

The Pelican

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

Volume 62-Number 10 Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon
October, 2016



The President's Message

Thoughts and Concepts

This is a continuation of my long article on information gleaned from the book, "THE BIRDER'S HANDBOOK, A Field Guide To The Natural History of North American Birds." This book is not a field guide to identification. It's an invaluable reference work on just about any question you could have about birds.

The mating systems used by birds is wonderfully complex and interesting. An estimated 90 percent of all bird species are monogamous. Monogamy is defined as one male mating with one female and forming a "pair bond." This bond may last for a single nesting, an entire breeding season, for several seasons or for life, as is the case with petrels, swans, geese, eagles, and some owls and parrots. It is thought that monogamy evolved in situations where young have a much better chance of surviving if both parents cooperate in rearing them. However, the amount of time and energy invested by monogamous males varies greatly. In some species the male only helps guard the nest until the brood goes out on their own. Levels of male parental investment seem to be higher in many passerines, where males often feed brooding females and assist in feeding the young. In herons and egrets males not only provide food for the young but share in incubation as well.

Polygyny, where one male mates with more than one female, while each female mates with only one male, is thought to be a fundamental mating system of animals. This seems to happen because the gender that produces the larger reproductive cells (eggs) is the female, and the one that produces the smaller (sperm) is the male. Males make a smaller investment in the embryos that result from the fusion of egg and sperm cells. The difference is particularly pronounced in birds, since the sperm is so tiny and the egg relatively gigantic. Therefore the male puts little effort into any single embryo whereas the female has a much greater stake since she can produce few eggs in her lifetime. It might therefore seem that polygyny would be the fundamental mating system for birds. Most birds, however, are monogamous. It seems that both parents must help to rear the young if the adults are going to have much chance of leaving genes to posterity. Why a few species practice polygyny is not completely understood.

I'm sure you have always wanted to know how adult birds make baby birds. Interestingly, the testes of birds vary greatly in size with the seasons. During the breeding season they may be several hundred times larger than they are during the rest of the year. Enlarged testes secrete greater amounts of male hormones and stimulate singing and courtship behavior. During copulation, the male mounts the female from behind. Both sexes hold their tails to the side so that contact can be made by their cloacas.

Continued on the next page

Calendar & Events

Monday, October 17th- Program Meeting: Michael Brothers, Director of the Marine Science Center, will give a presentation on the geologic history of Volusia County. This promises to be a fascinating presentation that you won't want to miss. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. at Sica Hall, 1065 Daytona Avenue, Holly Hill. The presentation begins at 7:00 p.m. A brief business meeting follows.

* * * * *

Field Trips

Friday, October 14th, Washington Oaks Gardens State Park- We'll meet at the [park](#) at 8:00 am and join Peggy Yokubonus as the group looks for migrant warblers and other species in the park and then head north to Matanzas Inlet to look for shorebirds. Lunch will be at one of the restaurants along A1A. Questions? Call Peggy at 386-316-4085.

Sunday, October 16th, Dunlawton Bridge- Meet Ray Scory at the [bridge](#) at 4:00 pm for this pleasant afternoon walk as we view all of the wading and seabirds on Rookery Island and in the area. This is one of the best and most accessible hot spots in our area. Questions? Call Ray at 386-763-4260.

* * * * *

Field Trips With Others

Saturday, October 8th- Join our friends from Flagler Audubon Society for the first of their monthly bird walks. This one will go to [Graham Swamp](#). Meet there at 8:00 am, 1125 S. Old Kings Rd. Palm Coast, 32137. Questions? Call Frank Quinn, 386-225-5101.

"Explore Volusia" with Volusia County Environmental Mgmt.

Friday, October 7th, Guided Hike, Wiregrass Preserve- Join Trey Hannah and take a hike of the wonderful 1,400-acre Wiregrass Prairie Preserve, which is situated almost entirely in the St. Johns River Valley. Explore upland and wetland natural communities that include wet flatwoods, cypress domes, and wet prairies. Learn about land management practices while hiking the diverse ecotones of the land. Meet at [1751 Lopez Road, Osteen](#) at 9:00 am for this 2 hour hike. Be sure to call 386-736-5927 to register for this event. Do Not try to use your car's GPS to locate this address.

Saturday, October 29th, Eco Buggy/Hike Longleaf Preserve- Take a riding trip through Longleaf Pine Preserve, which includes 12,000 acres of natural communities of flatwoods, cypress domes and swamps. In some areas there is an understory of saw palmetto, gallberry and seasonal wildflowers. Meet at the east entrance, [4551 Pioneer Trail, New Smyrna Beach](#). This event is brought to you by the good folks at the Lyonia Environmental Learning Center. Be sure to register by calling 386-789-7207.

A single copulation is usually sufficient to fertilize the eggs laid over a period of about a week. In some birds the sperm remains viable for much longer. Turkeys have been reported to lay eggs more than two months after copulation.

This amazing book is available at the Visitor's Center at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, where your expenditure will do a lot of good. It's also available through retail outlets and on Amazon. Treat yourself to this informative volume and you'll be glad you did for years to come.

Jim O'Shaughnessy

* * * * *

Memorial Plaque For Chuck Tague Unveiled

On Saturday, September 3rd, a small dedication ceremony was held at the Ormond Beach Environmental Discovery Center on Division Street in honor of Chuck Tague. The board voted to donate a Screech Owl box. There is also, a plaque with a picture and description of the Eastern Screech Owl, and a picture of Chuck. We extend our sincere thanks to the City of Ormond Beach and Stefan Sibley, who was instrumental in getting this project completed. They donated the plaque and manpower for the installation. Stop by to see it when you get a chance. Photos are to the right. The quote on Chuck's plaque (one of his favorites) is from Joseph Campbell. It says, "The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with nature."

Celine Sullivan

* * * * *

Audubon Adventures Needs Your Help

Yes, that means we need your money. Supplying Volusia County school classrooms with [Audubon Adventures](#) is a major HRA project. The cost to supply one classroom with this exceptional educational material is \$46.00. Please donate what you can to this special project. We are currently serving forty five teachers in sixteen schools. Make your generous check payable to HRA and designate it's for Audubon Adventures. And Thank You!

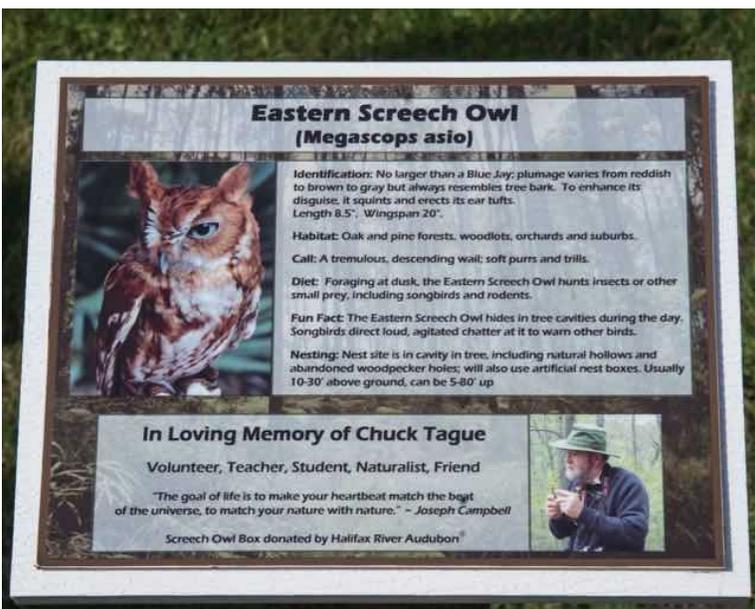
Chapter Education Co-Chair, Marion Monaghan

* * * * *

Due to some recurring problems at the membership desk at National Audubon, we were unable to include new members in last month's issue of the Pelican.

We Welcome Our New & Returning Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new and renewing members. Some of whom are teachers whose classes receive Audubon Adventures: Ann Anderson, Geraldine Babbitts, Debbie Bastion, Laura Bloom, Kathryn Brother, Elizabeth Burns, Danny Cain, Ralina Campbell, Carol Colucci, Sandi DePaul, Michael Dresner, Susan Fitzgerald, Susan Fox, H L Funkhouse, Pam Goeman, Randal Green, Joe Hamilton, Carolyn Hofmann, Tina Jacobs, Melissa Koenke, Sally Kriegsman, Jennifer Lastinger, James Lincoln, Amber McAndrew, Sunnie Merrell, Deon Myers, Robert Neetz, Barbara Northup, Leticia Roman, Jenna Schuld, Donna Sheean, Monica Sherwin, Jennifer Smith, Deborah Treur, Steve Waterman, Janey Wells, and Jamea Yates. We hope to see you at an upcoming meeting or on one of our excellent field trips.



From the top: The assembled crowd, including past and present board members, City of Ormond Beach workers and others. Also the nest box and the memorial plaque.

Photos by Steve Blackledge

Chapter Only Memberships

Membership Chairman John Carr confirmed that he is working through the list of HRA Chapter-Only members and advising them as to when their membership dues should be submitted. He hopes to complete his review and contact everyone within the next few weeks. If you are a Chapter-Only member and haven't yet heard from John, you will hear from him shortly. For the future John plans to institute a process where he will notify Chapter-Only members about one month prior to the date their current membership expires and remind them to renew their membership. If you have questions in the meantime, you can contact John at jcarr14@gmail.com.

Paula Wehr

* * * * *

If a contest were held for best birder in Florida, David Simpson would be right up there at the top of the list. Here's a little taste of why and a link to his [website](#). Editor

September Happenings

September is one of my favorite months. Football begins. I get a year older. The number and variety of fall migrants hit their peak. Here in Florida, migration occurs throughout the year. "Fall" may begin as early as May when the first Purple Martins, perhaps early or failed breeders, start heading south. July 4th is not just Independence Day. Among birders, it is known as the traditional start of shorebird migration. Many shorebirds spend a brief but bountiful summer on the tundra. Some populations winter as far south as the southern tip of South America, so they must be on the move as soon as possible. Once reproduction has been achieved, the adults leave. Youngsters are on their way a little later. The earliest travelers may even arrive in the southern states before July. Other migrants have a more temperate nature. Waterfowl, loons, robins, sparrows, and goldfinches arrive later, mostly November and December. Cedar waxwings are the tardiest of all. Reluctant to move while food is available, the bulk of their numbers may not arrive until February. At the same time, waterfowl start to push north, anticipating the ice melt. Local wintering populations of Northern Parula, are augmented by off-singing new arrivals. The tide of migration ebbs northward.

September sits in the middle of fall migration, capturing a little of everything. In Florida, there are more birds around than any other time of the year. Among the southbound migrants are many new travelers, most only a few months old. Resident bird populations swell as parents encourage their youngsters to find a place of their own.

Songbird migration peaks in late September and early October. For many species, migration is a nocturnal affair, often riding favorable winds that follow cold fronts. Flying in darkness helps avoid predators, but it has its difficulties. Without the benefit of sight, flocks keep together by using flight calls. Find a quiet place on a good flight night and you may hear dozens or even hundreds of "zeets", "chips", and buzzes overhead. With some practice, and the right resources, you might be able to identify who's who. To learn more, check out my new [Flight Calls](#) resources page. Don't be discouraged, even the experts can't recognize them all!

For tips on where to look to look for migrants, check for local hotspots on [eBird](#). Check with clubs like the Audubon Society which often lead local birding trips. Better yet, ask me. I can tell you the best places near you, if you are from Florida! Better still, book a trip with me, and I'll show you in person and give you tips on where, when, and how to find migrants. I hope to see you out there.

David Simpson

Here's another report from Harry Robinson's sea watch at Tom Renick Park, in Ormond By The Sea. Spend a morning with Harry one day and you'll be amazed at what you can learn.

TOM RENICK PARK BIRD COUNTS -AUGUST, 2016

For much of the month conditions were calm and sunny however for the last week there were stronger winds from the east. On the 31st the winds came from the south-west with the occasional shower.

There was a young Brown Booby on the 27th. The last Yellow-crowned Night-Herons (four) were seen on the 7th. Blue-winged Teals were seen from the 5th with a new high count of 248 on the 27th. A single Green-winged Teal flew to the south on the 31st.

Black-necked Stilts were seen occasionally with 15 on the 5th and 12 on the 21st. American Avocets put in their first appearance with one on the 5th and two on the 24th. There were single Solitary Sandpipers on the 7th and 27th. Willets were the feature of the month with very large numbers on the beach; there were 283 on the 7th with 446 on the 20th, then 360 seen on the 21st with 62 on the 31st. A Marbled Godwit flew to the north on the 24th.

It was nice to see Parasitic Jaegers back there was one on the 26th with two on the 28th. There were two Roseate Terns on the 10th with one on the 17th. There were two adult Arctic Terns in breeding plumage on the 27th. Black Terns were seen all month with 81 on the 24th.

The last White-winged Doves (two) were seen on the 3rd. There was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird on the 20th with an Eastern Kingbird on the 21st. Loggerhead Shrikes peaked at three on the 20th. There was a Tree Swallow on the 21st and Bank Swallows peaked at 14 on the 3rd. There were single Cliff Swallows on the 3rd and 6th. Barn Swallows peaked at 1429 on the 5th.

There was a Yellow Warbler on the 10th with a Prairie Warbler on the 3rd. Finally there was a Louisiana Waterthrush on the 5th. Both the Yellow Warbler and the Louisiana Waterthrush were new species. The other two were American Avocet and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

During this month up to 42 species were seen a day and there were 2,581 birds on the 5th. In all during August 87 species were seen during 17 surveys. A total of 171 species have been noted this year with 174 overall for this site.

So what will September bring?

Harry Robinson

* * * * *

Audubon Assembly, Our Annual Gathering

The Audubon Assembly will be held in St Petersburg at the Sirata Beach Resort October 28th and 29th. Field trips, workshops and good food highlight this annual gathering and you know you want to be there. Click this [link](#) for all of the information.

* * * * *

Project Feeder Watch, Citizen Science For All

For some, getting out to participate in all day bird counts is just too taxing on the body. Run by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, [Project Feeder Watch](#) offers every-one, from beginners to experts, a chance to contribute to the knowledge database on our bird populations from the comfort of their kitchen window or easy chair.

* * * * *

Finally, it's a bird eat bird world out there. As this [video](#) graphically shows.

Editor

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**

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	Jim O'Shaughnessy	386-253-0335	jebk75@gmail.com
Vice President	David Hartgrove	386-788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net
Treasurer	Betty Butcher	386-310-8039	bbutcher6@cfl.rr.com
Recording Sec.	Peggy Yokubonus	386-673-7619	pyokubonus@cfl.rr.com
Membership Sec.	John Carr	386-255-9360	jcarr14@gmail.com
Historian	John Carr	386-255-9360	jcarr14@gmail.com
Past President	Paula Wehr	386-673-5332	paulawehr@cfl.rr.com
At Large 2017	Renate Calero	386-761-8179	renate_c@hotmail.com
At Large 2017	Marion Monaghan	7386-60-2747	nautilus411@aol.com
At Large 2018	Holly Zwart-Duryea	386-672-8788	hollis1000@aol.com
At Large 2016	Vacant		
At Large 2016	Dan Gribbin	386-760-8226	bluzeman1@hotmail.com
At Large 2018	Celine Sullivan	386-257-1980	Celinesul@aol.com

Committee Members

Committee	Name	Home Phone	E-Mail
Conservation	David Hartgrove	386-788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net
Education	Marion Monaghan	386-760-2747	nautilus411@aol.com
	Holly Zwart-Duryea	386-672-8788	hollis1000@aol.com
Field Trips	Peggy Yokubonus	386-673-7619	pyokubonus@cfl.rr.com
	David Hartgrove	386-788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net
Newsletter Editor	David Hartgrove	386-788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net or hrapelican11@earthlink.net
Welcome	Jari Arbogast	386-761-2283	arbofish@att.net
Webmaster	David Hartgrove	386-788-2630	birdman9@earthlink.net