

NOVEMBER 2019

VOLUME 45, ISSUE 2

St. Lucie Audubon Society

Fostering appreciation of nature in St Lucie County, Florida, since 1954



The Laughing Gull

President's Message

By Ellen Lynch

“Do you like birds?” This is a question I asked many people as they approached our St. Lucie Audubon booth at a community event. I never heard a “No” but yet we are faced with a dire prediction of losing 389 species of our birds in the coming years due to climate change.

What can we do? How can we individually make a difference? I believe by participating in our local chapter, educating our youth and adults, listening to our program speakers to understand the environment around us and continue loving all the wonderful, beautiful birds we see every day.

There was a time when I did not notice birds at all. I knew they were there, but did not connect them to our quality of life or natural treasures.

I think most people are like that. That is why it is important to ask our neighbors, our children, our family members, “Do you like birds?” If they say “Yes” then we have their attention. If you like birds, you can do something...Join our chapter, come to our informative meetings, participate in our community events to help educate our community. It is a way that we can impact our changing climate and it is by asking, “Do you like birds?”

Inside This Issue

President's Message	1
Field Trip and Speaker	2
Conservation Corner	3
Chapter Dues Schedule	3
Items to Note	4
Officers & Board Members	4
Feathered Friends	5



Photo by Dan Martinelli

The Laughing Gull

Thursday, Nov. 7

Speaker: DEP Aquatic Preserves Staff

The speaker for our November general meeting will be from the Dept. of Environmental Protection Aquatic Preserves. The topic will be “Highlights in Indian River Lagoon Stewardship, Education, and Research.”

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 Jones Hammock & Platts Creek Preserves

Where: Jones Hammock Preserve entrance in Ft. Pierce

When: 7:15 am to 10:30 am

Guide: Eva Ries, Naturalist, St. Lucie Co. Environmental Resources Department

Details: This is a walking tour on uneven trails, including Traversing concrete weirs. The trails can be wet depending upon local rainfall and may have high vegetation. We recommend long pants, close-toed shoes, hat, insect repellent, sunscreen, and water. Adults (ages 12+) only. Bring your binoculars, camera, and scopes to enjoy the birds.

Contact: Doris Brookens at cell: 717-576-7876 email: dorisbrookens@gmail.com You can register on our website: <https://www.stlucieaudubon.org/field-trips>



“The Earth does not belong to us. We belong to the Earth” ~ Marlee Matlin

Conservation Corner

BY DIANE GOLDBERG

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) implemented a new rule as of October 3rd. The rule is designed to protect Florida's native songbirds and migrating songbirds from illegal trapping. The illegal trapping of native birds has long been a concern in the state, particularly in south Florida where trapping is believed to be widespread. Birds are lost from the wild population and, in many cases, may be mistreated and sometimes killed or injured when illegally trapped. Painted and Indigo Buntings are particular targets for illegal capture because they are colorful.

The new rule will provide an additional tool for law enforcement officers to help stop the poaching of these birds, while still allowing for lawful uses of bird traps. The rule contains exemptions for many lawful uses and contains a permitting process for individuals that trap nonnative nuisance birds but do not meet one of the exemptions in the rule. Under the new rule, note that all bird traps must be labeled, even if a person has a permit, other authorization or exemption.

For more information on the new rule including answers to Frequently Asked Questions, see MyFWC.com/Birdtraps.



Chapter Dues

The year for local chapter dues runs January to January. Dues can be paid by check or via PayPal on our Web site: <http://stlucieaudubon.org>

- Individual: \$25
- Family (2 or more people): \$30
- Sponsor: \$50
- Patron: \$100

The Laughing Gull

Photo by Ed Bowes

Citizen Science

BY ED BOWES

Time for the Christmas Bird Count!

It's that time again—time for the 120th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC)! The CBC is conducted between December 14 and January 5 each year, and the St. Lucie Audubon Society count will be held **Saturday, December 14, 2019**, rain or shine. The count begins just after sunrise and lasts for a minimum of 8 daylight hours. Nocturnal birding, or owling, is optional for any team that wants to look for nocturnal birds on count day. All teams meet at the Oxbow Eco-center at 5 PM to turn in paperwork and enjoy a pizza party.

Since the CBC began over a century ago, it has relied on the dedication and commitment of volunteers. You do not have to be an expert birder to participate on a count team. If you would like to join a CBC team, contact our local compiler, Ed Bowes via email at slacbc2010@gmail.com or via phone at 772-607-4028. Participate in the CBC and contribute to science that has been helping birds for over 100 years!

Project Feederwatch starts Saturday, November 9 and runs through April 3, 2020. Join the team of citizen scientists by counting birds who visit your yard and feeders! The Cornell Lab of Ornithology uses the data to identify changes in winter ranges and bird species at risk. You can join Project Feederwatch here: <https://feederwatch.org/about/how-to-participate/>

The **Florida Keys Hawkwatch** raptor count has ended at Curry Hammock State Park just north of Marathon. You can follow the count on Facebook or visit the web page here: <https://floridakeyshawkwatch.com/>

This year's count included 2517 Peregrine Falcons and 749 Merlins. Total individual raptors was 13,781!

St. Lucie Audubon Officers & Board Members

President – Ellen Lynch

Vice President – Ed Bowes

Treasurer – JoAnn Stillman

Recording Secretary – Kathy Mayshar

Corresponding Secretary - Jan Nuhn

Program Chair – Kevin Hinkle

Birding Adventure Co-Chairs – Adella Blacka, Doris Brookens

Conservation Chair – Diane Goldberg

Membership Chair - Carol Pembroke

Events Chair – Harriet Scott

Public Relations – Ruth Neese

Directors at Large – Adella Blacka, Roger Laliberte, John Nelson

Science Advisor – Matthew Anderson

Raffle Coordinator – Wayne Pembroke

Board members may be contacted by email at stlucieaudubon@gmail.com

The Laughing Gull

Feathered Friends

BY RUTH NEESE

Barred Owls (*Strix varia*) love bogs, marshes, and wetlands. These owls can be found in treed swamps or in forested areas near wetlands, especially where there are large trees with cavities. Barred Owls are cavity nesters, and they need mature trees. Unlike Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls are typically not active during the day. So, an owl that lurks in heavy tree canopy in a swamp that is primarily active at night equals not easy to see! Your best bet is to listen for them.

Barred Owls are most famous for their call, translated as "who cooks for you." During breeding season, these owls call a great deal, and territorial displays of calling can sound positively maniacal! All the noise can give you a clue as to the birds' location. You might still need a boat to spot one successfully.

These owls are mottled brown and white, with vertical brown bars on their white underparts and horizontal brown bars across the upper chest. The tail is also barred brown and white. Their eyes are very dark brown, almost black. Can you guess how they got the name Barred Owl?

Like other owls of similar size, Barred Owls eat small rodents, rabbits, and birds. These owls also pursue frogs, snakes, and fish. Unlike most other owls, Barred Owls have been documented wading in shallow water to catch fish and crayfish. That means you are most likely to find a Barred Owl in St. Lucie County's soggiest preserves—Paleo Hammock, Teague Hammock, and Hackberry Hammock. They have also been recorded in Pinelands Preserve, Bluefield Ranch Preserve, George LeStrange Preserve, and Oak Hammock Park.



Coming Attractions

FIELD TRIP

Sunday, December 1, 2019

Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge

GENERAL MEETING

December 5, 2019

“Birding in Brazil’s Pantanal & Iguassu Falls”

We’re on the Web!

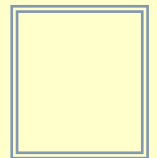
Visit us at:

<http://stluciesudubon.org>

St. Lucie Audubon Society

P.O. Box 12474

Ft. Pierce, FL 34979



Customer Name

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code