

# The Pelican

*We need to be the stewards of this world, not its destroyers*

Vol. 58-No.12 Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon June, 2013



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### *Thoughts From On High*

Happy Father's Day to all our members for whom this wish is appropriate. Some human father's truly earn the "World's Best Dad" accolade, other fathers sit idly by watching the family interactions from their recliners and an unfortunate few completely abdicate their paternal responsibilities. Avian fathers, too, run the gamut. Male birds can do all the same tasks involved in raising the family, except laying the eggs. As a result, many males are very involved in building the nest, incubating the eggs, and feeding the family.

The [Rhinoceros Hornbill](#) takes his responsibilities to the extreme. Before laying her eggs, the female enters a tree cavity and, with the help of the male, essentially seals herself inside leaving a small slit, through which the male provides all her food while she incubates the eggs for 40 days. After the chicks hatch, both she and the babies are completely dependent on the father to provide all their food. When the chicks are large enough to leave the nest, the father assists the female in chipping away at the entrance. Even after the hatchlings leave the nest, the father continues to bring food for the mother and chicks.

Male sunbitterns, members of the rail family found in Central and South America, gorge themselves prior to the egg hatching because after the chick is born, he/she receives the majority of the food foraged by the father. The parents don't eat until the chick is full.

And everyone who has seen the documentary "March of the Penguins" knows that the Emperor Penguin may win the Father of the Year award. In autumn, all the penguins age five and over leave the ocean to walk inland to their ancestral breeding grounds which is about 60 miles from the coast. Following courtship on the breeding grounds, the female lays one egg, after which she returns to the ocean, leaving the father with sole responsibility for incubating the egg, which is balanced on top of his feet and burrowed under his feathers. For the next two months all the fathers group together in a huge circle, constantly moving, so that each bird takes a turn at being near the center of the circle where it's the warmest and moving outward to the edges and then back toward the center. Males endure temperatures of -80°F with howling winds, relying on the snow to provide the only water they will drink in the months they are on the breeding grounds. They don't eat and by the time the chicks hatch, the males have lost nearly half their weight and eagerly await the return of the females so they can walk back to the ocean to fatten up before making the trek again to ensure the safety and care of the chicks until they are old enough to fend for themselves.

*Paula Wehr*

## Calendar & Events

**Monday, 6/17/13 Chapter Meeting,** Don't miss the final meeting prior to our summer break. We are ending our fall through spring session with a presentation from Chuck Tague about the Life of Butterflies. Chuck received rave reviews in April from the Ormond Beach Garden Club after they enjoyed his gorgeous photos and educational commentary. Chuck begins his presentation at 7:00 p.m. at Sica Hall, 1065 Daytona Avenue, Holly Hill. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for socializing. As usual, we'll have an assortment of donated books, chapter logo tee shirts and note cards for sale.

We'll also be voting to elect officers and Board members. The slate of nominees is:

President – Paula Wehr

Vice President – John Roessler

Treasurer – Rachel Ramsey

Recording Secretary – Peggy Yokubonus

Membership Secretary & Historian – John Carr

At-Large Board Member, Class of 2016 – Dan Gribbin

At-Large Board Member, Class of 2016 – vacant

Please contact Paula Wehr at 386-673-5332 if you'd like to volunteer for the vacant At-Large position. The three-year term begins immediately following the election and expires after the election in June 2016.

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## Other Happenings

With our sister Audubon chapters on summer hiatus here are a few items you may want to put on your agenda in the near future.

**Wed., 6/5** The Paw Paw Chapter of the Native Plant Society has their regular monthly meeting. Tonight's topic is one we can all use: "Removing Invasives From Your Yard." A presentation by Wes Winters. Paw Paw Chapter meetings are held at the James Street Youth Center, 1700 James St., South Daytona at 7:00 pm.

**Tues., 7/9** Note the special day for this special meeting. The Paw Paw Chapter presents Dr. Walter Kingsley Taylor, author of several books of Florida wild flowers. Dr. Taylor will be introducing his newest book, "*Florida Wildflowers, A Comprehensive Guide.*" This meeting will be held at the Piggott Center, 504 Big Tree Road, in South Daytona, at 7:00 pm. Here's a [link](#) to their new website.

## Conservation Notes

Prior to Monday, April 22nd of this year, there had only been four records of a Bahama Woodstar (*Calliphlox evelynae*) having been seen in the United States. All four were from here in Florida. The most recent being in 1981. So when one was photographed at Delmas and Ruth Witmer's feeder in Denver, Pennsylvania on the morning of April 22nd, it set off alarms all over the country. You can see photos of the bird [here](#). The bird was captured, measured and banded by Sandy Lockerman. At that point many thought the bird was some kind of Broad-tailed hybrid mix. When she sent the information off to other banders, Bob Mulvihill in Pittsburgh was the first to raise the question of this being a Bahama Woodstar. The bird was last seen around noon on April 24th. So if you have a feeder up, keep an eye out for this wanderer. He may be working his way back to the Bahamas.

\* \* \* \*

September 1, 2014 will be the 100th anniversary of the death of Martha, the last known Passenger Pigeon. In 1866 a flock seen in southern Ontario was estimated to be a mile wide and 300 miles long. It took 14 hours for this flock to fly past and it was estimated to contain 3.5 billion birds. Forty-one years later, in 1907, Martha and her two male companions in the Cincinnati Zoo, were the last of their species. Some of the steep decline in this species was due to loss of habitat. Much was due to hunting on a scale hard to imagine now. Passenger Pigeons probably nested twice a year. Though that's just a guess since no written records were kept of their nesting efforts. They were found to be a cheap source of protein for slaves and the poor. So unlimited numbers of hunters went after the birds with every imaginable technology available then. Young birds were simply knocked out of the nests with long sticks. Large pots of boiling sulphur were placed under the roost trees to daze the birds and make them easier to capture in nets. And of course many were shot. The slaughter went on unabated. One of the last large nestings of passenger pigeons occurred at Petoskey, Michigan, in 1878. Here 50,000 birds per day were killed and this rate continued for nearly five months. When the adult birds that survived this massacre attempted second nestings at new sites, they were soon located by the professional hunters and killed before they had a chance to raise any young. There were voices raised in protest at the time but they were drowned out by the voices of greed and self interest. One valuable result of the extinction of the birds was a raising of public awareness and an increase in calls for conservation laws.

Now comes news that a creative team is working on a documentary film about these once numerous birds. "From Billions to None" is scheduled to be released next year. It should be a fascinating film.

\* \* \* \*

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada has added the Bank Swallow to an ever growing list of endangered insectivores. Barn Swallow, Eastern Whippoorwill, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift and others have all seen precipitous declines in their populations in recent years. Bank Swallows have declined an astonishing 98% since 1970. Here, you just have to go outside on a Spring evening to know that our own Chuck-Wills-Widows and Common Nighthawks have become anything but "common." Hopefully, the efforts being conducted now by the volunteers on the Florida Breeding Bird Atlas II will show that things aren't as dark as they appear.

Our thanks to the Birding Community E-Bulletin and the Bird Studies Canada newsletter for the information herein.

*David Hartgrove*



## MEET OUR CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS

### Rachel Ramsey

Rachel is currently one of our two chapter Vice Presidents and has held the position of Treasurer for six years. Although technically not a Florida native (she was born in Baltimore and moved to Florida at age three), Rachel was raised in the Jacksonville area. Following high school, she attended Orange Memorial Hospital School of Nursing (now Orlando Regional Medical Center) where she earned an RN degree. During her nursing career, she worked in the recovery room, the OR, and IV therapy in the hospital. She had a short stint in private practice, working in a med/surg doctor's office.

In 1964 she married Ron and they raised two children. Son Darren and his family live in North Carolina with their two children and daughter Brooke and her family recently relocated back to Florida from Chicago with their two children. Husband Ron worked for GE which took the family to California and Texas for eleven years. Ron and Rachel lived in Florida the remainder of their lives.

Rachel returned to birding in 1997 when her brother Frank and his wife, Linda, invited her to go to Trinidad & Tobago. The trip reignited her interest in birds that had been dormant during many of her working years. She joined Audubon and has been an active chapter leader and field trip participant ever since. She also enjoys walking, reading and 'putzing' in the yard. She is active with her church and volunteers at Halifax Urban Ministries once a month. In prior years, she was an administrative volunteer at the Museum of Arts & Sciences. She participated in educational nature trips sponsored by MOAS under the leadership of Michael Brothers. She has completed two of the Florida Master Naturalist modules. Be sure to thank Rachel for all her service to our chapter when you see her at an upcoming meeting or field trip.

*Paula Wehr*

## NEW FEATURE

West Volusia Audubon Society has a new feature in their newsletter called "Volusia Special Places," an adaptation of Audubon Florida's "Special Places" theme. We think it is a great idea and want to copy it. So we need your help. You are invited to write a short article for publication about your special place to commune with nature. Your special place can be your backyard, a local park or trail, a stretch of beach or a thicket along a stream. Tell us about the wildlife, plants and/or birds that you see there. Include a photo or two if you can. Don't be intimidated with the words "write a short article." If you don't have a computer, a hand-written submission is fine. Or call me or David with your notes/thoughts and together we can put something into writing. Remember that what is seemingly ordinary to one of us may be unique and exciting to someone else. Our newsletter can only get better with a diversity of authors. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Editor*

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## Audubon Adventures

Even though school is out, we still need to collect funds for this exciting program. Audubon Adventures helps engage kids in the natural world around them. Ranked as one of the most popular environmental education curricula in the country, Audubon Adventures is perfect for anyone looking for supplemental science activities for upper elementary students. See the link [here](#) for more information.

Donations from members fund this program. Send your donation to Halifax River Audubon, P.O. Box 166, Daytona Beach FL 32115-0166. Any donation is welcome; \$45 will supply a classroom. Please specify on your check that your donation is for Audubon Adventures. And thank you!

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## Welcome To Our New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new members and to those renewing members who've been with us for some time: Edna Andee, Stephen & Elizabeth Brown, Kenneth Bunzel, Jane Dunkin, Sherry Frost, William A Henderson, Sarah Ira, Pauline Kurpinsky, Shirley Lieberman, Colleen Maines, Marie Morrison, Alexis Robinson, Gerald Spies, and Susie Williams. We hope to see you at one of our meetings or on one of our exciting field trips.

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## Grand Opening Celebration

**Saturday, June 8th, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

Join HRA Board members Saturday, June 8th, as we help celebrate the grand opening of the Yvonne Scarlett-Golden Cultural & Educational Center, 1000 Vine Street, in Daytona Beach. The City of Daytona Beach reached out to our chapter for advice on environmental issues and on how to create bird friendly habitat at the new facility. Built for the incredibly low price of just 2.5 million dollars this environmentally sensitive new building will serve as a beacon for the entire community. With multiple and flexibly arranged classrooms, a performing arts venue and sports complex this unique building has much to offer all of our citizens. It's a masterpiece of engineering and esthetically pleasing too. The April issue of the Pelican had an article with photos of the new building. Join us on Saturday, June 8th, to tour the new facility.

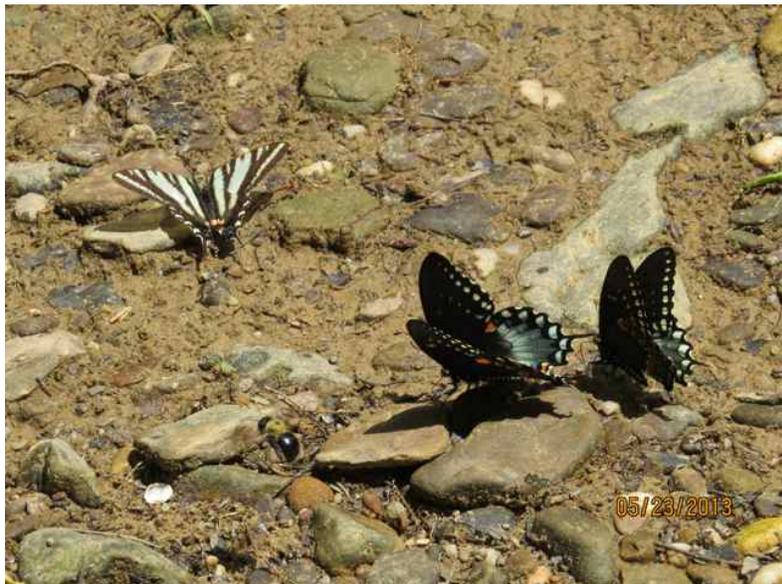
## A Butterfly Primer

Since our next meeting on June 17th will have Chuck Tague's presentation on butterflies, here are some photos taken last month along the shoreline of the Red River, in eastern Kentucky.



*Photo by David Hartgrove*

These Eastern Tiger Swallow-tails have recently emerged from their chrysalis and are in need of minerals which they can't obtain from flower nectar. Sipping moisture from the wet river bank sand provides these essential nutrients.



*Photo by David Hartgrove*

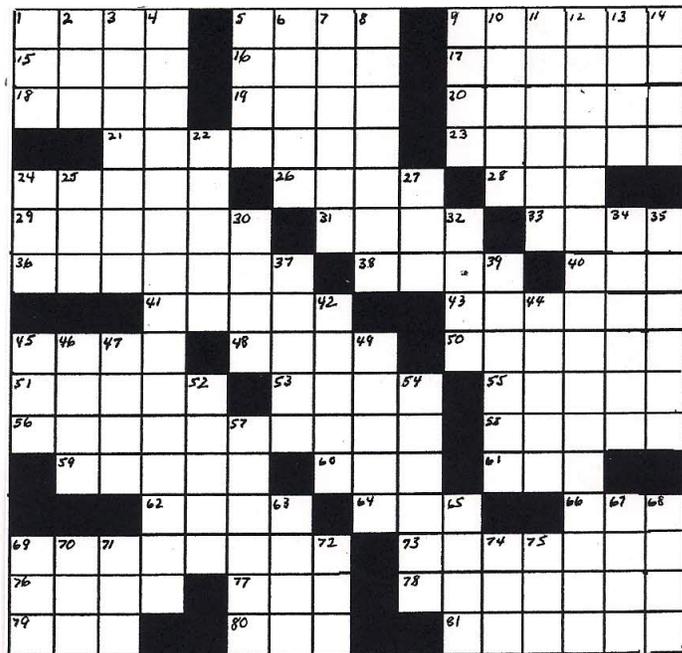
Here, two Spicebush Swallow-tails and a Zebra Swallow-tail are also sipping the moisture from the wet sand along the river shore.

In the course of researching these butterflies I spoke with Chuck in order to assure correct identification. Chuck said that only the males engage in this behavior of seeking specialized nutrients in wet places. Apparently, the males need the nutrients for sperm production. Which of course helps guarantee another generation of these amazing creatures. Be sure to come to the meeting on Monday, June 17th, to learn more.

*David Hartgrove*

Chapter member, Eileen Pazos, enjoys puns, puzzles and the English language. She combines all three interests by creating crossword puzzles. This month she provided a special feature for The Pelican by creating a crossword puzzle containing clues relating to birds specifically and to nature in general (with just enough "filler" clues to ensure that all the answers fit together.) Print a copy and try your hand at solving the puzzle. Answers will appear in next month's Pelican. Ed.

## GOOD WORDS FOR BIRDS



### ACROSS

- 1 Female of the species, colorwise
- 5 Kagan or Ginsburg's garb
- 9 Long-toed, lily pad walker
- 15 \_\_\_ war
- 16 Jack in the pulpit type plant
- 17 Protective tooth covering
- 18 Where Muscat is
- 19 "\_\_\_, Feathers and Death" (Wolk book)
- 20 River in SW FL that's a top location for bird watching
- 21 Wandering or gray-tailed \_\_\_
- 23 Menagerie occupant, perhaps
- 24 "Common" marsh bird
- 26 What hawks and kites do best
- 28 Kind of protein
- 29 Coal miners' bird
- 31 Freudian \_\_\_
- 33 Sci. dealing with biodiversity
- 36 How some like their eggs
- 38 Ste. Jeanne \_\_\_
- 40 \_\_\_ we there yet?
- 41 "Chicken Little" et. al.
- 43 Ahmadinejad et. al.
- 45 \_\_\_ Le Pew (cartoon skunk)
- 48 Church rows
- 50 TV spokelizard, et. al.
- 51 Pile up
- 53 Anti-fur group
- 55 Central part of plant stem
- 56 Hooded waterfowls
- 58 Cop's stunner
- 59 Internet source of wildlife videos

- 60 Place
- 61 Retired flier
- 62 \_\_\_ lamp
- 64 Vietnamese New Year
- 66 "Golden Age" film studio
- 69 Part of a duck's wing
- 73 Rump
- 76 Bird parasites
- 77 Modern greeting or gesture
- 78 Vacant acre for a game?
- 79 Ending with Mao or Tao
- 80 Ornith. Org.
- 81 Birds smaller than "lessers"

### DOWN

- 1 Dental health plan
- 2 Male sheep
- 3 Mallard's "tribe" (Lat.)
- 4 Famously named seabirds
- 5 White waters conveyance
- 6 Grad student hurdles
- 7 red-tailed or red-shouldered hawks' family
- 8 FL Keys Cuban \_\_\_
- 9 Safari vehicle
- 10 \_\_\_ fabalis (sci. name for the bean goose)
- 11 \_\_\_ egret (common in FL)
- 12 Rusty-backed falcons common throughout USA
- 13 Russian river
- 14 Thanks \_\_\_

- 22 \_\_\_ firma
- 24 \_\_\_Engineers (Ormond-based eng./construction co. concerned with conservation)
- 25 Casual turndown
- 27 Coastal inlet
- 30 Sound from a litter
- 32 Prude
- 34 Its nest is a basket
- 35 \_\_\_ Yellowlegs
- 37 Orca's domain (with the)
- 39 Pileated woodpeckers have big ones
- 42 Chimney \_\_\_
- 44 Play the role of
- 45 Cooking spray
- 46 Big bird from Down Under (var.)
- 47 Section
- 49 It might be part of a mating ritual
- 52 \_\_\_ Point. Great FL birding area at Wekiva River sanctuary
- 54 Fall flowers
- 57 Mountain bluebird state
- 63 Stately steed
- 65 Blue or green-winged \_\_\_
- 67 Red or Great \_\_\_ (sandpiper family bird)
- 68 Doppler imaging med. Tests
- 69 FL Keys black cuckoo
- 70 Greek letters
- 71 Old communications giant
- 72 Wellness facility
- 74 Chem. Ending
- 75 Info on a vitamin pill bottle

*A Special Thanks To Our Sponsors*

**Florida Power & Light, Garden Club of the Halifax Country,  
The Ormond Beach Garden Club and Colonial Colony**

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**Our mailing address is PO Box 166 Daytona Beach, FL 32115-0166**

**Our website is [www.halifaxriveras.org](http://www.halifaxriveras.org) For information on upcoming field trips, etc.**

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