

The Pelican

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

Volume 62-Number 8 Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon
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The President's Message

Thoughts and Concepts

As promised last month, here's the rest of my column on birding related gear and supplies.

If you wish to learn more about bird sounds there appears to be a number of apps available. I will mention a few that I have come across in the Apple app store. [Bird Calls: 4500 Bird Sounds](#), [Bird Songs](#), [Bird-Identification & Bird Guide](#) is free and claims to provide an incredible amount of info. Bird Sounds-Great for Bird Watchers is by Michael Novak and may be worth looking into. [Bird Song Id USA Automatic Recognition and Reference by Mullen and Poland](#) has some excellent reviews. It has a quiz component that really appeals to several of the reviewers. [Chirp! Bird Song USA](#) has been around for sometime and has a loyal following. It gets good marks for its ease of use and gets very positive comments about both its photographs and organizational layout.

The number of birding reference guides that have gone digital is staggering. I will mention some of the better known ones and don't want anyone to think that this list is all inclusive. [Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion](#) is a decade old and considered by many as one of the classic birding books. It is now available for Ibook and Kindle and can be no further away from us than your smartphone. The [National Geographic Birds: Field Guide to North America](#) is a favorite of many, including me. It is very comprehensive, with 995 species. All species have one to three illustrations and a map. The majority have sound recordings. The layout is clean and easy to follow. I guess we would expect nothing less from National Geographic. The [Sibley eGuide to the Birds of North America](#) is another classic that commands a loyal following. The [Audubon Bird eGuide](#) is well structured and has wonderful illustrations. What else would you expect? It is divided into several sections that assist in finding birds, recording sightings and keeping lists. It has a FAQ section, a tutorial and a guide to other apps. The [Peterson Field Guide](#) has a bird search, browse birds and sightings section. It is easy to use and a very popular digital reference guide.

You might be surprised to see the number of digital guides that are geographically specific. Ecuador, Europe, Columbia. Cuba, Ireland, Central Park(as in New York City), the United Kingdom, Venezuela, Australia, Switzerland, East Africa, Peru, Germany, the Netherlands, the Indian subcontinent, and Vietnam each have digital birding reference guides listed in the Apple app store.

Let me mention that these wonderfully comprehensive eGuides require significant amounts of memory. If you are planning to purchase a new smartphone or computer please keep this in mind.

Continued on the next page

Calendar & Events

Just a reminder that we're on our annual summer hiatus. So we don't have any field trips planned until after Labor Day. The new Field Trip list will be published next month. However, there are other options from our partners in Volusia County and here are some of them. **Please be sure to register for these events** by calling 386-736-5927.

Tuesday, August 16th, 9:00 to 11:00 am Paddling Adventure-Bring a canoe, kayak or SUP for a leisurely paddling trip down Spruce Creek. Learn about estuary and marsh ecosystems, along with a variety of information about the biodiversity of these important habitats. Participants must have Kayak/Canoe/SUP, life preserver and whistle. Meet at 9:00 am for this 2 hour adventure. Meet at 2317 Creek Shore Trail, NSB, FL 32168.

Saturday, August 20th, 9:00 to 11:00 am Guided Hike - Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve. Estuaries are home to unique plant and animal communities that have adapted to brackish waters. LEC and Explore Volusia staff will guide you on a hike through parts of beautiful Doris Leeper Preserve. Fish, bird, and plant species identification will be part of the focus of this adventure that will include the opportunity to seine net in Rose Bay. Program participants are recommended to wear long pants, closed toed shoes water shoes/rubber boots. This program is limited to 20 program participants and pre-registration is required. Please meet staff at the following address, 3251 N. Dixie Highway, New Smyrna Beach, FL. 32168.

Tuesday, August 23rd, 9:00 to 11:00 am Bicycle trail ride from Green Springs Park. Participants will ride the first segment of the East Central Regional Rail Trail from Green Springs to State Road 415 and back while experiencing the natural world along the way. All ages and abilities are welcome, please note this is an 11.4 mile round trip. Bicycle helmets are required. Meet at Green Springs Park, 994 Enterprise-Osteen Road, Enterprise.

Tuesday, August 30th, 9:00 to 11:30 am Guided hike at Smyrna Dunes Park. Explore Smyrna Dunes Park with staff members to learn about the wonders of the dune systems and importance of the ecosystem. Experts will also inform participants on sea turtles, and estuaries. Meet at 2995 N Peninsula Ave, NSB, 32169. Registered participants will receive a parking pass for the park.

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And For Those Seeking An Air Conditioned Experience

"The Birds of North America" was once a multi volume set of reference works that no serious amateur ornithologist could be without. A number of years ago it went online and provides an invaluable data base through a subscription service. It's recently been upgraded and is currently available free to anyone. Here's a link to this outstanding resource, [Birds of North America Online](#).

Conservation Notes

I recently wrote a letter to the editor of the Daytona Beach News-Journal. It wasn't published, probably because in it I suggested that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection consider a name change to the Department of Environmental Prostitution. What else can anyone think when the regulatory agency we count on to "protect" the environment openly calls for increasing the amount of toxic chemicals allowed in Florida's waters?

A letter written on behalf of the Environmental Council of Volusia & Flagler Counties to DEP Secretary, Jonathan Steverson, on the subject went unanswered. I refrained from suggesting a name change for the Department in that one. He and his agency are just responding to orders from our corrupt governor. Rick Scott, in his continuing campaign to wreck Florida's environment for the sake of quick profits for his friends, has made sure the Environmental Regulatory Commission is an industry friendly board. By state law the Commission is supposed to have seven members, one of whom is to be from the environmental community and one from a local government entity. Those two positions have been left vacant on purpose so that the remaining five members could more easily be whipped into line and vote the way the governor and his cronies desire.

Some of the chemicals the DEP has suggested we should drink more of include benzene and perchloroethylene. The latter is the chemical responsible for the cluster of cancers that hit the Marine Base at Camp LeJeune several years ago. Benzene's harmful effects have been documented time and again. The new rules will allow 3 times what was allowed under the old rule. Knowing this was going to be a contentious meeting that would garner adverse publicity, the governor's staff moved the date of the meeting up to July 26th from sometime in the Fall. The 26th was the same day a big meeting in Martin County was scheduled dealing with the toxic discharges of algae laden waters from Lake Okeechobee. By rescheduling the ERC meeting in Tallahassee to the same day as the one in Martin County the staff assured that the forces against the governor's plan would be divided. When your sleazy policies are going to screw the public in such a profound way you want to make sure opposition and publicity are kept to a minimum.

In what has to be one of the most disingenuous statements ever made by a regulatory administrator, DEP Deputy Secretary Drew Bartlett said the rule-making was, "very emotional, but we needed to get it done for Floridians." "The only thing we do is we take the science, we try to figure out how to use the science to best protect Floridians," Bartlett said, responding to criticism of the department. "That's exactly what we did here." How we as Floridians will be better protected by having higher amounts of carcinogens in our drinking water and in the locally harvested fish and shellfish we consume remains to be explained.

Now, if you're the governor and your campaign has been receiving generous contributions from the fracking industry chomping at the bit to start drilling, you might consider increasing the allowable limits of these chemicals since they're the same ones used in the toxic drilling compounds. When this was suggested at several meetings held around the state before the vote the DEP folks said there was absolutely no connection. And if you believe that I have a friend who has a bridge he'd like to sell.

As it happens July 26th was also the date of the meeting here in South Daytona to receive public comments about the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's proposal to declare Rookery Island a "Critical Wildlife Area." Doing so will allow the erection of signs closing off the island to humans and their dogs. Our chapter has long worked for this and we're happy to see it come about.

David Hartgrove

Too many of us have simply run out of memory with computers only a couple of years old. Spend the money to ensure that you have sufficient memory. My intent with this article was simply to introduce to you the amazing digital world that is available to those interested in birds and nature. It is indeed a very exciting world of technology that we have available to us.

I want to remind everyone that we do not meet in July and August. Therefore our next meeting will be September 19, 2016. Our scheduled speaker is Dr. Paul Gray, a Florida Audubon staff member. Paul lives and works in the Everglades area of our state and will enlighten us on the challenges facing this important part of Florida. He is a great speaker and I hope you will be with us. Have a wonderful summer.

Jim O'Shaughnessy

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Audubon Adventures Needs Your Help

Yes, that means we need your money. Supplying Volusia County schools classrooms with [Audubon Adventures](#) is a major HRA project. The cost to supply one classroom with this exceptional educational material is \$45.00. Please donate what you can to this special project. School will resume on August 15th and we want to make sure we're ready when they are. Please make your generous check payable to HRA and designate it's for Audubon Adventures. And Thank You!

*Marion Monaghan & Holly Zwart-Duryea
Chapter Education Co-Chairs*

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Welcome To Our New Members

Teachers whose classes receive Audubon Adventures also receive membership in our chapter. As a result we have a bigger list of new and returning members than usual. We extend a warm welcome to Ann Anderson, Geraldine Babbitts, Debbie Bastion, Laura Bloom, Kathryn Brother, Elizabeth Burns, Danny Cain, Ralina Campbell, Carol Colucci, Melissa Koenke, Michael Dresner, Susan Fitzgerald, Susan Fox, H.L. Funkhouser, Pam Goeman, Randal Green, Joe Hamilton, Carolyn Hoffman, Tina Jacobs, Sally Kriegsman, Jennifer Lastinger, Amber McAndrew, Sunnie Merrell, Deon Myers, Robert Neetz, Barbara Northrup, Leticia Roman, Jenna Schul, Donna Sheean, Monica Sherwin, Jennifer Smith, Deborah Treur, Steve waterman, Janet Wells and James Yates. We hope to see you at our chapter meetings, which resume again next month, on September 19th, or on one of our field trips.

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Audubon's New Birding Travel Map

The folks at Audubon have produced a new map that links you to all sorts of information on birding hot spots around the country. If you're headed to Alaska, Wyoming, Texas or Maine this new [web page](#) has valuable information for helping plan your trip.

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Help In Finding Sweet Honey

Board member and blues player, Dan Gribbin, set along this link to a special story in [The New Yorker](#). Greater Honeyguides (*Indicator indicator*), a bird found over much of Africa, have a sweet tooth themselves but an inability to access bee colonies which are often hidden deep in trees. The local people have the taste for honey but a problem finding it. The two species help each other through a tradition passed down through generations. In different parts of the bird's range a variety of calls are used by humans to elicit the birds' cooperation. Fascinating stuff.

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July Pelagic Trip Report

Birders from 10 states gathered on the dock in New Smyrna Beach at 2:30 am on July 24th for the latest pelagic trip sponsored by the Friends of the Marine Science Center. The seas were calm and the birds cooperative. We saw storm petrels, shearwaters, terns and migrating land birds. The marine mammals stole the show though. *The photos below are by Michael Brothers.*



Here a Wilson's Storm Petrel steps across the water. They are roughly the size of a mockingbird but with longer wings.



A Cory's Shearwater sits on the surface of the Gulfstream.



A Black Tern and a Bridled Tern share a perch at sea.



Here, a pod of Short-finned Pilot Whales we came across.



Looking straight down along side the boat into the blue water of the Gulfstream, a pilot whale mother and calf.



We also released 8 Loggerhead Sea Turtle hatchlings into a sargassum weed line. The next trip is scheduled for Sunday, September 25th. For information, contact [Michael Brothers](#), MSC Director.

photos by David Hartgrove

A Special Thanks To Our Sponsors

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

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

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