



Audubon FLORIDA NATURALIST



"Just One Moment in Eternity" © by Peter R. Gerbert

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012

Leadership for Conservation Impact

2012 Florida Audubon Society Leadership

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President, Florida Audubon Society

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Photo by Charles Lee



John Elting, Chairman, Florida Audubon Society

Board Chairman John Elting presents out-going board member Barbara Sheen Todd with an award for Board Leadership at the Audubon Assembly. Other leadership recipients included Sandy Batchelor, Henry Dean, Charles Geanangel, and Cynthia Plockelman.

Together We are Making a Difference

This past year the Florida Audubon Society covered a lot of ground, literally and figuratively, and I am extremely proud of our staff, chapter leaders, volunteers, and members for their conservation efforts throughout the state.

In this issue of the Florida Naturalist you will read about Audubon Florida's conservation leadership and some of its accomplishments. You will also read about our Conservation Leadership Initiative, a program in which we engaged college students in habitat visitation, analysis, and interpretation. Our plan is to expand this leadership initiative in the future to mentor young environmentalists as they seek career opportunities in conservation.

I am proud of our board of directors all of whom contribute time and money and serve on our various committees which include science, marketing, policy, advocacy, finance, and chapters.

Our Operations Management Committee meets monthly to discuss issues, strategies, and ways to best implement the Flyways Initiative, an Audubon effort encompassing the entire nation. This committee consists of representatives from both Audubon Florida and National Audubon.

Among a host of projects the Audubon Florida Board is working on is a program to deliver regular editorial content to newspapers and other print media across the state. In addition, an ad hoc committee is amending our bylaws to better align our chapter resources within the state.

I want to thank all of you for your continuing support of our efforts that make Audubon Florida the most effective environmental organization in the state. Have a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JOHN ELTING".

John Elting
Chairman, Florida Audubon Society



Chuck Geanangel

Audubon Florida Loses a Special Board Member and Friend

Chuck Geanangel passed away on Friday, November 9th, 2012. Wise, quiet, gentle, funny, inspiring, loving, generous, these are all words used to describe him. He was an avid birder with a life list of over 4000. "Chuck was a teacher by trade and at heart bringing birds and nature into his classroom," shared Nancy Gerbert, his dear friend and longtime caretaker.

Once Chuck retired from teaching, he shifted his efforts to the Lake Region Audubon Society. He married Roberta at the chapter's Street Center in 1981. For many years he served on the Audubon Florida and the Lake Region Audubon Society Boards. He was also the moderator for Polk County on e-Bird and worked on the Bird Breeding Atlas. Pete Timmers, his best friend, shared that Chuck volunteered at the Circle Bar B Reserve each weekend handing out water and tidbits of natural history. One of his beloved projects was www.polkcountybirds.com. Reinier Munguia, President of Lake Region Audubon, is continuing the web site, honoring Chuck's request.

Chuck asked that memorial gifts be directed to Lake Region Audubon. Online donations can be made at <http://www.lakeregion.net/> by clicking "donate" at the top of the page. President Reinier Munguia can be reached at President@Lakeregionaudubon.org.

On the cover:
"Just One Moment in Eternity"
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Conservation Leadership



When the student is ready the teacher arrives.

This year's Audubon Assembly attracted an amazing 338 conservation leaders from around Florida. With speakers ranging from US Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar to acclaimed author Cynthia Barnett, we learned so much about conserving water to sustain nature. But perhaps even more importantly, we learned about how to engage socially diverse audiences as we enlist our fellow Floridians in conservation.

The highlight of the weekend was a group of twenty-five college students who joined seasoned chapter leaders for co-mentoring sessions on how to more effectively work with younger conservationists. The students arrived from colleges all over the state—one travelled all the way from Tallahassee. And they reflected the cultural diversity that now defines Florida.

As the students and Audubon got to know each other and walked together through parks and coastal habitats, something remarkable happened. The students became the teachers. How? Audubon leaders know a lot about the natural world. What we need to learn is how to engage a world that is increasingly younger and more diverse. What better place to engage people than outdoors.

It was especially interesting to realize that the students seemed ready to challenge us to go beyond our good intentions and to move into action. For me, the meaning is that it is not enough to keep saying we must recruit a more diverse staff and market Audubon to an increasingly urban audience; we must do so now.

Change requires agents of change. Three of the students came to the Audubon Florida board meeting the next day to share some thoughts about their experience. Their message was clear and encouraging. They called their experience life-changing, and they urged us to do more.

Our leadership board broke out in applause after their comments. As I absorbed the moment, I realized that conservation has the leadership we need for tomorrow. Our job is to help provide opportunities to let them lead.

As to learning about how to engage Florida's socially diverse people, we are ready and tomorrow's teachers have arrived.

Eric Draper

Executive Director, Audubon Florida
President, Florida Audubon Society

What Conservation Leaders said...



Photo by Chase Pickering

"THIS WAS A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE" "Awesome experience! It was a great way to become more aware of the work Audubon does and the great opportunities to make a difference." **"I REALLY LIKED THAT I HAD A MENTOR IN THIS PROGRAM. HE REALLY HELPED ME UNDERSTAND AUDUBON A LITTLE BETTER."** "Fantastic learning experience! Saw life birds, learned about great tips for conservation leadership, and most importantly, about water conservation. I can't wait to apply this new knowledge to my conservation future!" **"I TRULY ENJOYED ALL THE SPEAKERS AND MENTORS! DO THE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AGAIN."** "I am greatly indebted to you and all of my new mentors for including me in this special event. I cannot express how much I learned during the conference."

Audubon Florida Offices

Audubon Florida

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850-222-2473

Local Audubon Chapters

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Jacqueline Sulek
386-497-4185 • jsulek@audubon.org

EVERGLADES CONSERVATION

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary

Jason Lauritsen, Sanctuary Director
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239- 229-8170

Rebecca Beck, Center Director
239-348-9151, ext. 114

Everglades Policy

Julie Hill-Gabriel, Director of Everglades Policy
305-371-6399, ext. 136

Everglades Water Quality

Charles Lee, Director of Advocacy • 407- 620-5178

Lake Okeechobee Watershed Program

Paul Gray, Ph.D., Science Coordinator
863-655-1831

Southwest Florida Collier Audubon Policy Office

Brad Cornell, Big Cypress Policy Associate
239-643-7822

Everglades Science Center

Jerome Lorenz, Ph.D., State Director of Research
305-852-5318

BIRDS AND COASTAL STEWARDSHIP

Coastal Wildlife and Habitats

Julie Wraithmell, Director of Wildlife Conservation
850-222-BIRD (2473)

Important Bird Areas

Marianne Korosy, Florida IBA Coordinator
(727) 742-1683

Coastal Islands Sanctuaries

Ann Paul, Tampa Bay Area Regional Coord.
813-623-6826

FLORIDA SPECIAL PLACES

Center for Birds of Prey

Katie Warner, Center Manager
1101 Audubon Way, Maitland, FL 32751-5451
407-644-0190

For additional staff contacts and locations go to
fl.audubon.org/node/19446

Reflections on a Year

HOW AUDUBON PEOPLE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR FLORIDA



Julie Wraithmell with daughter Maisie

Coastal Bird Stewardship Citizen Scientists Make a Positive Impact

Investing their sweat equity and personal advocacy to protect and monitor birds at 23 beaches and 16 wading bird rookeries statewide, Audubon Florida's network of staff and chapters is now reflected in 500 volunteer beach and water bird stewards. The effects of Audubon stewardship network were everywhere: a new protected area at Three Rooker Bar; vegetation removed on the St. George Island Causeway to allow shorebird nesting, testimony upholding the beach driving prohibition at Matanzas Inlet and real-time monitoring of the catastrophic effects of Tropical Storm Debby on the Gulf Coast's rookeries.

My heartfelt thanks to the inspiring men and women who protect our signature Florida coastal birds and their habitats, this and every year.

Julie Wraithmell
Director of Wildlife Conservation



Julie Hill-Gabriel congratulates Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar on his recent Audubon award. Photo by Charles Lee

Everglades Science and Policy Staff Working Together

Everglades restoration has reached numerous milestones this year that are cause for celebration and optimism for future progress.

2012 is an indicator of what can be achieved when Audubon Florida science and policy professionals work together and coordinate with our volunteer network. Using data obtained from the Everglades Science Center in Tavernier, policy and science staff worked closely to analyze what needed to be done to help Roseate Spoonbill populations in Florida Bay. When it became clear that the greatest need was to re-route and re-distribute water in a more natural pattern, the team urged decision-makers to prioritize the C-111 Spreader Canal Everglades restoration project that will do just that. In 2012, the first phase of that project was completed and will serve as one of the first tests for restoration results.

In the Northern Everglades, Audubon Florida's policy and science experts, along with

hundreds of volunteers, helped garner support for the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. The Everglades Headwaters was formally established in 2012 and will ultimately include up to 150,000 acres of important wildlife habitat.

Finally, after decades of working to find the right path to improve water quality, Audubon Florida supported the state and federal agreement to construct water treatment projects while at the same time pushing for additional on farm pollution control.

While these are just some of the achievements over the past year, they serve as examples of how success can be found when science, policy and volunteer efforts come together in search of solutions.

Julie Hill-Gabriel
Director of Everglades Policy

While these are just some of the achievements over the past year, they serve as examples of how success can be found when science, policy and volunteer efforts come together in search of solutions.

Photo by George Willson



Photo by Susie Warren



Photo by RJ Wiley



Florida's Special Places Advocating for Florida's Land and Water Treasures

Lovers of natural Florida have a lot to be proud of this year. Two years ago, we made the one-of-a-kind Sandhill Lakes region of the Panhandle our first nominee for the Florida's Special Places campaign. The region's lakes were under serious threat from a proposed huge groundwater wellfield. Audubon leaders and local citizens rallied around this unique ecological area, while local citizens challenged the permit in court. In July a judge ruled against the proposal. The stunning, crystal-blue Sandhill Lakes, and the unique biology and quality of life they support, are now saved.

But our work is not over. Across the state our public lands and water are at risk. Proposals to sell off public conservation lands and allow overpumping of groundwater spring up every day.

Audubon and our allies are pushing back with the Florida Water and Land Legacy campaign. This initiative is the best option Floridians have to ensure that public funds are available to protect our remarkable natural resources. Our community – the Florida's Special Places community – is already making a difference, but it will take a Herculean effort to make it on the 2014 ballot. The coming year will be a test of our resolve; will you help us rise to the occasion?

Jonathan Webber
Conservation Campaign Manager

Audubon Center for Birds of Prey Celebrating Bald Eagle Conservation

Audubon Center for Birds of Prey had many reasons to celebrate this year, specifically relating to Bald Eagle conservation. Hosting a joint celebration with Florida Wildlife Commission this summer, Audubon and Florida's wildlife agency spoke of the successful recovery of this iconic species. Florida hosts more than 1,400 pairs, the largest concentration east of the Mississippi River. Through our Audubon EagleWatch program, volunteer citizen scientists monitor more than 20% of the state's eagle nests. Our clinic treated 58 eagles this year, approximately 10% of our total patient load (642 patients to date for 2012).

I am most proud to see our Eagle Eyes program come on line. A generous grant from Progress Energy allowed us to staff our education program to create the new Eagle Eyes on the Environment program. More than 3,000 individuals have taken pledges to take action for Bald Eagles by protecting our waterways, conserving energy and protecting important habitats. Generous funds from Disney will bring the rehabilitation process to the public through a new camera system providing a live "bird's eye view" into flight barns where eagles and other raptors learn to fly after being treated and before returning to the wild. The Eagle Eyes exhibit will open in February and makes this a wonderful year of education, rehabilitation and citizen science.

Katie Warner
Center Manager

Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary A Year of Change, Challenges and Celebrations

The Sanctuary had a number of noteworthy firsts during 2012 related to personnel, resources, programming and conservation. Audubon's beloved long-tenured Sanctuary Director Ed Carlson retired. Ed remains an Audubon Warden and continues to serve on the board as Director Emeritus and volunteer his time.

Sanctuary resource firsts include the lowest Lettuce Lake water level on record for September, which typically is the month with the highest water level. This was also the first time in recorded history that the storks failed to nest a third year in a row. The prolonged drought and lack of shallow wetlands contributed to this trend.

To provide more diverse visitor experiences a series of evening programs titled "Corkscrew After Hours" and a new Landmark Trees project were initiated.

To conserve the wetlands that characterize the Corkscrew watershed we settled litigation (along with our conservation partners including Collier County Audubon Society) against a proposed development. Part of the settlement enables restoration of more than 1,000 acres of shallow wetlands within the Corkscrew wood stork core foraging area.

Fason Lauritsen
Sanctuary Director

A Very Good Year

BY ERIC DRAPER

FOR CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP



Photo by Jacqui Sulek



Photo by Dr. Bob Knight



Photo by David Macri

*One of my favorite movies from the past year is *The Big Year*, the story of three birders trying to break a record for spotting the most North American birds. The title emerged this year at the Audubon Assembly when I reported on the year's successes to our members.*

*The *Big Year*'s story contains lessons for conservation leadership: preparation, persistence, positive attitude and hard work set the stage for opportunity. These characteristics are witnessed in Audubon's volunteers, leaders and staff, and these characteristics explain why Audubon has been viewed as Florida's voice for conservation for more than 100 years.*

Audubon's conservation leadership had a very good...not perfect...but very good year. On the 'not perfect' side of the ledger, the budget-cutting politics of Tallahassee left just a pittance for land conservation and a fraction of what is needed for the Everglades. That said, there was much accomplished this year to offset the 'not perfect' side of the ledger.

Let me tell you some of the things I am most proud of and that reveal real conservation leadership; however, before doing so I would like to note that, by working with our allies and by support from grassroots citizens, the press and a few heroic legislators, many bad bills not spelled out here were stopped.

We bought an island. Not just any old island, we bought Lanark Reef, a hemispheric site for migrating birds and the most important Brown Pelican nesting site along Florida's Gulf coast. The island was owned by a developer who once had plans to put houses on it but lost the land to his bank. Julie Wraithmell, Audubon's Director of Wildlife Policy, raised money from a foundation and from some of you. She enlisted renowned conservation real estate expert (and Audubon board member) George Willson who persuaded Tallahassee's Premiere Bank to sell the island to Audubon to be preserved forever

as a bird sanctuary. *Good job Julie, George and Premiere Bank!*

We received a gift of an island. A little island located in Boca Ceiga Bay and loaded with nesting waterbirds is now part of the Florida Audubon Society Sanctuary system. With more than 80 parcels around the state providing habitat for scores of species, Florida Audubon Society's sanctuaries are special places. The Miller family, knowing of Audubon's management of other nesting islands along the Gulf and Atlantic

coasts, donated the beautiful little island at no cost. Audubon's staff biologists Ann Paul and Mark Rachal will work to keep predators and people away from the nesting birds and make sure that foraging areas provide abundant food. *Way to go Miller Family, Ann and Mark!*

We kept an island from washing away. The Richard T. Paul Alafia Banks Sanctuary in Tampa Bay is an Audubon treasure. Co-managed with Mosaic, the island is a Global Important Bird Area and is home to a spectacular array of shorebirds and waterbirds. However, wakes from big ships coming into the Port of Tampa were washing the island away. Ann Paul sought and received grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Mosaic Company Foundation, and Landon, Moree and Associates for the installation of specially designed wave breaks. Now the island is growing back. *Great work Ann, Mosaic and Landon, Moree and Associates! Thanks NFWF!*

We became guardians of a 4000 acre wetland forest. When Brevard County allowed a landowner to establish a plan for the future of a pulpwood plantation, Audubon's Charles Lee negotiated an easement on thousands of acres of forested wetlands. With legal enforcement rights, Audubon will stand guard to make sure this land is restored and managed for habitat for Swallow-tailed Kites and other migrating birds. *Thanks Charles!*



Photo by RJ Wiley



Photo by RJ Wiley

We took on Florida Scrub-jays. One of Florida's best citizen science programs was run by The Nature Conservancy. When TNC shifted priorities, Audubon Florida's Important Bird Area Coordinator Marianne Korosy partnered with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission to take on the task of keeping the hardworking Jaywatch volunteers at their posts. Charismatic Scrub-jays rely on increasingly rare sand scrub habitats that have long succumbed to golf course development and citrus grove conversion. Jaywatch is essential to maintaining Florida's only endemic bird. *Thank you TNC, FWC, Marianne and scores of Jaywatch volunteers.*

We helped launch the Florida Conservation Coalition. The gang that took over the Capitol in 2011 pretty much declared war on Florida water policy and proposed selling off some of Florida's valuable public lands. Former Governor and US Senator Bob Graham called on the people who worked for him during his administration to help galvanize the conservationists' response. Vicki Tschinkel and Estus Whitfield enlisted Audubon and other Florida groups to push back against bad environmental policies. In 2012 we fared better. *Way to take a stand Senator Graham, Vicki, Estus and FCC members!*

We focused attention on springs protection. Working with Bob Knight and others, Audubon's Charles Lee and Jacqui Sulek as well as chapter leaders from around North Florida are harnessing grassroots networks to send thousands of messages opposing a huge proposed beef operation threatening the health of Silver

Springs. The fight is still on. *Great leadership Bob, Jacqui and Charles.*

We stopped some really bad legislation. Every year Audubon and our allies face developer sponsored bills to undermine Florida's environmental laws. This year bills to give away publicly owned river shores, allow oil and gas exploration in state forests, and breed exotic zoo animals on public lands were warmly greeted by some legislators.

Audubon's Tallahassee staff Mary Jean Yon, Julie Wraithmell, and Jonathan Webber worked against the bills and rallied public opinion. In the end only zoo legislation passed and we thank Governor Scott for vetoing that bad bill. *Way to stand tough Mary Jean, Julie and Jonathan and Audubon's grassroots policy network.*

We won an enforceable Everglades clean water standard. After decades of litigation and sugar industry delays, the State of Florida signed a federal order agreeing to clean up water entering the Everglades. Audubon staff encouraged both sides to stay at the table and reach a deal. Credit goes to Governor Rick Scott and to the Obama administration for agreeing on both a standard and a plan to clean up the water and to Everglades Foundation scientists Melodie Naja and Tom Van Lent and Audubon scientist Paul Gray for helping inform the decision. *Good job Rick Scott, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and Melodie, Tom and Paul!*

We celebrated America's newest Wildlife Refuge. The federal government ran into serious opposition when proposing the Everglades Headwaters Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. Audubon chapter leaders and staff jumped in to help defray the controversy. Working with ranchers in Florida and with Audubon's Julie Hill-Gabriel lobbying the US Congress, we activated a huge grassroots response to the idea. *Way to get it done everyone! And a special thanks to Julie and Kissimmee Valley Audubon Society's Larry Rosen.*

We won a commitment to restore 1000 acres of Wood Stork foraging area. After years of litigation Audubon's Brad Cornell and Corkscrew Swamp Director Jason Lauritsen helped negotiate an agreement with a developer to set aside land and money to restore nearly 1000 acres of shallow wetlands in Collier County. The restored wetlands will increase the foraging area for Wood Storks which are increasingly rare in South Florida. *Good job Brad and Jason.*

We helped pass the federal RESTORE Act to secure BP Oil Spill penalties for Florida's coastal environment. Audubon Florida worked closely with conservation allies and Senator Bill Nelson to build support for the RESTORE Act, which directs 80% of Clean Water Act Penalties from the BP Oil spill to the affected states. Audubon's DC office led by Brian Moore helped win votes in Congress while Julie Wraithmell, Julie Hill-Gabriel, Jacqui Sulek and Jonathan Webber organized allies and grassroots support. *Outstanding effort Brian, Julie, Julie and Jonathan.*



Photo by Paul Marcellini

We helped launch the Water and Land Legacy Amendment campaign. After years of seeing conservation budgets shortchanged by the Florida Legislature, Audubon joined other conservation groups in launching a petition campaign to put an amendment on the ballot in 2014 to dedicate 1/3 of documentary stamp taxes (about \$500 million a year for 20 years) to water and land conservation. Led by Trust for Public Land's Will Abberger and Pegeen Hanrahan, Audubon chapters have jumped in to take the lead in collecting signatures and recruiting volunteers. *There's hope thanks to Will, Pegeen, Alik, Jacqui, Jonathan and thousands of people who signed up to help!*

Conservation leadership is more than talking the talk. Audubon's volunteers, board members, allies and staff roll up their sleeves and get the hard work done. I wish I had enough space to individually credit all of the tremendous leadership we've seen this year. For those I was not able to single out, you know what you did, and we sincerely thank you for your work. And for those wishing to become involved, there is always more to do. We welcome you aboard this coming year.



Photo by Julie Hill-Gabriel

Leadership GIVING



The Disney VolunteERS celebrate after finishing their work day at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey.

DONOR ENGAGEMENT: GIVING BACK IN SPECIAL WAYS

Every donor counts at Audubon Florida. The accomplishments outlined throughout this annual report are not possible without the investment of donors – from \$10 to \$425,000. Although we cannot list every donor or volunteer, each contribution or investment of time is treasured by Audubon's staff and board. Some of our corporations, foundations and individuals desire to be engaged beyond a monetary investment. They want to be involved in hands-on work or provide their valuable expertise. Below are a few examples of how donors are engaging in these special ways. We help donors make this deeper connection whenever we can.

PUTTING SCIENCE TO WORK TO INFLUENCE CONSERVATION DECISIONS

The Batchelor Foundation has helped mold our science program into a robust, statewide effort that maximizes our use of citizen scientists and develops data and analysis to support real-time policy decisions. The Foundation Chair, who serves on the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board, also serves on our Science Committee. Disney has put both money and the valuable time of its employees into helping to improve Audubon's citizen science online data collection. Mosaic staff took the time to get into the field with Audubon science staff and, from first hand observation, funded a project to reduce erosion of a vital bird sanctuary.

BENEFITTING AN ECOSYSTEM WITH ADVOCACY

Audubon's Everglades conservation work would not be possible with the ongoing loyalty of the people who sit on the board of the Everglades Foundation. This unique board includes the champions of Everglades restoration; individuals who have been on the front line in the field, courtrooms and capitols. Darden Restaurants helps Audubon through its foundation and also is focused on the question of sustainable food production. They have invited Audubon to help educate visitors at its LEED Certified headquarters. Those involved in the Martin Foundation are often in the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and are valuable voices in the management of the Sanctuary.

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

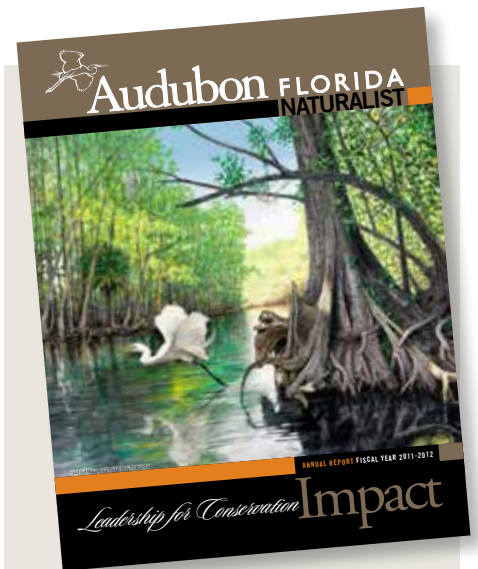
At the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey employees of Disney regularly have volunteer work days to repair flight cages and improve the grounds. Being familiar with the Center, it was easy for Disney and Progress Energy to get behind a project to bring the Center's visitors closer. Now Eagle Eyes on the Environment showcases how water, energy and birds are all connected.

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY

The Jessi Ball duPont Fund gets to know its grant recipients through leadership training programs. Taking an interest in Audubon's

leadership changes, the fund recommended that Audubon seek ways to reach a broader audience. The result was the hiring of a Conservation Campaign Manager who is able to help mobilize support and opposition to emerging conservation issues.

These are just a few examples of giving in action. If you have an interest in engaging with Audubon Florida through a financial investment or a gift of involvement, please contact Margaret Hankinson Spontak at (352) 229-2887 or email [mshpontak@audubon.org](mailto:mhspontak@audubon.org).



Cover artwork

Just One Moment in Eternity

PETER R. GERBERT

The painting features a Great Egret in flight on the Silver River; the extremely detailed cypress roots were built-up with thick texture to create a 3-D effect. The original acrylic painting, from a private collection, is now available as a print with a portion of the proceeds benefiting Florida Audubon Society's conservation work. A limited edition of 100 fine art canvas signed and numbered prints (Image size 14 ½ x 22 inches or 22 x 34 inches) are available for purchase.

To place an order, visit
www.PeterRGerbert.com.

Audubon Assembly

Celebrating Florida's Conservation Leaders

OCTOBER 26-27, 2012

Highlights:

- The 2012 Audubon Assembly attracted record attendance with 338 participants.
- Select college students received scholarships to attend the Conservation Leadership Initiative. Outdoor workshops at North Lido Beach, North Siesta Beach, and the Celery Fields were followed by afternoon learning sessions including a special leadership training.
- U.S. Representative of Florida's 11th Congressional District Kathy Castor opened the welcome luncheon followed by a panel discussion on how to rethink Florida's water policy.
- Cynthia Barnett, author of *Blue Revolution* and *Mirage*, delivered the keynote address.
- Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar gave an inspiring acceptance speech during the awards ceremony.
- The Assembly ended with Saturday morning sessions on water conservation and native plants, the annual conservation priority session and a closing Chapter Luncheon.

All photos by Charles Lee, except opposite beach scene



Keynote Speaker Cynthia Barnett



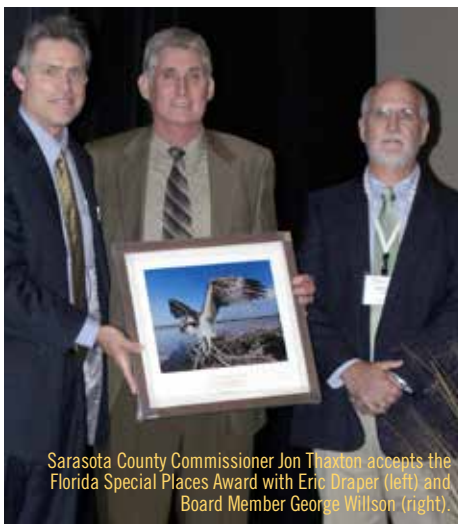
Champion of the Everglades Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar



USDA State Conservationist Carlos Suarez accepting Florida Special Places Award for USDA Under Secretary Harris Sherman.



Featured luncheon speaker U.S. Representative Kathy Castor with Eric Draper and John Elting.



Sarasota County Commissioner Jon Thaxton accepts the Florida Special Places Award with Eric Draper (left) and Board Member George Willson (right).



Carlton Ward accepts Wildlife Photographer of the Year Award from Eric Draper (left) and Ann Paul, Florida Coastal Islands (right).



Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary Director Emeritus Ed Carlson (right) accepted the Guy Bradley Award and unveiled his portrait by Artist Nicholas Petrucci.



Conservation Leadership Initiative participants visited Lido and North Siesta Beaches with Audubon mentors.

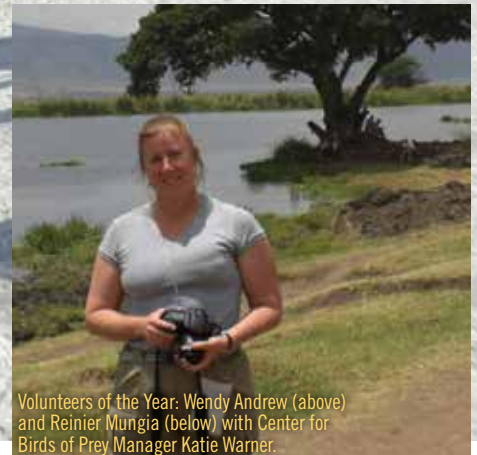
Photo by Reinier Munguia



Junior Volunteers of the Year John Brice and Nora Jade Flower with Monique Borbeon, Northeast Florida Policy Associate.



Julie Morris accepting Florida Woman in Conservation Award from Eric Draper (left) and Julie Wraithmell (right).



Volunteers of the Year: Wendy Andrew (above) and Reinier Mungia (below) with Center for Birds of Prey Manager Katie Warner.



Former Lee County Commissioner Ray Judah accepts Theodore Roosevelt Award from Board Member Joe Ambrozy (left) and Eric Draper (right).



Scott and Elaine Taylor accept Distinguished Philanthropists Award from Eric Draper (left) and Charles Lee (right).



Randy LaBueve (right) accepts FPL Distinguished Corporate Leadership Award from Eric Draper (left).

The 2012 Audubon Assembly – *Made Possible by Generous Support from our Sponsors*

Gold



Silver



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Local Leadership

AUDUBON CHAPTER AWARDS FOR 2012

An unprecedented 38 of 44 chapters were represented at the 2012 Audubon Assembly this October. Hosted by Sarasota Audubon at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota, attendees claim it was the best Assembly ever. As Joyce King, President of Santa Fe Audubon shared, "The Chapters really had a place at the Assembly. I felt so much a part of Audubon Florida. We were recognized in so many ways."

Audubon Chapter member participation was notable. John Hood and Helen Warren jumped into action gathering petition signatures for the Florida Water and Land Legacy Campaign at the showing of Last Call at the Oasis. Friday morning, 15 chapter leaders participated in the 2nd Conservation Leadership Initiative.

On Saturday morning after the President's Breakfast, chapter leaders helped Cynthia Barnett gather ideas on implementing a water ethic. Bob Stamps moderated a very popular workshop on creating water wise/bird friendly habitats with Florida native plants. John Hood, Joyce King, Jim Brady, Loretta Satterthwaite, Laura Reynolds and Margaret England gave overviews of the conservation priorities and successes in their respective regions and Deborah Green presented the Climate Resolution drafted under her lead.

At the chapter awards luncheon Julie Wraithmell gave an inspiring overview of some of our citizen science programs and recognized volunteers that participated in Christmas Bird Counts, Eagle watch and Jay watch. And finally, celebration through the chapter awards provided a snapshot of the amazing work done by Audubon volunteers.

CHAPTER MILESTONE – BAY COUNTY AUDUBON CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY!

While Audubon is synonymous with the history of conservation in Florida, we are proud that so many of our local organizations have also shared much of that history. This year, Bay County Audubon celebrates 50 years of conservation and creativity. In 2012, they played a huge role in influencing the Northwest Florida WMD to deny a consumptive use permit that would have threatened the health of the Sand-



Venice Area Audubon Left to right: Charlie Sample, Richard Holder, Alena Capek, Gardner Jones, Bill Fairbank, Brenda Bossman, and Norma Lee Rhines (also attending was Bonnie Hurley)

hill Lakes. Congratulations were offered to President Ron Hauser for their milestone anniversary and conservation victory.

BEST CHAPTER DISPLAY AND EDUCATION PROJECT AWARDS GO TO VENICE AREA AUDUBON

Another record was set this year when 13 chapters brought displays. From the beautifully painted rain barrels brought by Marion Audubon to the larger than life photos of birds from Orange Audubon, to the twirling Least Tern (powered by a car battery) and Snowy Plover kits of Clearwater Audubon, making a choice on the best chapter display was a daunting task. A panel of judges was given the criteria: Which chapter would they most like to join? (Several of the judges might secretly join more than one). The official winner was Venice Area Audubon with its hand-written day-glow paper labels and photos capturing the essence of the organization.

Venice Area Audubon also received the award for Best Education Project. Education Chair Brenda Bossman has been coordinating the Venice Area Audubon team to get 2000 local elementary school children out to their Rookery each year. The students that experience birds and nature in this wonderful outdoor classroom will become the conservation leaders of tomorrow.

BEST CONSERVATION PROJECT AWARD GOES TO TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Tropical Audubon Society addresses multiple threats to South Florida's natural resources. As one of Florida's largest chapters within a major American metropolis is always an issue to challenge. Tropical Audubon Society has invested in an Executive Director position and has built relationships with developers and governmental agencies in the area. So when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was issued a permit to dredge the port



Plan to participate in Audubon Academy - April 12–14, 2013

Audubon Academy is designed to provide leadership development, encourage volunteers, and support chapter innovations and creative responses to their local challenges. Send your potential leaders and members to reinvigorate, renew and build chapter leadership. Learn how to connect to your community to promote environmental awareness. Academy will be based at historic Lakeside Inn in Mount Dora. Have fun and learn while walking trails with friends old and new, enjoy half-day field trips, participate in interactive learning sessions, share ideas, best practices and strategies, and meet Audubon staff and leaders. **Registration materials, program schedule, and more information will be available in early January. For more information, contact Bob Stamps, Academy Coordinator, rhs-oas@att.net.**



Tropical Audubon Society Executive Director Laura Reynolds receives Conservation Project Award for Chapter.



Orange Audubon - Left to Right: Phyllis Gray, Katie Warner, Diana Flynt, Deborah Green, Teresa Williams, Bob Stamps, Loretta Satterthwaite.

of Miami that the chapter decided to join a local group, Biscayne Bay Water Keeper and a private citizen to challenge the permit.

The lawsuit, although settled, won concessions that will improve the protection of Biscayne Bay and the adjacent Bill Sadowsky Critical Wildlife Area. The settlement secured \$1.3 million into a trust account to fund wetland and mangrove restoration, long term water quality monitoring and improved seagrass protection. Executive Director Laura Reynolds accepted the award on behalf of all the folks who contributed to this extraordinary effort.

BEST CHAPTER (and MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT PROGRAM) AWARDS BESTOWED UPON ORANGE AUDUBON

The next award is a two in one. Orange Audubon is another urban chapter with a great track record. From festivals like The Orlando Wetlands Festival to the protection of the restoration of Lake Apopka you will find them educating and advocating for the resources that provide escape and relief to the growing population of the Orlando Area. Their Chertok Photography festival now in its 25th year attracts entries from all over the state and features the who's who of nature photography. It is not a

coincidence that with all their activity they have also seen record increases in their chapter generated memberships, winning them the membership recruitment award. When Deborah Green stepped into her new role as President of Orange Audubon she posed this question: What would it take to become Chapter of the year? Apparently her board took this to heart. Congratulations to all the folks whose combined energy and commitment to conservation have made Orange Audubon Society the Audubon Florida Best Chapter of 2012.

Thank You

Our work is made possible by the generous support of individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations that share our vision to restore natural ecosystems.

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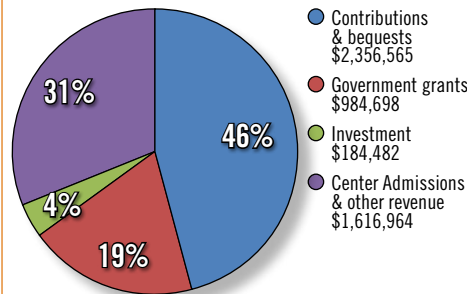
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JULY 1, 2011 - JUNE 30, 2012

National Audubon Society and Florida Audubon Society work together and fund conservation programs operating under the name Audubon Florida. Funds received by Audubon Florida are spent exclusively on Florida conservation work.

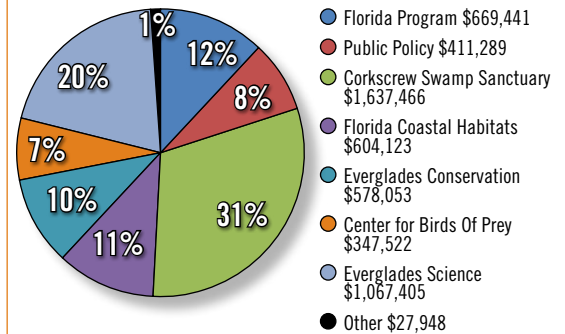
Audubon Florida

Revenue Sources



Total Revenue \$5,142,709

Expenses by Program



Total Expenses \$5,343,247

Florida Audubon Society Assets and Liabilities

Florida Audubon Society is an independent non-profit that owns sanctuaries, manages endowment funds and provides support to Audubon Florida including membership training programs, state policy work, maintenance of more than 7700 acres of conservation lands and easements and the Center for Birds of Prey, and other conservation work.

FLORIDA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC. Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets - As of June 30, 2012

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash	224,824.40
Cash - Restricted	411,973.49
Account Receivable	171,352.85
Naples Capital Investment Trust	2,639,822.55
Total Current Assets	3,447,973.29
Other Assets	
Land	3,034,379.00
Building & Improvements	2,247,386.97
Furniture & Equipment	154,971.83
Accumulated Depreciation	-830,260.05
Total Other Assets	4,606,477.75

TOTAL ASSETS 8,054,451.04

LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	6,754.84
Equity	
Land-Preservation	503,612.00
Aquisition Fund	2,307,155.00
Unrestricted Net Assets	738,107.57
Retained Earnings	4,394,010.61
Net Income	104,811.02
Total Equity	8,047,696.20

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 8,054,451.04



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fl.audubon.org

WINTER 2012

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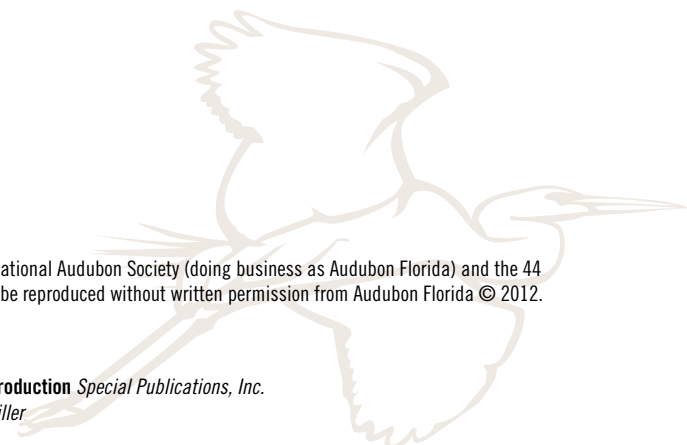
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As you make your holiday giving list or offer others suggestions for your own holiday gift, consider how investing in Audubon Florida's conservation work can make a lasting difference for birds, wildlife and the places that make Florida special. Our new online giving link makes it easy to pick how you would like to designate the gift.

- **Someone who loves taking care of animals:** A gift to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey
- **A conservation activist:** A gift to support policy and advocacy
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If you have questions, please call (352) 229-2887 and ask for Margaret.

Florida Audubon Society, Inc.

Notice of Special Members' Meeting

To consider changes to Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

January 18, 2013

2:00 PM EST

Blair Center Classroom
 Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary
 375 Sanctuary Road West
 Naples, FL 34129

To review amended and restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws go to <http://fl.audubon.org/florida-audubon-society-inc-articles-incorporation-and-bylaws>