

Bird-a-thon

By Bill Karnofsky

A very special thanks to the special people who contributed to our Bird-a-thon fund-raiser this past December. We wish to acknowledge the generosity of the following individuals who supported our efforts at keeping the Street Audubon Center open and functioning, as well as supporting our ongoing activities of education and environmental issues. (If you would like to join these wonderful people by supporting Lake Region Audubon Society, you can mail your contribution to Lake Region Audubon, 1439 Grand Cayman Circle, Winter Haven, FL 33884.)

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Paul & Janet Anderson
Debbie Baker
Suzie Brantley
David & Gloria Brooke
Robert & TJ Coburn
Deborah Cullings
Elizabeth Davis *
Nancy Duncan
Lori Edwards **
Beverly Etheredge
Mr. & Mrs Lee Farnsworth
Colleen & Mike Fearney *
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Carol Guinn
Donald Hamm
Mrs Robert (Karen) Harden
C Clay Holland
Albert & Gunn Honican
Margaret James
Bill & Rose Karnofsky
Shirley Lux
Eda Marchman *
Catherine Mayo

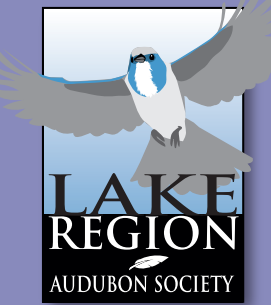
Barbara & Bob McDowell
Kate Mercer
Alfred Minch
Joseph Misiaszek
Ellen Olney
Gloria O'Rourke
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Ronald Plummer
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Vineta Reass
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Nancy & Don Southern
Mark & Barbara Stampfl *
Pete Timmer *
Thomas Tuxill MD
Heather Whitney
Faye & Bud Wirth
Leo & Audrey Woytiuk

* contributed \$100 - \$499
** contributed \$500 or more



www.lakeregionaudubon.org

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WELCOME TO THE LAKE REGION AUDUBON'S NEWSLETTER

Lake Region Audubon Society, Inc.
115 Lameroux Road
Winter Haven, FL 33884
www.lakeregionaudubon.org
A non-profit 501(c)(3) Corporation



Eagle Watch at Work by Reinier Munguia

It all started with a phone call from Lynda White from the Audubon Center for Bird of Prey (CBOP) and coordinator of the Eagle Watch program. She was in need of foster parents for a four week old eaglet from Osceola county. The nest in which it was born collapsed killing its sibling. After a failed attempt to return this youngster to its parents, Lynda was left with no choice other than to find him a new home.

Within a day we coordinated the relocation and on January 19th, the eaglet was brought to Winter Haven. Lynda arrived with Jim Lotta, an Eagle Watch volunteer and official tree climber, and John, a volunteer from the CBOP.



The process of relocating this eaglet required taking a picture of the existing eaglet to ensure it was a match. Jim climbed the tree and took a picture, then the camera was lowered to confirm the age of the bird. It all looked

good and the foster eaglet was raised to its new home. As a treat and to reduce the work load of the adults, a nice fat rat was left for the adults to feed the babies.

This is just one of many cases every year that show the importance of citizen science based programs such as Eagle Watch, and the success of the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey. Thanks to them, and all the volunteers that work so hard to keep our raptors flying.

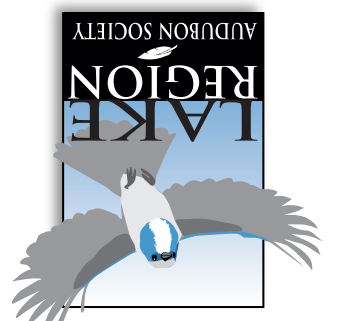
IN THIS ISSUE

- Eagle Watch At Work
- President's Thoughts
- Fund raising for Conservation
- Gleanings of the Fall Migration
- LRAS Conservation Projects
- Gator Creek
- Rails: Unusual Birds
- Birding Adventures
- Bird-A-Thon

I quickly alerted all the LRAS Eagle Watch volunteers and the search was on. After inspecting a few nests, we couldn't locate one with babies of the same age as this one. Some were too old and had grown flight feathers, others were too small. Finally I came to check on PO208, which looked like a nice nest and the eaglet there seemed to be the right age. But it wasn't until later that day that I got an email from Becky Richardson that included pictures of the baby living on PO208. It looked like a possible match for our foster



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AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

[make check payable to National Audubon Society]
This membership automatically enrolls you in the National Audubon Society, Audubon of Florida, and Lake Region Audubon Society.

You will receive these publications from each organization:

- National Audubon Society - Audubon Magazine
- Audubon of Florida - Florida Naturalist
- Lake Region Audubon Society - The Scrub Jay Times

Cost: 1st year - \$20.00* Yearly Renewal: \$35.00

*Lake Region will receive all of the first year's dues. Thereafter it receives no direct portion of your annual dues.

LOCAL MEMBERSHIP ONLY [make check payable to Lake Region Audubon Society]

- This membership enrolls you in Lake Region Times, which is published 5 times a year.
- Cost: 1st year - \$20.00 Yearly Renewal: \$20.00*
- * Your first year's dues and each renewal goes 100% to support all Lake Region Audubon's programs and the publication of the newsletter, The Scrub Jay Times.

Save costs: send newsletter by e-mail.

Member Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

email: _____

Please mail your check and this completed application to:
Membership Chairman
1439 Grand Cayman Cir
Winter Haven, FL 33884.

If this is a gift membership for the person named above, please write your name here:

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Upcoming Events



ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday March 9th, at 7:00pm
at Audubon Street Nature Center
115 Lameroux Rd. Winter Haven

The current President of the Board of Lake Region Audubon Society, Inc wishes to invite all LRAS members to this year's annual meeting. The nominating committee's ballot for officers, directors and board members will be open for nominations from the floor. Balloting to follow. Please join us in framing our future.

Love is in the Air (Mar 11th, 6:00 pm)

An in-depth study on breeding bird behaviors including mate selection, courtship, nest building and much more.

Nature Faire for Kids (Mar 19th, 10:00 am-2:00pm)

Join us for an event full of activities for kids including fossil hunt, arts & crafts and much more.

Feathered Jewels (Mar 22nd, 6:00 pm)

An insight to the amazing world of hummingbirds. Learn the facts that separate hummingbirds into a unique family of birds. Enjoy a presentation full of information and beautiful images of hummingbirds. Admire the beauty of some of the most majestic species like the Booted Racket-tailed, and the

Fiery-throated or the tiny Volcano hummingbird.

The Enchanted Isles* (April 2nd, 6:00 pm)

Dinner Event - Fee \$15.00 pp
Come aboard as we navigate through the Galapagos Islands, witnessing some of the most impressive spectacles of nature. From breeding birds colonies to humpback whales, and the famous tortoises, there's a reason why these islands are called the Enchanted Isles.

Check our website's calendar for more events. All events are held at the Street Audubon Center, Winter Haven unless otherwise specified.

For more info on events contact:
events@lakeregionaudubon.org

President's Thoughts *by: Susan Schenk*

As my year as president comes to a close I want to thank all the people who have helped make it memorable. The LRAS Board Members, both old and new, that have supported my desire to modify and cajole our Chapter into the 21st century. Along the way, I have experienced the joy of working with many volunteers who serve the greater good and give of themselves to make Lake Region Audubon a successful service and education provider to the local communities of students and wildlife.

The wildlife of Florida deserves all their citizens to be educated and actively involved in conserving Florida's wild resources for future generations. In order to get that job done statewide, you need to harness the energy of as many volunteers as you can. Why? Because there is not enough money in the world's banks to pay to do what private citizens can do when they give of their own time. There are not enough scientists and researchers to watch every eagle's nest in Polk County or anywhere else

across our vast State. So the people, if they can, must take up the slack and help. For all of you who have helped, Thank You from the bottom of my heart.

Without volunteer help to monitor, clean and protect the natural lands, parks, and other conservation areas, Polk County, as with many other counties, would have a very tough time providing viable habitat for varied creatures. If our State had to pay people to do all the jobs volunteers do, our State would be unable to pay those wages without taxing us more.

In the future, it is my hope more of you will take the time to be a volunteer for LRAS and all the other meaningful and necessary programs that help both people and wildlife survive and thrive.

I want all of you to know that I noticed. I am proud of you and what you do since you are the backbone of the conservation corps of today. Keep up the good work and I will see

you out there. Remember, it's for our legacy to the next generation that we are working.

My Special Thanks
To the following Individuals and Groups:

Joan Waters
Woodland Wonders
Local Wildlife Rehab

Lynda White
Center for Birds of Prey -Rehabilitation

Polk County Natural Resources

Marybeth Soderstrom
Campfire USA

The Polk County Master Gardeners

Tenoroc and the FWC

Florida Audubon

All the schools, groups and other organizations that have invited us to speak to them and share the secrets of a wild Florida.

Gleanings of the Fall Migration *by: Paul Fellers*



In Central Florida, fall migration begins about the third week of July (believe it or not) and winds up about mid-November. Saddle Creek Park is our best local migrant stopover, and localers, and male and female Cerulean Warblers. Other better birds were Yellow, 2 Worm-eating, and 3 Hooded Warblers. The scenic boardwalk along Lake Tarpon was very productive.

Don, Liz and I spent 9/11 on the East Coast birding Turkey Creek Sanctuary in the A.M. and Merritt Island National Wildlife Preserve in the P.M. Top birds were a pair of Audubon Carracas on the drive over, 13 Roseate Spoonbills, 2 Eastern Wood Peewees,

2 Florida Scrub Jays, and 9 warbler species including 6 Blackburnian, 2 male Black-throated Blue, 3 Prothonotary, and Worm-eating.

The dogs and I spent most of 9\18 (Fall Migration Count day), at the Arbuckle State Forest and surrounding area. A family of 11 Wild Turkeys were spotted near Lake Arbuckle County Park; 3 Scrub Jays were near the intersection of Arbuckle Rd. and Rucks Dairy Rd.; 4 Brown-headed Nuthatches were along School Bus Rd.; and no fewer than 8 warbler species (including Blue-winged and Black-throated Blue) were in a group near the entrance to the Avon Park Air Force Range.

A visit to the Mosaic Phosphate Mines by Pete Timmer and myself on 9/19 resulted in some pleasant surprises; 307 Great Egrets, 51 Roseate Spoonbills, very early Northern Harrier, 8 American Avocets, 4 Long-billed Dowitchers, Gull-billed Tern, 39 Sandwich Terns, and whopping num-

bers of Forster's Terns (1,085) and Black Terns (525).

A trip to Ft. De Soto County Park with Liz Lane rounded out the migration with 83 species noted, best being 6 adult Pied-billed Grebes and 3 striped very young at the Tierra Verde Pond along with 35 Redhead Ducks (8 duck species overall), 1,000 American White Pelicans, 19 Wilson's Plovers, rare Piping Plover (North Beach), 8 American Oystercatchers, 7 Marbled Godwits, an amazing 117 Black-hooded Parakeets (feeding in the grass along the road), and 2 rare Golden-crowned Kinglets (our target bird and first for Liz in Florida), and the first American Robin for the fall. A bonus was seeing about 25 Monarch Butterflies getting set for their amazing migration across the Gulf of Mexico to Mexico!

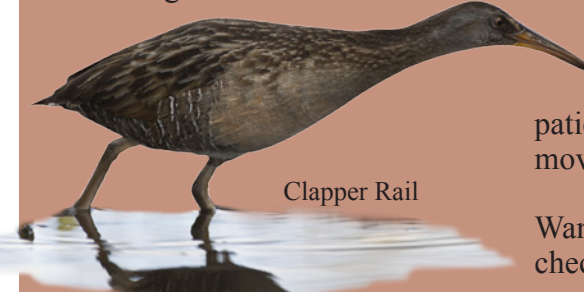
In all, 23 warbler species were recorded for the fall. Perhaps I will see you on the trail!

Rails: Unusual Birds

Text & Photos by R. Munguia

The Rallidae family includes a series of marsh and wetland birds highly adapted to moving through floating vegetation and grasses found on these ecosystems. The family includes rails as well as gallinules and coots. While all of them can swim and even dive, the coots are the most adapted to water. Their lobed feet allow them to dive pretty well. In contrast, the purple gallinule has long toes that allow them to distribute their weight over floating vegetation such as lily pads.

The birds known as rails are very special indeed, and seldom seen due to their secretive nature. Their narrow bodies, flexible wings and strong feet are adaptations to their life among weeds and



Clapper Rail

grasses of fresh or brackish waters. Five species of rails are found in Florida, the Yellow, Black, Clapper, Virginia and King Rail. Then you have the Sora, another member of the rail family with similar behavior and characteristics. Their plumage is colored with browns, grays and reddish tones that blend them against the marsh background.

Although relatively weak at flying, some species endure long migrations over water and land. Females may lay from 6-15 eggs, perhaps to offset a high mortality rate due to predation.

If you're interested in finding some of these rails, you want to look carefully at the water's edge of emergent vegetation. The Clapper and Black rails are often found on salt-marshes, the latter is the smallest of all rails in North America.

The Virginia, King Rail and the Soras can be seen in Circle B Bar. They require a lot of patience and keen eyes to spot their movement through the vegetation.

Want to learn more about rails, check our extended article online.



King Rail



Virginia Rail



Sora

Fundraising for Conservation Projects - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle... *by: Susan Schenk*

We have been hearing these words for over a generation now. It seems that not all of us have been listening. How do these words affect our daily lives? Well, I have an idea that will help us increase our ability to live these words in a meaningful way and help wildlife in the process.

Our Society wants to fund special places and special projects that will increase the health of bird populations both migratory and residential. Funding these projects has been a problem in the recent economic times. So we have to be creative and find ways to raise money and sponsoring a community wide sale seems like an awesome idea.

Here is my idea in a nutshell. We have this wonderful property in Winter Haven. Our site has parking, open areas and all the space in the

world to host a quarterly community white (bird) sale. What do you think of the idea? We host the event, you pay a nominal fee to have a table at the event and you get the opportunity to sell (recycle) your unneeded goods to a larger audience than having your own private sale.

There would be a few simple rules. You can not bring weapons of any kind to sell at the sale and you must clean up after yourself and remove any unsold items.

How is this helpful? I don't know about you, but I sometimes wish I could have a garage sale but I don't think I have enough stuff to make it worthwhile. So I keep holding onto that stuff and wondering when I will donate it or sell it to make room in my garage. If I knew that there would be plenty of traffic and lots of customers,

I might just get rid of or pass on my stuff to those who want and need it. You get the picture.

That is my idea. Now all I need are people who would want this to happen and support it by signing up for a table. I would very much like to have a committee of folks interested in helping out, coordinating and communicating to the people in the neighborhoods around Polk County.

So the call is out to the people. Would you help out and support this idea? If so, please contact the Society President, me, and I will gladly work with any and all individuals or groups that would like to be involved. Times a wasting, today we can start to live the "reduce, reuse and recycle" lifestyle that will help our area's wildlife.

Contact: president@lakeregion.org
Or call: 863-701-0216

Gator Creek Reserve

by Charles Geanangel

If you are interested in exploring the fabled Green Swamp yet you don't want to drive for hours, the Gator Creek Reserve is for you. This 2,700 acre Polk County nature preserve is found on highway 98 just north of Lakeland. Located one mile above where the dual highway changes to a single lane; proceed to the entrance on your right. There is no entrance fee. Two large recent additions have made this reserve the second largest in the Polk County reserve system. The County staff has provided a nice paved parking area, modern bathrooms, trail guides, and picnic tables. This is becoming popular with the equestrian set and they have a separate entrance on Clark Road nearby. The extensive trail system is made up of

several loops, one of which is paved for handicapped visitors.

Most all of the specialty birds found in the Green Swamp can be found here in this heavily wooded tract. Summer Tanagers, Carolina Chickadees, Yellow-throated Warblers, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers all breed here. Deer and Wild turkeys are common but in order to observe the wildlife you must remain quiet. As you walk deeper into the reserve, you will experience what the early settlers must have experienced; a vast forest broken up with cypress domes and small streams. Little Gator Creek has been extensively ditched but it is still evident. Once you are away from the highway noises all you hear will be the sounds of the birds and the whisper of the breeze in the trees. For many city people this will be an eerie experience. Be sure to carry plenty of water with you and plan on several hours of walking if you choose one of the longer trails. You will not be disappointed.



The preserve well maintained trails system cuts through a mix of pine and oak forest and few large open meadows.

Birding Adventures Join the fun!

by: Gloria Brooke



Some members of the LRAS Bird Club enjoying a birding day and tram ride at Circle B Bar. The blue color must be good for birds, don't you think?

The Bird Club of LRAS meets every Thursday from November till mid-April no matter what the weather conjures up for us. Well, a hurricane would make the exception. We had one mighty cold day this year at Cockroach Bay. Enroute we saw three species of hummingbirds followed by a good day's collection of birds. On the way home we visited the manatees at Florida Power. Each trip has its highlights like the Golden Crowned Kinglets joining in our picnic lunch at Ft DeSoto, or the disappearing Roseate Spoonbills roused by an immature Eagle for a few moments in the Blue Heron Wetlands. Then they were gone. Our trips are scheduled for the season with some flexibility. We were able to visit the Raptor Project at the Space Coast Birding Festival while in the area.

The Mosaic Mines' trip is always a highlight. We saw ninety seven species of birds this year at the Mines. We have nine more trips scheduled for this season.

Birders of every level are encouraged to join us. Some of the trips need advanced registration such as the February 17, 2011, Blue Springs River Cruise trip. The cost of the River Cruise is prepaid \$18.00 each.

On the LRAS website, look under Bird Club for the schedule. Bring your binoculars and usually lunch too. We have a fun time and learn more about birds and birding every time. For more information contact:

Gloria Brooke
birdclub@lakeregionaudubon.org