



Audubon | FLORIDA

# Naturalist

Winter 2021



Yellow-throated Warbler. Photo: Kara Cook



**Heidi McCree**  
**Board Chair, Audubon Florida**

Despite the rise, and fall, and continued uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 in Florida this year, we are celebrating victories across the Sunshine State. In South Florida, massive Everglades restoration projects — initiatives that Audubon has been pushing for decades — are finally complete. More water is flowing towards the River of Grass, and we are keeping our eye on all the

new projects coming online in the near future (pg 6). Along our beaches, our coastal team has discovered a small, but effective way of protecting vulnerable sea and shorebirds: chick shelters! (pg 3). Each opportunity for public comment and letters from our staff and members is a win for the environment, and for the wildlife and places that cannot speak for themselves (pg 5).

Of course, working with our members, donors, and volunteers achieves the biggest victories. We were thrilled to see so many of you at our Audubon Assembly focused on Natural Climate Solutions (pg 12), and as critical players in so many of our programs. Thank you. We look forward to more wins in 2022!

Heidi McCree, *Board Chair, Audubon Florida*



**Julie Wraithmell**  
**Executive Director, Audubon Florida**

If this year has proven anything, it is that the power of our voices when we flock together can create monumental change. Here in Florida, you spoke for coastal birds in new sea and shorebird guidelines; you advocated for protecting beach habitat; you

gathered to promote a new climate compact; and so much more. At the federal level, an expansive infrastructure bill has been signed into law, which means funding for restoration projects that Florida birds need to survive and thrive. Even on the world-stage Audubon listened to you and spoke out: at COP 26, attended by Audubon's CEO Dr. Elizabeth Gray, world leaders pledged measures to slow or even stop climate change. Here at Audubon we know that your voices add up. With your help, the future is looking brighter for birds!

Julie Wraithmell, *Executive Director, Audubon Florida*

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Least Tern chicks on Lido Key.  
Photo: Kylie Wilson



Black Skimmer using shelter on Pensacola Beach. Photo: Caroline Stahala

## Audubon Uses Chick Shelters to Give Beach Birds a Break

Nesting sea and shorebirds raise their chicks in precarious environments. In addition to risks from human disturbance on our beaches, Florida heat itself proves dangerous to vulnerable young birds. On rooftops and beaches, temperatures can soar to 140 degrees, and until feathers grow in, chicks cannot thermoregulate. When their parents are not nearby or the chicks are too large to brood under their parents, these chicks are at risk of over-heating.

To give the birds some relief, Audubon Florida staff and volunteers employ chick shelters at nesting sites on the sand and on gravel rooftops.

What are chick shelters? These shelters come in a variety of shapes and sizes, depending on the species of shorebird and location where they are needed. The majority are made of wood and are usually in the shape of a lean-to or triangle. Some “shelters” can be large-diameter PVC pipes in which smaller chicks, such as Least Terns, can easily fit; others are made from older signs, recycled to create a lightweight and easy-to-move shelter for chicks that like to roam.

Chick shelters were used about 20 years ago on rooftops in Pinellas County by St. Pete Audubon and Clearwater Audubon under the direction of Dr. Beth Forsys of Eckerd College. They successfully provided

shade at active rooftop nesting sites and we now see chicks of all sizes — from downy to fledged — using these shelters on rooftops and at area beaches. Adults have even used them when they needed a bit of shade!

These shelters also protect chicks from predators. Due to the increased presence of humans and their trash, we are noticing rates of predation on busy beaches increasing each breeding season. Many rooftop nesting sites are found in urban areas where avian predators are common. Predators such as Fish Crows and Cooper’s Hawks steal young chicks from the safety of their colonies on the beach or rooftop. With little to no vegetation at these sites, chicks have few places to run for cover when danger is present — chick shelters play an important role by providing security and protection from predators.

Audubon Florida’s coastal team continues to look for creative, adaptive solutions to protect these iconic sea and shorebirds during the summer breeding season.

**Are you interested in volunteering for our stewardship program? Email [flconservation@audubon.org](mailto:flconservation@audubon.org) for more information.**

# A New Era in Florida Bird Conservation

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## FAREWELL, MARIANNE

We wish Marianne Korosy, PhD, good luck as she retires from her position as Director of Bird Conservation. Marianne held this position for ten years, but was part of Audubon for much longer. She held leadership positions with Clearwater Audubon, worked seasonally with Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries banding Roseate Spoonbills, and even completed her doctorate studying Florida Grasshopper Sparrows, one of Florida's rarest birds, on Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park. In other words, at this point, Audubon is in Marianne's DNA.

During her time on staff, she helped lead the coastal program to provide extraordinary coverage for Florida's beach — and island — dependent birds, marshaling scores of volunteers to extend our reach not only on the beach but also as advocates, even providing testimony on the policies that these species need to survive. Thank you Marianne, for all you have done for Florida's birds.



## WELCOME, AUDREY

Audrey DeRose-Wilson is succeeding Dr. Korosy as Audubon Florida's Director of Bird Conservation. For the last two years, she has been the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Florida Shorebird Program lead and supervised its regional non-game biologists.

Before her work with the commission, she worked as a Shorebird Biologist and Avian Program Manager for the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife, where she notably managed the volunteer-based Delaware Shorebird Project that entailed capture, banding, data collection, and analysis of migratory shorebirds, including federally-threatened Red Knots. In this role, Audrey also represented the State of Delaware on the Atlantic Flyway Council, Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, and several Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency committees. Prior to Delaware, she worked as a research scientist

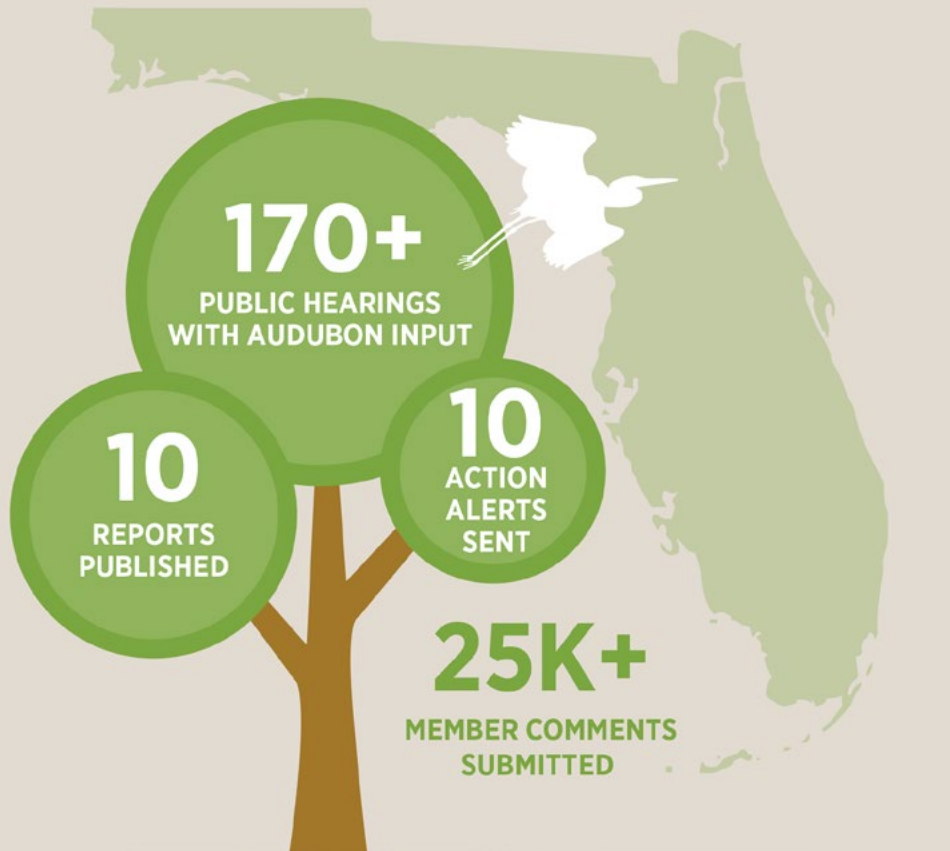
for Virginia Tech studying the post-storm population dynamics of Piping Plovers. In addition to her extensive background with waterbirds, she has substantial banding and conservation experience with passerines (especially grassland birds).

She earned a M.S. in Fish and Wildlife Conservation from Virginia Tech and a B.S. in Zoology from Michigan State.



Piping Plover. Photo: Jean Hall

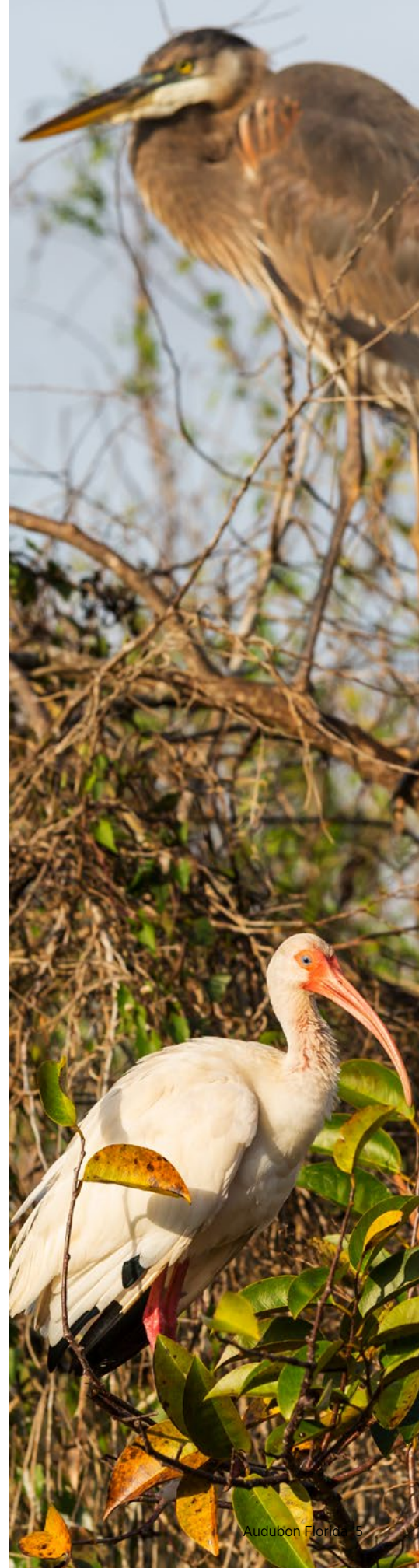
## Audubon Shows Up for Critical Policy Decisions Across the State in 2021



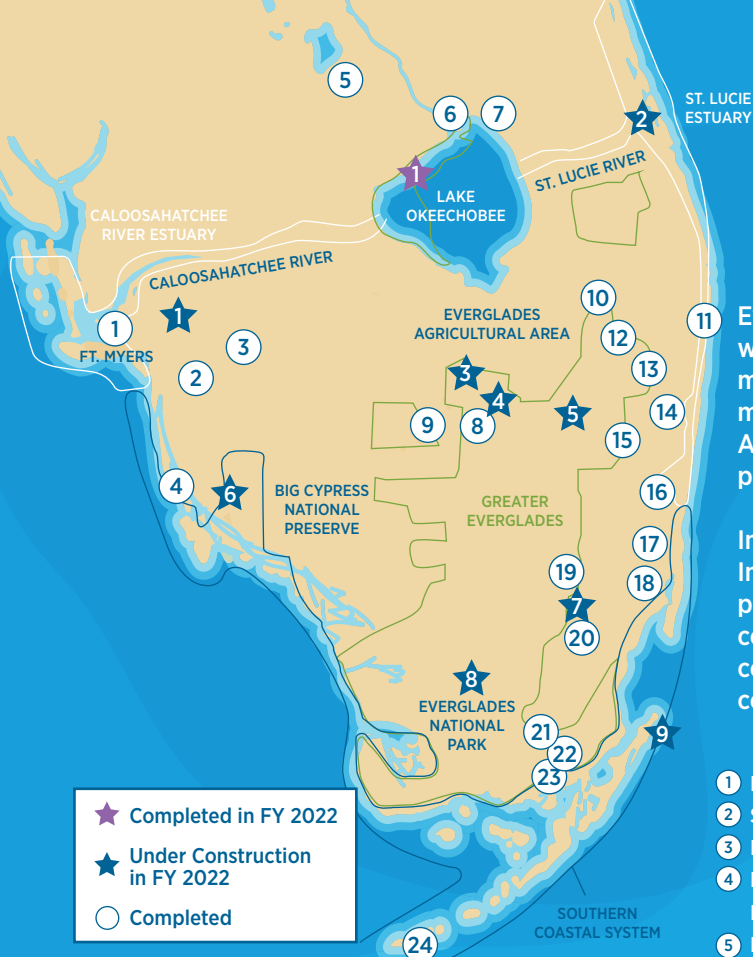
## Infrastructure Bill Represents Landmark Investment in Curbing Climate Change

The sweeping bipartisan infrastructure bill and the Build Back Better Act both contain critical funds that would inject billions of dollars into environmental programs across the country. While funding levels for some programs remain lower than what is needed to truly address the threat presented by a changing climate, there are enough meaningful investments to build upon. While the bipartisan infrastructure bill has already been signed into law by President Biden, the Build Back Better package, to date, has only passed the House.

The two landmark bills contain important funding for initiatives that will curb carbon pollution, build the climate resilience of communities, and lay the foundation for cleaner energy systems. The bipartisan infrastructure package presents an important opportunity for federal funding for America's Everglades and investment in natural climate solutions. \$1.6 billion of Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program funding from this legislation could support already planned projects under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Together, these bills will provide sweeping investments in environmental projects across the country.



## 2021 EVERGLADES RESTORATION: A SNAPSHOT OF PROJECTS AND FUNDING



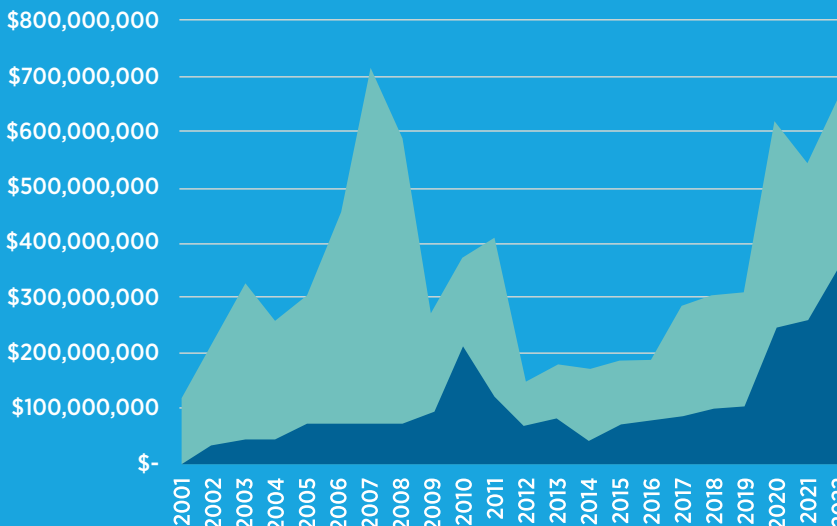
Everglades Restoration is the largest ecosystem restoration in the world, spanning decades, and to keep on track, it's important to measure progress, celebrate successes, and ensure we are meeting and beating deadlines — in funding and implementation. As this year comes to a close, here's an accounting of restoration progress-to-date on both fronts. 2021 has been an amazing year!

In Fall of 2021, the Army Corps of Engineers released the updated Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) for Everglades restoration projects. Of the 68 restoration elements in the IDS, 24 were completed before 2022. In 2021, two more projects were completed. In 2022, one project is slated for completion and construction is underway on nine projects.

★ Completed in FY 2022  
★ Under Construction in FY 2022  
○ Completed

- 1 ★ Herbert Hoover Dike, 100% complete
- 1 ★ Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage, 25% complete
- 2 ★ Indian River Lagoon South, 27% complete
- 3 ★ Central Everglades Planning Project Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir, 1% complete
- 4 ★ Restoration Strategies, 1% complete
- 5 ★ Central Everglades Planning Project North, 1% complete
- 6 ★ Picayune Strand Restoration Project, 90% complete
- 7 ★ Central Everglades Planning Project South, 1% complete
- 8 ★ Tamiami Trail, 68% complete
- 9 ★ Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands, 40% complete

- 1 Lake Park Restoration
- 2 Southern CREW Project Addition
- 3 Lake Trafford Restoration
- 4 Henderson Creek/Belle Meade Restoration
- 5 Kissimmee River Restoration
- 6 Lake Okeechobee Watershed Water Quality Treatment Facilities
- 7 Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough Storage and Treatment Area
- 8 Modified Holy Land Wildlife Management Area/Water Management Operations
- 9 Modified Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area/Water Management Operations
- 10 C-51 and Southern L-8 Reservoir
- 11 Lake Worth Lagoon Restoration
- 12 Acme Basin B
- 13 Protect and Enhance Existing Wetlands Systems along Lox (Strazzulla Tract)
- 14 Winsberg Farms Wetlands Restoration
- 15 Site 1 Impoundment - Phase 1
- 16 Melaleuca Eradication and Other Exotic Plants in Davie
- 17 Lower East Coast Water Conservation
- 18 Change Coastal Wellfield Operations
- 19 Central Lakebelt Storage Area
- 20 C-4 Structures
- 21 Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park
- 22 C-111 South Dade
- 23 C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project
- 24 Florida Keys Tidal Restoration



Funding levels from both the State of Florida and the federal government for projects within the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program.\*

■ State    ■ Federal

\*Numbers were derived from the Cross-Cut Budget which is a document produced for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives.

## This Snail Kite is the Newest Bird Ambassador at the Center for Birds of Prey


Imagine cruising along on your airboat when wham! A huge brown bird bounces off your fan and onto the deck of the boat. Unfortunately, such a collision did happen to an immature female Snail Kite this fall. The boat captain delivered her directly into the care of our Raptor Trauma Center; when our veterinary team evaluated this bird — Snail Kite patient 669 — they found that she had spinal trauma and some leg paralysis. Both of those impairments cleared up quickly, but lasting injuries including a badly dislocated elbow and broken wing meant she will not be able to survive in the wild.

Snail Kites are federally endangered and, while historically their populations have been centered around Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades, their range has been expanding. This is only the third Snail Kite admitted to the Center in the last decade.

Kites, in general, do not make very good patients because they don't eat well on their own in the clinic setting. In addition, as their name suggests, Snail Kites' diets consists of, you guessed it, snails. The Clinic always keeps some snails in the freezer, but traditional efforts to induce her appetite failed. Luckily, our innovative bird care team had an idea up their sleeve. In the wild, kites are social birds, and a little healthy competition can do wonders for a bird's appetite. Once the team realized she could not be released they moved her into a mew with Gretel, a Swallow-tailed Kite and one of the Center's Education Ambassadors. After two days together, the young Snail Kite finally ate a little bit of snail on her own.

We are encouraged by her resilience. We look forward to having her as part of our ambassador bird program, educating visitors and students about the Everglades ecosystem and the importance of Everglades restoration.



 The Snail and Swallow-tailed Kites sitting side by side at the Center for Birds of Prey. Photo: Tabitha Smith



A mother raccoon carries her newborn through the flooded swamp to safety in this award-winning photo from Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. Photo: Mac Stone

## Photo from Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary Honored in International Wildlife Photographer of the Year Contest

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Illustrating the challenges faced by wildlife in our dynamic sub-tropical swamp ecosystem is no easy feat, but photographer Mac Stone's image from Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary does just that. His was one of a record-breaking number of entries, submitted by professional and amateur photographers from 95 countries, chosen by the Natural History Museum in London for their 57th annual Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition. The awards are considered to be the Oscars of the wildlife photography world.

Stone's subject, an adult raccoon carrying a newborn kit through water, shows how difficult it can be for native wildlife to live in the swamp with its dramatic seasonal rise and fall of water levels. While these species have evolved here and are well-equipped to survive, they still need to get creative when Mother Nature throws a curveball.

"Mac and I spent some time looking at the rainfall and water level data and talking about the timing of the photo, and it seemed a pulse of rain late in the wet season must've caught this presumed mama off guard," said Shawn Clem, PhD, of the October 2020 image. Dr. Clem, the Director of Research at the Sanctuary, determined that in the week prior to the image, the swamp received nearly four inches of rainfall, causing water levels to rise significantly in just two days.

"Endless, unseen narratives play out in these old-growth swamps and camera traps offer us a way to see behind

the scenes," said Stone. "I was floored when I found this tender moment on my camera because it shows the incredible challenges that our native wildlife face in order to survive in the Everglades. This subtropical ecosystem is also hard on camera equipment; only a few weeks later a tree fell on this camera, destroying it but fortunately the images survived," he added.

In typical years, water levels in the swamp begin consistently falling after the first week of October. Everglades scientists frequently see impacts of dry season reversal events on nesting wading birds, but reversal impacts on other species are less frequently documented.

Florida wildlife is facing double jeopardy in the coming decades. Human activities have significantly reduced the quantity and quality of wildlife habitats across Florida, while our changing climate is predicted to make rainfall patterns more inconsistent. These factors, both individually and combined, will certainly make life in the swamp even more challenging.

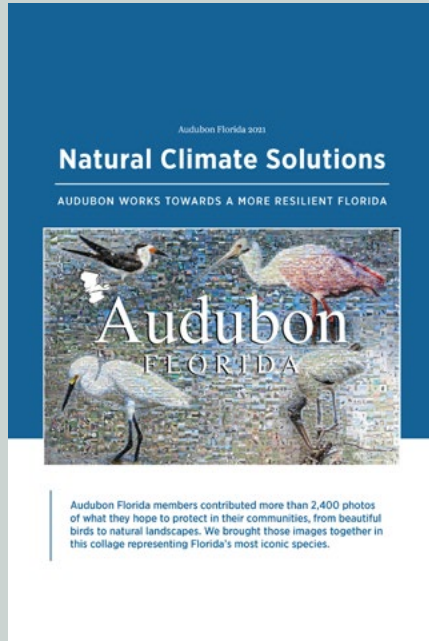
The 100 winning images, along with the two grand title winners, were announced during a virtual awards ceremony, broadcast live from the Museum's famous Hintze Hall, on October 12. The exhibition will be displayed alongside insights from Museum scientists and experts in 2022, with a goal of leaving visitors with a deeper understanding of the issues facing nature and the actions we need to take to protect it.



# Audubon Florida's Climate Program

Audubon Florida's climate program is committed to expanding the development of greenhouse gas emissions baselines, adoption of solar energy and electric vehicles, implementation of Natural Climate Solutions, and the many other resilience initiatives that allow us to mitigate for and adapt to a changing

climate. We work with chapters, supporters, and community partners to advocate for smart climate policies, educate our elected officials, and collaborate across our network to protect and restore natural resources for birds.



## New Audubon Natural Climate Solutions Booklets Offers Inspiration For Your Community

<https://bit.ly/3G7EDoL>

In a brand new booklet, readers can find examples of Natural Climate Solutions in Florida, learn how these solutions benefit birds and the environment, and explore work Audubon is doing to implement and advocate for these solutions. Other facets of natural solutions are covered, including how Florida's entrepreneurs are innovating solutions and why community partners are integral in advocating for policies grounded in sound science.

We now know that Natural Climate Solutions can range from large regional initiatives, like watershed restoration, to hands-on projects in local communities such as a native plant garden in a neighborhood park. For any project idea, big or small, the booklet provides a step-by-step guide on how you can incorporate Natural Climate Solutions and the key messages to share.

## What is it like to live near a solar facility? We will show you!

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=I4-FfL6PoEE>

To meet the energy demand of our growing communities, Florida's utility companies are turning to the sun to provide clean and reliable energy. But what is it like to live near a solar power facility? Our brand-new video and infographic can tell you! Audubon interviewed residents and staff, community stakeholders, and more to give you a snapshot of solar as a neighbor.





Roseate Spoonbill. Photo: William Lutin/  
Audubon Photography Awards

## With Gratitude to Everglades Science Center Supporters: The Wolfson Family

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The Everglades Science Center in Tavernier has studied the River of Grass and Florida Bay for more than 80 years. Innovative studies have explored how altered freshwater flows have affected the food base for many higher predators, including game fishes, crocodilians, wading birds, and birds of prey. Today, their data informs critical restoration decisions up and down the watershed.

Our work would not be possible without dedicated supporters, including Louis Wolfson III. The Wolfson family has been an integral part of Miami-area philanthropy and culture for five generations and is currently the owner and operator of Audubon House in Key West. They have supported the Everglades Science Center since 2005.

### A Message from Louis Wolfson III

The Wolfson Family and our Foundations are thrilled to be working with the Audubon Everglades Science Center.

Their research and leadership in this area is essential to the environmental health and welfare of the flora and fauna of the Florida Everglades, which includes the bays and waters surrounding it. One of Florida's main economic engines is dependent upon our natural resources. The continued pollution of our beaches, bays, waterways, and Everglades

will drive our tourism numbers down. As it turns out, the Roseate Spoonbill is our “canary in the coal mine.”

We are now supporting a new communications initiative that will bring further public awareness to these issues and we encourage all environmental enthusiasts to join with Audubon to further their work and thus leave our grandchildren with a healthy and thriving environment. It takes a village — please join in!

*To learn more about the Everglades Science Center, head to:*  
[restorefloridabay.org](http://restorefloridabay.org)

# The Ron Magill Conservation Endowment Makes Sure Audubon Work Keeps Rolling

Ron Magill, the charismatic Zoo Miami communications director and international radio and TV star, always makes time to engage Audubon audiences as a keynote speaker and activist. This year, in conjunction with the Ron Magill Conservation Endowment at the Zoo Miami Foundation, he not only provided half the funding needed to purchase a swamp buggy for Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Naples, but he also arranged for the Everglades Science Center to receive a new van to aid in research and conservation work in Florida Bay and the Everglades.

This gift was made possible by the profound generosity of the Bean Automotive Group, led by its Principal Owner, Ms. Lorraine (Lori) Bean, which secured the van and provided it at below cost while covering all of the expenses of the wrap design and installation. Photo: Courtesy of Bean Automotive Group



“This van will be a valuable tool in our efforts to study and protect Florida Bay and the wildlife that calls it home. Being able to efficiently transport our team and equipment in a dependable and comfortable vehicle, to the variety of locations where we are doing our research, allows us to better focus on our actual work as opposed to worrying about how we are going to get there to do it. In addition, having it beautifully wrapped helps to make the public aware of our efforts and our presence to hopefully inspire further support.”  
— Jerry Lorenz, PhD,  
Audubon Florida's Director of Research at  
Everglades Science Center

With generous support from donors across the country, Corkscrew Swamp was able to raise \$75K in 36 hours to commission a new swamp buggy for land management! Steve Nellis anchored the purchase with an inaugural gift and supporters from across the country chipped in what they could. A final gift from the Ron Magill Conservation Endowment pushed us over the finish.  
Photo: Extreme Buggies



“Our land management team relies on specialized, and costly, equipment to reach the wildest corners of the Sanctuary's 13,000 acres. Swamp buggies can traverse all terrains, throughout all seasons, and are critical for habitat restoration, invasive species removal, and prescribed fire. We had to unexpectedly retire one of our swamp buggies this year and are so grateful to the Ron Magill Conservation Endowment, our board chair Steve & Merrilee Nellis, and all of the generous donors who acted quickly in helping us to raise over \$75K in less than 36 hours to purchase a new buggy! We are so humbled by our Corkscrew Swamp friends.”  
— Lisa Korte, PhD, Audubon Florida's  
Sanctuary Director of Corkscrew  
Swamp Sanctuary

*Thank You, Ron Magill Conservation Endowment Video:*  
<https://youtu.be/gGdtnXdkhxw>



The Lake City Wetlands field trip explored how created wetlands can help improve water quality and provide great wildlife habitat. Photo: Erika Zambello

Participants in the Central Florida Assembly event had a chance to meet Sanford, the Center for Birds of Prey's ambassador Eastern Screech-Owl. Photo: Kara Cook



## Audubon Florida Assembly Explored Natural Climate Solutions Across the Sunshine State

Audubon Florida's 2021 Assembly took participants across the state for three field trip sessions in North, Central, and Southwest Florida, linked together with four virtual sessions. This year we focused on Natural Climate Solutions and their benefits for birds, other wildlife, and people.

In North Florida, field trip participants flocked to Lake City Wetlands to see how wastewater managers are using natural landscapes and plants to clean and store water, while providing excellent habitat for wetland-dependent species. Birders spotted a Purple Gallinule, watched families of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, heard Marsh Wrens, and so much more.

Over in Central Florida, those on the field trips spread out across Orlando City Wetlands, Mead Botanical Gardens, and Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive to see more natural infrastructure in action. Following their birding expeditions, participants returned to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland for lunch and a visit with some of Florida's most iconic raptors.



In-person events wrapped up in Southwest Florida at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, where the team welcomed nearly 60 guests from around the state. Many enjoyed birding in the old-growth bald cypress forest while activity stations on the boardwalk enabled guests to learn how management activities — such as wetland restoration and prescribed fire — are helping make the Sanctuary and neighboring communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Audubon Assembly participants enjoyed birding from the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary boardwalk after hours. Photo: Renee Wilson



American White  
Pelicans. Photo: Robert  
Bunch/Audubon  
Photography Awards



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# Year 11 of Conservation Leadership Initiative Program Launches at Regional Audubon Assemblies

It has been ten years since Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) welcomed its first students to the Audubon Assembly. Since then, CLI has welcomed 25 Florida College students and 25 Audubon chapter leaders into the co-mentorship program every year. Building relationships, networking, and creating experiential learning opportunities for our future leaders are key components to a successful program. Since the expansion of CLI to a full-year program in the fall of 2019, our students and mentors have found new ways to achieve their program goals in a COVID-19 world.

This year's Audubon Assembly events are a shining example of how creativity and flexibility allow us to make meaningful connections while staying safe. For the first time ever, Audubon Assembly traveled across the state, hosting three separate in-person, regional outdoor events. As Audubon Assembly acts as the onboarding event for CLI, our students and mentors were also dispersed across the three events:

“As a student in conservation, connecting with people who care about the natural world is imperative. The Central Florida Assembly event served as an opportunity for students like me to step into a quest to explore all that Audubon has to offer and make these important connections. Beginning with a tour of the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, us CLI students got a peek at all of the incredible work done there. We then got the opportunity to socialize a bit more and learn about each other's passions and interests relating to the environmental field. The following day, we visited Orlando Wetlands Park for a refreshing field trip with many seasoned birders. Getting outside in unique location like this felt so special, and that proved true with many incredible bird sightings — Bald Eagles and an American Bittern, to name a few! Upon returning to the Center, all students were able to speak with many Audubon professionals and board members, as well as chapter members about important events, issues, and diversifying the field of conservation. This event marked an extraordinary start to a year of learning and making a difference with fellow students and Audubon!”  
— Kailey Boyd, Flagler College; paired with St. Johns Audubon

Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) is an experiential learning program providing opportunities for undergraduate college students to immerse themselves in Audubon, strengthen leadership skills, and gain an understanding of career options in the conservation field.



CLI at the Central Florida Assembly experience. Photo: Kristen Kosik



CLI at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. Photo: Luke Franke



CLI on a kayak trip after the North Florida Assembly session. Photo: Kristen Kosik



“The North Florida Assembly session provided an amazing introduction to Audubon’s work and the passionate individuals who carry it out. Through the CLI student social we connected as a cohort before the Assembly, and the next day we visited the Lake City Wetlands to learn more about a natural solution for wastewater treatment — while birding! Our subsequent kayaking trip down the Ichetucknee River was an exceptionally fun way to learn more thanks to the guidance of Park Ranger Sam Cole. Overall, the experience left me not only inspired and empowered to help protect birds and the places they need, but also grateful to be surrounded by such an outstanding group of like-minded individuals. The North Florida Assembly Event was an incredible experiential learning opportunity that I will carry with me through my CLI experience and beyond.”

— Robin Pitilon, Valencia College; paired with Seminole Audubon



“The South Florida Audubon Assembly was a perfect combination of learning, connecting, having fun, and new experiences. Our swamp buggy tour of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary was a thrilling field trip, since we were able to learn about many Florida birds and their natural environments right before our eyes! Meeting with a variety of experienced, environmentally-related passionate people was wonderful. At the same time, making collegiate friends in the environmental field who are also interested in birds was very special to me. I enjoyed every minute of our trip, and even got to see a bird that I had never seen before — a Painted Bunting! After everything I discovered that my interest in what the Audubon Society stands for has been propelled forward, and along with it my inspiration for future career goals.”

— Michelle Read, New College of Florida; paired with Sarasota Audubon



CLI is grateful for the continued support of Darden Restaurant Group for our participation at Audubon Assembly over the past ten years. We thank Vortex Optics for their second year of binocular donations, allowing our students to become instant birders at Audubon Assembly.

# Thank You to Our \$5k+ Supporters in 2020-2021

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Mr. Paul Myerson and Mrs. Giselle Wagner  
Navron Corporation  
Stephen and Merrilee Nellis  
NextEra Energy Foundation, Inc.  
Ocean Reef Conservation Association, Inc.  
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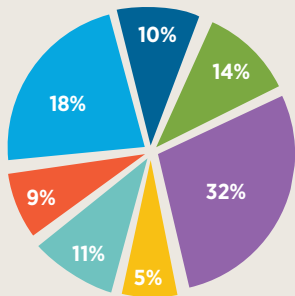
The Herbert and Helen Padgett Revocable Trust  
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SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund  
Michael and Judy Sheridan  
The Hugh Smith Trust  
The Spurlino Foundation  
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Ron Magill Conservation Endowment at the Zoo  
Miami Foundation





AUDUBON FLORIDA & FLORIDA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
FINANCIALS JULY 1, 2020 – JUNE 30, 2021

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM



TOTAL  
EXPENSE  
\$8,352,501

\$860,050 Florida Program

\$1,154,331 Public Policy

\$2,707,474 Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary

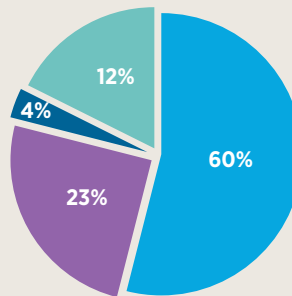
\$452,595 Everglades Conservation

\$898,210 Everglades Science

\$765,563 Center for Birds of Prey

\$1,514,279 Coastal Stewardship

REVENUE SOURCES



TOTAL  
REVENUE  
\$8,352,501

\$5,008,244 Contributions & Bequests

\$1,946,773 Government Grants

\$373,816 Investments

\$1,023,668 Center Admissions & Other Revenue

FLORIDA AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.  
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, & NET ASSETS  
AS OF JUNE 30, 2021

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash	44,412
Cash - Restricted	19,413
Charles Schwab Investment	6,166,369
Charles Schwab Investment - Restricted Geanagel	857,811
Charles Schwab Investment - Restricted VonBoroski	445,159

Total Current Assets 7,533,163

Other Assets

Land	2,578,510
Building & Improvements	2,270,834
Furniture & Equipment	44,459
Accumulated Depreciation	-1,352,376

Total Other Assets 3,541,427

**TOTAL ASSETS 11,074,590**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities 36,255

Net Assets

Land-Preservation	503,612
Board Designated Aquisition Fund	3,336,177
Unrestricted Net Assets	4,937,740
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	581,782
Permanent Restricted Net Assets	300,000
Net Income	1,379,024

Total Net Assets 11,038,335

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS 11,074,590**



## Chapter Successes

During Assembly's first (virtual) session, Chapter Conservation Manager Jacqui Sulek introduced regional leaders to highlight conservation projects and celebrate chapter successes across the Sunshine State.

### EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

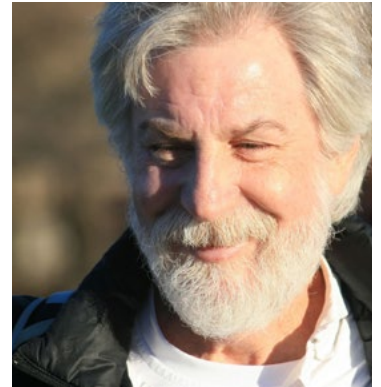
- » Francis M. Weston Audubon planted more than 200 native plants at Pensacola's Bruce Beach, and had 99 volunteers from the community participate.
- » Santa Fe Audubon has been working with kestrel boxes for three years and were able to band and attach radio transmitters to gather critical data.
- » Pelican Island Audubon launched their Trees for Life program in 2019 and continue to work toward their goal of planting 100,000 trees.
- » Tropical Audubon helped support efforts at the Cape Florida Banding Station during their first annual spring banding season.
- » Audubon of Southwest Florida created its own winter monitoring program for sea and shorebirds, collecting critical data.
- » Sarasota Audubon partnered with UnidosNow to offer LatinX families fieldtrips in Spanish for the first time.
- » Kissimmee Valley Audubon partnered with UCF to study and band Purple Martins that use suites of gourds they help maintain during nesting season.

## 2021 Audubon Florida Assembly Awardees

Every year as part of our annual meeting, the Audubon Assembly, Audubon Florida recognizes the state's leading conservationists with a suite of annual awards.

### ***Guy Bradley Award*** **Reed Bowman**

Bowman's career at Archbold Biological Station has generated the strong science needed to understand and protect Florida's only endemic bird species, the Florida Scrub-Jay, with ground-breaking studies on fire, cooperative breeding behavior, interactions between jay groups, dominance hierarchies, prey base, and so much more. He has been instrumental in the captive breeding and reintroduction of critically endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrows, and has mentored countless graduate students who now are advancing conservation science across the country.



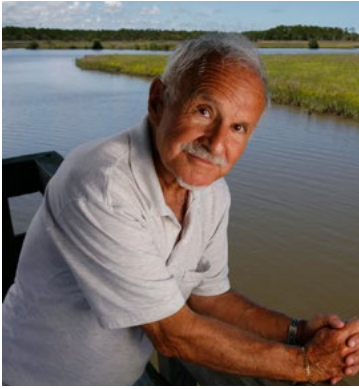
### ***Champion of the Everglades Award*** **Richard Grosso**

Grosso has used the law to advocate for the Everglades since 1990. As a lawyer and former Executive Director and General Counsel for Everglades Law Center, Inc., Grosso has provided legal, strategic, and policy advice to dozens of organizations and individuals working to restore the Everglades. Most recently, he has joined with Tropical Audubon Society to challenge the sprawl-inducing proposal to extend the 836 expressway in Miami-Dade County across conservation lands needed for Everglades restoration.

### ***Teddy Roosevelt Award*** **Eric Draper**

Draper will retire at the end of 2021 as head of the Florida Park Service, where he oversaw the addition of iconic new parks ranging from Gilchrist Springs to the Bluffs of St. Teresa. Previously, he served as Executive Director and Policy Director for Audubon Florida, with accomplishments for Everglades restoration, water resource protection, land conservation, and more.





**Special Places Award  
Reid Hughes**

A resident of Northeast Florida, Hughes championed the conservation of Volusia County’s Spruce Creek, Rose Bay, and the Tomoka River, donating his time and money to protect our state’s aquifer.

Hughes served on the Boards of the St. John’s River Water Management District, the Florida Development Commission, the Everglades Foundation, the Florida

Environmental Education Foundation, and the Sierra Club, and received many distinguished awards. He was a member of the Volusia Forever Advisory Committee and helped purchase and preserve nearly 62,000 acres of important ecological lands in Volusia and Flagler counties alone. He was a board member of Defenders of Wildlife, the National Audubon Society, and Chair of the Florida Nature Conservancy.

But arguably Hughes’s biggest environmental accomplishment was his advocacy to establish Preservation 2000, a \$3 billion, statewide conservation program — which began Florida’s commitment to land conservation that is embodied in the Florida Forever program today.

Reid Hughes passed away in 2021. His environmental legacy will live on in these special places and the future generations that enjoy them.

**Volunteer of the Year Award  
Joan Dunn**

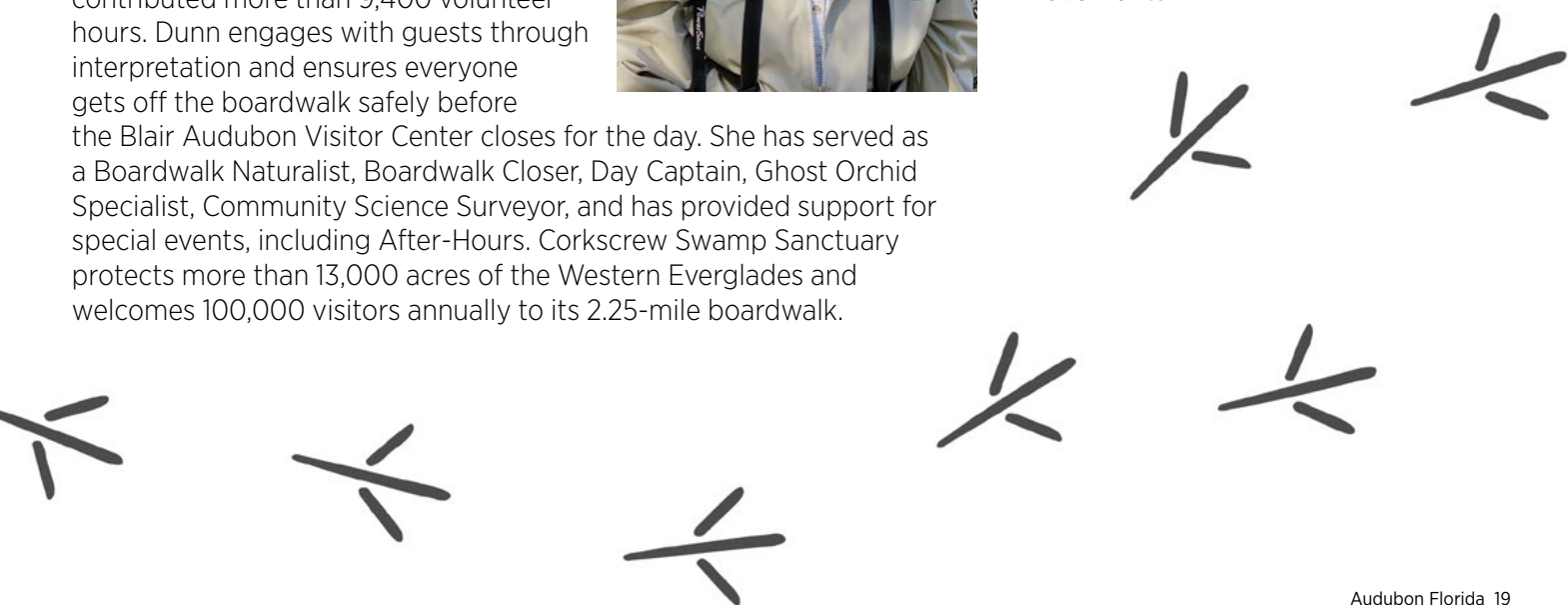
Dunn is recognized for her work at Audubon’s Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Naples. Since her first volunteer assignment at the Sanctuary in 2007, Dunn has been a loyal and passionate supporter of conservation and has contributed more than 9,400 volunteer hours. Dunn engages with guests through interpretation and ensures everyone gets off the boardwalk safely before the Blair Audubon Visitor Center closes for the day. She has served as a Boardwalk Naturalist, Boardwalk Closer, Day Captain, Ghost Orchid Specialist, Community Science Surveyor, and has provided support for special events, including After-Hours. Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary protects more than 13,000 acres of the Western Everglades and welcomes 100,000 visitors annually to its 2.25-mile boardwalk.



**Distinguished Philanthropist Award  
Carol Timmis**

As a longtime member and current Vice Chair of the Audubon Florida Board of Directors, Timmis has been a conservation leader for nearly 30 years. She brings sophistication and expertise honed during her finance career to bear on her conservation work, supporting Audubon advocacy and science with her own gifts, while recruiting others to the cause. Carol founded and chairs the Development Committee of Audubon Florida’s Board of Directors and is a thought leader among her peers, elevating philanthropy and fundraising in service to conservation.

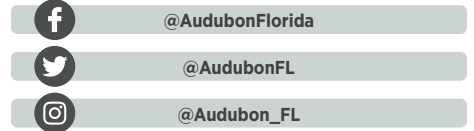
Her love for Roseate Spoonbills encouraged her to help sponsor the deployment of a satellite tracker on a Roseate Spoonbill by our Everglades Science team to trace the birds’ movements.



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