

NOVEMBER 2018

VOLUME 44, ISSUE 2

St. Lucie Audubon Society

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



The Laughing Gull

President's Message

By Eva Ries

Autumn in Florida is underway, and so are the migrating birds! Many reports are coming in via our [FaceBook page](#) about arrivals such as Palm, Prairie, and Pine Warblers, Eastern Phoebe, Grey Catbird, American Kestrel, and Snail Kite.

Keep your eyes open and your binoculars handy! And don't forget to check out this season's plethora of wonderful [TRIPS](#) our Birding Adventures Chair has in store for members and guests!

It's always citizen science project season! [Project FeederWatch](#) begins in November, and the [National Audubon Society's](#) annual [Christmas Bird Count](#) will be held in December. Interested? Contact Citizen Science Chair Ed Bowes to sign up to be part of St. Lucie County's team! Send him an email at: stlucieaudubon@gmail.com

Happy Birding!

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Photo by Dan Martinelli

Thursday, November 1

Speaker:

The speaker for our November meeting is Ryan Chabot, MSc, from Inwater Research Group, Inc.. His topic will be "Swimming with Sea Turtles: Understanding their World."

Field Trip, Saturday, November 10

Teague Hammock Preserve & C-23 Reservoir
8551 Carlton RD, Ft. Pierce, FL

Meet in the Paleo Hammock parking lot between 7 & 7:15 AM; start time 7:30 AM. Our guide is expert birder Tim Towles.

Wetlands and prairie hammock and unusual tropical trees. Bird species such as warblers, water thrush, wrens, wading birds, water fowl and Snail Kites are often seen there. There are many butterflies and native flowers found in the area. Afterwards, depending on the road conditions, we will drive to C-23 Reservoir off of Germany Canal Road to view more wildlife. Contact Adella Blacka at ablacka.florida@gmail.com or via cell #856-261-8599.



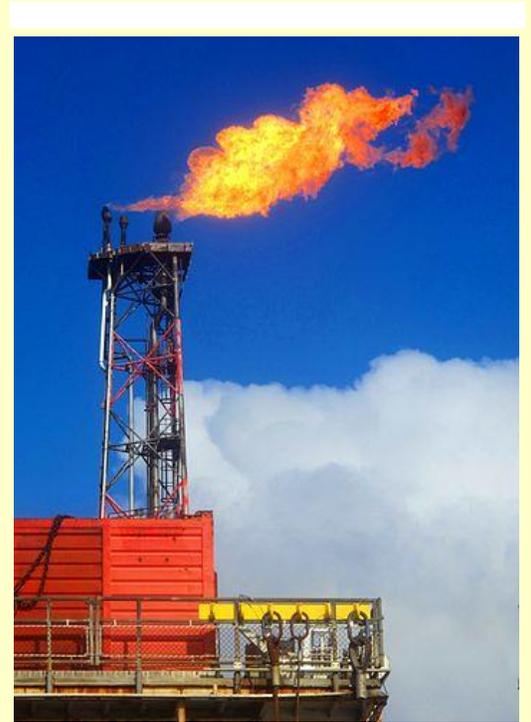
**"I took a walk in the woods and
came out taller than trees."
~Henry David Thoreau**

Conservation Corner

BY DIANE GOLDBERG

Methane is a hydrocarbon byproduct of coal, oil, natural gas production. It is the most powerful greenhouse gas, making methane a potent contributor to climate change. This gas routinely leaks from oil and gas wells during production, and the Obama administration had published regulations requiring oil and gas companies to capture leaking and vented methane at existing sites on tribal and public lands. The regulations also required energy companies to gradually update their technology and to monitor the escaping gas.

Oil and gas companies maintained that these regulations were burdensome, even though the Government Accountability Office estimated \$23 million of potential royalty revenue was lost annually to methane leaks (<https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-275R>). The Trump administration has revised this rule to eliminate the requirement to control methane waste. This rollback came one week after the EPA proposed easing its restrictions on methane emissions and cutting inspections for methane leaks from every 6 months to once a year. Environmental groups have objected to these rollbacks. If you object, please contact your Congressional representatives and Senators to tell them about your concerns.



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

American Bald Eagle nesting season will be starting soon, and that means it's time for EagleWatch training! Audubon Florida operates this premier citizen science program that deploys the eyes and ears of volunteers in the field to monitor over 600 eagle nests. This year, Audubon EagleWatch will celebrate 26 years of conservation in Florida.

Volunteers are needed locally to monitor eagle nests in St. Lucie and Martin Counties. Audubon EagleWatchers collect important data on nesting eagles in Florida including productivity, active nest locations and possible disturbances or threats to nesting activities. Registration and training is required for volunteers, so that you become familiar with eagle nesting biology, applicable laws, monitoring techniques, identification of nest threats, and the verification of previously recorded active nests. For more information and to register as a volunteer, visit <http://fl.audubon.org/get-involved/audubon-eaglewatch>

If you are birding, report what you see for science! The better the data, the better scientists can guide conservation efforts for birds and other species. Report bird sightings to eBird at <https://ebird.org/home>



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

The Laughing Gull

Feathered Friends

BY RUTH NEESE

Mourning Doves are ubiquitous and can be seen almost anywhere in the United States; just look up at the utility wires. Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*) are larger than Common Ground-Doves, but smaller than White-winged Doves and Eurasian Collared-Doves. They are named for their mournful coo, which sounds like “boo-hoo-hoo-hoo.”

Like Common Ground-Doves, Mourning Doves show black spots on the wings. Unlike Common Ground-Doves, Mourning Doves lack the fine scaling on the neck and chest and have a black beak. Their overall color is light brown, and they have dark wingtips, black-bordered white tips on the tail feathers, and adults have bright pink feet. The long, pointy tail is unique to Mourning Doves; other doves have a squared-off tail. Also unique to Mourning Doves is the loud whistling sound made by their wing feathers on takeoff.

Mourning Doves are not disturbed by humans near their nests, and these birds will frequently nest on eaves, gutters, and abandoned equipment. They are not the best nest builders, and nests are often a flimsy arrangement of pine needles, small twigs, and grass stems that may offer little protection for the young. A typical clutch consists of two eggs, and a nesting pair may raise from 1 – 6 broods in one season. Nestlings are initially fed crop milk, or pre-digested seeds. Fledglings must learn to peck for seed after leaving the nest.

These doves visit urban and suburban bird feeders for seed, often crowding out other species. Millet is one of their favorite foods, but they eat a wide variety of plant seeds from wild grasses to sunflower hearts and peanuts. Look for Mourning Doves literally ANYWHERE in St. Lucie County!



Coming Attractions

FIELD TRIP

Saturday, December 8, 2018

South Fork Kayak Outing, Guides: Kathy Mayshar & Roger LaLiberte

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, December 6, 2018

Speaker: Sam Fried, "Tanzania, Africa—Birding & Wildlife in the Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater, and Much, Much More...."

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

<http://stluciesudubon.org>

St. Lucie Audubon Society

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