting starts at
7:00 PM Free to the public and non-members are
welcome.**

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.

May 4: *Walkabout* Deep Creek Preserve
Phyllis Cady –see April newsletter for info

May 15: *Field Trip* Kayak Trip
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

Editors Notes:

The May newsletter is the last of the season issued until September when we will resume from our summer break. During the summer break there will be no scheduled meetings or trips.

Look for the September White Bird for the new season of activities.

Also, think about going green and having an electronic mail newsletter only. It would be a savings of printing and postage for the club and ink and paper for the environment.

Dave Lancaster

Fort DeSoto Field Trip Report-April 17

Twenty PRAS members and guests headed for Ft DeSoto on a somewhat cloudy day, not expecting a lot. No front had come through that week, and reports from the internet on migrants there had not been encouraging. When we arrived at the mulberry tree area there were no crowds of birders as in previous years. We were greeted by a small flock of European Starlings followed by Cedar Waxwings. An Ovenbird was spotted by the ranger's house, and a first year male Orchard Oriole was found in the second mulberry area. When a Yellow-throated Warbler and a Blackpoll Warbler were also found, we decided to try the East Beach woods rather than giving up on migrants and switching to shorebirds. Although migrants were sparse they were there, and before the day was over a total of 11 warblers species, including Prothonotory, Worm-eating, Prairie, Palm, Hooded, Black-and-White, Parula, Northern Waterthrush. Other passerines of note included Painted Bunting and Baltimore Oriole, and a common Nighthawk. At North Beach we also had a Great Horned Owl and chick in a pine tree in a picnic grove. We had time to check out shorebirds, and saw Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, a white-phase Reddish Egret and an American Oystercatcher among the usual shorebirds. A total of 66 species were observed at Ft DeSoto, with 6 additional species along SR 679 through Tierra Verde, including Magnificent Frigatebird. Having expected little, we all came home quite happy.

Eleanor Marr

Volunteers of the Month

The Board decided to switch things a bit and make multiple people members of the month. The Board recognizes the time, effort, creativity and generosity of the members who donated their art to the silent auction. As such, we would like to recognize and thank the artists for their donations including: Rod Boevee, Louise Lewis, Kathy MacAdam, Carol MacDougal, Ron Mills, and Linda Moreau. Thank you for helping make our silent auction and banquet a great success. And a hearty thanks on behalf of Florida's panthers.

President's Report

Thank you for making it another wonderful year with Peace River Audubon Society. We had wonderful programs, walkabouts, field trips and special events. Many thanks go to all who participated and especially to those of you who planned and led the events. As this year closes three members of the Board of Directors (Eleanor Marr, Mike Krzykowski, and George Ruby) have reached their term limit and will retire from the Board. On behalf of the Board and the general membership, I would like to thank you for your four years of service on the Board of Directors. Eleanor, we all loved your field trips! Mike, thanks for all the publicity and George thanks for representing us at the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP) and getting a Corkscrew swamp buggy field trip booked for next February.

Now we need a new Board! The remaining Board members have agreed to continue to serve, but we need new faces! Two people (Shannon McGinnis and Gil MacAdam) have agreed to put their names on the ballot for election. Elections will be held in May at the general meeting; would anyone else like to join the Board of Directors or help with other functions? At this point Mike has agreed to continue publicity and George has agreed to continue to be the CHNEP representative, but we need a treasurer, a field trip organizer and additional Board members. Please contact Cathy or the rest of the nomination committee: Stu Lewis and Starr Zachritz.

As you know the silent auction was a great success, but how successful was it? The banquet portion (food and room rental) was break even, but the auction grossed \$2,585.60! This will be split as a donation to the Friends of Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve for Florida panther conservation and with the PRAS Environmental education fund (including a donation to the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center).

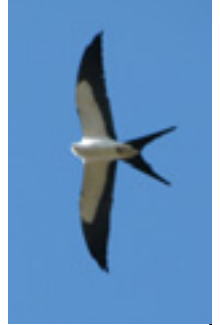
The Board of Directors is considering transitioning from a printed newsletter to an electronic newsletter. We currently spend over \$2000 annually in printing and mailing costs. A switch to a completely electronic newsletter will allow us to use the money for other uses. Please let a Board member know if this would negatively affect you.

Many of our members will start heading north to their summer homes, others of us will stay here with the heat and the wonderful afternoon rain storms with our resident and summer birds. See you in September. Safe travels and good birding to all!

Cathy Olson

Report Swallow-tailed Kite Observations

Swallow-tailed kites once nested as far north as Wisconsin and ranged over as many as 21 eastern states. Today they no longer occur in 12 states and are rare in all states except Florida. They are listed as Threatened, Endangered, or Imperiled in Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas. As Florida is their last chance for survival it is imperative that good conservation programs are maintained. And this is where YOU CAN HELP by tracking swallow-tailed kites through a citizen science project in which you can add your sightings to a database organized by the Center for Birds of Prey. Whenever you see a swallow-tailed kite write down the number observed, the time and the date seen, their specific location and their behavior and enter these data at the following website: <http://www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org/swallowtail-kite.php>.



Marked Great White Heron Sightings

Birds marked in south Florida.

Avian Research and Conservation Institute (Gainesville, Florida) has color banded 42 juveniles and six adults as part of a study of foraging ranges and dispersal of Great White Herons in southern Florida. We would appreciate reports of any observations of these marked birds, which might be seen anywhere on the Atlantic or Gulf coasts or in the Caribbean. The bands are positioned high (tibia) on the RIGHT leg and are either RED or BLUE with white letters and numbers. This alpha-numeric code consists of two characters stacked vertically (e.g., T over 3). There also will be a USFWS aluminum band low (tarsus) on the left leg. An additional 26 Great White Herons were marked only with USFWS bands.

If you see one of these marked birds, please report the band color and the alpha-numeric code (as much of it as you can read), date, and location as specifically as possible. All information should be sent by email to Gina Kent at zimmerman@arcinst.org. All observers will receive background information on the bird they report and will be acknowledged in print.

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



May 2010
White Bird

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

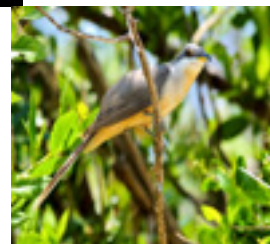


Printed on Recycled Paper
C & R Graphics (folding donated)

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: Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*) by Cathy Olson, PRAS President

As its name implies, the Mangrove cuckoo is frequently found in mangrove swamps in Florida. It however, lives in a variety of other lowland communities in the Caribbean, Central and northern South America. Detecting these birds is difficult since they only call during the nesting season. In fact, they were once thought to be migratory in Florida since they were not often detected outside of the breeding season. Like other cuckoos, many parrots and woodpeckers, they are zygodactyl, having two toes in front and two toes in the back. Thanks to Dave Lancaster and Eleanor Marr, many of us were able to see a mangrove cuckoo recently at Ponce de Leon Park.



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