



The PELICAN

Newsletter of St. Johns County Audubon Society

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St. Johns County Audubon Society promotes the protection, preservation, and restoration of birds, other wildlife and their habitat through science-based advocacy and education in St. Johns County, Florida.

Notice of Election

St. Johns County Audubon Society

**Board of Directors and Officers
January 26, 2009**

Nominees for Officers:

President: Andrew Thornton
Vice President: Barry Albright
Treasurer: Nancy Sachs
Secretary: Diane Reed

Nominees for Board of Directors for term of 2009 and 2010:

Ali Fulcher
Terry Jennings
Erin Masters
Amy Meide

Nominations will be accepted from the floor on the day of election.

Remaining Board Members:

Fran Preston (2009)
Peggy Cook (2009)
Past President: Ned Shuler (2009)



New Day, Time, Location!

Chapter Meetings for 2009 will be held on the Fourth **MONDAY** of the month from **7:00 - 9:00 PM** (unless otherwise advertised)
South Ponte Vedra Civic Association Community Center
Located approx 7.3 miles North of the Vilano Bridge and 10 miles South of Mickler Rd on Coastal Hwy A1A (this is the old Fire Station just south of the Gate gas station)

FEBRUARY Members Meeting
Monday, February 23, 2009, 7:00pm
South Ponte Vedra Civic Association Community Center

Research and Monitoring Initiatives at the GTMNERR

Presented by Rick Gleeson

Rick Gleeson has held the position of Research Coordinator for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR) since 2001. His responsibilities include development and coordination of the broad-based research and monitoring initiatives of the GTMNERR. Rick will describe current technologies ranging from molecular biology to satellite remote sensing as tools to better understand the natural processes of estuarine systems.



Special Audubon Workshop
Sketching Birds
with Artist/Instructor Joan Tasca

Southeast Branch Library
US-1 South, St. Augustine
Saturday, February 21, 2009
9:30 - 11:30am

Join Joan for an introductory workshop on sketching birds. We'll begin with an indoor lesson to introduce participants to the art of sketching birds. The group will then visit an outdoor location to practice their new sketching skills.

No drawing experience necessary. \$3fee for supplies. Bring a folding chair for the field trip exercise. RSVP Joan at 904-794-2594 by Feb 14.

MARCH Members Meeting
Monday, March 23, 2009, 7:00pm
South Ponte Vedra Civic Association Community Center
The Greening of the Greens

A special presentation by Amy Meide, Biologist
Land Management Coordinator

St. Johns County Land Management Systems

St. Johns County recipient of the Together Green Conservation Fellowship, Amy Meide, will describe the goals of her recent National Audubon Society/Toyota Award. She will focus on her Conservation Plan to improve and restore habitat on the publicly-owned St. Johns County Golf Club. Amy's initial plans include using native plants to improve natural habitat for threatened and endangered animals on three acres of 'no play' zones along the course. Join us as we welcome Amy Meide as our newest member to our chapter Board of Directors.



Field Trip: Birds and Butterflies

Leaders: Andrew Thornton and Diane Reed
Meeting Place: Ravine Gardens State Park (fee) Palatka, Florida

Date: Saturday, February 7, 2009

Time: 8:30am - 11:30am

What to Bring: Beverage, snacks, comfortable walking shoes, insect spray, birding optics.
Trip Difficulty Level: Fairly easy walking in and around the ravine.

Meet at the Convention Center in the Park. We will work on bird identification by field mark, behavior and sound. We will also focus on identifying butterflies. The trails leading to the bottom of the ravine tends to attract many songbirds, woodpeckers, etc. Our target species will hopefully include early migrating species, such as warblers and flycatchers. The park also features two lovely hanging bridges, several ponds and picnic areas. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after we take our walk. Contact Diane Reed at 904-829-9854 (904-540-2030 on the day of the trip). (Continued)

Ravines Field Trip Continued:

Directions: Ravine Gardens is located within the city limits of Palatka, near the St. Johns River, a few blocks south of downtown and U.S. Highway 17. Access to the park is from Twigg Street, east from Moseley Avenue, south from S. R. 20 and U. S. 17. Ravine State Gardens is less than an hour drive from Gainesville, Jacksonville and St. Augustine.



St. Johns Audubon Nature Walks: Contact Teddy Shuler at teddys23@bellsouth.net or call 904-819-5860 to be added to her email reminder list.

February 10th: 9 - 11 am. Weff Road Docks. Meet at the end of Weff Rd.
March 10th: 9-11 am Vilano Boat Ramp and The Mission area. Meet at the boat ramp.
April 2nd: 9-11 am Princess Place Preserve. Meet Melinda Clemons (829-0406) at the Parking lot.

May 16th: Return trip to Elkton with Renee and Phil Stambaugh (692-3927).



Field Trip:

Viera Wetlands/Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
Leaders: Thomas J. Dunkerton and Andrew Thornton
Date: Sunday, March 8, 2009

PART 1 – Viera Wetlands

Begins: 7:00AM – 10:30AM

Meeting Place: Burger King parking lot at Exit 191 of I-95, Wickham Road. From this point, we will caravan to the Wetlands searching for Viera specialties (Caracara, Limpkin, Bittern) and seasonal waterfowl.

Directions: Approximately 2 hour drive from St. Augustine. From I-95, take Exit 191 (Wickham Road). Note that we will be meeting at the Burger King parking lot prior to entering the Wetlands. If you are arriving late, travel west to the end of the road. You will pass through developed properties of the Duda Farms along the way. Sign in at the Administration Office before going to the dikes. To get to the north ponds go back out through the gate and go north on the dirt road next to the power lines. For information, call 321-255-4328.

PART 2 – Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Begins: 11:00AM (with lunch break) – mid afternoon.

Meeting Place: Dixie Crossroads Restaurant

Refuge trip difficulty: Easy car birding, short walks to observation platforms.

Directions: Approximately 90 minute drive from St. Augustine. Exit 220 off I-95, East 2 miles; on the south side of Garden Street; just west of Park Avenue. We will meet at 11:00 AM at Dixie Crossroads for lunch prior to continuing our trip to the Refuge. Please let us know if you will be having lunch with us, so we can plan for seating. Notify Diane Reed by March 1st if you are planning on going to the restaurant for lunch.

Expect to see specialties, such as Florida scrub jay, migratory water fowl, wading birds, nesting bald eagles, and the many shorebirds that visit the Refuge. The Refuge exit is the same (Exit 220 from I-95) as the restaurant. Questions, contact: Diane Reed at 904-829-9854. Cell phone day of trip: 904-540-2030.



President's Message:

It seems like just yesterday that I wrote my first president's message. Where does the time go? St Johns Audubon is moving on up.

Let's review of this year's goals:

- Membership is on the rise thanks to the expanded activities and super programs.
- Chapter news is getting out on a regular basis through the web site and our email list. If you are not on the list and wish to be let me know at kq4sy@bellsouth.net.
- Members are stepping up to the plate. Our slate of officers includes some fresh faces. We are no longer graying.
- We are receiving more media coverage. Meeting and field trip notices are published in the Record.
- We have had programs on conservation issues such as the St. Johns River and Climate Change.
- Our Least Tern project has expanded to include all shorebirds.

To accomplish these goals members and officers attended the Audubon of Florida's annual assembly. Members also attended the Audubon of Florida's Academy. The Academy is set to help develop chapter leaders. Two Directors attended National Audubon's week long training at Hog Island, Maine.

Last but not least the picnic in November brought together new as well as long time members. Everyone attending felt it helped to energize the membership. Let's continue the great work. The more people that step forward the more we can accomplish.

Happy New Year!

Ned

APRIL Members Meeting
7th Annual Birding and Fotofest
Saturday, April 25, 2009, 12:30 pm
Special Meeting Location
Whitney Lab (Marineland)
Florida Nature and Photography
Presented by Thomas Dunkerton

Join Tom as he speaks of the dizzying array of wildlife we can find and photograph here in Florida. He will touch on various aspects of photography from digiscoping to DSLR. He'll also share his experiences working with the Florida Scrub-jay, as well as our relationship with the wildlife around us.