

The Pelican

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

Volume 60-No.7 Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon
January, 2015



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thoughts from on High

So, what's new for 2015? NOAA recently announced a final agreement for Amendment 7 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS Fisheries Plan: Bluefin Tuna Management. Read more about this subject elsewhere in this issue.

Connie Mahon, Audubon Policy Office, Director, Grassroots Outreach, sent us a copy of the final letter addressed to and personally delivered to Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell, commending the Department of Interior for recognizing the urgent need for rapid, meaningful, landscape-scale sage-grouse conservations actions. National Audubon Society led the way by first identifying iconic sage habitats in Wyoming. Working with the State of Wyoming, NAS showed how saving this habitat is good for all sage-dependent species, not just for sage-grouse. The letter is signed by 160 NAS Chapters from 35 states (including HRA, SEVAS and 11 other chapters from Florida), which together represent 96,048 members. In addition to laying out a plan of recommended actions, the letter recognizes that all stakeholders should be welcomed in the decision making process before the USFWS makes its final determination in September 2015.

Jonathan Steverson, Executive Director of the Northwest Florida Water Management District, was appointed by Gov. Scott as Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, replacing Herschel Vinyard who resigned in late November after serving for four years. Following confirmation by Cabinet members, Secretary Steverson and his staff will take a major role in implementation of Amendment 1, the constitutional measure passed in the November 2014 election which earmarks one-third of the revenue from document stamp revenue to be spent on water and land conservation and preservation. Audubon Florida supports the appointment of Mr. Steverson.

Best wishes to everyone for a safe, healthy, successful and happy New Year. If you are looking for something "new" for 2015, please attend an upcoming HRA monthly meeting, field trip or community project.

Paula Wehr

Welcome To Our New and Returning Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new and returning members: Joan Asnip, Geraldine Babbitts, Kathleen Brown, Anne Burns, Betty Butcher, Cynthia Humphrey, Theodore Konovitch, John Morris, Leslie Nixon, Carolyn Riley, Paul Ross, Dan Spangler and Carole Zink. We hope to see you at an upcoming meeting or on one of our excellent field trips.

Calendar & Events

Monday, January 26, 2015- Program Meeting: "Birding with Greg Miller". Join us on Monday evening, January 26, when Greg Miller, "one of the guys" from The Big Year will talk about his adventures in birding. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. at Sica Hall, 1065 Daytona Avenue, Holly Hill. Our speaker begins at 7:00 p.m. A brief business meeting follows. **NOTE: The January meeting is held on the 4th Monday (not the usual 3rd Monday) due to the MLK holiday.**

Friday, Jan. 9th- Merritt Island NWR Join us for a trip to MINWR to see the wealth of birdlife there in winter. Meet at 7:00 am in the Target parking lot, behind Panera Bread on Dunlawton Ave. east of I-95. Bring lunch for a picnic. Questions? Call David Hartgrove, 386-788-2630 or e-mail: birdman9@earthlink.net

Wednesday, Jan. 14th- Gull Watch Each winter the beach in Daytona Beach Shores hosts the largest concentration of gulls in the western hemisphere. Join us to learn more about gull identification and witness this magnificent natural spectacle. Meet at 3:30 pm at Frank Rendon Park, 2705 S. Atlantic Ave. in Daytona Beach Shores. Questions? Call David Hartgrove, 386-788-2630 or e-mail: birdman9@earthlink.net

Friday, Jan. 16th- Marlbed Flats This property is owned by St Johns River Water Management District and includes both oak hammock and wet prairie. So there's a slight chance for damp feet. We'll walk at least 1.5 miles and see a variety of species. Bring lunch and meet at International Square behind the Krystal Restaurant on Int'l Speedway Blvd., east of I-95. Questions? Call David Hartgrove, 386-788-2630 or e-mail: birdman9@earthlink.net

* * * * *

Field Trips With Others

Our sister chapters, the West Volusia Audubon Society and the Southeast Volusia Audubon Society, both have an extensive offering of field trips. Below are links to their field trip schedules. The [WVAS schedule](#) includes a Saturday trip to Lake Apopka lead by Harry Robinson. The [SEVAS schedule](#) also has some Saturday trips listed for those of you unable to attend weekday offerings.

* * * * *

Chances To Volunteer And Make A Difference

Volusia County offers us a variety of opportunities to volunteer and make a difference in our community and its environmental heritage. The [Marine Science Center](#) and the [Marine Discovery Center](#) both have extensive volunteer programs and they give training to help you help make a positive contribution to our area. You can help with bird rehab at the MSC or help restore wetlands at the MDC. There are lots of other opportunities at these locations to. Take a positive step in the New Year and get involved. You'll be glad you did.

Conservation Notes

The failure of the launch of an Antares rocket off Wallops Island, VA on October 28th may have dealt a death blow to Space Florida's plans for a new and completely unnecessary launch facility in Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge at what's called the Shiloh Site. The Antares rocket that was lost uses a relatively harmless kerosene/liquid oxygen fuel for its first stage. Its second stage booster however is powered by the solid fuel nitrogen tetroxide. This is some very dangerous stuff. Suppose there was an active Shiloh Site in operation and a similar accident occurred. That second stage full of nitrogen tetroxide could have been blown up over Mosquito Lagoon dumping this toxic substance into the area that produces our seafood. On July 24th, 1975, three American astronauts were injured when an accidental leak of a tiny amount of nitrogen tetroxide occurred in their space craft as it prepared for reentry. One astronaut was rendered unconscious and all three spent 14 days in the hospital with chemically induced pneumonia. Let's hope that 2015 brings an end to this project.

* * *

Another project further south is still in the long range planning stage but could have profound impacts to the Everglades. A new airport in Hendry County northwest of Lake Okeechobee could become the hub for all kinds of perishable cargo that now arrives from points south into Miami International Airport. "Airglades" is the name for now and it could provide hundreds if not thousands of jobs in an area sorely in need of economic stimulus. Of course there will impacts to the environment but if done with sensitivity to the unique location, this could be a positive project. Time will tell.

* * *

Information from e-bird entries and a [report](#) from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology indicate that we may be in for another invasion of Snowy Owls this winter. So far a number of owls that were captured last winter and fitted with solar powered data loggers have suddenly been heard from as they arrive within range of cell phone towers again. One female that was tagged last year has already shown up in Delaware. Technological developments of the past 20 years have revolutionized bird study and these new data loggers give ornithologists information they could only dream of a short time ago.

* * *

Finally, the election in November gave a reason to celebrate as a whopping 75% of Florida voters approved Amendment One. Now we have to see how the Legislature deals with the issue since there's still room for all kinds of chicanery on their part. It should be simple. The people spoke with their votes in support of the ideals embodied in the text of the Amendment. Unfortunately, past experience shows us that there are those in the Legislature whose contempt for the electorate can be easily measured by the wealth in their campaign accounts. Much of that contributed by those who are more interested in quick profits than in quality of life or a sustainable environment.

* * *

One of my favorite films on the subject of Florida and its environmental battles is called "Sunshine State". Written and directed by John Sayles, and starring Timothy Hutton, Edie Falco, Angela Bassett and others it delivers a story that's both funny and serious. It's one of the last screen performances by comedian, Alan King, and his brief appearances offer acidly funny excerpts. Released in 2002, it's available from Netflix and in our local libraries. Here's wishing you all a very Happy New Year from our entire board in Halifax River Audubon.

David Hartgrove

NOAA Announces Amendment 7 Rule Finalized

After [many years of development](#), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service recently released implementing regulations for Final Amendment 7 to the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan.

The [Amendment 7 Final Rule](#) for the U.S. Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery includes a suite of management measures that work together to protect areas of high bluefin abundance, significantly reduce and control incidental catch of bluefin overall, and improve data collection and monitoring of the U.S. Atlantic bluefin fishery. The only real downside to the rule is that the agency is also providing the surface longline fishery with additional bluefin quota at the expense of other more selective fisheries.

NOAA Fisheries has created a strong and balanced Final Rule that will reduce the waste of bluefin and support the long-term sustainability of the U.S. Atlantic bluefin fishery. This Pew [web feature](#) provides a quick overview of the rule and why it's such a big step forward. A summary document outlining key measures included in the rule and the deadlines for their implementation is available online at <http://ow.ly/FfvZh>

Cameron Jaggard

Note from HRA President: Cameron Jaggard, Sr. Associate, US Oceans, at The Pew Charitable Trusts (and our speaker in September 2014) states that this victory would not have been possible without the support of Halifax River Audubon and other chapters around the state.

* * * * *

New Signs Along Central Park Trails

On Thursday, December 11, 2014, the City of Ormond Beach held the official ceremony for the bird identification signs installed along G.F. Althouse Trail in Central Park. Chuck Tague worked with Ms. Meri Albert's second grade gifted class at Pine Trail Elementary School to create these signs. They complement the plant identification signs which were created by the 2013 gifted class and installed last year. Chuck will continue working with the class next year to create additional interpretive signs.



Designed to withstand the elements, here's one of the signs.

* * * * *

Old Birds and Birders

A recent issue of Audubon magazine profiled Chandler Robbins, a long time researcher in bird population dynamics. Here's a [link](#) to an online article about a bird he banded in 1956 on the island of Midway. Thanks to board member, Marion Monaghan for sending out this information. *Ed.*

Below is another in the series "Everyday Birding"

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

Text and photos by Ray Scory

Time stands still when you look at a Wood Stork. No jerky movements here, no dashing about. Just stationary, like a royal guard at the entrance to Buckingham Palace. Unpretentious, reminds me of an old-timer sitting on a park bench just watching the world go by. A bird of deep wisdom appears the stoic Wood Stork. Yes, I can look at this bird and see a prehistoric creature, standing four feet erect, snow white with a long, eleven inch gray beak extending down from a featherless gray face and head. Expressionless.

I stop in my tracks to watch this bird, to observe a beautiful moment. One of tranquillity. A time when beauty and wonder fill my thoughts. I wonder at the thrill of past experiences, the closeness of loved ones, friends, surprises, adventures, accomplishments and awareness. A high speed progression of images flash through my mind. I am in a different space - short in time but long in memories. Yes, all this because of the sighting of a Wood Stork.

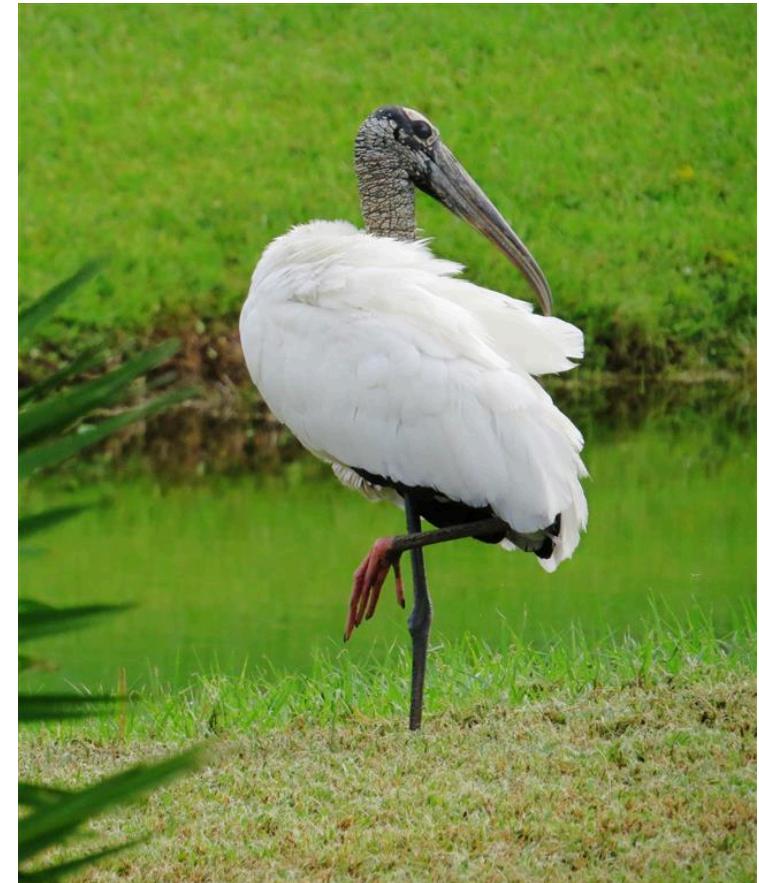
The Wood Stork inhabits a wide range of locations on our planet, but only breeds in the USA. It ranges in the western Hemisphere from Canada to lower parts of South America, mainly residing along all of coastal Mexico, our lower southern states up to the bottom edge of North Carolina. Wood Stork sightings have been numerous throughout the United States but they save Florida for raising their family. The Wood Stork is a full time breeding resident of Florida. Their nesting area is normally near water where they favor high trees in a cypress swamp. They breed late in winter to take advantage of the lack of rain. As the pond and swamps diminish in size the fish are concentrated into smaller quarters making it easier to capture them and feed their young. It is estimated that a family of four needs four hundred pounds of fish during one breeding season.

I have followed three Florida scientists into an active breeding Wood Stork site in Florida to study their breeding behavior. The place was a fortress. High cypress trees topped with large shabby stick nests and knee high water dominated my impression of the place. The water was shoe polish brown in color making it impossible to see to the bottom, which was covered by broken, submerged branches, knocked down trees and soft spongy plant material. The fear of falling was always present during this treacherous, slippery walk. The Wood Stork will travel 50 miles to gather food and has been observed flying as high as 6000 feet. After such energetic activity, the Wood Stork needs a rest and they do so in an unique and singular fashion. They simply squat vertically down collapsing their legs accordion style. While it may look comical and uncomfortable, it must not be. I have seen them resting this way for long periods of time without moving. The Wood Stork is a unique waterbird deserving its time honored existence.

* * * * *

Join Florida Nature Tours In The Dry Tortugas

Our friends at [Florida Nature Tours](#) have an ambitious schedule set for Spring of 2015. There will be four trips out to the Dry Tortugas (one is already sold out) and one South Florida land tour that can be coupled with one of the Tortugas trips. Cost is \$1195.00 per person for 4 days in paradise. Our boat, the MV Spree, is perhaps the finest craft sailing out of Key West. It's clean as a pin and the food will have you begging for the recipes. And, if you don't want to drive back after being on the water all day, you can sleep aboard the boat the night we return, saving you another hotel bill. Click on the link above for all of the information.



Adult Wood Stork photo by Ray Scory



Resting in a position that only they use photo by Ray Scory

* * * * *

Audubon Adventures For Our Local Schools

Audubon Adventures is a wonderful program that 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. Please specify on your check that your donation is for Audubon Adventures. And thank you!

HRA Goes To Cuba

As many of you know, our chapter sponsored a birding trip to Cuba. Fourteen people met in Miami at a Sleep Inn on the night of November 30th. We had arranged to leave our cars there instead of the airport parking lot. The following morning we flew off to Havana. Walking out into the parking lot at the Havana airport was like walking onto a used car lot in 1960. There were Packards, Hudsons, Mercurys and even Edsels everywhere. All dating from the late 40's through the 50's and early 60's. I'll be putting together a presentation about our trip for future exhibition at one of our meetings. For now, here are a couple of the birds we saw.

David Hartgrove



The Red-legged Thrush in a tree outside our first hotel.



A young male Bee Hummingbird. That wire is slightly thicker than the diameter of a number 2 pencil.



The Blue-headed Quail Dove all photos by David Hartgrove

Classifieds

We have another quality optical offering this month. The Nikon ED III A is an excellent scope. This one comes with a 20x30x38 wide angle eye piece, a Manfrotto tripod and fluid, quick release head. The asking price is 1150.00. Contact Chris Reinhart by e-mail at ChrisReinhart@gmail.com



Nikon ED III A scope w/ wide angle eye piece and tripod

It's Time For The Birding Festivals

Beginning this month it's the largest birding festival in the country and it's just 35 miles south of us in Titusville. The **Space Coast Birding & Wildlife Festival** begins on Wednesday, January 21st and runs through Monday, January 26th. Here's a [link](#) to their website. The Festival headquarters, at Eastern Florida State College, on US 1 in Titusville, is *the* place to look for birding optics, information on birding tours and the not to be missed Raptor Project. Every year Jonathan Wood brings an awesome collection of owls, falcons and hawks and you're right there with them. The address is 1311 North U.S. 1, Titusville, FL.

In February, Palm Coast will host its first ever birding festival. "Birds of a Feather Fest" will run from Friday, February 6th through Sunday, February 8th. Here's a [link](#) to their website. Headquarters for the festival will be at the Hilton Garden Inn at 55 Town Center Boulevard in Palm Coast. There will be field trips, presentations and talks and Greg Miller will deliver the keynote address. Please come out to support this new festival here in our area.

Finally, down in Hendry County, it's the Big "O" Birding Festival. The Big "O" refers to Lake Okeechobee, our state's largest fresh water lake and one of the largest in the US. The Big "O" Festival has field trips guaranteed to please and with some birds we rarely, if ever, see in this area. Birds like Snail Kite, Purple Swamphen and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher are seen regularly down there. Here's a [link](#) to their site. It's well worth the trip down.

David Hartgrove

A Special Thanks To Our Sponsors

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

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

Our website is www.halifaxriveras.org For information on upcoming field trips, etc.

Contact Our Board Members

Office	Name	Home Phone	E-Mail
President	Paula Wehr	673-5332	paulawehr@cfl.rr.co
Vice President	John Roessler	255-9826	birdman3651@bellsouth.net
Treasurer	Rachel Ramsey	673-1037	gmmamimi@cfl.rr.com
Corresponding Sec.	Karen Mosher	322-3790	frederickmosher@att.net
Recording Sec.	Peggy Yokubonus	673-7619	pyokubonus@cfl.rr.com
Membership Sec.	John Carr	255-9360	jcarr14@gmail.com
Historian	John Carr	255-9360	jcarr14@gmail.com
Past President	David Hartgrove	788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net
At Large 2014	Renate Calero	761-8179	renate_c@hotmail.com
At Large 2014	Marion Monaghan	760-2747	nautilus411@aol.com
At Large 2015	Karen Moser	322-3790	frederickmosher@att.net
At Large 2015	Holly Zwart-Duryea	672-8788	hollis1000@aol.com
At Large 2016	Deborah Green	407-625-1390	greenmermaid55@att.net
At Large 2016	Dan Gribbin	760-8226	bluzeman1@hotmail.com

Committee Members

Committee	Name	Home Phone	E-Mail
Bird ID Class	Ray Scory	763-4260	colors@cfl.rr.com
Conservation	David Hartgrove	788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net
Education	Marion Monaghan	760-2747	nautilus411@aol.com
Field Trips	Holly Zwart-Duryea	672-8788	hollis1000@aol.com
Field Trips	Chuck Tague	412-841-8813	kingsrail@mac.com
	Joan Tague	253-1166	babyowl@mac.com
Newsletter Editor	David Hartgrove	788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net or hrapelican11@earthlink.net
Welcome	Jari Arbogast	761-2283	arbofish@att.net
Webmaster	Paula Wehr	673-5332	paulawehr@cfl.rr.com