

FLYWAYS



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NEWSLETTER OF AUDUBON OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

<http://www.audubonSWFL.org>

March 1, 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Audubon Supporters:

The National Audubon Society, with which we are affiliated, has released an energy policy statement endorsed by most of the major environmental groups in the country. In brief, the policy calls for a national commitment to a new energy strategy that will protect our climate, national security, economy, health, and environment. Any energy policy must also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Policies that provide *real* solutions to our climate and energy problems should reflect the following goals.

- Reduce oil use 25 percent by through efficiency, clean renewable fuels and transportation alternatives, with an interim goal of reducing consumption 10 percent by 2015;
- Harness clean, renewable, homegrown energy sources such as wind, solar and farm-based bio-fuels;
- Establish a cap on U.S. Global warming emissions;
- Promote a just transition to a reduced-carbon world;
- Oppose a free ride for new dirty coal plants;
- Reengage in international climate negotiations;
- Promote high performance homes, buildings, and appliances with a goal of 10% reduction in energy use by 2025.

I think it is worth a few minutes of your time to read the entire statement. It can be found at the website for our regional Audubon association, www.SWFLRCC.org. There is no question that climate change is the major environmental crisis we are facing and energy policy is the key to the solution.

Best,

Pete Quasius



ASWF MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to protect plants, animals, and their habitats and to promote environmental education and a greater community involvement with the natural world

Join the Fun and Fundraising: Be a Birder or Sponsor for Birdathon 2007, March 24

Join Audubon of Southwest Florida in our springtime tradition and major fundraiser, **Birdathon**.

Like all Audubon chapters across the nation, ASWF signs up birders who, before Birdathon, recruit sponsors who pledge a specific amount per species sighted or a flat amount. During the 24 hours of Birdathon, participating birders—from beginners to experts, individually or in teams—travel all over Southwest Florida in search of as many bird species as possible. Bird in your own backyard or explore parks, preserves, and out-of-the-way crannies.

We will conclude the day's birding with a post-Birdathon social and dinner at 6 p.m. at the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center, when birders can share tales of good birding and enjoy a well-deserved meal.

The Birdathon is Audubon's main fundraising event for the year, and the funds support our own chapter's Conservation Education Fund, which finances conservation and education projects, scholarships, and awards.

See page 2 on how you can participate!!!

If you are ready to join in this exciting, social, and educational fundraising event, email Birdathon@audubonswfl.org.

You can contribute to Birdathon 2007 in several ways:

- Set-up or participate in a birding team—If you would like to be a birder but do not have a team, don't let that stop you. We have teams you can join. And, if you choose to become a birder, we will provide you with all the information you need to make your day successful and enjoyable. If you would like to become a better birder, this is a good chance for you to learn the ropes from some of our more seasoned birders. Bring all interested family and friends for a fun-filled day.
- Sponsor a participating birder—if you just don't see yourself out there asking for donations and birding, please consider being a sponsor for a birder. Your generous, tax-deductible donation will help us fund vital educational and conservation work.
- Make a tax-deductible donation to Audubon—your tax-deductible donation in any amount helps. So please, consider doing whatever you can to accomplish ASWF's mission of promoting environmental education and protecting natural habitats.

BIRDING HOTSPOTS

It won't be long before Robins are a distant memory of a very active winter for abundant species of birds. Robins were the most noticed but along with them we have enjoyed one of the best seasons in recent years for Cedar Waxwings, Am. Goldfinches and tens of thousands of Yellow-rumped Warblers. It has also been a good winter for common loons, earlier in the season Horned Grebes were at Bunche Beach. Right now Sanibel is looking a bit like some safari in western Palm Beach Co. A Limpkin has returned as has a pair of Short-tailed Hawks. A Water Pipit was reported from the wildlife drive. It won't be long before the lighthouse 'lights up' with waves of migrants from the south. Familiar with the White-winged Dove? I have had up to 10 all winter long at my feeders.

A bird to watch for, HOUSE FINCH. Since I spotted a family at a feeder in Ft. Myers in Dec 2005 I have since spotted them several times in south Florida. Just this late Feb I've seen them singing along I-75 in Hernando Co. and now a week later 3 at a feeder in Alva. This is a species known for dramatic range expansions. Native to California it has become a common fixture at feeders from Chicago to Boston. It has been breeding in N. Florida for years. My guess? It is neo-urban and expands as man creates suitable hmmm? (For the lack of a better definition) non habitat that is otherwise unsuitable to our local songbirds. At least it has a much better song than the House Sparrow. See ya at the lighthouse

Vince McGrath



Audubon of Southwest Florida is now an affiliate of the Online Nature Mall. More than 11,000 items for your shopping pleasure connect and shop via one of the links on our website and we get a portion of every sale. Check it out!

www.onlinenaturemall.com/

Reminder Box

- Our Chapter code is E33
- Please call ahead for field trip to secure a space
- All fees for our field trips and programs go to help us meet operational expenses

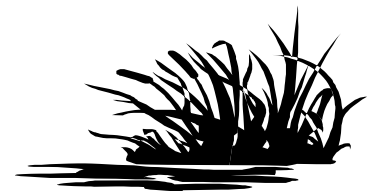
This is the last issue for our 2006/2007 season.

I hope you enjoyed the newsletter in spite of a huge dilemma getting it out on time. We seem to have solved that.

Also we really dropped the ball on Adopt-A-Beach. I can't remember a season so difficult. I've retained a couple of articles of events from last issue, Birdathon and Audubon Academy, due to their huge importance to our chapter. Please accept our apologies while we try to improve efficiency. SO!! One last appeal, please consider becoming more active by joining the Board of Directors. Try your hand at organizing anything you like.



Audubon of Southwest Florida
MESSAGE CENTER
(239) 339-8046



A Gift That Keeps on Giving
Audubon of Southwest Florida

CONSERVATION / EDUCATION FUND

For more on planned giving, call
Kathy Zunich (239) 939-0640.

From the Charles Foster Conservation Fund, a full tuition scholarship is offered in environmental studies for son or daughter of members of Audubon. For details contact Teri Heath, chair of the education committee, at edu@AudubonSWFL.org

THIRD ANNUAL AUDUBON ACADEMY AT
ECKERD COLLEGE
MARCH 23-25, 2007

SAVING FLORIDA BIRDS:
THE ROLE OF AUDUBON CHAPTERS

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Desiree Williams**

Chapters are the crucial link to communities when it comes to acting to protect Florida's birds and their habitats. Besides becoming familiar with local birds, chapter leaders must be knowledgeable about conservation outcomes that will result in the desired protection. Veterans and newcomers alike have praised the effectiveness of this low-cost weekend conference, designed to develop, strengthen and sharpen each participant's skills. Both current chapter leaders as well as anyone interested in becoming knowledgeable about conserving Florida birds are welcome. All workshops are interactive and led by chapter leaders from around the state.

Conservation-focused workshops include:

- Status of Florida Birds in Each Region
- Conservation Planning
- How to Save Land for Birds
- Uniting Amateurs and Professionals in the Study of Florida Birds
- Teaching Your Community About Birds
- Florida as Migration Highway

Other workshops are Orientation for New Chapter Leaders and learning new ways to raise funds for your chapter.

Keynote speaker will be Charles Lee, Audubon of Florida Director of Advocacy. Other special speakers are David Anderson, Audubon of Florida Executive Director, Eric Draper, AOF Director of Policy, and Scott Hecker, National Audubon Director of Coastal Bird Conservation.

Registration for the Academy is \$25. Motel rooms at \$60/night are available on the Eckerd campus, just steps from the sessions. Call 727-865-7000 (Eckerd College Continuing Education Center/West Lodge) to reserve accommodations.

AUDUBON OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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FIELD TRIPS

WHOA!! I was going to list the 3/18 field trip to Babcock/Webb WMA but we reached our limit by 2/25/07

Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary Sunset Truck Trip April 14, 2007, 5:15 PM – 7:45 PM

This is an opportunity to visit the north end of the Sanctuary, normally off-limits to the general public. We will leave the Corkscrew visitor center parking lot and go to the north end observation platform. We will go through several habitats, including marsh, cypress swamp and pine flatwoods, and will have the opportunity to view wildlife along the way. We will stop at the observation platform to view the sunset over the marsh before heading back to the parking lot. Cost is \$25.00 per person. Space is limited to 19, so sign up ahead of time. For more information and reservations call Dan VanNorman at 337-7381.

Bird Rookery /Sunset/Caloosahatchee River Kayak Tour May 19, 2007, 4:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Paddle with GAEA Guides around several phenomenal islands where thousands of birds of many species roost and nest. The tour leaves from Royal Palm Park in east Fort Myers – This tour includes a gorgeous sunset. Paddle in a wonderful, natural area of our Caloosahatchee River. \$40 per person includes all equipment and your guide is a Certified Florida Master Naturalist. There is a \$10 discount for using your own equipment. Reservations are required and space is limited. For more information and reservations call 239-694-5513.