

# The Pelican

*We need to be the stewards of this world, not its destroyers*  
Volume 64-Number 8. Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon  
August, 2018



## The President's Column

### THE JOYS OF VOLUNTEERING...AND LEARNING!

A few weekends ago, David Hartgrove, Vice President and Conservation Committee Chair, Holly-Zwart Duryea, Education Committee Chair, and I met with Summer STEM (Science, Technology, Education and Math) program attendees at the Yvonne Scarlet Golden Community Center in Daytona Beach. The centerpiece of our meeting was an educational presentation on Migration that was prepared by former chapter member, Chuck Tague. Though mostly about bird migration it covered migration by others, like butterflies and dragonflies too.

Although the program learners for our module were elementary school aged, our audience ranged from about six to around 40 years of age and included elementary school children, a pair of Bethune-Cookman University student interns, some educators and school counselors, and a few parents---quite a range of age and knowledge! That presented a challenge, but it was one we overcame with some of us pretending to be learners ourselves. What is migration? What do you mean by resources when you talk about birds? How high do birds fly? How long do they live?

About half way through the presentation, we were getting questions from everyone --- kids, parents, educators, interns --- and they were all very good questions too! We could tell that our audience was genuinely curious, not just about birds but also what they need to survive and thrive. It showed us that yes, we can engage kids and their families, which is something we hope to do more of in the coming year. We also made contacts to give presentations at more schools during the academic year and perhaps to after school programs, as well.

If you're a beginning birder like I am, you might enjoy going to the Audubon Adventures [website](#). Yes, it's geared toward elementary school learners but it has a lot of great, easy to digest information that I can use, too.

And whether you are an experienced birder or not, you can join our Education Committee this fall and participate, to help brainstorm more ways for us to take nature to kids and kids to nature! It is deeply rewarding to see minds blossom to the beauty of the natural world and such a privilege to be part of it.

Stay tuned to this space in September for a very important update on Halifax River Audubon's Strategic Initiatives for the coming year and beyond! See you soon!

Melissa Lammers

*Just a reminder that we're still in our summer hiatus. So no regular meetings or field trips until next month. The board does meet on Monday, August 6th, at the Ormond Beach Regional Library in Meeting Room 4 at 1:30 pm. You're welcome to attend.*

\* \* \* \*

### Explore Volusia, Summer Field Trips With Volusia County Environmental Management

A slightly shorter list of activities for the month of August includes a paddling trip on Spruce Creek, a lecture on sharks and their important place in our environment and a bike ride around Gemini Springs. These are just a few of the chances for fun with Volusia County's Environmental Specialist, Trey Hannah. Click on this [link](#) for all the information. Be sure to scroll down to the bottom of the page for the full calendar.

\* \* \* \*

### Archbold Biological Station, One of Florida's Truly Special Places, and the Queen of Red Hill

Archbold Biological Station has been a gathering spot for biologists, ornithologists, entomologists, botanists and others pursuing knowledge about our natural world since 1941. It's a world class research facility and has also hosted any number of field trips for Audubon chapters, the Florida Ornithological Society and birding festivals. In 1929 John Roebling II (his uncle built the Brooklyn Bridge, among many other things) bought one thousand acres of pine scrub on the Lake Wales Ridge in Highlands County. His idea was to build a vacation home for himself and his wife, who suffered from tuberculosis. The mansion he planned was never built. So in 1941 his son, Donald, donated the property to Richard Archbold, a world renowned biologist and philanthropist. Who incidentally did some of the original surveys of Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp in 1946. The two families worked together to guarantee the future of the property as a research facility and protected environmental treasure.

The Queen of Red Hill is the title given to Gopher Tortoise number 21. That number was painted on her shell in 1968 by Dr. Jim Layne, who took over leadership of the site in 1967. She continues to roam the property today. Here's a [link](#) to a short, beautifully shot video which I'm sure you'll enjoy. As it plays see if you can identify the birds heard calling in the background: like Florida Scrub Jay, Northern Bobwhite, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Eastern Towhee.

David Hartgrove

## Conservation Notes

An article published in [Scientific American](#) tells us that due to excessive snow pack along Greenland's eastern coast, many shorebird species will not be nesting this year. It seems ironic that as we hear about the melting of Greenland's glaciers due to climate change, we now hear that the late spring snow pack will prevent birds like Ruddy Turnstones, Sanderlings and Red Knots from nesting. Not only will the birds not be nesting but huge numbers will die of starvation due to their inability to find adequate food. These birds depend on arriving on the tundra just as the warmer temperatures of late spring trigger the hatching of billions of mosquitoes and other insects on which the birds feed. There are always fluctuations in breeding numbers from one year to the next but a complete loss of a year's nesting season is unprecedented. And it's not just in Greenland. Researchers across the Arctic are finding similar conditions in northern Canada and Alaska. Climate change is causing wetter conditions that mean more spring snow. Snow that then lingers longer into June when the birds arrive to begin the frantic race to breed, raise their young and fatten up for their southward migration in August. This does not bode well for shorebird survival chances as our climate changes faster than these species can adapt. Our future shorebird surveys could be a depressing documentation of their extinction.

\* \* \*

Sometimes incompetence in high places can reveal evidence of what was suspected but not proven. A year ago the Trump administration ordered a review of 27 national monuments announced during the Obama administration. Suspicious that this "review" would be a one sided affair with a predetermined outcome, the Center for Biological Diversity, the Washington Post, the New York Times and others filed a joint Freedom of Information Act request seeking all relevant documents to said review. They spent a lot of time sifting through the volumes of testimony, emails and paperwork. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's henchmen, hand picked for their connections to extraction industries, seemed almost gleeful at the prospect of gutting Obama's environmental legacy. Researchers came across numerous email communications that proved beyond doubt that the purpose of the "review" was to open up vast tracts of protected lands to drilling, mining and logging interests. The very industries in which the people conducting the "review" had worked a short time earlier.

Dino Grandoni wrote in the Washington Post that the emails "show more candid conversations than ordinary FOIA releases because the Interior Department sent out the unredacted correspondence by accident." Officials there removed the email documents from the Interior website and urged anyone who had downloaded them to hit delete. Unfortunately for them the cat was out of the bag and their perfidy was exposed for what it was. Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona (D) raised a red flag when he spoke in Congress and said, "The review has been secretive. It has been opaque and it has been contrived. I say it's contrived because the conclusion was already written."

So far Trump has reduced the size of two of the monuments Obama announced: Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante, both in Utah. We now know based on the released documents that the reduction of Bears Ears was done strictly to allow oil and gas drilling on lands held sacred by Native Americans. Before that shrinking can actually take place, the courts will have the final say. Environmental advocates have sued and are convinced that law and court precedent are in their favor. They believe the monument reductions will be reversed. Let's hope they're right.

David Hartgrove

Look for our table at the Museum's Natural History Festival next month. We'll be there dispensing information on birds, Audubon and answering questions. We'll also have chapter t-shirts and books for sale. Come out and support us and the Museum.

\* \* \* \* \*



Scarlet Tanager with beetle, Photo by David Hartgrove

The photo above was taken at Fort Jefferson, in the Dry Tortugas. [Florida Nature Tours](#) has been running birding trips to this fantastic location since 1966. They have just released the dates for next year's trips: Wed., 4/10 through Sat., 4/13; Sat., 5/4 through Tues., 5/7 and Tues., 5/7 through Fri., 5/10. Stay tuned for more information.

Here's another in our ongoing series about local naturalists and their contributions to our appreciation of the world around us.

## Paul Rebmann, A Man For All Seasons

I've known Paul for over twenty years and done many bird counts with him but his interests extend far beyond the realm of birds.



His photo here of a loggerhead sea turtle hatchling crawling toward the waves won first place in the Orange Audubon Chertok Photo Contest in 2008. In early 2011 he completed the Florida Master Naturalist Program and he's a past president of the Paw Paw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.



Here's a Florida Scrub-Jay photographed at Lyonia Preserve



Here's a Beef Fly on a Roseling that won an award earlier this year. Yet another example of a pollinator that isn't a honeybee or a butterfly.

Paul's [website](#) and his [blog](#) make for fascinating reading. Last December he and a friend hiked part of the Appalachian Trail and stood on Blood Mountain, in north Georgia. It gave them a beautiful view of the Blue Ridge. Paul wrote, "This is also the greatest elevation in the Apalachicola River watershed making Blood Mountain the highest source of water that reaches Florida. Amazing to think that rain falling on this remote north Georgia peak could be part of the fresh water essential to the oysters in Apalachicola Bay."



It's hard not to get a great photo of a Swallow-tailed Kite and here Paul has caught a shot of one in fresh plumage gliding gracefully through the air.

I urge you to click on the website and blog links above and while you're on the website look for the link to Paul's [newsletter](#). There you can click on the December, 2017 entry to learn about mushrooms or the entry from October, 2015 to learn about Lake Disston, in western Flagler County. This Outstanding Florida Waterway is also an Audubon Important Bird Area. All of these photos were shot by Paul and there are many more to be seen on the links above. Now that he's recently retired from his job as Director of Information Systems for the Root Corporation he has lots of time to devote to his passions. And we all benefit from that.

*David Hartgrove*



Sandhill Crane, photo by Paul Rebmann

\* \* \* \* \*

### Duck Stamps, Funding Wildlife Refuges

The newest Duck Stamp has been issued. Officially known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, it went on sale on the 29th of June. For the paltry sum of just 25.00 you can contribute to our national wildlife refuge system and assure yourself access to any refuge in the country for an entire year.

First issued in 1934, that first stamp was designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling. He was an artist and a political cartoonist who also happened to be the Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, the predecessor to today's U S Fish & Wildlife Service. He and some other folks came up with the idea of selling stamps to fund the purchase of wetlands for conservation. Many of us have spent a lot of quality time at the refuge near Fort Myers that bears his name.

Ninety-eight cents of every dollar collected goes directly to the maintenance and purchase of lands for our national wildlife refuge system. There's a misconception that these are stamps for duck hunters only, and hunters need them to hunt on refuges. But they're also one of the most effective ways the average person can help save our environment. They can also be a valuable collector's item. They can be purchased [online](#), at your local wildlife refuge, like Merritt Island NWR or at the Post Office. Though I've run into trouble trying that last approach. Not all post offices have them in stock apparently. So do yourself and wildlife a favor and get yours today.

Editor

## Welcome to Our New and Returning Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new and returning members. There's just a small group this month: Gregg Goldsworthy, Pauline Kurpinsky and Rick Seiler. We hope to see you next month at our general meeting or on one of our excellent field trips.

\* \* \* \* \*

### From The Quotable Birder

"Words are like rocks... they weigh you down. If birds could talk, they wouldn't be able to fly."

*Marilyn Whirlwind, character on the TV show, Northern Exposure*

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE PELICAN

is published monthly by the Halifax River Audubon, a chapter of the National Audubon Society and a member of Audubon Florida serving eastern Volusia County.

PO Box 166  
Daytona Beach FL 32115-0166

Email: [editor@halifaxriveras.org](mailto:editor@halifaxriveras.org)

Web: <http://www.halifaxriveras.org>

### Halifax River Audubon

[forbirds@halifaxriveras.org](mailto:forbirds@halifaxriveras.org)

Meets monthly September through May

President: Melissa Lammers

Vice President: David Hartgrove

Past President: Jim O'Shaughnessy

Treasurer: Ellen Tate

Recording Sec.: Peggy Yokubonus

Membership Sec.: Joan Tague

Corresponding Sec: Vacant

Historian: Holly Zwart-Duryea

At-Large: Ellen Tate, Holly Zwart-Duryea, Joan Tague, Dan Gribbin, Steve Underwood

### Committee Members

Conservation: David Hartgrove

Education: Holly Zwart-Duryea

Field Trips: Peggy Yokubonus

David Hartgrove

Newsletter Editor: David Hartgrove

Welcome: Vacant

Webmaster: Joan Tague

\* \* \* \* \*

We wish to thank our sponsors, whose contributions play a vital part of allowing us to continue our work: Florida Power & Light, Colonial Colony and the Spruce Creek Garden and Nature Club.