

The Pelican

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

Volume 63- Number 7 Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon
July, 2017



The President's Message

Thoughts and Concepts

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Thank you. I am incredibly fortunate to be the incoming President of the Halifax River Audubon chapter, entrusted with helping further a conservation heritage that goes back almost 100 years. It is a great honor and a great responsibility to participate with our leadership and members in carrying out our mission:

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

The dictionary tells us that *stewardship* is the *responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving; the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.*

For me, being a member of Audubon means that I ask myself every day how I can actively help protect and preserve our earth. Its care has been entrusted to me, as it has been to each of us, for the living beings who have no voice and for the future generations who come after us. It also means that I am not alone in my acceptance of this awesome responsibility. Audubon's website explains...*No other conservation organization matches the size, reach, scale, influence, diversity, and creative energy of our chapters, nature centers, volunteer leaders, and partners. At its best, our network has the knowledge and authenticity to care for birds and the places they need in communities across the country.*

Audubon's conservation work is driven by science, advocacy and its vast network. We have the scientific resources to understand the needs of birds and the habitats that support them and other wildlife, and to understand the harms that are done daily to those special creatures and places. We use our voices to educate and as advocates, collectively and individually, to protect the remaining wild places in our own community and beyond. And we can always do more.

As I embark upon my journey as your President, I hope it will be a journey we take together to devote ourselves to being true stewards of our wild places, to find opportunities however small or grand, to preserve the beauty of nature for all living creatures. Thank you.

Melissa Lammers

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"One has only to sit down in the woods or the fields, or by the shore of the river or the lake, and everything of interest will come around to him,- the birds, the animals, the insects..."

John Burroughs, American naturalist and essayist

Calendar & Events

While we're still in our summer hiatus as far as chapter events, there's plenty to do to keep you active...

The Marine Discovery Center- [The Marine Discovery Center](#), in New Smyrna Beach, has a full schedule of activities that are both fun and educational. Guided kayak tours of Brown's Bay and the Indian River Lagoon, full moon boat rides on their 40' pontoon boat as well as day trips around Ponce Inlet and the surrounding area are all available to fit anyone's schedule. Click on the link above and then navigate around the site for all of the information.

Tomoka State Park- [Tomoka State Park](#), in Ormond Beach, is a local treasure with lots to do, even in the heat of summer. Its location on a small peninsula in the Halifax River means it has cool breezes year round. While summer camping in Florida is only for the most adventurous among us, a day hike or picnic under the shade of centuries old oaks is sure to rejuvenate the soul of anyone.

Volusia County Environmental Management- Our County's commitment to the environment runs deep and having spent funds to save portions of it for posterity, they're rightfully proud of what's there and look for ways to engage the public on these lands. Click on this [link](#) and scroll down to the "Upcoming Events" section for all of the details.

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Have you ever wondered what to do when you have a free day? **The Volusia County Parks and Trails app** shows you where to hike, bike, paddle, swim or be a tourist. This free app is available for download on both Android and iPhones.

All the local birding hotspots from the Great Florida Birding Trail are listed, as are trails, paths, museums, springs, ocean parks and more. Navigate through the app by selecting an index icon such as Do, See, Know & Services, which will provide a list of categories. Or navigate by "Guidebooks" which are broken into chapters and sub-chapters. A mapping option gives turn-by-turn directions to the venue selected from wherever the user is at the time. Details about how the app works, with graphics, can be found on the Volusia County website. Click [here](#) for the link on the County's website to download the app or Search for this free app using the Google Play or iPhone App Store icon on your mobile device.

Paula Wehr

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"Of all the classes of animals by which we are surrounded in the ample field of nature, there are none more remarkable in their appearance and habits than the feathered inhabitants of the air."

Thomas Nuttall, English botanist, ornithologist and naturalist

Conservation Notes

President Trump sent out another of his mysterious Tweets the other day. I say mysterious because it's a mystery as to how what he wrote bears any relationship to what he's actually doing. "We're going to have the cleanest water..."

Ever since before he took office he's been whining about how terrible the EPA is and how he couldn't wait to gut the Clean Water Act. In 2015 The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers settled long standing disputes and agreed on which and how water bodies in the US should be cared for. The resulting document was called the Clean Water Rule. Ever since the Clean Water Act was passed in 1972 states and corporations had used various ambiguities in that landmark piece of legislation to avoid cleaning up pollution in water all across the country. Scott Pruitt, Trump's new EPA Administrator and an unprincipled shill for the energy industry, has wasted no time in setting into motion the the process of doing away with the Clean Water Rule. Eighty percent of small business owners, eighty-three percent of hunters and fishermen and eighty percent of the voters nation wide approve of the Clean Water Rule and its goals. One guess as to who's against it.

Yes, it's Big Oil, and Big Ag and states whose legislatures are controlled by right wing groups bent on drilling and damming and mining anywhere they please and to hell with the environmental consequences. Many of us remember seeing the Cuyahoga River burning like mad on television in June of 1969. And this wasn't the first time that river had caught fire. Back then corporations and state and local governments treated our water ways like sewers. Many rivers and streams were devoid of life entirely. In 1970 Cleveland Mayor, Carl Stokes, spoke out and testified in Washington pleading with Congress to do something on the national level since states and local municipalities were incapable of dealing with the powers of industry and their own lack of funding. In 1972 Congress passed the Clean Water Act. President Nixon vetoed the bill and Congress promptly overrode his veto. The Clean Water Act, flawed though it may have been, became the law of the land. Suddenly there were federal dollars to match with state and local funds to pay for cleaning up the nation's polluted waterways.

The 1969 fire on the Cuyahoga was the last river fire in our history but it certainly wasn't the first. Going back to the 1880's this was number 13 for the Cuyahoga. Rivers in other major cities had river fires of their own. If Trump and his administration have their way we'll see river fires again some day. This simply doesn't make any sense. Surely even the Congressmen we have representing us can be made to see the tragic folly of going along with these greedy, insane plans. Their numbers are easily found in the phone book or on the web. It will only take a minute to call their office. You'll probably have to leave a voice mail but those are tracked by staffers and provide the best and easiest way to register your feelings. And you'll know you did your part for clean water for all of us.

David Hartgrove

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Of Youth & Birds & Enthusiasm

There are a number of young birders making their mark in the field in which we endeavor. Each in our own way. One of them is the grandson local Sierra Club and Environmental Council member, Betty O'Laughlin. Eddie Kasper lives in the Chicago area with his parents and like many savvy teens he has a [website](#). On it you'll learn that he did a junior Big Year back in 2013 and totaled 466 species, That was when he was age 10-11! It's filled with some of his great photos and his blog. He's headed down to Ecuador right now. So that should make for some interesting blog posts. Check it out and wish him well.

NEWS FROM AUDUBON FLORIDA

Hi Audubon Members and Friends,

My name is Paula Wehr and I am your representative on the Audubon Florida Board of Directors. There are seven geographic groupings called Regional Conservation Committees (RCCs) which cover all 45 chapters in the State. The Central Florida RCC includes Halifax River, Highlands, Lake Region, Kissimmee Valley, Oklawaha Valley, Orange, Ridge, Seminole and West Volusia Audubon chapters. Southeast Volusia Audubon Society, although technically assigned to the Indian River Lagoon RCC, is also included in the Central Florida RCC mailings so they can participate when issues arise in their area. It is my intention to send brief updates on what is happening in the Central Florida RCC at least quarterly, and more often if events dictate.

Each Chapter Representative on the Audubon Florida BoD participates in the Chapters Committee which meets monthly to discuss how Audubon Florida can assist local chapters to be as successful as possible. Last year our committee created and distributed a Chapter Leader/Board Manual which includes templates for agendas, budgets, Board member applications and the like as well as how-to instructions for basic chapter operations and best practices from chapters which have created successful programs or fund-raising events.

Since 2005 National Audubon Society has provided funding for collaborative grants to chapters, a process run by our Chapters Committee. With matching funds from Audubon Florida via a grant from FP&L, this year our Chapters Committee was able to fully fund all 10 applications for amounts between \$520 and \$1,000. Programs funded by these grants ranged from purchasing optics for a young bird steward program to coastal dunes restoration.

Each year at Audubon Assembly in October, the Conservation Action Agenda is adopted. Once approved, these goals focus the work of State staff. Audubon Florida is unique in inviting local chapters to participate in the agenda-setting process. Each RCC selects one or two broad-based conservation goals for the entire RCC geography which is included in the Conservation Action Agenda. Click on this [link](#) to read the entire document. The Central Florida RCC goals for 2017 are shown on pages 19-20. Look for updates soon

Paula Wehr



Welcome To Our New & Returning Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new and returning members: Cheryl Allen, Carol Chillemi, Brian Deaton, Susan Dodge-Donnino, Carol German, Janet Mills and Alyce Switzer. We hope to see you in September at our next chapter meeting or on one of our field trips.

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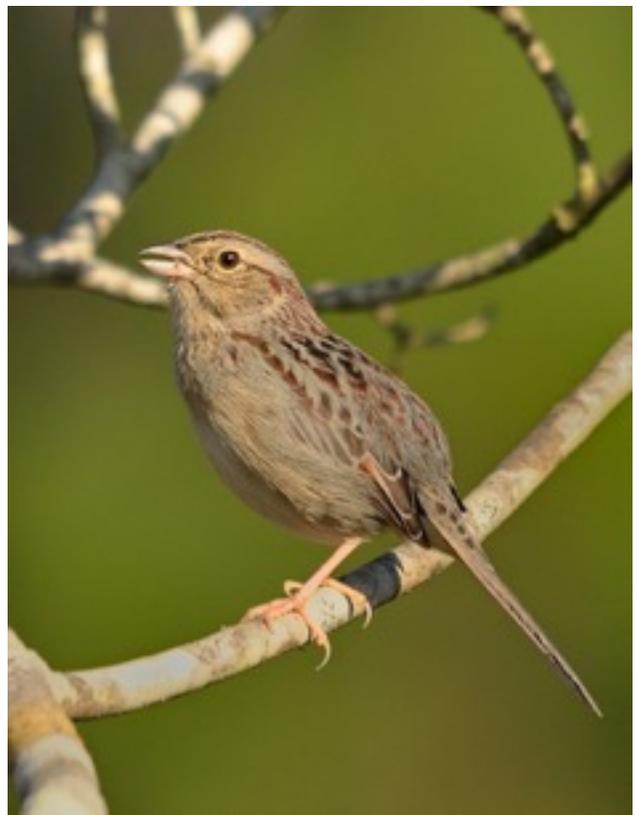
Least Terns On Rooftops

I know, it sounds like the beginning of a lost stanza from a song in *Sound of Music*. Actually it refers to what has become a fairly successful survival strategy for what are normally beach nesting birds. As was mentioned in last month's Pelican, Least Terns are once again nesting on the roof of the City Island Library. It's one of several buildings locally that are hosting these smallest of the tern species. As part of our chapter's commitment to being good stewards we're affiliated with the [Florida Shorebird Alliance](#). The FSA is a partnership between state and county government agencies and local volunteers who monitor beach and rooftop nesting birds. In addition to beaches and rooftops these opportunistic little birds will adopt any space that gives them a substrate they can adapt to their needs. So in addition to the rooftops and beaches already mentioned, Michael Brothers discovered a new location in a vacant construction site on the east side of the Tanger Outlet Mall property. I met Alex Kropp (of FWC) there last month and we installed about a dozen signs to mark off the nesting area after conferring with the site manager. If you're in the neighborhood there's a convenient spot to park and you can see them for yourself from a safe distance near the stop sign as you turn into the mall. Look for the small white signs just off the road at a 3 way stop.

David Hartgrove



Least Tern *Photo by Dan Gribbin*



Bachman's Sparrow *Photo by Peter May*

Iconic Bird of the Pine Woods

Named by John James Audubon for his friend, the Rev. John Bachman, this little sparrow has been the bane of many a birder who happen to be here in winter. In early spring when they're beginning to nest, males sing from an exposed perch and can be relatively easy to find in the right habitat. In winter they act more like mice, running along under the cover of low growing vegetation and can be found in gopher tortoise burrows on cold nights.

Reverend John Bachman (who pronounced his name "BACKman") was a Lutheran clergyman who settled in Charleston, S.C. in 1815 and served the same church there for 56 years. In 1831 Audubon lived with the Bachman family for about a month and this was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. He was coauthor with Audubon on the latter's book on the mammals of North America and was the discoverer of what Audubon named the Bachman's Warbler in 1833. Bachman presented Audubon with skins and mounted specimens and it was based on these that Audubon included the bird in his "Birds of North America." He never saw the bird in the wild.

And there aren't too many folks around now who have seen a Bachman's Warbler. The last confirmed sighting was in the Charleston area in 1962, though unconfirmed reports include one from Brevard County of a possible young female in 1988. The only person I know who's seen one is our own John Carr, who as a young boy was on a birding trip with T. Gilbert Pearson and saw the bird in its native habitat in the late 1930's. Pearson was one of the founders of the National Audubon Society and a professor at the University of North Carolina.

David Hartgrove

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A Big Price Increase Next Month

The senior pass for the US National Parks system, sometimes referred to as the "Golden Age Pass", is about to go from 10.00 to 80.00 on August 1st. If you qualify and don't have one now's the time to get yours.

Editor

A Special Thanks To Our Sponsors

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

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

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