

Peace River Audubon Society

# White Bird

February 2012

Volume 35, Issue 6

Cathy Olson, Editor

Dan Artman, Dispatcher



www.PeaceRiverAudubon.org

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Join the Peace River Audubon Society for

## "An Evening with Audubon" Our 35th Annual Banquet & Fundraiser

Thursday, March 15, 2012

Dr. Bill Dunson presenting:

# Gardening for Wildlife

*Come listen to Dr. Bill Dunson, renowned wildlife biologist and professor, speak about "Gardening for Wildlife". Dr. Dunson received a PhD in Zoology from the University of Michigan, and has dedicated his life to learning and sharing his knowledge with others.*

**At Charlotte County's Cultural Center**  
2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte 33952  
Cash Bar - 5:30 pm / Dinner - 6:30 pm

For info contact Phyllis Cady at 941-286-7638, or Sandy Artman at 941-575-0651, banquet1@peacriveraudubon.org or visit [PeaceRiverAudubon.org](http://PeaceRiverAudubon.org)

**Includes:**

**Dinner** - Menu Options: Prime Rib or Pecan-crusteD Tilapia

**Auction** - Silent bidding on many great items (Don't forget your checkbooks!)

**Photo Display** - Find out the winners from the photo contest in December

**Seats are limited so make a reservation today!**

**Non-members welcome**

Reservation deadline March 1st, 2012

Tickets NOT available at door

Mail check for \$35/ person to:

PRAS c/o Phyllis Cady,  
425 Fireball Ct / Punta Gorda, FL 33950

\*\*Include name(s), phone, & meal choice\*\*

*Special Discount  
Register by February 16 and  
receive \$3 discount per person*



Sponsor a whole table (8 people) for \$255 and receive special recognition in our newsletter and website

**Proceeds will benefit PRAS's Youth Environmental Education Fund**

Peace River Wildlife Center Program  
By: Larry Behrens

Please join us for this month's general meeting, Thursday, February 16 at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church where Maryann Sakamoto will present a program on the Peace River Wildlife Center (PRWC). Maryann Sakamoto is Education Outreach Coordinator for PRWC. The PRWC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the care, preservation, and protection of Charlotte County's native wildlife. Animals that are injured, orphaned, or displaced, are brought to PRWC. Most of the approximately 2000 individuals brought in are rehabilitated and released back into their native habitat. PRWC becomes a permanent home for animals whose injuries are too extensive for release. Maryann will explain how these animals are treated and cared for. She will also describe how residents can help with their operation. PRWC is located at Ponce de Leon Park, in Punta Gorda.

Possible Preserve Surplus  
By: Nancy Turner

The Surplus Lands Assessment Public Meetings that were scheduled by Southwest Florida Water Management District have all been held. All questions and concerns that were raised at these opened meetings can be viewed on the Southwest Florida Water Management District website ([www.swfwmd.state.fl.us](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us)). Deep Creek Preserve and Prairie/Shell Creek are two properties that are listed to be reviewed and assessed as to whether either or both should be considered for surplus. It is not too late to get involved in this decision process. Your comments can be submitted on the SWFWMD website under the subtitle "Surplus Lands Assessment". It is extremely important that everyone lets the Surplus Lands Subcommittee know how beneficial these two properties are to our community. The Subcommittee will be making their recommendation to the District's Governing Board on March 7, 2012. This is an opened meeting accepting public input.

February 18 Field Trip : Venice Landfill  
By: Stu Lewis

The Venice Landfill is a popular birding spot, providing good numbers and good views of eagles and hawks. The open fields are good habitat for meadowlarks, savannah sparrows, etc. In the fringe ponds along the road, there are usually gatherings of wood storks and ibis, as well as other wading birds and ducks. If we're lucky, we may see the American Bittern and Peregrine Falcon. We should see a variety of other birds, including woodpeckers, blue-birds, warblers....

We will be a driving through the entrance gate and around the loop, making stops to bird at various spots. There should be some good photo opportunities.

Rest rooms are available at the entrance of the landfill. For those who would like to bring a lunch, we'll stop at a park after the landfill to eat and look for more birds.

We'll meet at 7 a.m. at the **north location**, the Peachland Mall behind MacDonaldis near I-75 and Kings Highway. For more info, call Stu Lewis at (941) 235-2590.

March 6 Walkabout : Shell Creek Preserve  
By: Dave Lancaster

This preserve is pine flatwoods with water retention ponds and swales between the preserve and the orange groves. We will be checking the ponds for interesting birds. Along Shell Creek we will try for a Barred Owl. Bobwhites and Swallow-tailed Kites are possible along the way. Be prepared to do a lot of walking, bring water and suntan lotion.

Take US 17 east to Washington Loop Road, go about 5 miles passing Hathaway Park, and turn onto Trails End Drive. Follow it for 2 miles to the entrance of the preserve. Look for White-winged Doves on the telephone wires along the way.

For info contact Dave:DJL8339@comcast.net or call him at 586-214-0203.

## 2011-2012 Speaker Schedule

February 16: Peace River Wildlife Center: Maryann Sakamoto

March 15: Banquet: Gardening for Wildlife: Dr. Bill Dunson

April 19: Southeastern Florida kestrels: Dr. Karl Miller

May 17: Member's night slide show

**Meetings are at 6:30: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2565 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte.**

### Walkabouts and Field Trips 2011-2012

Saturday, February 18, 2012

Field Trip: Venice Landfill

Coordinator: Stu and Louise Lewis

Meet: North carpool location\* 7 a.m.

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

Walkabout: Shell Creek Preserve 8 a.m.

Coordinator: Dave Lancaster 941-625-0979 or 586-214-0203

Saturday, March 17, 2012

Field Trip: Babcock-Webb Wildlife Mgmt Area

Coordinator: Dave Lancaster 941-625-0979 or 586-214-0203

Meet: Babcock-Webb Entrance Station 7 a.m.

Tuesday, April 3, 2012 8 a.m.

Walkabout: Footprints Trail- Babcock Ranch Preserve Bermont Road

Coordinator: Phyllis Cady 941-286-7638

Saturday, April 21, 2012

Field Trip: Fort DeSoto Park

Coordinator: Eleanor Marr 941-624-4182

Meet: North carpool location \* 7 a.m.

Tuesday, May 1, 2012

Walkabout: Audubon Pennington Park 8 a.m.

Coordinator: Larry Behrens 941-286-9094

Saturday, May 19, 2012

Field Trip: Caspersen Beach and Venice Rookery

Coordinator: Shannon McGinnis 941-258-6363

Meet: North Carpool location\* 7 a.m.

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

#### **Carpool locations:**

\*NORTH—the parking lot by McDonalds at Peachland Mall near I75 and Kings Hwy in Port Charlotte (24133 Peachland Boulevard)

#### **PRAS has three email groups:**

1. White Bird only: 1 monthly email alerting you the current White Bird is ready for viewing
2. PRAS Updates: 2 or 3 PRAS email reminders per month of upcoming meetings and field trips.
3. Nature Alert: Same as PRAS updates plus notices from other conservation organizations and additional field trips, notices for odd bird sightings.

Sign up on the PRAS website: [PeaceRiverAudubon.org](http://PeaceRiverAudubon.org)

#### **Walkabout Report**

**By: Gil MacAdam**

A dozen hardy walkers took part January 3 in a walk focusing on the hydrology of the Desoto Learning Center, located near the banks of Horse Creek, in Desoto County. Understanding the Horse Creek ecosystem is important, with 15% of the freshwater delivery into the Peace River coming from this drainageway. Wind chill temperatures were in the 30s as the group quickly toured the site. Vegetation was easy to interpret, but any kind of avian life was not easy to see or hear. The group stayed within the relative warmth of the wooded environment. One main highlight was to sit in the newly constructed expanded teaching area of the cypress boardwalk. The new section was funded by PRAS, and constructed by a team as an Eagle Scout project. Sitting quietly was an enjoyable part of the walk, as the group focused on cypress trees, knees, water and woodpecker evidence, as well as the value for school groups of utilizing this new addition. A brisk walk back to the education center for warm refreshments made a pleasant ending.

#### **Where has my PRAS newsletter been?**

Have you been missing the White Bird? Be sure to sign up for the newly expanded electronic version of the White Bird. PRAS is only mailing two copies this year; all others are available on our website: [PeaceRiverAudubon.org](http://PeaceRiverAudubon.org). Contact a Board member if you need help signing up.



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

Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
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Check the "Exp" date on your address label!  
"1012" means your PRAS and/or National membership expires October 2012. 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: Common loon (*Gavia immer*) by Cathy Olson

The common loon breeds in large ponds and lakes in northern north America, but winters here with us in our coastal waters. Although their plumage is rather drab while they are here in Florida, they are rewarding to watch as they hunt for prey. They snorkel and look for their food and then dive down in pursuit of their prey which includes fish and invertebrates



## 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: **COZE140Z**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \$20 Local Audubon Membership (PRAS)

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

(All proceeds of local memberships stay within local chapter vs National memberships which PRAS only receives a small portion. National members renew at Audubon.org)

( ) \$\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Gift for PRAS

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

( ) \$\_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation to PRAS Scholarship Fund

Please help us fund a college student studying conservation

**MAIL CHECK (\*\*payable to PRAS) WITH THIS FORM TO:**  
PRAS, PO box 510760, Punta Gorda, FL 33951-0760