



SUMMER/FALL 2009

Florida Naturalist

**2009 AUDUBON
ASSEMBLY
AND SPECIAL
KICK-OFF DIALOGUE
ON COASTAL
CONSERVATION AND
CLIMATE CHANGE.
OCTOBER 23-24**



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Nothing defines Florida as well as our remarkable coastal areas. The atlas says that Florida has 1,197 miles of coastline, but that number masks the variety and diversity of these special places, from the white dunes of the Panhandle to the rocky shores of the Keys. The number is higher when you add tidal areas such as the landward sides of barrier islands.

Coastal areas are special to me because they are great places for bird watching. Whether picking out migrating hawks or spotting warblers in a maritime hammock, I know I am going to be treated to lots of bird species. Every generalization belies the random uniqueness of our coasts, and each distinctive part is remarkable in its own way.

Whether your favorite natural place in Florida has a view of the sun rising or the sun setting, it is special because of what you experienced. The fish you caught, the bird you saw, the people you were with, the smell of the air—these details bind us to the thousands of beautiful places where land meets water. We call this collective experience—of nature, time, and space—Florida. And Florida really is as much an experience as a place. This is nowhere truer than along our coasts.

We must all think about Florida's coasts as an experience, because they are changing. The changes are not just winter moving into spring. Our changing climate is altering Florida's coasts and impacting the species that depend on these habitats. Immediate changes, such as the northeaster that stripped away so many Atlantic beaches earlier this year, are coupled with long-term sea level rise that will impact beaches, salt marshes, myriad coastal habitats and the birds that depend on them.

Audubon is asking the question that must be answered by science, policy, and thoughtful action. How do we adapt to a changing coastline that both provides habitat for numerous important species and hosts a built environment worth hundreds of billions of dollars?

I invite you to join me at the 2009 Audubon Assembly on October 23 and 24 in St. Petersburg where this question and others will be discussed by experts, policy makers, scientists and concerned conservation leaders. The answers ultimately will come from those of us who value every changing mile our state's shoreline.

David Anderson
Executive Director, Audubon of Florida

AUDUBON'S RESOLVE REMAINS FIRM

Despite a Legislative Session that was Tough on the Environment



Bald eagle by R.J. Wiley

Florida's 2009 legislative session marked the first session since 1990 that no bonds were approved for public lands preservation. However, pressure from Audubon's grassroots advocates got legislators to defend long-standing environmental protections including prohibitions on nearshore oil drilling, and even to make some improvements in Florida's environmental policies. Audubon staff is proud to have helped draft a bill to implement Amendment Four, which provides tax relief for conservation lands. On the downside, state land management funds were cut to the bone, and only \$50 million was provided for the Everglades.

GOOD BILLS THAT PASSED

Conservation Tax Loophole Fix - SB 2430 Sen. Al Lawson (D-Tallahassee)
By closing a corporate tax loophole, the bill will increase revenue to protect the state's bond rating, thus ensuring that Florida Forever funds appropriated for the current fiscal year can be spent.

Seagrass and Coral Reef Protections - HB 1423 Rep. Baxter Troutman (R-Winter Haven)
This legislation will better protect seagrass in aquatic preserves from propeller scarring, and provides penalties for damage done to Florida's coral reefs by vessels.

Conservation Lands – Amendment Four Implementation - HB 7157 House Finance and Tax Council and Sen. Thad Altman.
The final bill resulted from a session-long push to create policies to reward landowners for conservation stewardship with reduced property taxes.

GOOD BILLS THAT DIDN'T MAKE IT

Springs Legislation - SB 274 Sen. Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs)
Despite substantial public support, springs protection legislation failed to pass due to objections prompted by the septic tank industry.

Renewable/Clean Energy Standards - SB 1154 Sen. Jim King (R-Jacksonville)
This adequate renewable energy bill would have reached a 20 percent goal only by including nuclear energy, called a "clean" energy source by proponents because it emits no greenhouse gases. The modest proposal nevertheless was shunned by the House in favor of oil drilling as a state energy policy.

BAD BILLS THAT PASSED

Growth Management - SB 360 Sen. Mike Bennett (R-Bradenton)
Makes it easier for counties and cities to let developers bypass reviews of large projects, and allows counties and cities set growth boundaries without thorough state review.

HB 73 Rep. Robert Schenck (R-Spring Hill)
This bill shortens to 45 days (from 90 days) the timetable for decisions on environmental permits.

Reducing Public Participation on Water Permits - SB 2080
This bill, supported by Audubon in an earlier version, was amended in its last days on the floor to delegate to district executive directors decisions on permitting that previously were made by governing boards of water management districts.

Airports and Wildlife - HB 1065 Rep. Scott Plakon (R-Longwood)
Makes it easier for airports to abuse their authority over wildlife in the name of public safety.

BAD BILLS THAT WERE DEFEATED

Nearshore Oil Drilling - HB 1219 Rep. Charles Van Zant (R-Palatka)
Despite a full court press from the Texas oil lobby, this bill was never taken up in the Senate.

Public Interest End-run on Wetlands - HB 1349 Rep. Jimmy Patronis (R-Panama City)
Allows engineering consultants to waive environmental review of wetland permit applications.

Photo by Christina Evans

Oil drilling threats trigger campaign to *Protect Florida's Beaches*

Public opposition to nearshore oil drilling was so intense that Florida's Senate refused to take up a proposal offered late in the 2009 legislative session by lobbyists for Texas oil companies. But those favoring the bill declared their intention to push for 2010 passage of legislation that would allow oil and gas drilling in Florida's nearshore waters.

To head off this assault on Florida's beaches, nearshore waters, and coastal economy, Audubon is joining with other organizations in a Campaign to Protect Florida's Beaches. The initiative, which coincides with two of Audubon's priorities—Coastal Conservation and Climate Change—is designed to mobilize public support for protecting Florida's coastal waters.

Florida's tourist-based coastal economy generates an estimated \$60 billion in annual economic activity. The proposed oil and gas revenues would amount to only about \$1 billion a year. At a moment when Florida must resolve its climate and energy challenges by moving aggressively to replace oil-based fuels with clean energy, it makes little sense to increase our dependence on oil. Although the oil and gas industries claim that drilling is now foolproof, who can forget images of seabirds coated with oil, and the lingering impacts to shores in states that allow drilling?

Audubon invites its members and others to share their views and perspectives on gas and oil drilling by going to audubonnews.org. Get news about energy and climate issues by signing up to receive Florida Climate Action News at <http://audubonaction.org/florida/join.html>.



Photo by Arby Reed



AMERICA MOVES CLOSER TO CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Audubon of Florida and the national Audubon family have worked hard over the past couple of years to advocate for comprehensive climate legislation to reduce global warming pollution and protect birds and ecosystems from the worst impacts of this serious problem.

In June, we cheered when the House of Representatives narrowly passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES—HR 2424) and Audubon, with your support, is gearing up to call on senators Mel Martinez and Bill Nelson to support and strengthen climate legislation as it moves into the Senate later this year.

By addressing the issues of climate change and energy independence, we can protect our communities and the environment, revitalize the country's faltering economy, create millions of new jobs, and build the clean energy economy of the future. The ACES Act is a major step toward achieving a healthier and more resilient environment and economy.

Highlights of the ACES Act

The ACES Act requires power plants, oil companies, and other polluting industries to clean up and reduce global warming pollution.

- It will reduce U.S. emissions by 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020, 42 percent by 2030, and 83 percent by 2050.
- A separate program provides funding for international efforts to reduce tropical deforestation, with a goal of cutting emissions an additional 10 percent by 2020.

The bill establishes a combined national renewable electricity and energy efficiency standard of 20 percent by 2020. At least one quarter of the requirement can be met through energy efficiency improvements. States also have the ability to raise the efficiency portion to two-fifths of the standard.

ACES provides critically important funding to help natural systems adapt and respond to the enormous threats posed by global warming. Specific restoration efforts, like that underway for the Everglades, would benefit significantly from this Act.

- It provides an average of \$1.7 billion during the efforts' first 20 years for a variety of programs at national, state, and local level for wildlife adaptation and safeguarding natural resources.
- Longstanding, proven programs for wildlife conservation, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge System, and Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, would receive funding.

ACES provides states with billions of dollars in new funding from the sale of pollution allowances on an annual basis. These would be used to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy in every part of the nation and in all communities.

ACES includes several important programs to save oil.

- Promotes the next generation of clean and efficient vehicles.
- Supports the development of smarter transportation plans.
- Reduces global warming pollution from heavy trucks, construction equipment, trains, and airplanes.

ACES delivers clean energy that is affordable and helps protect consumers across all income groups.

- 15 percent of the revenues gained from selling pollution allowances are dedicated to protecting low income consumers.
- Electric and natural gas distribution companies are required to utilize distributed allowances in a manner that benefits their customers.
- In the latter years of the program, more revenues are provided for consumer rebates as the free allocation of pollution allowances is phased out.

GOOD NEWS FOR FLORIDA BAY

SPOONBILL RESPONSE INDICATES RESTORATION IS POSSIBLE

Florida Bay's roseate spoonbill population is an indicator of the health of the southern Everglades and a measure of how water management and restoration efforts are achieving ecological benefits. Audubon scientists have studied this population of spoonbills since the discovery of five nests by Audubon wardens in 1935. That year marked the re-colonization of Florida by this spectacularly-colored species following the devastating plume-hunting era. Critical information gained by Audubon scientists has determined what helps and hurts spoonbill's ability to thrive in their natural habitat.

Roseate spoonbill nest numbers in Florida Bay during the past two seasons has been the poorest on record since the 1960s. Although a collapse seemed imminent, complete nesting failures have been avoided, due in part to Audubon's

collaboration with water managers to improve the timing of water flows from the lower C-111 canal system. Along with favorable weather conditions, this collaborative process has allowed wetland conditions in the spoonbill's foraging habitat to more closely mimic the natural wet and dry cycles that coincide with wading bird nesting.

Audubon will continue efforts to influence and collaborate with local, state and federal decision-makers so all can learn from our unique scientific expertise. Audubon has been a vocal proponent for operating the first phase of the C-111 Spreader Canal project for maximum ecological benefit. This canal system in southern Miami-Dade County has contributed to the ecological decline of Florida Bay by changing natural water flow into the bay and surrounding wetlands. That made restoring the area's flows to better mimic natural conditions a top priority.

Even as Audubon's decades-long expertise in Florida Bay is helping to conserve wildlife, it is now even more important to protect South Florida from the worst impacts of climate change. The southern Everglades ecosystem, like many parts of Florida, is subject to rising sea levels, salt water intrusion, and storm surges that could inundate the freshwater wetlands. These threats are not a reason to give up on restoration efforts; rather, they are the reason to accelerate them.

The same restoration efforts that benefit roseate spoonbills and other wildlife will also help to create a freshwater barrier to the rising salt water in Florida Bay. Continuing and accelerating the state and federal partnership to restore the Everglades (including raising Tamiami Trail, completing the Modified Water Deliveries, Decompartmentalization, and the C-111 projects) will allow more natural water flows through the Everglades, and into Florida Bay. The slow southward movement of freshwater will also allow peat levels in the soil to recover and stabilize. All these efforts are essential to protect the underground aquifers that millions of people rely on for clean drinking water, as do the already-endangered or threatened wildlife that call the Everglades home. Audubon continues its commitment to restore ecological abundance and connectivity throughout Everglades National Park and Florida Bay, and to convey this increased sense of urgency to decision-makers.



Adult and juvenile spoonbills by R J Wiley

Northeast Florida program marks successful first year



Left to right: John Hankinson, Chairman, Audubon of Florida Board of Directors; Monique Borboen, Audubon's Policy Associate for Northeast Florida; Jim Jacoby, who has donated office space for Audubon staff.

On June 25, 2009, some of Northeast Florida's most influential conservationists and elected officials joined Audubon in celebrating the successful first year of Audubon's staffed Northeast Florida program. John Hankinson, Chairman of Audubon's board of directors, presided at the inauguration of Audubon's new regional office at Marineland's Coastal Policy Center and thanked the major supporters who were there.

"We have established remarkable collaborations between land managers, advocates, Audubon chapters, and decision-makers in our first year in Northeast Florida," said Monique Borboen, Audubon's Northeast Florida policy coordinator. "This region's vibrant chapters provide a wealth of expertise and ground our work in the community with local perspectives and local solutions. This is an exciting time to be a conservationist in Northeast Florida. While we are here celebrating, just up the road, a colony of beach-nesting least terns is successfully hatching its chicks. This colony has never been so well protected, thanks to Audubon volunteers' advocacy to create a driving-free area for the birds, as well as their efforts stewarding the colonies during periods of high beach visitation."

Audubon of Florida Executive Director David Anderson recognized two early supporters of Audubon's work in the region. He presented awards to Jim Jacoby, a businessman with a keen passion for the ocean and coastal conservation, and to Rayonier, a Northeast Florida timber company committed to stewardship and conservation.

"We know the value Audubon has brought to conservation issues elsewhere in the state and wanted Northeast Florida to have the benefit of a staffed Audubon presence too," said Mike Bell, Rayonier Director of External Affairs. Jacoby added, "Audubon is a welcome addition to the Marineland community."

"We thank our partners for recognizing the need for Audubon and for stepping forward to support our program in this region," said Anderson. "We also thank the Jessie Ball duPont Fund for its early and essential investment in our vision for this program. Together we are building a culture of conservation in Northeast Florida sustained by informed, engaged grassroots leaders."

To learn more about Audubon's work or get involved as a volunteer, contact Monique Borboen at (904) 813-5115 or mborboen@audubon.org.

JOIN US FOR THE 2009 AUDUBON ASSEMBLY

St. Petersburg, Florida October 23 and 24



Oyster catcher by R.J. Wiley

Please join Audubon of Florida on October 23 and 24 in St. Petersburg for the 2009 Audubon Assembly and dialogue on Coastal Conservation and Climate Change.

Celebrated oceanographer Sylvia Earle, Ph. D., is the Assembly's keynote speaker. The two-day program brings together conservation leaders and scientists—as well as policy makers, and business people from across Florida to discuss strategies to protect our coasts, birds, and wildlife, and secure our quality of life.

Come and enjoy two days of Audubon fellowship. Connect with nature and birds on expert-led and self-guided field trips. Celebrate Audubon chapter milestones, too: St. Petersburg Audubon turns 100 and Clearwater Audubon is 50 this year. Deepen your knowledge at exciting learning sessions. And share your stories of how climate change is affecting your life and the places you care about.

Register Online Today www.audubonofflorida.org—and see the full schedule

All-inclusive Assembly registration package is only \$120/person if booked on or before October 6, 2009.

PACKAGE includes programs, workshops, pizza party, cocktail reception (with cash bar), Friday evening banquet, breakfast, two lunches, and field trips.

To take advantage of this Early Bird package price now, go to www.audubonofflorida.org. Book hotel accommodations separately.

- **Early Bird** all-inclusive ticket: **\$120**. (on or before Oct. 6)
- **Last Minute** all-inclusive ticket: **\$140**. (Oct. 7 and after)
- **Friday Evening** Women in Conservation Banquet ticket: **\$50**. (includes reception)
- **Friday Only** ticket: **\$85**. (Learning sessions, luncheon, snack, reception, awards banquet)
- **Saturday Only** ticket: **\$75**. (Learning sessions, breakfast and lunch)

To register by mail, contact Lisa Reichert to request a registration form 305-371-6399, ext.120, or email lreichert@audubon.org.

Think about car pooling to St. Petersburg. It's fun and a great way to reduce global warming pollution.

Least tern by R.J. Wiley



BE A SPONSOR

of the 2009 Audubon Assembly.

Connect with hundreds of people who are passionate about preserving Florida's environment and wildlife.

For information on sponsorship opportunities and benefits, call Vicky Johnston 305-371-6399, ext. 134, or email vjohnston@audubon.org.



Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park

The Assembly is at this certified green hotel beside a lake—handy for birding breaks. Enjoy Hilton comforts at a special rate of \$109 per room. Enter the code “NAS” when making your reservations at www.hiltonhotelstpete.com, or tell the reservations clerk this code when you call Hilton.

Celebrate Audubon and Its Chapters

Don't Miss the **DIALOGUE ON COASTAL CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE** beginning at 9 a.m. Friday, October 23. *This session is free and open to the public.*

FRIDAY KICK-OFF 9AM: Dialogue on Coastal Conservation and Climate Change

The dialogue promises to be a lively discussion of climate change adaptation strategies and ways to secure coastal areas as places where people and wildlife thrive.

Audubon has partnered with state and federal agencies to plan and host the Dialogue:

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Southwest Florida Water Management District

U.S. Geological Survey

University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science

University of Central Florida

Science Tools and Conservation Strategies

Learning sessions feature scientists, conservation leaders, and policy makers who focus on issues, tools, and finding solutions to some of the most important conservation challenges facing Florida. Here is a preview:

Birds and Climate Change. Warmer winters are already affecting the distribution of wintering Florida birds. National Audubon's Greg Butcher, Ph.D., leads a discussion of the Birds and Climate Report he released earlier this year.

Non-native Invaders. Florida's ecosystems are threatened by the spread of non-native plants and animals. What strategies will stop the worst invaders?

Florida's Wild Urban Beaches. Will the cities and counties that own beaches allow coastal wildlife to coexist with people? Audubon chapters are on the next frontier in coastal wildlife conservation, keeping Florida's beaches wild.

Stop Global Warming to Save Our Coasts. Learn how to join the fight to secure strong federal laws that will reduce the threat and consequences of global warming.

Make Bird Counts Count for Conservation. Tired of having your bird counts filed in some dusty drawer? Come together for a collective planning session, get tools to carry out collaborative efforts, and standardize techniques for recording and sharing your observations.

Wetlands: Turning Losses into Gain. Craig Pittman will highlight points from his recent book, *Paving Paradise*, describing how the no-net-loss-of-wetlands policy in Florida has failed, allowing destruction of this critical habitat to continue virtually unchecked.

of events for the 2009 Audubon Assembly

CELEBRATE WOMEN IN CONSERVATION AND HEAR A CELEBRATED OCEANOGRAPHER AT THE FRIDAY BANQUET

Oceanographer Sylvia Earle, Ph. D., winner of Audubon's 2009 Rachel Carson Award and former chief scientist at the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, is keynote speaker at the Assembly awards banquet Friday evening. She will be joined by important Florida Women in Conservation.

SET FLORIDA'S 2010 CONSERVATION AGENDA

Audubon of Florida sets its agenda to protect the Everglades, combat climate change, and conserve our coasts. Shall the focus be stopping oil drilling, protecting Florida Forever, conserving our springs and rivers, or driving wildlife policy? You and other Audubon members will decide, at the keystone event of the Audubon Assembly.

SHARE YOUR CLIMATE CHANGE STORIES AND INSPIRE OTHERS TO ACT

Tell your story about how global warming is changing your habitat and affecting your life. Turn your personal narrative into a powerful tool to inspire others.

EXHIBITS AND AUDUBON'S NATURE STORE

See what Audubon's sponsors, partners, and chapters are doing to protect birds and conserve habitats, and improve humans' quality of life. Then visit Audubon's Nature Store to browse and buy gifts, art, books, and other awesome nature-inspired products.

CONNECT WITH BIRDS AND NATURE ON FIELD TRIPS

Fascinating birds and natural areas are within easy walking and driving distances. St. Petersburg Audubon will get you to the hottest birding spots. All you do is the watching. Don't miss Roosevelt Wetlands and Fort DeSoto on the tidal marshes on Tampa Bay. You will also see plenty of birds right at the hotel's nature preserve.



Red-headed woodpecker by Christina Evans

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Is a Focus of Bird Conservation Initiatives

Collaborative partnerships among Audubon chapters and the science, conservation and policy teams of Audubon of Florida are key features of bird conservation programs in Florida. Strong collaboration is the most effective way to approach the state's complex bird conservation issues, and so other like-minded groups will also be invited to join these endeavors.

“Common Birds in Decline” and “Urban Oases for Migrating Songbirds” are the focus of Audubon's new initiatives. Many common birds are showing marked declines, as crucial components of once-widespread habitats disappear. The program targets problems faced by birds of about 35 species that were once far more plentiful across much of Florida. Examples include ground doves, nighthawks, red-headed woodpeckers, flickers, shrikes, bluebirds, meadowlarks, goldfinches, and towhees. A second initiative recognizes the challenges that millions of songbirds migrating through Florida each spring and fall encounter when seeking good “refueling” habitats, especially in large urban areas along the coasts.

The threats to birds are widespread, underlining the fact that understanding and resolving these bird conservation issues will require collaborative

regional and state-wide efforts. This situation certainly calls to mind the need to “think globally and act locally.”

Audubon of Florida staff and multiple Audubon chapters are gearing up to combine resources (people, expertise, and funds) to address designated high-priority bird conservation issues. The resulting teams will identify birds that are in greatest need of attention, plan ways to deal most effectively with problems facing each species, and standardize and collaborate on new monitoring and protection activities. The program's strength derives from the broad network of Audubon chapters and members across Florida, all focused on a common set of birds and habitats.

For many of these birds, the precise causes of their declines are not well understood, so it is difficult to know which conservation strategies will be the most effective. This is where the chapter volunteers can play critical roles in obtaining valuable new information about these birds. Some questions to resolve include: How many birds remain? Where are they? What are the key characteristics of essential habitat? What are the most important food plants for migrating songbirds?

In 2009, chapter volunteers from Alachua, St. Johns, and Tropical Audubon, working in collaboration with John C. Ogden, Audubon of Florida's Director of Bird Conservation, began to field-test monitoring protocols for both common birds and migrating bird initiatives. Based on their experiences, and with input from members of other Audubon chapters and conservation partners, an expanded monitoring program is planned for next year. It will be directed at answering the key questions listed above.

To get involved, call John Ogden at 305-491-9722 or email jogden@audubon.org

Northern parula by Christina Evans



SPECTACULAR SIGHTS for visitors to Corkscrew

GHOST ORCHID

A ghost orchid discovered at Corkscrew in 2007 put out fascinating blooms again in 2008 and 2009. Listed as endangered in Florida, this species requires precise conditions to grow, making the frequency and abundance of blooms produced at Corkscrew even more remarkable. For three Julys, crowds have come to see the white flowers that hover like ghosts over the leafless plant whose roots wrap a cypress trunk 45 feet above the boardwalk. "These orchids are rare, beautiful and mysterious," says Carlson.

WADING BIRDS STAGE FEEDING FRENZY

Low water levels last spring led to the greatest show in years for visitors, as thousands of adolescent wood storks began fledging and a host of adult storks, roseate spoonbills, egrets, night herons, ibis, and alligators staged a wildlife feeding frenzy. "The surface of the water was boiling with millions of tiny fish, which are prey for the wading birds and alligators," said Jason Lauritsen, Assistant Director of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. "And those little, fuzzy-headed, somewhat clumsy adolescent storks spent a lot of time figuring out how to fish and fly right here in stork paradise."

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, located at 375 Sanctuary Road West, in Naples, is open to visitors 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. everyday from April 11 to September 30. Between October 1 and April 10, Corkscrew is open to the public from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Admission to the boardwalk within one hour of closing is not allowed. The Sanctuary may close when severe weather threatens. For information on admission fees, call 239-348-9151.

Ed Carlson's Lifetime of Commitment Has Turned Corkscrew into a Jewel



In May, Ed Carlson celebrated 35 years working fulltime for Audubon

At six feet, five inches tall, Ed Carlson towers above everyone and nearly everything--except the ancient cypress trees protected at Corkscrew. His impressive achievements have made Corkscrew an internationally-recognized living example of ecological sustainability. "Corkscrew is the crown jewel of Audubon's sanctuary system, and Ed Carlson is the reason for its success," said John Flicker, president of National Audubon Society.

The old growth cypress forest, wood stork colonies, rare ghost orchids and diversity of habitats at 13,000-acre Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary owe their existence, at least in part, to a man who has spent a lifetime passionately connecting to, managing, and advocating for their protection. In May 2009 Corkscrew Director Ed Carlson celebrated 35 years working fulltime for Audubon.

As a teenager in 1968, Carlson spent the summer building the sanctuary's first boardwalk. He graduated from the University of South Florida and started fulltime at the swamp in May 1974. For the next ten years, he conducted field research and accumulated baseline data that laid the groundwork for Corkscrew's permanent management and protection. Sanctuary manager since 1983, Carlson made Corkscrew a model of how to maintain natural ecosystems and sustain endangered wildlife in the face of development pressure in Southwest Florida.

Carlson modestly refers to himself as a "swamp rat," but others have more complimentary terms to describe him. "He's a legend," said David Anderson, Executive Director of Audubon of Florida. "Ed is dedicated to Corkscrew and has become a major environmental force in Southwest Florida and is much beloved by all the people in our community who care about Corkscrew."



Bald eagle by Susie Warren

30 Year Anniversary

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, November 12, 2009

Be part of a festive evening to honor past achievements and look toward the future, as Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland celebrates 30 years of raptor rehabilitation, conservation and education. Help us spread the word. Individual guests - \$100 each. The Center is also seeking sponsors for this celebration. For event details and information on ways to get involved, please contact Katie Warner at **407-644-0190** or kwarner@audubon.org

THINK OF YOUR BEQUEST TO AUDUBON AS AN INVESTMENT. HERE ARE SOME OF THE DIVIDENDS...

Please support our conservation work by including a bequest in your will, or by naming Audubon of Florida as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets.



Audubon



WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING WORDING: *I bequeath \$_____ (or _____% of my residuary estate) to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit environmental conservation organization, with its principal offices located in New York, NY, for its Florida state office (Audubon of Florida).*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: *Wayne Mones, Vice President, Senior Philanthropy Advisor, Audubon, 225 Varick Street, 7th floor, New York, NY 10014, or call 212-979-3033.*



Least terns and ghost crab by David Maeri

ST. PETERSBURG AUDUBON IS 100 CLEARWATER AUDUBON IS 50

**Chapters Make Scientific Strides while
Marking Momentous Anniversaries**

After a century of dedication and hard work for St. Petersburg Audubon (SPAS) and a half-century for Clearwater Audubon, the members of these chapters have accomplished great things for birds and the environment. In collaboration with hundreds of conservation-minded citizens, they have been monitoring and replacing least tern chicks hatched in rooftop colonies for eight years. What makes 2009 even more special is a science-oriented initiative that involves banding the chicks prior to replacing them—work that will yield valuable information for biologists.

Marianne Korosy, who holds the group's banding permit, relates that by mid-June around 160 color-banded juvenile least terns were in various stages of fledging from four warehouse-rooftop colonies in central Pinellas County. This year's juveniles wear yellow bands that signify 2009 banding. Older birds may have red, green, or orange bands below the yellow ones. Colors correspond to the buildings from which birds fledged. Volunteers later worked to spot banded birds and reported their locations. "We do not know where juvenile least terns go when they fledge from rooftops in central Pinellas County. They may turn up on the bay side, on the Gulf side, or in other counties," Korosy says.

This productive partnership owes its momentum to leaders in three critical areas. These include Clearwater member and certified bander Marianne Korosy and her assistant John Hood, vice president of the Clearwater chapter. Dave Kandz, Conservation Chair for SPAS, and SPAS chapter member Bonnie Jenks coordinate the volunteers and maintain the schedule for chick-checking for fallen chicks. Providing the academic component is Beth Forsy, Ph.D., Professor of Environmental Studies and Biology at Eckerd College. Thanks go to the more than 50 volunteers whose dedication is behind these strides data-gathering about least tern behavior and conservation.

Call for Chapter Award Nominations

Materials are due by September 12



The inspiring accomplishments of Florida's chapters and volunteers will be recognized Saturday, October 24, at the 2009 Audubon Assembly awards luncheon. Please see the Assembly registration details in this issue and make plans now to attend. This year's event will be held at the Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park so that everyone can help the members St. Petersburg Audubon celebrate their 100th anniversary.

Award categories are: chapter of the year, best conservation project, best membership recruitment program, best education program, and best chapter exhibit at the 2009 Audubon Assembly. Nominations and supporting materials must be received by Saturday, September 12, 2009, to be considered.

Nominate your own chapter or another one—it's easy. Chapter officers have all the details about criteria and required supporting materials. For complete guidelines, please contact Jacqui Sulek, Chapter Coordinator, at jsulek@audubon.org or call her at 850-251-1297.

Ruby-throated hummingbird by R. J. Wiley



Left to right: Joyce King, Helen Warren (president of Alachua Audubon), George Baldwin, and Jacqui Sulek (president Four Rivers Audubon).

AUDUBON HONORS LOCAL VOLUNTEER WITH PRESTIGIOUS CALLISON AWARD

Dedicated volunteer Joyce King was recognized with the 2009 Charles H. Callison Award. The biannual award honors one outstanding National Audubon Society staff member and one chapter volunteer for the whole country. “Joyce King is an exemplary Audubon volunteer,” said National Audubon Society president John Flicker at the May awards ceremony in Charleston, South Carolina. “For more than 25 years, she has demonstrated personally that the actions of committed individuals can change the world.”

A retired school teacher and counselor who lives in Melrose, Florida, King has helped Audubon achieve its conservation mission at the local, state and national levels. She served as president of the St. Petersburg Audubon Society (SPAS) and as a board member of both Florida Audubon and Audubon of Florida, after the former became a state office of the National Audubon Society (NAS). She is president of the Santa Fe Audubon Society (a new chapter and Florida’s forty-fourth) and in May was elected to the board of NAS.

“Joyce has worked tirelessly on behalf of birds and important habitats in the state, and to nurture cooperative relationships throughout the Audubon organization. We are thrilled that her efforts are being recognized in this way,” said David Anderson, Executive Director of Audubon of Florida.

Her achievements include helping to launch the Shell Key project in 1992 as a conservation project of SPAS with a handful of volunteers. The project expanded in 2002 into a partnership with government land managers, agencies, and academia, now known as the Suncoast Shorebird Partnership. The continuing project has significantly raised awareness and resulted in the protection of beach-nesting birds on Florida’s Gulf coast.

One of the architects of the Regional Conservation Committee structure that moves ideas and information between Audubon of Florida’s board and chapters, King shaped the Audubon Academy, an annual gathering to train and mentor chapter leaders from around the state.

Audubon’s Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries Celebrates 75 Years of Conservation

Former U.S. Representative Sam Gibbons (left) and former Florida Governor Bob Martinez (far right) joined supporters of Audubon’s Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries to celebrate the program’s 75th anniversary in April. The Tampa Electric Company hosted a reception at the TECO Atrium in Tampa, where 200-plus guests enjoyed refreshments courtesy of Mosaic Fertilizer LLC. Musicians were underwritten by Mallory Lykes and David Belcher. Former Pinellas County Commissioner Barbara Sheen Todd moderated presentations describing the 75 years of leadership that Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries has provided for bird conservation and environmental protection.





AMBROZY HONORED

At its June meeting in Orlando, Audubon of Florida's board of directors honored Joe Ambrozy, one of its members, for his countless hours of volunteer work, generous giving to Audubon and Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, and for the extra work he undertook as chair of Audubon of Florida's Investment Committee.

DR. JERRY LORENZ AT FIU

Congratulations to Jerry Lorenz, Audubon's State Research Director at the Tavernier Science Center, on his recent appointment to the graduate faculty at Florida International University in Miami. This prestigious position demonstrates the respect that Dr. Lorenz has achieved in academic and environmental circles. He will teach a new generation the importance of conservation and the need to advocate on behalf of the natural world. Audubon of Florida is proud to have such a gifted, dedicated scientist on its team.

Financial information about National Audubon Society can be obtained by writing to us at 225 Varick St., 7th Floor, New York, New York, 10014 or as stated below:

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DON'T MISS THE AUDUBON ASSEMBLY

OCTOBER 23 – 24, 2009 AT THE HILTON ST. PETERSBURG CARILLON PARK

a certified green lodging establishment

More details inside this issue.

ASSEMBLY KICK OFF:

DIALOGUE ON COASTAL CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

Everyone is welcome at this lively discussion of climate change adaptation strategies and ways to implement them so coastal areas remain hospitable to people and wildlife. Dialogue begins at 9 a.m. Friday, Oct. 23.

REGISTER FOR AUDUBON ASSEMBLY ONLINE AT WWW.AUDUBONOFFLORIDA.ORG



Bachman's sparrow by Christina Evans

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 St. Petersburg Carillon Park in St. Petersburg, Florida, at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 24, 2009. 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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