



2024 Audubon Assembly



**125 Years of Audubon
in Florida**

**Hilton Daytona Beach
Oceanfront Resort**

Nov. 7-9, 2024

Great Egret.
Photo: Bonnie Masdeu/Audubon Photography Awards

Schedule of Events | Audubon Assembly, Nov. 7-9, 2024

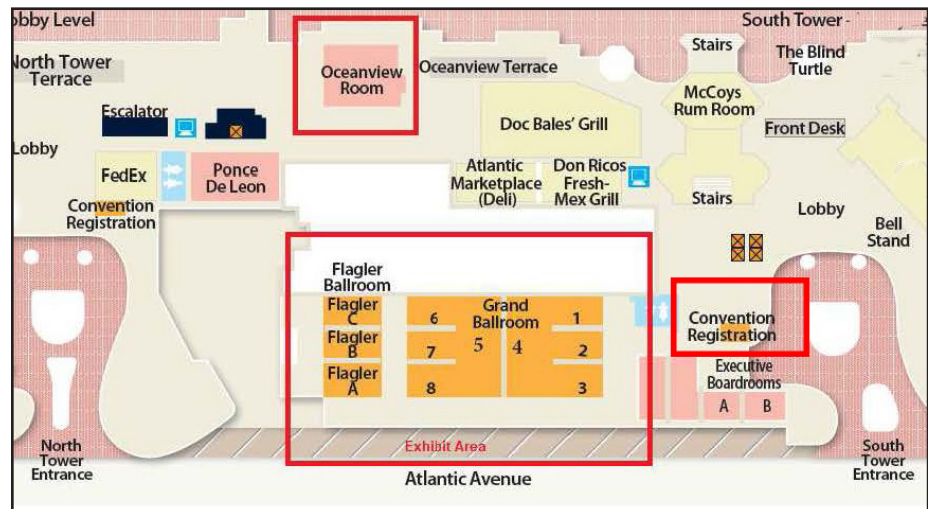
| Thursday | | Location |
|--------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Noon to 4 p.m. | Open House at Lyonia Preserve | 2150 Eustace Ave, Deltona |
| 2:30 - 7:30 p.m. | Registration/Event Check-in | Convention Registration S. |
| 4 p.m. | Hotel Check-in | Hotel Lobby |
| 3 - 5 p.m. | Chapter Presidents' Roundtable | Flagler A & B |
| 5 p.m. - Sat. noon | Corkscrew Nature Store Table | Exhibit Area |
| 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | Cocktail Reception (Beer/Wine/Soft Drinks Provided) | Grand Ballroom 6-8 |
| Friday | | |
| 6:45 a.m. - noon | Registration/Event Check-in | Exhibit Area |
| 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. | Conservation Leadership Initiative Session | Grand Ballroom 1-3 |
| 7:15 - 8 a.m. | Field Trip Meetup: Boat - 7:15 a.m. Lighthouse Pt. & Central Park - 8 a.m. | Exhibit Area |
| Noon - 1:30 p.m. | Welcome Luncheon, Keynote Presentation: Paul Gray, PhD | Grand Ballroom 4-8 |
| 1:30 - 7 p.m. | Registration/Event Check-in | Convention Registration S. |
| 2 - 3:15 p.m. | Learning Sessions | |
| | Building Conservation Momentum through Community Building | Flagler A |
| | Addressing Flooding with Local Solutions: An Advocate's How-to | Flagler B |
| | Re-envisioning Coastal Recovery with More Frequent Storms | Flagler C |
| 3:15 - 3:45 p.m. | Networking Coffee Break | Exhibit Area |
| 3:45 - 5 p.m. | Learning Sessions Repeat | Flagler A, B, C |
| 5 - 7 p.m. | Meet and Greet With Francis the Bald Eagle | Oceanview Rm & Terrace |
| 6 - 7 p.m. | Cocktail Reception (Cash Bar/Cards Accepted) | Oceanview Rm & Terrace |
| 7 - 9:30 p.m. | Awards Banquet and Anniversary Celebration | Grand Ballroom 4-8 |
| Saturday | | |
| 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. | Networking Breakfast | Grand Ballroom 5-8 |
| 8:45 - 10 a.m. | Flight Plan Plenary Featuring Marshall Johnson | Grand Ballroom 5-8 |
| 10 - 10:30 a.m. | Hotel Check-out, Coffee | Grand Ballroom 5-8 |
| 10:30 a.m. - noon | Chapter Celebration | Grand Ballroom 5-8 |
| 1 p.m. | Annual Meeting of the Florida Audubon Society* | Flagler A & B |

Welcome Luncheon Friday, Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Join old friends and make new ones from around the state as we convene at lunch to kick off this year's Audubon Assembly.

Audubon Florida Executive Director Julie Wraithmell will welcome participants followed by a keynote presentation with Paul Gray, PhD, Everglades science coordinator, about the early days of Audubon in Florida.

Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort Main Floor Layout



* Pursuant to the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of the Florida Audubon Society will be held on Saturday, November 9.

Our planet. Our passion.

At Publix, conserving our natural resources is a part of our culture. We view sustainability as a journey rather than a destination.

This philosophy is ingrained in our mission statement, which calls us to be involved as responsible citizens in our communities. That's why we've teamed up with the National Audubon Society to help protect, restore, and conserve water in the Everglades.

Learn more about our commitment to social and environmental stewardship by visiting publix.com/goodtogether.



Field Trip | Thursday, November 7

Open House at Lyonia Preserve, Hosted by West Volusia Audubon Society Noon to 4 p.m. (free)

2150 Eustace Ave, Deltona

Visit the Lyonia Environmental Center and engage with interactive exhibits to learn about Volusia County's scrub habitat, water conservation, and scrub wildlife, including the Florida Scrub-Jay. View their collection of ambassador alligators, turtles, snakes, lizards, and fish, as well as the gallery hall featuring pollinator murals and the Photography Club's photos.

Outside the building, visit the pollinator garden and get your picture taken in front of the Florida Scrub-Jay wings mural, part of the "Wings of the West" mural trail of wings throughout West Volusia County.

You can also go out for a hike in the Lyonia Preserve's scrub habitat, which provides a home to many scrub animals including Florida Scrub-Jays and gopher tortoises.

Members of the West Volusia Audubon Society's Friends of Lyonia Environmental Center will be on hand to answer questions and lead tours of the Center and gardens with a short hike into the preserve.



Florida Scrub-Jay.
Photo: Kaitlin Marks-Dubbs/Audubon Photography Awards

Field Trips | Friday, November 8

Boat Tour of the Indian River Lagoon with the Marine Discovery Center

Meet in the hotel lobby at 7:15 a.m. for a 7:30 carpool departure.

On this two-hour boat ride, a Florida Master Naturalist and Audubon chapter member will lead your tour along the waters of the Indian River Lagoon to observe a variety of local flora and fauna. We will look for resident wading birds, Brown Pelicans, and possibly some fall migratory species as well as Atlantic bottlenose dolphins and Florida manatees, if water temperatures permit.

Guests will also learn about mangrove propagation, the value of living shorelines, salt marshes, challenges to the lagoon's water quality, and the ecological impact of shorelines throughout the entire 156-mile expanse of what is considered the most biologically diverse estuary in North America.

Light breakfast items will be served on the boat, courtesy of the Southeast Volusia Audubon Society.

The boat is wheelchair accessible and has a small, enclosed bathroom.

Lighthouse Point Park and Beach Areas

Meet in the hotel lobby at 8 a.m. for an 8:15 carpool departure.

The Lighthouse Point Park trip offers a two-hour birding walk along the jetty, beach, and back area along the Halifax River. According to eBird, 224 species have been recorded here, including many rarities. Commonly seen birds include American Oystercatchers, Black Skimmers, American White Pelicans, and numerous shorebird species, gulls, and terns. Purple Sandpipers have also been reported.

Participants should have the ability to travel along both grassy and paved pathways, up to two miles in distance, at a slow pace. Most wildlife will be

seen from these paths without walking on the sandy beach.

There are restrooms in the Lighthouse Point Park parking lot.

Central Park, Ormond Beach, and the Ormond Beach Environmental Discovery Center

Meet in the hotel lobby at 8 a.m. for an 8:15 carpool departure.

This 160-acre urban park includes five large ponds and numerous woodlots. Fall is the most active season, with 171 species reported. November should yield late migrants, including many warblers, woodpeckers, and raptors.

Participants will also visit the Ormond Beach Environmental Discovery Center to learn about species specific to Central Florida with displays and live exhibits. A 3.2-mile loop trail offers an easy route, with paved concrete, asphalt, or wooden boardwalks (with railings). It is typically 3 to 6 feet wide (with some wider passing spaces).

Restrooms are available at the Discovery Center, where the group will begin and end this two-to-three-hour field trip.



Photo: Sydney Walsh/Audubon



Boat tour. Photo: Marine Discovery Center.
Royal Tern, Northern Harrier, Yellow-rumped Warbler. Photos: John Serrao



Cleaner Water = Healthier Manatees!

What's the connection between our Polk County power plant and our Manatee Viewing Center in Apollo Beach?

A manatee eats 100 pounds of seagrass every day.

But nutrients in city wastewater can put this food source at risk.

Tampa Electric's Polk power station works with nearby cities to filter and treat wastewater before using it to cool the power station.

It's an innovative and award-winning solution that greatly improves water quality in the bay.

Enjoy your meal, manatees!



More information:



Learning Sessions | Friday, November 8

Learning sessions are held from 2 to 3:15 p.m. and repeated from 3:45 to 5 p.m.

Building Conservation Momentum through Community Building

Flagler A

In-person and virtual events can create a welcoming community for beginner birders, inspire action in devoted conservationists, thank dedicated volunteers for their service, and more. Hear from panelists across Florida on their experiences using events to create community and protect birds and the places they need.

PANELISTS: Lauren Jonaitis, Tropical Audubon Society; Kristina O'Hern, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary; Amanda Post, Francis M. Weston Audubon Society; Kathy Rigling, Orange Audubon Society

Addressing Local Flooding with Local Solutions: An Advocate's How-to

Flagler B

In this session, we will explore Florida's growing flooding threat as a result of climate change, rising sea levels, and increased urbanization. We will delve into the critical role that natural systems, including wetlands and floodplains, play in mitigating flood risks while highlighting the potential of green infrastructure like rain gardens, permeable pavements, and bioswales. Attendees will learn how protecting and restoring natural systems, combined with implementing green

infrastructure, can significantly reduce flood risks while providing numerous environmental and community benefits.

PANELISTS: Chris Farrell, Audubon Florida; Andrew Dance, Flagler County; Ginger Adair, Volusia County; Melissa Lammers, Halifax River Audubon Society

Re-envisioning Coastal Recovery in a Time of More Frequent Storms

Flagler C

Florida's coastal habitats and wildlife rely on erosion and accretion from hurricanes, while coastal buildings and roads need stability. Traditional armoring alters these natural processes, harming the beaches and wildlife that attract people. Plans for resilient coastlines aim to maintain these natural processes and reduce storm impacts, but emergency recovery efforts often revert to harmful armoring solutions. This session will address the need for coordinated, informed decision-making in coastal management, more thoughtful emergency permitting processes, and the potential need for managed retreat in the face of increasing storms.

PANELISTS: Commissioner Henry Dean, St. Johns County; Mike McGarry, Brevard County; Jason Engle, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



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Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI)



Photo: Luke Franke/Audubon

The Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) is Audubon Florida's college mentorship program that provides a unique opportunity for undergraduate students across Florida to immerse themselves in Audubon's conservation work, refine their leadership abilities, and explore potential career paths within the environmental field.

What sets CLI apart is its intergenerational approach, bringing together Audubon's experienced leaders and a diverse group of college students. Each student is matched with

an Audubon chapter leader, fostering a valuable co-mentoring relationship. This enables Audubon leaders and students to collaborate, network, and share their knowledge, creating a rich environment for mutual growth. Students gain insight into Audubon's conservation initiatives and hands-on experience, while Audubon leaders develop the skills needed to effectively engage, communicate with, and mentor the next generation of conservation leaders.

This year, students in our cohort represent 16 colleges and universities across Florida, from Pensacola to Miami. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our mentors this year; their commitment to shaping the future of Audubon is truly invaluable! We're delighted to extend a warm welcome to the 2024-2025 CLI Cohort as they join the Audubon Florida flock.



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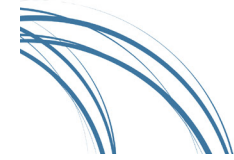
is proud to support the
Audubon Florida Assembly.

Congratulations to Audubon Florida
on another great year of conservation
efforts, improving habitats, and
caring for Florida's birds & wildlife.



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Meet Francis, the Bald Eagle!

Francis, a 33-year-old male Bald Eagle, will join Audubon Assembly for a meet-and-greet with participants!

Reception attendees on **Friday evening from 5 to 7 p.m.** will be invited to say hello and even take a photo with this majestic and gentle raptor.

Francis came to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey as a very young eaglet in April of 1991. Most likely kicked out of his nest by his parents because of a respiratory infection and a cataract in one eye, he was a very sick little eaglet when admitted.

Because of his reduced lung capacity from the infection and an inoperable eye defect, staff determined he could not be released back into the wild. Francis is glove-trained and very comfortable around the public, participating in educational programs as an Audubon ambassador.

Francis is named for St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals.

Join Us for Three Keynote Presentations



Photo: Sydney Walsh/Audubon

Julie Wraithmell



Photo: Mike Fernandez/Audubon

Marshall Johnson



Photo: Sydney Walsh/Audubon

Paul Gray, PhD

We have so much to share this year that we've split our traditional keynote into three riveting discussions of Audubon in Florida across 125 years, our unique place in the Sunshine State's conservation history, and our role in the future of conservation in the Western Hemisphere.

Friday Lunch: Paul Gray, PhD, Everglades science coordinator, will give the first talk during our welcome lunch hour. From the plume trade to the senseless slaughter of birds before the advent of the Christmas Bird Count, Dr. Gray will trace the origins of Audubon and the modern conservation movement.

Friday Banquet: During the Friday evening dinner event, Audubon Florida Executive Director Julie Wraithmell will emcee a retrospective of Audubon accomplishments in Florida.

Saturday Breakfast: On Saturday morning, National Audubon Society Chief Conservation Officer Marshall Johnson will share Audubon's ambitious Flight Plan hemispheric vision, with an engaging morning celebrating how Florida is leading the way in its implementation at the state and chapter levels!



Saturday Morning in the Grand Ballroom

Networking Breakfast | 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

Bird enthusiasts are certainly early risers. That's why we will meet bright and early Saturday morning for breakfast and networking to share ideas about issues facing chapters and conservation stakeholders.

Plenary Session | 8:30 - 10 a.m.

National Audubon Society Chief Conservation Officer Marshall Johnson will kick off the morning with insights from the ambitious, hemispheric vision of Audubon's Flight Plan, followed by Audubon Florida Executive Director Julie Wraithmell's showcase of Flight Plan wins in the Sunshine State. Finally, we will work together to brainstorm how individuals and chapters can plug into Flight Plan for future conservation initiatives.

Chapter Celebration | 10:30 a.m. - noon

We will launch into our traditional chapter awards celebration. Experience the heart and soul of the Audubon network and their successes in engaging with both traditional and new partners. Executive Director Julie Wraithmell will wrap up the event with closing remarks.

New to the Audubon Family?

With 44 Audubon chapters around the Sunshine State, you're bound to find a flock to join in your neck of the woods.

Check the website for chapter locations and contact information here: audubon.org/audubon-near-you.

Stay Informed!

Sign up to receive "The Advocate" legislative briefing and other alerts.



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Tricolored Heron.
Photo: Cynthia Barbanera-Wedel/
Audubon Photography Awards

2024 Audubon Florida Conservation Award Winners

Guy Bradley Award

Laurie Dolan

Everglades Champion

Kathy Burchett
USFWS

Special Places Award

Max Chesnes

Volunteer of the Year

Lynn & Harry
Etters

Law Enforcement Award

Lt. Jason Register

Teddy Roosevelt Award

Senator
Gayle Harrell

Philanthropist of the
Year

Merrilee & Steve
Nellis

Board Service
Recognition

David Cox

Board Service
Recognition

Heidi McCree



Black Skimmers.
Photo: Britt Brown

Audubon Assembly | 2024 Sponsors



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Photo: R J Wiley

Stop by the Corkscrew
Swamp Sanctuary
Nature Store table for
fun, nature-themed
items and
holiday gifts!



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