



Street Audubon Center
115 Lameraux Road
Winter Haven, FL 33884



Circle B Bar Reserve a Polk County Environmental Lands Site



Circle B Bar Reserve has been one of the best nature sites in the immediate Lakeland/Auburndale/Winter Haven/Bartow area for the past three years. The hurricanes of 2004 caused much damage and the cleanup that followed removed even more ground cover. In September 2005 the Southwest Florida Water Management District started a project to restore the site to its pre-cattle ranch condition as much as possible. To do this the marsh is now nearly drained dry and the drainage ditches are being filled in with dirt. Once this project is complete the water will flow through the marsh in a more natural manner. We should have better access to the marsh areas and could have better views of the wildlife in the marsh upon completion.

Another part of the project is a Nature Center. It is to be constructed about two-thirds of the way from the east gate to the lake and will have two classrooms, a meeting room and a hands on exhibit area. It's appearance will blend in with the surroundings. It should be completed in 2007.

Another phase is the planting of native plant habitats in the sandhill area in the southwest part of the site. This part has not been accessible, but will be once the project is complete. Planting of the plants was scheduled for January 21, 2006.



We look forward to completion of the project and hiking the trails and observing the wildlife.

More information on Circle B Bar Reserve and other Environmental Lands sites may be found on the web site;
http://www.polk-county.net/county_offices/natural_resources/environmental_lands/about.aspx

or by telephone at (863)534-7377 *

SPRING IS COMING

Linda F. Cooper

As soon as we have those first cold snaps in central Florida do your thoughts turn to Spring and gentle weather for gardening as mine do? If so, you might want to consider putting in some wildlife-friendly plants. Not only will you make birds, small mammals and butterflies happy you will also have a much healthier yard. We plant native plants as much as we can because of their wildlife value and their requirements for less water and fertilizers once established.

When we moved to our home near Haines City we had turf grass (mostly populated by chinch bugs) and neatly trimmed boxwood hedges. An occasional blue jay or grackle might stop by or a butterfly might fly by but there was no reason to stay. We started by digging out most of the grass and planting butterfly-attracting plants. Many of these plants are also attractive to birds. All of our vegetable scraps are composted into our flower beds. Earthworms have returned and, with them, White Ibis and Sandhill Cranes that stop by regularly to poke in the lawn. We are especially thrilled when the cranes bring a youngster or two to dig around for grubs and worms. An occasional Gray Fox stops by to drink at the birdbath or take a snooze in the sun.



Butterflies are numerous. Because we have the plants for caterpillars to feed on many butterflies complete their life cycle in our postage stamp -sized yard. Since butterflies have specific host plants it is easy to choose which butterflies you wish to attract. By planting plants in the milkweed



family you will attract Monarch, Queen and an occasional Soldier. If you have a place for vines then passion vine and pipevine are good choices.



Passion vine will attract Gulf Fritillary such as this mated pair and Zebra Heliconian. Polydamas swallowtail prefers the non-native pipevines and Pipevine swallowtail prefers the native pipevines. Plants in the legume family are good



choices as both skippers and sulphurs use them for host plants. If you have ever planted garden peas or beans then most likely you have had "leaf rollers". These "leaf rollers" are actually the caterpillars of either Long-tailed such as shown or Dorantes Longtail Skippers. These large skippers should be a welcome addition to your yard. You can leave some of your turf grass if necessary as many of the small skippers use various grasses as host plants. There are also many attractive native grasses that work just as well. Any of the native hollies, native viburnums, and stoppers are highly valued by wildlife and easy to care for.

We have gone from a sterile yard to one filled with life. Our butterfly yard list has gone from very few to 46 and we figure 25 of these have bred in our yard. Our neighbors say "Why should I pay to look at butterflies when I can just come to your yard and see them for free?"

Our bird list also counts birds seen on our walks in our neighborhood which borders on Lake Hamilton and it stands at 131.

You will greatly enhance your enjoyment of your yard when you welcome all of Nature's creatures. Remember, Spring is coming. *



Feature Photo



Great Egret on Lake Parker

Send your photo to the editor for publication as the Feature Photo.

Send as an e-mail attachment to:
hmoul@verizon.net

or

Send a print or file on disk to:

Editor

3101 Young Court
Lakeland, FL 33803

Lake Region Web Site

The printed version of the *Eagle's View* is in black and white. For a full color version, check it out on the Lake Region web site at www.lakeregion.net. The photographs are much nicer in full color.

You will also find the latest schedules and other information. Rae Bourquein is the webmaster and she does a terrific job keeping it current.

Audubon Saddle Creek Property

Audubon has nearly 500 acres of property to the north-east of Eaton Park, east of Lakeland. It has a nice series of old phosphate pits on it. We are now clearing the top of the berms around the pits to open them for trails. Workdays are Wednesday at 9 am. We work for 3 to 4 hours. If you can cut or clean brazilian pepper, come on out. Contact Herman Moulden at hmoul@verizon.net for details.

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Lake Marion Creek Snell Creek Management Area Hike

By Paul Fellers

Perhaps the 15 of us enjoyed the perfect nature hike on November 19, 2005: two and a half miles in some of nature's finest. Florida did something right when its legislature enacted the "Save Our Rivers" land acquisition program in 1981 and included the 3,472-acre purchase of Lake Marion Creek. The hike there is a nice one and allows a big loop back to the main trail by Snell Creek. The main reason for scheduling this particular outing in late November was to witness the glorious show of wild asters at the soggy trail's terminus. This year the tall purple *Aster elliotii* was magnificent—only in the Green Swamp in the Hampden Tract have I seen as nice. The other asters were Bushy Aster (*A. dumosus*), Climbing Aster (*A. carolinianus*), a few White-topped Asters (*A. reticulatus*), and Silvery-leaved Aster (not an aster at all and also called Golden Aster, *Pityopsis graminifolia*). Lots of showy yellow Begger-tick (*Bidens mitis*) were in the wet area. But the star species was a couple of gorgeous bright red Cardinal Flowers (*Lobelia cardinalis*). I'd seen a few growing along Snell Creek at Cypress Parkway 2 or 3 times in years past, but it's pretty rare in our county. In the heavy swamp were several Spider Orchids (*Habenaria odontopetala*) and some luxuriant Cinnamon Fern. Small Butterwort (*Pinguicula pumila*) blooming somewhat early along 3 spots along the trail made for a nice surprise. A Skullcap, (*Scutellaria multiglandulosa*) was in full bloom out of season. Most of the Blazing Star (*Liatrus sp.*) was gone by, as was the Carpheforus (*C. corymbosum*). We noted several Blue Curls (*Trichostema dichotomum*). A lone Pink Spiderwort or Roseling (*Cuthbertia sp.*) was found. Another dozen or so wildflowers were identified.

Besides flora, there was plenty of fauna in evidence as well. Some good birds seen were 2 Wood Storks, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Phoebe, wintering Great-crested Flycatcher (best bird of the day; near Snell Creek), 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets (one with crown raised—a rare sight), a lone American Robin, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated, and 8 Pine Warblers. Ten butterfly species were seen, including 3 showy Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, 6 Buckeyes, Palmedes Swallowtail, 3 Queens, Viceroy, and Sleepy Orange. We were fortunate to have spotted a 2 ½' Yellow Rat Snake catching some rays in the middle of the trail.

Having completed the major hike for the day, we headed for the picnic tables at the Osceola County School Environmental Center near Poinciana for lunch. After lunch, we hiked the center's boardwalk to Reedy Creek. A couple of Bald Eagles soared overhead. Royal Ferns were absolutely luxuriant what with all the light allowed down to the forest floor due to the forest devastation from last fall's 3 hurricanes. Lots of Dahoon Holly (*Ilex cassine*) escaped the winds and some were heavy with berries. Sharp-eyed Liz Lane spotted a single bloom of Leather Flower (*Clematis crispa*) out about 40'! This is a very uncommon flower in Polk County, and it wrapped up our great day nicely. Perhaps we will see you on the trail?

Native Plant Sale - Flea Spree

Thanks to: John Duncan, Mae Hartsaw, Janet Anderson, Herman Moulden, Ann Pinner, Paul Fellers, Ron Butts, Tom Zimmer, Paul Anderson, Lois Smith, Jewell Mason, Marvel Loftus, Lorraine Schnickels, Anne Yasalonis. You did a wonderful job at the fall Native Plant Sale. You are all outstanding!

April 8, 2006, is the Spring Native Plant Sale. Now is the time to start potting native plants for the sale. The more we supply the fewer we have to buy, so we make more money. We are going to do something new, the plant sale and flea spree will be combined. We have items left over from previous sales that we need to clear out. Bring items for flea spree priced, clean and ready to sale. Please, bring donations Friday, April 7th or early Saturday, April 8th. We will need lots and lots of volunteers to make this work. We know we can depend on you. If you have questions or want to volunteer, call Carrie Plair, 683-8094. Thanks!

LRAS Bird Club

As of this writing we have had five bird trips and 110 species and we are just beginning. We have many more trips, viewing our wonderful Florida's marshes, woods, and beaches and just maybe we will see many more beautiful birds and butterflies. Come join the fun. Everyone is welcome. The



complete schedule is on our web-site. Every trip has a highlight: Ft. DeSoto was the plovers, Lakeland Highland Scrub was the Solitary Sandpiper, Viera



Wetland were the Snail Kites and Gannets, Green Swamp, in the rain, the Blue Birds, and Merritt Island WMA was all the ducks,

Roseate Spoonbills, and best of all, the rails. Thanks to Linda Cooper we have these wonderful pictures

of the Clapper Rail and Sora. There is a change in the schedule so look it over carefully.

FEBRUARY 2, 2006 — T. M. Goodwin Waterfowl Mgmt. Area

FEBRUARY 4, 2006 — Saturday — Emerald Marsh

FEBRUARY 9, 2006 — Skipped — No trip this day

FEBRUARY 16, 2006 — Phosphate Mines with Paul Fellers

FEBRUARY 23, 2006 — Bacles Yard & Ed. Medard Park

MARCH 2, 2006 — Polk County Landfill & So. Howard Lake Park

MARCH 9, 2006 — Whaley's Landing, Overstreet Landing, 3 Lakes WMA

MARCH 16, 2006 — Kissimmee State Park

MARCH 23, 2006 — Highland Hammock State Park

MARCH 30, 2006 — Babcock - Web WMA

APRIL 6, 2006 — Ft. DeSoto — Last Trip for this year.

For more information, contact Marvel Loftus, 863 324 9657, E-mail -

MARVEL769@hotmail.com.

SATURDAY MORNING WALKS

Second and Fourth Saturday of every month. In addition to the walks on February 11, 2006 we will have a slide program on Birds and on March 11, 2006, we will have a slide presentation on Butterflies. Come and enjoy our wonderful Nature Center.

For more information, contact Marvel Loftus, 863 324 9657, E-mail -

MARVEL769@hotmail.com.

The Art of Photography Photography Class

Tony Catalano will present instruction on "The Art of Photography. Classes start on Saturday March, 4, 2006 and continue for four consecutive Saturdays. 9:00AM to Noon at the Street Audubon Center. For details and enrollment contact Tony at pegtony515@msn.com.

PIZZA & FILM NIGHT

First & Third Tuesday of every month.

Good food and interesting films. The time is 7:00 pm and the donation is only \$1.00

FEBRUARY 7, 2006 — Orchid Hunter

FEBRUARY 21, 2006 — Africa Elephants of the Rain Forest

March 7, 2006 — March of the Penguins

March 21, 2006 — Expedition to the Edge

For more information, contact Marvel Loftus, 863 324 9657, E-mail -

MARVEL769@hotmail.com.

Volunteers Needed

Hours are 9 am to noon or noon to 3 pm.

Duties are to be present, open the center and close it.

Call Ann Pinner at 956-2374



Duck Boxes Charles Geanangel

Within the next few months, local wood duck nesting pairs will begin their annual search for suitable nesting sites.

Unfortunately, their quest is becoming increasingly difficult. Due to the

rapid and poorly regulated growth which is often occurs too close to the lakes, ponds, streams or swamps in our region of Florida, the hollow trees where these ducks typically have nested are becoming few and far between. We all know that habitat loss is often the major cause of population decline. Thus, our wood duck population can be expected to fall unless we can reverse the loss of these nesting sites.

Fortunately, there is hope; woodies adapt readily to appropriately constructed and situated nesting boxes.

During the past several years the Polk Group of Florida Sierra has constructed and placed more than 100 wood duck nesting boxes. These are made using one inch thick native cypress and are highly resistant to decay. Several have been

placed as in service far away as New England and Washington State. As shown in the photo above, these nests are eagerly accepted by wood ducks and on several known instances by screech owl pairs.

Polk Sierra “assigns” these nesting boxes to those who make a minimum \$50 donation to the Richard L. Coleman Scholarship Program in ecological studies at Florida’s New College in Sarasota. For those who may not have known Richard, he was a veteran, highly effective environmental advocate who worked closely with both local and state-wide groups of the Sierra Club and with Audubon. He was killed in a tragic airboat accident two summers ago on the Kissimmee River chain of Lakes while acquiring additional photographs for his slide show entitled Rebirth of a River which documents the ecological improvements resulting from ongoing work to reverse the canalization of the river which had been done in the 1950’s and 60’s. Richard had earlier played a seminal role in getting this river restoration project approved.

If you wish to sponsor one of these nest boxes (which you can place at a site of your choice) by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Coleman Scholarship, contact Bob Taylor 863-439-2251 or Frances Coleman, 863-956-3771 *

Hiking Honeymoon Island State Park By Paul Fellers

December 3rd, 2005 dawned pretty chilly for a hike along the Gulf, but the 10 of us didn’t mind a bit as the sun warmed us up. Prior to the 5+-mile-round trip hike, we noted a concentration of wading birds along the waterfront off Dunedin. We counted a whopping 300 Great Egrets. Then along the causeway over to the Island were 3 Budgerigars, and on the beach were a big group of 300 Black Skimmers with 22 uncommon Marbled Godwits and a few other shorebirds. At the stop on the right just after the entrance gate, we noted 3 Horned Grebes just off the little close island.

On the long, fairly tough round trip hike up the sand spit, we were able to ID 16 shorebird species including the following plovers: 10 Black-bellied, 4 Wilsons, 18 Semipalmated, and 8 Piping (rare and one with a lime-green leg band); and 7 Whimbrels, 12 Western Sandpipers, 50 Dunlin and 40 Short-billed Dowitchers. A group of about 100 Redhead Ducks at the end of the point was

outstanding. In all we saw 5 Common Loons with one being quite close and another flying. A Merlin was seen going lickety-split very low over some shorebirds. And there were a couple of American Oystercatchers along with a bevy of Caspian, Royal, and Forster’s Terns on a sand bar. Lots of dolphins graced the waters off the beach.

We enjoyed a late lunch at the excellent picnic area near the trailhead for the Osprey Trail. Hiking there after lunch produced some neat sights; best being a Merlin perched on a snag, then in close order a huge Great-horned Owl in the top of a pine tree, and a really yellow Palm Warbler (uncommon; from the eastern race). Unfortunately, most of the Osprey nests had been blown down by last fall’s hurricanes, but we did see a few. The most common butterfly noted was Buckeye, followed by Gulf Fritillary, then about a half dozen other species. Snowberry (*Chiococca alba*) with its attractive, small, white, round fruit was in short supply—perhaps a victim of hurricane winds as well? What a super day it was. *

EVERYBODY LOVES BIRDS

This is a DVD that is produced by Peter G. Merritt, Ph.D. It is a very entertaining DVD for children at the elementary school level. They pick 50 birds that are most common in 7 different habitats. This program focuses on the behavior and ecology of our favorite animal, birds. The filming and pictures are great and I would recommend it for use at our Nature Fair. It also has a digital Activity Book which also includes birding resources for teachers and tips on how to use this program. This would be a very good program for Home School families and for young, beginning birders. Cub Scouts could enhance their badge program with this DVD. It would also make a good gift. The cost of this DVD is \$25.00. Contact: Hobe Sound Productions, Inc. 8558 SE Sharon St., Hobe Sound, FL 33455, or purchase directly from Peter Merritt at 772-485-8016, website WWW.floridabirds.net.

Marvel Loftus

Upcoming Events**Merritt Island NWR Birding**

Feb 18, 2006, Saturday

Meet at SAC to carpool to Black Point Drive, Oak Hammock, Crossover Canal (Manatees), Bio Rad Road by Indian River, Visitor Center, Playalinda Beach (Seabirds). Bring snacks, early dinner at famous Dixie Crossroads Restaurant.

Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Sumica

March 4, 2006, Saturday

5-mile (round-trip) hike to Lake Walk-in-the-Water, varied habitat. Bring lunch. If too wet, we will go elsewhere.

Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Green Swamp 2.5 mile Wildflower and Nature Hike

March 25, 2006, Saturday

Meet at Van Fleet Rails to Trails Trailhead to carpool. Follow brown Great Florida Birding highway signs on SR 33 in Polk City to trailhead.

Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Native Plant Sale Fundraiser

April 8, 2006, Saturday, 9:00 - 1:00, Street Audubon Center. Bill Bissett of the Natives Nursery will present a workshop on Florida natives. Florimulch, T-shirts, cold drinks and nature books will be available for purchase. For information call Carrie Plair, 863-683-8094.

Mission Statement: Lake Region Audubon Society, a Chapter of National and Florida Audubon Societies, is dedicated to youth education, conservation, clean air and clean water, preservation of our native flora and fauna, and the promotion of public awareness of the remaining natural beauty of our Florida and our world.

2005-2006 Officers**Steering Committee:**

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Street Audubon Center Advisory Committee:

Chuck Geanangel, Bill Karnofsky and Paul Anderson

Board Members: Charles Geanangel, Mae Hartsaw, William Karnofsky, Carrie Plair, Paul Anderson, Paul Fellers, Elizabeth Purnell, Janet Anderson, Louise Lang, Marvel Loftus, Gil and Gina Lucas, Ron Butts, Gary McCoy, Herman Moulden, Bob Snow, and Ann Pinner

Help! Help!! Help!!

Come and join our group of volunteers at the Nature Center. What do you have to do? Nothing, just open up or lock up and BE THERE!! Due to the three hurricanes and other situations, we are shorthanded. If you would like to volunteer for a morning: 9:00am to noon; OR an afternoon: noon to 3:00 pm; please call **Ann Pinner, phone 956-2374**. Helping out once a month would be GREAT!! The Nature Center is a wonderful place to bring a lunch, friends or grandchildren; read a book or just enjoy the peace and quiet.

Come and join us!!

Lake Region Audubon Society
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Visit Joan’s website: www.woodlandwonders.org.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For New Audubon Members Only - Chapter E25:7XCH

Join the National Audubon Society for the special rate of US \$20. That’s \$15 off the regular membership dues. This 3-way membership includes the Lake Region Audubon newsletter and magazines of Florida and National Audubon. **Make checks payable to The National Audubon Society, and mail with this form to:**

**Attention Membership
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115 Lameraux Road
Winter Haven, FL 33884**



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