



SUMMER 2007

# Florida Naturalist



**AUDUBON ASSEMBLY 2007**  
Saving the Next 2 Million Acres  
NOVEMBER 2-3

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



National Audubon Society and Audubon of Florida recently released an analysis detailing the decline of 20 species of common birds based on forty years of data collected by Audubon citizen scientists during Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Surveys.

The news is alarming. Since 1967, the average population of those common birds in steepest decline fell by 68 percent; some species, including the northern bobwhite, plummeted as much as 80 percent. All 20 listed birds lost at least half their populations—in just four decades. Another key Everglades wading bird—the little blue heron—declined by 54 percent.

There is some good news in all this—not in the results of the analysis, but rather, in its methodology. These figures resulted neither from lab work nor are they the product of theoreticians. They are the result of ordinary people—you and me—looking around and quantifying what happens when we don't protect our land, water, and air. They demonstrate the voice we have as part of something bigger than ourselves. They underscore the value of groups like ours, and events like the Audubon Assembly.

This issue of the Florida Naturalist focuses on the upcoming Audubon Assembly and the issues critical to protecting our land, our water, and the birds and wildlife that depend on these healthy habitats for survival. Our November Assembly is themed “Saving the Next 2 Million Acres.” We will provide all who attend the tools so important to accomplish our mission and establish our 2008 Conservation Action Agenda on Preserving Land, Saving Water, Managing Growth, Protecting Wildlife, and Slowing Climate Change.

Without these natural lands and fresh water there will be no stopping the decline of these common birds or the quality of life for everyone, and everything, in Florida. You already are part of the solution, simply by supporting us. For that, I thank you. But please, if you can, take the next step and join us at the Assembly in November in Cocoa Beach. You'll be among friends and a part of something important. Because the future of Florida's common birds, and Florida itself, starts with a few uncommon actions by a lot of us common folks. I look forward to seeing you at this year's Assembly.



*Topping the list of common birds in decline is this Northern Bobwhite species. Photo by Ashok Khosla.*

David E. Anderson  
Executive Director, Audubon of Florida

# Lake Okeechobee and Wildlife are Winners in 2007 Legislature

Under the clouds of tax reform, the 2007 legislative session produced some wins for the environment in the areas of money for the Everglades and stronger wildlife policy. It lost ground on growth management, and a special session on property tax relief has already caused local governments to start cutting environmental programs. Audubon's strong legislative team was supported by grassroots chapter leaders, organized through the Florida Conservation Network, and by other conservation organizations, who were valuable allies on a number of key issues.



Senator Burt Saunders deserves special thanks for delivering on his promise to legislate a solution to Lake Okeechobee's stormwater runoff problem.

and sets up a planning and funding process to meet pollution cleanup and water management targets for the lake and estuaries. HB 197 creates new rules to limit polluted stormwater runoff from new development. Together with \$100 million in new funding provided in the General Appropriations Act, these two pieces of legislation move Lake Okeechobee and the estuaries much closer to ecological health.

## Stronger Rules on Coastal Armoring Protect Shore-Dwelling Wildlife

Audubon's Wildlife Policy Coordinator Julie Wraithmell scored an important legislative victory for wildlife by inserting a provision in SB 1472 to ensure that all nesting of state or federally threatened or endangered species are considered in the review of permit applications for coastal armoring. This is an important precedent establishing that not just state agencies must consider the impacts of their permits on imperiled wildlife. Seawalls and other beach structures rob sea turtles and beach nesting birds of valuable habitat.

## Bad bills that did not pass

Advocacy efforts by Audubon and its partners also helped stop a number of proposed bills that would have set back environmental protection. One to block restoration of the Ocklawaha River did not make it out of the House or the Senate. A bill to reduce state spending on alternative water supply was never given a hearing in the Senate. Audubon joined a broad coalition opposing the bill, which would have reversed years of efforts to wean public water supply utilities from using water needed for the environment. Audubon also worked to stop two troubling bills. One would have required the state to seek assumption of federal wetlands protection, which picked up several bad amendments, including one that preempted local wetlands programs. The other bill would have allowed dredging in aquatic preserves.

## Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery

Senate Bill 392 by Sen. Burt Saunders of Naples and House Bill 197 by Rep. Richard Macheck of Delray Beach provided a one-two punch for Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries. SB 392 designates the Northern Everglades

## Bad bills that passed

### Fertilizer Amendment Mars Agricultural Bill

Many Florida waters are naturally low in nutrients and can be degraded by algae blooms when high levels of nutrients are introduced. Fertilizers used in agriculture and in urban landscapes are significant sources of nutrients, which run off into lakes and streams. Rep. Bryan Nelson (R-Apopka) amended the House version of SB 1952, the Senate Commerce Committee bill, to mandate the creation of a Fertilizer Task Force. The task force is viewed as a tool to cause local governments to postpone local regulation of pollution from fertilizer.

### Transportation

HB 985 emerged from a series of worrisome transportation bills to be passed and signed by the Governor. It raises the debt cap for the turnpike enterprise from \$4.5 to \$10 billion and allows special incentives for private financing of new roads. Together these items create greater incentives for sprawl-inducing roads to nowhere. Language was also added to the bill limiting the duration of moratoria counties can place on rock mining, even if those moratoria are based on environmental concerns.

### Major Growth Management Decisions Removed from State Oversight

HB 7203 amended the strict transportation funding requirements imposed in the 2005 Growth Management Act. The bill also includes a pilot plan to remove Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) oversight from certain urban areas. Although Audubon has long urged more DCA focus outside of urban areas, this provision could be interpreted to allow Miami-Dade to more easily change its Urban Development Boundary. Despite emails sent from nearly 400 advocates in less than 24 hours, the Senate and House adopted the bad growth management amendments and passed this bill. Governor Crist signed it into law.

For more information on Audubon's advocacy efforts to protect Florida's environment visit [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org).

# The Big Picture: Managing Water for Lake Okeechobee and the Estuaries

The last few years have been tough on Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries, but there is a silver lining to the dark clouds that have besieged these ecosystems. The crisis has focused widespread, non-partisan attention on fixing the lake's problems. Unprecedented restoration initiatives are underway.

Extremely high and damaging water levels in Lake Okeechobee, with concomitant massive estuary dumps during 2004 and 2005, gave way to the lowest water level ever recorded in May 2007, leading to severe water rationing. Record levels of phosphorus in-flows over the past decade have contributed to record-breaking water quality problems, causing severe impacts to plant, insect, fish, and bird communities in the lake. Harmful algae blooms in the estuaries were another result. Now the Hoover Dike, which surrounds the lake, has been declared unsafe at deep water levels. The agencies are contemplating managing for lower water levels to avoid a breach, but that might cause further harm to the lake's health.

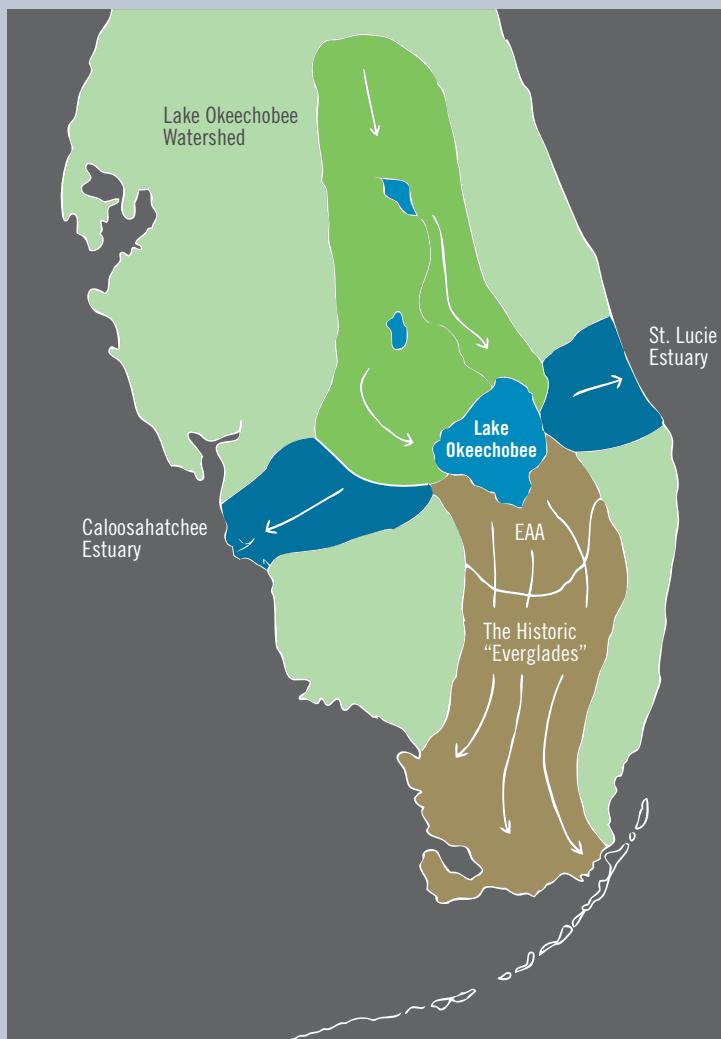
The most urgent short-term tasks are implementing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers water management plan, called the "Regulation Schedule," and restoring the integrity of the Hoover Dike, which the Corps is working on now. How quickly the dike can be repaired to full service depends on Congressional funding, and Audubon is working to accelerate funding.

The second great initiative is the recently-passed "Northern Everglades" legislation, which includes record-level funding for Okeechobee restoration projects. The program casts its net over the estuaries by funding new projects and planning St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee watersheds.

As these initiatives move forward, it will be critical to recalculate water storage and treatment needs upstream of Lake Okeechobee. Florida appears to have entered a volatile weather pattern of both wetter- and drier-than-normal years, making water management more difficult. Restoring reasonable control over the water levels will require storing much more water in the watershed during wet seasons, to avoid excessively high water, and moving it through the lake during dry seasons to prevent excessively low water. Water managed in this way

also can be cleaned before it enters the lake. Unfortunately, even with these increased efforts, the lake's problems are so severe that it will be decades before enough projects can be funded and implemented to turn things around.

As Audubon of Florida works to implement longer-term efforts, the present drought has allowed the lake's beleaguered plant communities to begin re-growing. This, it is hoped, will improve the future of this great lake.





## FLORIDA JOINS NATIONWIDE LEADERS TO TACKLE GLOBAL WARMING

*Photo by R. J. Wiley*

Governor Charlie Crist catapulted Florida into the national leadership on global climate change in July, joining California and northeastern states, by signing three executive orders and international partnership agreements with the United Kingdom and Germany.

Audubon of Florida has long advocated for action on global warming and a clean energy policy, and applauded Governor Crist for addressing this critical issue during the Florida Summit on Global Climate Change held July 12 and 13 in Miami.

Calling global climate change "one of the most important issues facing the State of Florida this century," the executive orders said, "with nearly 1,350 miles of coastline and a majority of citizens living near that coastline, Florida is more vulnerable to rising ocean levels and violent weather than any other state."

The Climate Summit culminated with Governor Crist signing executive orders that focus on renewable energy, conservation and energy efficiency, as well as fuel efficiency, bio-fuels and ethanol to achieve aggressive reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The orders focus on actions

to reduce emissions by state agencies and its transportation fleet; to set targets for Florida to reduce GHG emissions; and to establish an Action Team on Energy and Climate Change.

Partnership Agreements were also signed with the United Kingdom and Germany to strengthen and extend the international agreement to reduce GHG emissions, known as the Kyoto Protocol, beyond 2012. These agreements also aim to increase trade in climate-friendly technologies, improve market-based incentives to reduce GHGs, and increase renewable energy sources, as well as to expand scientific knowledge and exchange data and expertise between Florida and the two countries.

These executive orders will require rulemaking and some legislative changes. Audubon of Florida will work throughout these processes to ensure the visionary elements of the Governor's orders are captured in Florida laws and regulations.



## Conserving Natural Florida *Through Land Use*

Recently Florida's newspapers published the alarming prediction that 36 million people would be living in the state by 2060. Maps showed growth areas splashed in red across the state like cancerous tumors.

Audubon and other land conservation advocates have been working together to create an alternate vision of the future. The frontline has been a campaign to accelerate and double the state's Florida Forever land acquisition program. Other strategies to harness growth to help pay for conservation also show promise.

Florida's successful efforts to manage growth, in part by setting aside public lands, have been supported by a succession of state leaders over the years. Although the Legislature routinely provides funds, the Florida Forever program and related efforts to buy land for Everglades restoration are falling short. Population growth, development, and soaring land costs are putting pressure on environmental lands still in private hands.

That more must be done to implement and accelerate traditional and innovative tools for land conservation is a growing consensus. During the 2007

legislative session Audubon worked with the Florida Forever Coalition to urge doubling the state's land buying program to \$600 million per year. With tax revenues sagging, the Legislature appropriated \$300 million for Florida Forever, the amount spent annually for a decade. (Only \$105 million goes for conservation lands, where there is a backlog of two million acres worth nearly \$9 billion.)

Clearly, proponents of preserving large intact ecosystems (landscapes) need improved strategies. Significant tracts of privately-owned, undeveloped

land in Florida are in play, and long-standing environmental goals depend on successful efforts to offset division and development of acreage that currently provides water resource benefits and wildlife habitat.

### Land Conservation Proposals

**Accelerating Florida Forever.** The \$300 million program provides only \$105 million a year for outright land conservation. Funds also go to parks and water projects.

**Replacing Florida Forever.** Land conservation advocates point to a \$10 billion backlog in state conservation lands, with two million acres awaiting state action. A proposal to increase the program to \$1 billion a year was ignored by the 2007 Legislature.

**Accelerating or Increasing the Save Our Everglades Program.** The state's fund to buy land for Everglades restoration has run headlong into rising land prices, and competition from developers and land speculators. Newly recognized challenges to Lake Okeechobee and estuary recovery are placing demands on the Everglades land protection programs.

**Funding the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act.** A law passed five years ago to allow the state to pay for easements on working ranch and timber lands has gone unused.

**Stimulating New Local Land Conservation Programs.** Dozens of local governments have approved taxes and/or bonds to pay for land conservation programs. But these land preservation programs, often leveraging state conservation funds, may be doomed by the Legislature's aggressive rollback of local taxes.

### An Alternative: Using Changes in Land Use Plans to Conserve Land

Florida's counties and cities make 10,000 changes a year to local land use plans, usually increasing density to benefit landowners with development plans, and often with scant regard for the impact on water and habitat. But significant examples exist in which landowners have agreed to set aside natural areas, usually in exchange for more advantageous development plans.

Conservationists have begun to advance strategies that take advantage of landowners' willingness to conserve large tracts in exchange for increased development rights. Along with the above-mentioned strategies to use public funds, these new approaches—using land-use decisions to leverage conservation—have real promise for preventing the extreme effects of predicted population growth and sprawl.

Back to the Florida-in-50-years map splashed with images of growth: What would the map look like if population increase were to be accommodated differently? What if human populations were accommodated in compact areas so that expanses of natural habitat could be conserved?

Cities need not sprawl beyond their current boundaries. Much of Florida's projected population growth could take place through the existing strategy of infill, entitled areas adjacent to existing boundaries, and a series of new compact cities.

### Reusing Urban Landscapes.

One solution is to redesign existing developed areas to accommodate more people, increase green spaces, and retrofit storm water facilities to recreate natural features.

**Moving the Line/Holding the Line.** Audubon advocates in Osceola County have asked the county to not allow new subdivisions unless densities are purchased and transferred from rural landowners.

**New Towns.** Several proposals for new, smart growth cities will preserve hundreds of thousands of acres of ranches, forests and habitat.

### Conservation Through Land Use

With large areas of Florida's important conservation lands still held by families or corporations, it makes sense to come up with conservation strategies now. When owners move on or business strategies change, as has happened with many ranch and timberlands, large tracts are often subdivided into smaller parcels, leading to rural sprawl and loss of ecological connections and values.

Florida's current growth management processes offer large landowners few viable paths other than breaking up their land for sale. Public land acquisition is still the best option for conserving habitat, but it is limited by lack of funds for purchase and management. That is why most conservationists are looking at new ways to achieve our long-term goal, which is to preserve as much of natural Florida as is necessary for birds and wildlife and, of course, people.

# SAVE OUR SWAMP

*Audubon's work to protect wetlands, water, wood storks and wildlife*



Audubon of Florida's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary hosts America's most important wood stork rookery and is integrally connected to a larger system of wetlands spanning through the adjacent Cocohatchee Slough to Wiggins Pass Estuary, as well as the 60,000 acres of Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) in southeast Lee and northern Collier Counties. Destroying one part of this system has severe implications for the rest of these natural lands, the wildlife, such as wood storks, and the quality and quantity of our water, which we all depend upon for survival.

This is why it is so important to save and restore Cocohatchee Slough, and why Audubon and our Cocohatchee Slough Coalition partners are so motivated to use every tool available to block efforts to turn more than 1,100 acres of this important wood stork wetland habitat into thousands of houses and at least four golf courses. Audubon and its partners are bringing litigation challenges against the development proposals by Mirasol, and the adjacent projects, Terafina (also called Saturnia Falls), and Parklands-Collier. The coalition is also focusing on reforming the permitting process in Southwest Florida to avoid these assaults in the future.

At the core of our defense is a difference of opinion about the Slough's viability as wood stork foraging territory and its wetlands' value for water. Jason Lauritsen, Audubon's science coordinator at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, has documented that, despite the presence of dense exotic plant species, wood storks are foraging successfully in sections of Cocohatchee

Slough that are currently targeted for development, and are consuming prey offsite that were spawned in the exotics-laden wetlands.

Lauritsen's findings contradict those of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which declared that the storks neither need nor use the 650 acres of wetlands in question. They even said the Mirasol project would be a benefit for wood storks.

On May 11, 2007, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers indicated its approval and issuance of a federal wetland destruction permit for the Mirasol project, which would effectively destroy 650 acres of wetlands and wood stork habitat. Having exhausted other avenues, Audubon of Florida and its Coalition partners, the Florida and National Wildlife Federations, Collier County Audubon Society, and Conservancy of Southwest Florida, sent a warning to the Corps that it would sue over the permit's impacts on endangered species, water quality, and wetlands. The Corps then delayed issuing the federal permit until an administrative judge could rule on a separate Coalition legal challenge to Mirasol's state permit; the ruling could occur by early August.

To avoid similar permit assaults on public resources, Audubon and its partners are pursuing a campaign to reform the permitting process in Southwest Florida. "The permitting assertions these agencies currently make—that digging ditches and lakes is better than preserving and restoring wetlands, that exotics irreparably destroy all wetland values—must be established as false," said Brad Cornell, Audubon of Florida's Big Cypress Ecosystem policy associate. "Indeed, our Herculean task to fix the Everglades is based on the knowledge that wetland and habitat restoration is possible and necessary for the long term sustainability of these ecosystems and the people of Southwest Florida."

Audubon and its coalition partners are committed to protecting Florida's water, wetlands, wood storks, and wildlife. And with help from dedicated people like you, we are confident that we will Save Our Swamp, and our quality of life. For more information, visit [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org).

## HOST ORCHID THRILLS VISITORS AT CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY.



In July this spectacular cluster of rare ghost orchids was spotted in Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, high on a bald cypress about 150 feet from the boardwalk. The ten showy blossoms (three is typical) indicate a very robust plant that may be 30 years old, according to sanctuary director Ed Carlson, who said earlier years' blooms were probably shielded from view by branches.

Cuba and Southwest Florida are the only places *Polystachya lindenii* grows, and the plant's short, erratic blooming period makes this display at Corkscrew all the more electrifying. Susan Orlean's book nonfiction book "The Orchid Thief" and the movie "Adaptation" featured the ghost orchid. This is one of many rare and endangered species whose habitats are protected by Audubon of Florida's work in Southwest Florida.

*Photo of Ghost Orchid in Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary by R. J. Wiley  
www.rjwileyphoto.com*



## Mark Kraus Moves to The Everglades Foundation

Mark Kraus, Ph.D., Audubon of Florida's deputy state director, has been named vice president/chief operating officer of The Everglades Foundation, Inc. "Although I'm leaving the Audubon nest, I'm not going far. I am remaining right here in southern Florida, and will continue to work on Everglades Restoration initiatives," said Kraus, who joined Audubon eleven years ago as director of restoration science.

The Everglades Foundation, whose offices are in southern Miami-Dade County, is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to advancing an understanding of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades watershed and its irreplaceable environmental and economic value. It directs 100 percent of donations to Everglades restoration efforts, including those carried out by Audubon of Florida.

"It is always hard to see a trusted colleague leave," said David Anderson, Audubon of Florida's executive director. "But I am pleased that Mark will continue to focus attention on that which brought him and his family to Florida—restoration of the Everglades."

Among Kraus' accomplishments at Audubon were leading the team in review and comment on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and managing the successful effort to stop construction of a commercial airport at the former Homestead Air Force Base. As deputy state director since 1999, Kraus helped craft the strategic alliance with the National Audubon Society, and at various times was called on to handle duties ranging from press liaison to grant writer to major gifts officer. His dedication was recognized with two Individual and three Team ACE Awards, Audubon's award for excellence.

"We are all very sad to lose Mark, while at the same time, happy for his success and grateful that his considerable talents will continue to benefit the wildlife and people of Florida," Anderson said.

## Get Involved.

### Join the Florida Conservation Network.

Go to <http://audubonaction.org/florida> to join Audubon's Florida Conservation Network (FCN). Get weekly updates on environmental issues and tips on making your voice heard.

#### Please Support Audubon of Florida

Visit [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org) and click on Donate to support Audubon of Florida's initiatives or mail your contribution to Audubon of Florida, 444 Brickell Avenue, Suite 850, Miami FL 33131



**Donate**

Financial information about National Audubon Society can be obtained by writing to us at 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003 or as stated below: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY FLORIDA REGISTRATION # CH281: A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

# Saving the Next 2 Million Acres

## HELP SET OUR CONSERVATION PRIORITIES FOR 2008

Be part of Audubon's century-long tradition of conservation work. While Audubon of Florida works closely with National Audubon to address national issues that include Everglades restoration funding and climate change policy, the 43 Florida chapters guide responses to local and regional issues.

Our **statewide efforts** to protect the environment for the benefit of birds and wildlife and for people focus on Land Conservation, Water Resources, Wildlife Protection, Growth Management, Transportation, and Climate Change.

Audubon's **regional conservation priorities** are evolving with plans developed by six chapter-led regional conservation committees. These are Everglades Ecosystem, Big Cypress Ecosystem, Gulf Coastal Habitats, Central Florida Ecosystems, Northeast Florida Coastal Habitats, and Northwest Florida.

Volunteer leaders and staff use the resolutions and regional plans to guide advocacy campaigns and develop local conservation projects, and we make it a priority to work closely with other environmental organizations. Our actions may take the form of public hearings, legislative lobbying, grassroots mobilization, news media outreach, and even litigation. Audubon's work is distinguished by a reliance on the advice of our science staff, on our professionalism, and listening to the experience of our member-leaders.

The preliminary Florida conservation action agenda, posted at [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org), reflects discussions already held at chapter and regional levels. **Plan to join us at the Audubon Assembly** to finalize these items for formal recommendation and approval by Audubon of Florida's Board of Directors at its November 3 annual meeting.

### Register for Assembly. Book hotel separately.

*Conference costs are underwritten by Audubon of Florida to keep participants' costs to a minimum.*

All-inclusive Assembly package of programs, workshops, receptions, talks, meals, and field trips is only **\$115/person through October 2**. After 10/2/07, registration cost is \$125/person.

Use the form provided, download one at [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org), or register online. Request forms by mail or fax from Lisa Reichert 305-371-6399 ext.120, or email [lreichert@audubon.org](mailto:lreichert@audubon.org). Visit [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org) for DETAILS about Programs and Field Trips.

*"The most fun learning experience I've had in years."*

## Field Trips and Other COOL STUFF

### Thursday, Nov. 1

**Field trip** to Viera Wetlands (2-4 p.m.)

**Reception** with cash bar (5:30-7:30 p.m.)

**Movie Who Killed the Electric Car?**

(8-10 p.m.)

### Friday, Nov. 2

**Field trips** to Jetty Park/Canaveral Locks or Merritt Island NWR (both 7-11:45 a.m.)

**Special Workshop:** Community Stewards for Climate Change (10:30 a.m.-12) Calculating your carbon footprint. Taking steps toward living a carbon-neutral life. Engaging your community for change. Audubon's plan for action.

### Saturday, Nov. 3

**Field trips** to Lori Wilson Park (7:30 a.m.), Florida Solar Energy Center or Pine Island (both 8:30-11:15 a.m.)

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (2:00)

Followed immediately by Audubon of Florida Board of Directors meeting.

**Kayaking Trip** around 1,000 Islands/Banana River Lagoon (2-4:30 p.m.) \$20 includes equipment. Pay cash/check directly to Spacecoastkayaking.

**Deadline for field trip reservations—October 26.**

Except for kayaking, field trips are FREE with Assembly registration. **Reservations are required** for all field trips. Departure is from Hotel via carpools (to be arranged). Don't forget sunscreen, hat and binoculars.

**Field trips coordinated by Space Coast Audubon Society. See trip details at [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org)**

**NEW FOR 2007 REGISTER ONLINE**

# Audubon Assembly 2007: Noon to Noon.

## FRIDAY, NOV. 2

Noon	Welcome Lunch - <i>Rally Together to Save Habitat</i>
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.	LEARNING SESSIONS - GROUP ONE <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Land Acquisition at the State and Local Level - <i>Green Florida/Blue Florida</i></li><li>• Carbon Capture in Florida's Forests - <i>Stopping Climate Change, Saving Land</i></li><li>• Fresh Water for the Everglades and Florida Bay - <i>Reserving Water to Preserve an Ecosystem</i></li></ul>
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Networking
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	LEARNING SESSIONS - GROUP TWO <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conservation through Land Use Decisions - <i>Saving Three Acres for Every Acre That Is Developed</i></li><li>• Rising Tides and Coastal Habitats - <i>Meeting the Wildlife Challenges of Beach Management and Armoring</i></li><li>• Winged Messengers for Conservation - <i>Telling the Story with Eagles, Terns, and Wading Birds</i></li></ul>
6:00 p.m.	Happy Hour – <i>Birders Dip Their Beaks</i>
7:00 p.m.	Conservation Awards Banquet – <i>Walking the Walk</i> Guest Speaker – <b>Carl Hiaasen</b> , Author, Syndicated Columnist and True Floridian (invited) <b>EVENING EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR \$40, WITH RESERVATIONS BY OCT. 29.</b>

## SATURDAY, NOV. 3

8:00 a.m.	Chapter Presidents' Breakfast
9:30 a.m.	Rally for Conservation – <i>Renewing Audubon's Action Agenda for 2008</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preserving Land</li><li>• Saving Water</li><li>• Managing Growth</li><li>• Protecting Wildlife</li><li>• Slowing Climate Change</li></ul>
Noon	Lunch – <i>Chapter Awards</i>

**Scheduled to appear:**  
**Carl Hiaasen**

*"Inspiring to hear what chapters are doing... took lots of ideas back to my group."*

AT [WWW.AUDUBONOFFLORIDA.ORG](http://WWW.AUDUBONOFFLORIDA.ORG)

## HOTEL Information

Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront

1550 N. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

## HOTEL Reservations

Book now for special rates:

800-526-2609 Audubon code: AOF

## HOTEL Rates

**Audubon Assembly Rate: \$119/night** (Ask for "special Audubon Assembly rate")

Cut-off date for Special Room Rates is October 2, 2007. After 10/2/07, rooms will be charged at standard rates. No exceptions.

**Upgrades to beachfront accommodations available at additional cost:**

Concierge level - \$139

Oceanfront - \$219

Junior Suite - \$229

## VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

Please assist Audubon staff by volunteering a few hours during this exciting weekend. Contact jsulek@audubon.org with your availability.

## CHAPTER EXHIBITS

Exhibit space at Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront is offered to Chapters.

Cost is free but space is limited. Please contact Jacqui Sulek, Chapter Coordinator, at 850-251-1297 or jsulek@audubon.org by October 22, 2007.

## CASUAL ATTIRE

Meeting rooms tend to be cool, so bring a sweater or jacket to sessions. Field trips will be warm, so don't forget sunscreen, hat, and plenty of liquids. The beach is right out the back door, so bring your bathing suit, towel and binoculars!

## CONFERENCE SIGN-IN AND REGISTRATION

Thursday 3 - 5:30 p.m., Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - noon.

Chapter exhibits will be on display Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - noon.

## REGISTER NOW FOR AUDUBON ASSEMBLY 2007

**Friday reception/awards banquet is open to the public for \$40/per person, with reservations by Oct. 29. This event is included in full registration package**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest/First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

*Hotel reservations are not included in Registration. Book rooms directly with Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront 1-800-526-2609.*

Special dietary needs \_\_\_\_\_

### Registration Fee - Per Person

All-inclusive package includes Thursday beachside reception, Friday lunch and dinner, Saturday lunch, and all workshops and programs.

REFUND POLICY: Up to 30 days prior - full refund; 10 or more days prior - \$50 refund. No refunds within 10 days of Assembly.

\$115 Early bird registration (up to Oct. 2)  \$125 after Oct. 2

Friday Reception and Awards Banquet (only) @ \$40/per person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Already included in registration package).

*Hotel reservations are not included in Registration. Book rooms directly with Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront 1-800-526-2609.*

**TOTAL DUE \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to Audubon of Florida. Charge my  VISA  Mastercard in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO AUDUBON OF FLORIDA, 444 BRICKELL AVE., # 850, MIAMI, FL 33131, FAX TO 305-371-6398 OR REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.AUDUBONOFFLORIDA.ORG**

**FIELD TRIPS. You must reserve by October 22 for ALL trips.**

No.of People

No.of People

- Viera Wetlands / Thursday 2-4 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jetty Park/Canaveral / Friday 7-11:45 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Merritt Island NWR / Friday 7-11:45 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lori Wilson Park / Saturday 7:30 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_

- Pine Island / Saturday 8:30-11:15 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Solar Energy Center Tour / Saturday 8:30-11:15 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Kayaking / Saturday 2-4:30 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$20 payable to Spacecoastkayaking)

## MAKE YOUR BACKYARD WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY with Free Habitat Guide



Audubon Center for Birds of Prey is offering a Landscape Habitat Guide that shows Florida residents ways to use native plants to attract and support wildlife while reducing lawn areas and minimizing the use of pesticides. The free guide's tips for creating green sites are based on the Center's own layout and plantings, although the information applies to all landscapes—large or small, home or business.

The printing and a series of programs at the Center based on concepts in the guide were made possible through a generous grant from Progress Energy. The Landscape Habitat Guide incorporates Progress Energy's "Know Where you Grow" campaign to educate consumers about its tree trimming practices and about trees that are suitable for planting near power lines. Terry Kane Orlando (TKO) donated the graphic design. To request a free guide, call the Center at 407-644-0190.



*Photo by Susie Warren*

## A SPECIAL STAR

Each day it is a privilege to work with Florida's raptors—to get to know each and every species with all their different personalities and character traits.

It's an honor to share these fabulous birds with visitors and program participants at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey. People's eyes shine with excitement as they meet raptors up close and personal, and their questions and comments reveal the absolute awe they feel at interacting with these creatures.

Audubon Ambassadors, the Center's glove-trained raptors personally enhance the lives of many humans. A red tailed hawk called Ladyhawke was one bird that touched thousands of hearts throughout her life, which came to a natural end in May 2007. Hardly a week would pass without Audubon Center visitors being moved to tears when they met Ladyhawke. Many have declared that the 1985 Universal Studios film in which she was featured (with Michelle Pfeiffer and Matthew Broderick) is their favorite movie.

Ladyhawke arrived at the Center in 2000 after a long career in the bird show at Universal Studios under the stage name Spike II. She touched lives, thousands of them, and she lives on in our memories and in our hearts.

The Center is requesting memorial adoptions in honor of Ladyhawke. Contributions will support the ambassador birds residing at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, and the education and outreach programs that inspire so many.

Visit [www.audubonofflorida.org/who\\_centers\\_CBOP\\_adoptabird.html](http://www.audubonofflorida.org/who_centers_CBOP_adoptabird.html) or call the Center 407-644-0190 to adopt a bird or make a donation in Ladyhawke's memory.

## Celebrate Chapters' Accomplishments— Award Nominations are due by September 15

Outstanding achievements by Audubon of Florida's chapters will be recognized on Saturday, November 3, during an awards luncheon at the Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront. The always-inspiring ceremony has become, for many, the grand finale of each Audubon Assembly.

Award categories are: chapter of the year, best conservation project, best membership recruitment program, best education program, and best chapter exhibit at the 2007 Assembly. To be considered for an award on November 3, nominations and required back-up information must be received no later than Saturday, September 15.

To nominate your own or another chapter, submit a one- or two-page document supporting the nomination to Jacqui Sulek. Chapter officers have already received details about the key factors on which entries will be judged and the required reports that must be on file, but everyone is encouraged to submit.

For a copy of the guidelines and full details, contact  
Jacqui Sulek, Chapters Coordinator  
Audubon of Florida,  
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 103  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
Email [jsulek@audubon.org](mailto:jsulek@audubon.org) or call 850-251-1297



Seminole Audubon Society is a premier volunteer-led environmental organization, and this was recognized recently in conjunction with National Volunteer Week in Central Florida. Seminole's logo was chosen and is featured prominently on the LYNX 2007-2008 Public Service Bus, which rotates daily among service routes in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

Faith Jones, president of Seminole Audubon Society, noted that having the chapter's logo on a bus "is a great way for us to show our support for public transportation." Seminole's logo was among twelve selected from Central Florida non-profits and unveiled in April. The display calls attention to the estimated 65 million Americans who donate time to address community needs, and will be visible on the public bus for one year.

*Pictured (left to right) are LYNX CEO Linda Watson, SAS president Faith Jones, and Audubon of Florida board member Neta Villalobos-Bell.*

## YOUR BENEFICIARIES There are more of them than you realize!



At Audubon, we have always understood the vital connection between people and nature.

**By including a bequest to Audubon in your will, you can help ensure a brighter future for both.**

Make your bequest by asking your lawyer to use the following language in your will:

I bequeath to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit organization located at 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, \_\_\_\_\_% of my residuary estate for the benefit of Audubon of Florida.



To learn more, call for a free brochure. Wayne Mones, Vice President, Planned giving, National Audubon Society, 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, 212-979-3033. [www.plannedgifts@audubon.org](http://www.plannedgifts@audubon.org)

## Audubon Welcomes New Staff



David Skipp, Chief Development Officer

Audubon of Florida is pleased to welcome David Skipp, Chief Development Officer, based in the Miami office. Skipp brings twenty years of fundraising and organizational development experience spanning 21 countries and five states. Skipp's love for South Florida's environment stems from having grown up on a sailboat on Biscayne Bay. He spent every free moment in a skiff, exploring the mangrove creeks, flats and reefs of

the Florida Keys, the Everglades, the Bahamas and the Caribbean. Please join Audubon in welcoming David. He can be reached at [dskipp@audubon.org](mailto:dskipp@audubon.org).



Jacqueline M. Cohen, Everglades Policy Associate

Audubon of Florida welcomes Jacquie Cohen as its new Everglades Policy Associate, based in the Miami office. She earned a J.D. from the University of Miami School of Law and an M.A. in Marine Affairs and Policy from the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. Cohen, who was admitted to the Florida Bar in October 2006, is taking a leadership role to advance Everglades restoration and water policy. Cohen was born and raised in New York City where she was a vice president at Sotheby's, Inc. before moving to Miami four years ago to study law and marine policy. "I am elated by collaborating with people who are as passionate about their work as those at Audubon. I look forward to contributing to Everglades restoration and conservation." She can be reached at [jcohen@audubon.org](mailto:jcohen@audubon.org).

## Audubon of Florida Staff

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(305) 289-9988 (305) 289-0073 Fax

**Audubon Center for Birds of Prey**  
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100 Riverwood Circle  
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*Lake Okeechobee Watershed*

**REGISTER FOR ASSEMBLY ONLINE AT [www.audubonofflorida.com](http://www.audubonofflorida.com)**



## Notice of Annual Meeting of the membership of The Florida Audubon Society

Pursuant to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, notice is hereby given that the Annual Membership Meeting of the Florida Audubon Society will be held at the Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 3, 2007, in conjunction with the Annual Assembly of Audubon of Florida being held there November 2 - 3, 2007. The meeting agenda will be to receive a financial report and hear any comments of the membership to the Board of Directors. A Meeting of the Board will follow immediately upon the conclusion of the Membership Meeting.

**Audubon's Mission** *To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.*



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