



Street Audubon Center
115 Lameraux Road
Winter Haven, FL 33884



Northern Wheatear

Everglades National Park, Florida

September 18 & 21, 2006

Bill Karnofsky

You have to love the internet if you are a birder. How else could you know almost instantly when a rare bird has been spotted at a location reasonably close to where you are? Well, that happened in the middle of September.



My wife, Rose, and I were planning a trip to Davie, Florida (just west of Ft. Lauderdale) to baby-sit our two grandchildren while their mother was on a business trip for about a week. Just prior to leaving I checked the web to see what birds were around and to my surprise, and probably to the surprise of many, a Northern Wheatear was “supposed” to have been identified in the Everglades. Frankly, I doubted it. A bird that nests in Alaska and winters in southern Africa with a migration route that takes it across Canada, through the British Isles, and down to its wintering grounds has no business being in Florida.

Throughout the weekend the thought of going to the Everglades was on my mind. Then Monday morning, after bringing the two children to school, Rose and I decided to take a run down to the Everglades. Neither of us believed the bird was correctly identified; and, we figured the odds were against us finding it. Nonetheless off we went.

Let me now go back to June 1, 1968. At that time Rose and I were living in Cheshire, Connecticut and were members of the New Haven Bird Club. We received a call from the club’s rare-bird alert program. There was a Northern Wheatear on the coast of Connecticut at a town called Guilford. We jumped into the car to find a bird that we had previously never heard of. On the way, we picked up Rose’s sister. The three of us went to the location where the bird was last seen. We looked all around but no sign of it. Sitting in an old beat-up car was an older man surveying the activity of the three of us. I noticed he had a small pair of binoculars. I ventured over and asked if he was there to see THE bird. He said he was and noticed we had not



Northern Wheatear

been looking in the likely terrain where the bird would be found. He proceeded to give us an extraordinary amount of information about the bird and how rare it was to be found in Connecticut because it is so far south of its migration route. Then another birder who had been wandering around the area approached the car, interrupted our conversation, and asked if he could have an autograph. Up to that moment we had no idea who this gentleman was. Were we ever surprised when he signed the stranger's bird guide with the name Roger Tory Peterson! He was quite gracious, and signed each of our books. I then said to him I had a question I really had to ask and would he mind. He said to go ahead. I asked him if it would be all right if we added him to our life lists. Well, that really struck him funny. When he stopped laughing, he said in all the years he had met birders in the field no one had ever asked him that question. The Northern Wheatear was never added to our life lists that day but we did get to add an unexpected treasure added to our field guides.

It was more for nostalgic reasons that we took the 100+ mile trip to the Everglades that Monday, September 18, 2006. With little expectations of finding the bird, what a wonderful surprise we had when in about 20 minutes after entering the park there was the bird standing ten feet away from us. We spent about an hour and a half watching him. He was quite interested in us when we sat on the ground and ate our lunch. He was quite inquisitive and kept coming close to see what we were doing. He was unconcerned about our presence. On two occasions, he flew down to catch an insect within 24 inches of where I was standing. He was relaxed, ate his victim, looked up at me, and then at his leisure moved off to a low shrub. He did that two times. The whole time we were watching him we were the only birders there.

We had such a great time there and for more practical reasons (none of the photos I took came out very well) that we decided to return to the park on September 21. This time there were about eight birders at the same spot where we had found the bird on Monday. The noise from all these people was unbelievable. Everyone was talking, and talking loudly. One nice woman said to me, "The bird is way over there in the Brazilian Peppers, and every once in a while you will be able to spot him." Just then, sure enough, he popped out, looked around then disappeared. Over the next fifteen minutes or so, one by one the others left. When the last couple left and walked across the parking lot to load their gear into their car, and it had been totally quiet for about three minutes, you guessed it - the wheatear came right over to where we were. This time I got about fifty pictures, a sample of which is here for you to see. After about thirty minutes alone with our new found friend we chose to leave him to enjoy his privacy.

Lessons learned: don't be so doubtful about postings on the internet; be quiet when birding; have your camera on the correct settings; and finally, if you wait long enough you will get to see the bird you always wanted to see. ***

To view these photos in color visit the Lake Region web site at www.lakeregion.net

"May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds."
Edward Abbey

Volunteers Needed

Hours are 9 am to noon or noon to 3 pm.
Duties are to be present at the Street Audubon Center, open the center and close it.

Call Ann Pinner at 956-2374

Pizza and a Movie

Third Tuesday of each month
Mark your calendars for Dec 18th, Jan 16th and Feb 20th at 7:00 PM for Pizza and a Movie at the Street Audubon Center. For information contact Marvel Loftus at 863 324 9657.

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AUDUBON ACADEMY 2007

Eckerd College, St. Petersburg - Continuing Education Center

March 23-25, 2007

SAVING FLORIDA'S BIRDS: THE CHAPTER'S ROLE

RATIONALE: Chapters are the crucial link to the community in taking actions that will protect Florida's birds and their habitats. Chapter leaders must become knowledgeable about the birds that live in their area in order to advocate for their protection. Chapters must become aware of four conservation outcomes that will make the difference in saving Florida birds:

1. Stabilize and increase populations of at-risk species of birds.
2. Prevent persistent declines or range contractions in populations of common native birds.
3. Protect and restore sites essential for vulnerable species.
4. Improve and protect the health of landscapes that support or could support birds of Florida.

WORKSHOPS

Conservation-Focused Workshops:

Conservation Planning - How to Save Land for Birds - Uniting Amateurs and Professionals in the Study of Florida Birds - Teaching Your Community About Birds - Chapter Development Workshops: Orientation for New Chapter Leaders - On the Money Trail

Saturday Evening Program – Entertainment (TBD) and Speaker

Speaker: Charles Lee, Director of Advocacy, Audubon of Florida — The Audubon Legacy

Nominating Committee

If you desire to run for an office at the Membership Meeting on March 14, 2006 contact one of the Nominating Committee members:

Ann Pinner - 863-956-2374

Paul Anderson - jianandr@aol.com

Herman Moulden - hmoul@verizon.net

**Lake Region Audubon Society
General Membership Meeting**

The 2007 General Membership Meeting will be held at the Street Audubon Center on March 14th at 7:00 PM. Election of officers and other LRAS business will be done.

Open House

Marvel Loftus

Open House was a success! Delmer and Barbara Cowel cooked a fine ham dinner. Many people commented on how nice and clean the Nature Center looked. All this could not have happened if we did not get the needed help. I want to thank the many workers who cleaned, set-up, served, donated cookies, bought the tickets and donated their time and money. This is what makes a successful event. It was so nice to see everyone enjoying themselves. The proceeds from the Open House will help to keep the Nature Center open.



Biofuels, an Environmental Scam or the Wave of the Future

Chuck Geanangel

The rhetoric is heating up now and once again we all have to choose sides. Is ethanol going to be a viable replacement for petroleum or is it going to cause even more problems? Do you believe the industry hype or the environmental spin. First, let us list a few facts upon which almost everyone agrees. A biofuel is a fuel derived from plants such as potatoes, corn, switch grass, forest products (cellulose) or even petroleum. The most commonly mentioned product today is ethanol. Ethanol, or grain alcohol, is found in most alcoholic beverages. Ethanol will be produced in the USA and not imported. Ethanol produces 76,000 BTU/gal of energy while gasoline produces 114,000 BTU/gal of energy. Thus you need 1.5 gallons of ethanol to produce the energy of one gallon of gasoline. This is an important difference and has to be factored into everything you read.

At this point, things get murky. Scientists try to calculate the total amount of energy required to manufacture ethanol, that is the energy used to not only produce the ethanol but the energy to grow the plant material, say corn, for example. Corn requires fertilizer and lime to grow efficiently so you also have to figure how much energy is used to crush the lime rock and how much energy to make the fertilizer and how much energy to transport the corn to the ethanol plant and how much energy to manufacture the tractor and equipment, and how much energy to feed the farmers that grow the crop and how much..... well, you get the picture. This is complex stuff to say the least.

Professors David Pimental at Cornell and Tad Patzek at Berkley started the ball rolling a few years back by calculating that it takes more energy to produce ethanol than the ethanol contains. They claim that it takes 1.3 gallons of oil to create one gallon of ethanol. This is a very strong negative. Other scientist, working on the same problem in 2005, have reached the opposite conclusion. Researchers at the UC Berkley campus concluded that "producing ethanol from corn uses much less petroleum than producing gasoline" The reason for the discrepancy is simple. The technologies for all the variables are constantly changing, getting better, more efficient. Some of the new discoveries just over the horizon can change the equations even more.

The scientists further concluded that corn was not a good choice because of environmental problems such as soil erosion, excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, and destruction of natural lands. Additionally, there was the taxpayer subsidies paid to corn farmers which trouble many. They reasoned that if you made ethanol from woody products, cellulose technology, you could avoid many of these problems. There are billions of tons of waste cellulose products that could be used for the raw material right now. Just getting rid of this material is expensive and a source of environmental concern. Brazil avoids this problem by using sugar cane waste to ferment much of its ethanol at the farm site. Prior to that it was burned in the fields which caused a major air pollution problem.

With the environmental problems diminished the main concern then would be cost, though with pump prices moving on toward the \$4 mark, it may be a moot point. As more research is put into improving the new technologies, and they become even more efficient, costs will level out or hopefully drop. Did I mention that ethanol does not transport easily because of its ability to adsorb water from its surroundings? To be truly effective it will have to be produced and used locally. One final caveat; ethanol will be at best an additive. Pure ethanol does not produce the zoom, zoom, zoom that we all love. 15% ethanol mixed with 85% gasoline is the bench mark now and certainly that ratio can be greatly improved. Anything beyond that number will require the redesign of the automobile engine which would increase the cost dramatically. So to answer the original question, biofuels will play a role in making our country energy independent but only in conjunction with a whole family of alternative energy sources. Don't expect it to be the silver bullet that some predict. It ain't gonna happen. In the end, however, simple conservation measures will be our most productive path to energy independence. And we can do that right now. ****

Saddle Creek Fall Migration 2006

By Bob Snow

The fall migration warbler walks started August 19th, and ended October 28th. There were some slow days, as far as number and diversity of migrants, but some good sightings were recorded. A total of 116 species was observed including some of Saddle Creek's rarer ones. Twenty-eight warbler species were observed, with the standout being an adult male Canada Warbler, at close range, observed by Chuck Geanangel and a small group. We were fortunate to see several Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, and Cerulean Warblers, plus one Kentucky Warbler. Another sighting included a beautiful Philadelphia Vireo, found by Larry Albright and observed by our group. Several flycatchers observed by Paul Fellers added to our count. He observed an Olive-sided Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher, and a singing Willow Flycatcher. Two of these birds are not only unusual for Saddle Creek, but uncommon for Florida. There were several Olive-sided Flycatchers observed around the state this fall.

We were fortunate to see a light morph Short-tailed Hawk on most of our Saturday walks. We even had two sightings of the hawk, perched along the trail. We heard an Eastern Screech Owl on four separate occasions, in response to a recording. Roy Morris spotted an Eastern Bluebird, which was an unusual bird for the park.

Total attendance for the migration walks was 166 or an average of twelve people each Saturday.

Coming Events

Dec 3, Sunday Christmas Party

2 PM at Street Audubon Center. Come and enjoy fellow Auduboners. There will be a program for your entertainment. Bring finger food. Drinks will be provided.
Marvel Loftus 863-324-9657

Dec 16, Lakeland Christmas Bird Count

Round-Up Dinner for Christmas Bird Count participants. To participate in the Lakeland CBC, call Paul Fellers.
Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Jan 8, Monday, Photography of Birds

7:00 PM at Florida Presbyterian Home, Glenmore Chapel, 6 Lake Hunter Dr, Lakeland. (Lake Hunter Dr at Cresap St.) Reinier Munguia, a professional photographer, will present the program. Reinier's work has been on display at many shows to include Polk County's Water, Wings and Wild Things.
Marvel Loftus 863-324-9657

Jan 13, 2006, Sat, Audubon Regional Central Florida Conservation meeting

Street Audubon Center 10 AM to 3 PM.

Jan 20, Sat, 10:00 AM, Wildlife for Kids (Adults also)

At the Street Nature Center
Reinier Munguia will present a program on birds and conservation for kids. He will have some live birds to assist him in the presentation. Hot dogs will be served after the presentation.
Marvel Loftus 863-324-9657

Jan 27, 2007, Sat, Mosaic Phosphate Mines Birding Trip

LRAS members only. Meet at Publix parking lot in Bartow at 8 am. Lunch by Mosaic. Reservations required. 80 to 90 bird species probable.
Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Feb 10, 2007, Sat, Merritt Island MWP.

Black Point Drive, Oak Hammock, Crossover Canal (Manatees), Bio Lab Road by Indian River Visitor Center, Playalinda Beach (Seabirds). Bring snacks, early dinner at famous Dixie Crossroads Restaurant. Meet at Street Audubon Center at 7 am to carpool.
Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

Feb 13, 2007, Antarctica, Buck and Linda Cooper

Chain of Lakes Complex, 210 Cypress Gardens Blvd West (540 and Hwy 17), Meeting Room 1 at 7:00 PM. The Cooper's will tell about their trip to Antarctica.
Marvel Loftus, 863-324-9657

Feb 17, 2007, Hoot, the film

At the Street Audubon Center at 10 AM. A film for all. Learn of the plight of Burrowing Owls via this film.
Marvel Loftus 863-324-9657

March 3, 2007, Sat, Circle B Bar Reserve

4 mile hike through various habitats. Meet at 8 am at main gate (closest to Saddle Creek on SR 540, Winter-Lake Road).
Paul Fellers, 863-293-0486

MILKWEED BUTTERFLIES - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

By Linda and Buck Cooper

In central and south Florida we have three milkweed butterflies - Monarch *Danaus plexippus*, Queen *D. gilippus*, and Soldier *D. eresimus*. There is also a mimic - Viceroy *Limenitis archippus*. All of these can be found flying together especially in areas containing both host plants - milkweed *Asclepias*, *Sarcostemma*, *Cynanchum*, *Morrenia spp* and willow *Salix spp*. All of these butterflies are large, brownish-orange, and have black lines and white spots. The three milkweed butterflies also have black and white spotted thoraxes and orange and black abdomens. An interesting recent finding is that Florida Viceroy is also “nearly as unpalatable as



Female Queen, Ventral

Male Soldier, Ventral



Monarch, Ventral



Monarch, Dorsal

Monarchs, and more so than Queens.” (Ritland & Brower, 1991). Let’s look at differences.

Monarch is the largest and the most golden, especially on the ventral hindwing surfaces. The wings are heavily veined in black both dorsally and ventrally. It is the only milkweed butterfly with four orange supapical spots towards the wing tip on the dorsal surface. It has a lilting flight and spends a lot of time gliding with wings

in a V shaped dihedral. This gliding flight helps in long-distance migration. Most Monarchs spend the winter in Michoacan, Mexico and California but there is a nonmigratory population in Florida (Cech & Tudor, *Butterflies of the East Coast - An Observer’s Guide*). Queen and Soldier are the two most easily confused. These two are almost the same size and the same rich orange-brown but, overall, Soldier has more golden highlights. Dorsally, Queen wing veins are not outlined in black. It has two interior white spots on the forewing which are usually absent or faint on Soldier. Dorsally, Soldier wing veins are outlined in black but not nearly as heavily as Monarch. Ventrally, Queen has hindwing veins outlined in black but forewing veins are not outlined in black. Ventrally, Soldier has wing veins outlined in black but not as heavily as Monarch.



Viceroy, Dorsal

Viceroy, Ventral

Ventrally, the big identification mark to distinguish Soldier is a watermark of pale spots in a ‘C’ shape in the postmedian area of the hindwing which is lacking in Queen.

Soldier also looks ‘brighter’ than Queen. Even where we live in central Florida it has become fairly common to find Soldier in our yard, drawn to our *Eupatorium odoratum* (*Chromolaena odorata*). This tropical butterfly is a recent colonist to Florida and may be expanding northward due to warmer winters. The milkweed butterfly mimic, Viceroy, is slightly smaller and in south and central Florida is dark mahogany in color. Its caterpillar food plant is the Coastal Plain Willow. Its subspecies, *Limenitis archippus floridensis* is considered to be a Queen mimic. Farther north in Florida, Viceroy is more golden and mimics Monarch rather than Queen. The wing veins both



Queen, Dorsal

dorsally and ventrally are heavily outlined in black. On the hindwings, it has a dark curved line that looks

like a 'parenthesis'. The flight is quite different from the milkweed butterflies. It flies rapidly with a 'flap and glide' pattern with wings held flat during the glide. Besides ingesting cardiac glycosides from their host plants, adults of milkweed species collect pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) from dried stalks, roots and flowers of heliotropes, eupatoriums and others. We have seen both Queen and Soldier imbibing chemicals from dead saltbush *Baccharis spp*, dog fennel *Eupatorium spp*, *E. odoratum* and *Crotalaria spp*. To learn more fascinating facts about the milkweed butterflies read a thorough discussion of them in *Butterflies of the East Coast - An Observer's Guide* by Rick Cech and Guy Tudor and *The Butterflies of North America* by James A. Scott. Most of you have no difficulty attracting Monarch and Queen to your yard by planting Scarlet Milkweed *Asclepias curassavica* or one of the native milkweeds. Try vines such as White Vine *Sarcostemma clausa* or one of the swallowworts *Cynanchum spp* to entice Soldier into your yard where you can become familiar with this tropical butterfly, another bonus of Florida living. *Photos in the article by Linda Cooper and Alana Edwards.*

Fall Native Plant Sale

The fall sale is now over. Lois Smith and Carrie Plair put together another great event. A large number of volunteers assisted in setting the plants up for sale and in assisting during the sale. Volunteers included: Janet Anderson, Ron Butts, Ann Pinner, Paul Fellers, Mae Hartsaw, Bob Snow, Marvel Loftus, Tom Zimmer, Herman Moulden, Gary and Faye McCoy, John Duncan, Al and Gunn Honican, Lorraine Schnickels, Linda and Buck Cooper, Mali Rafats, Lee Shoe, Forrest Howard and Betty Butcher. All who assisted deserve our thanks. The Spring Sale is coming! Save flower pots and grow some native plants to donate to the sale.

Bird Club

Marvel Loftus

The Bird Club is off and running. We had a beautiful trip on Nov 9th to Fort DeSoto and the weather was perfect. The most noted bird, a Golden Crown Kinglet, was seen by Ron Plumer and Larry Lane. A Magnificent Frigatebird was also seen. The Bird Club schedule is on the web site, www.lakeregion.net. The next trip is Dec 7th. We meet at Gator Creek Reserve on U.S. 98 north of Lakeland and then drive through the Green Swamp. Jan 2007 trips are:
 Jan 04 Wolf Branch Creek, Tampa
 Jan 11 Merritt Island, Titusville
 Jan 18 Brooker Creek Preserve, Northern Pinellas County
 Jan 25 Viera Wetlands, Melbourne

Anyone interested should contact Marvel Loftus at 863-324-9657

Give Florida's Birds a Voice!

Audubon of Florida's online Advocacy Center keeps you up-to-date on issues facing our environment! Sign up for free monthly e-newsletters and learn how you can help birds with the click of a mouse!



<http://ga1.org/natureadvocate/home.html>

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Fall Field Trips

Paul Fellers

We began the ambitious season at Lakeland Highland's Scrub on 9/9 with hikes of 2.0 and 0.8 miles covering much of the area there. Birding highlights were 4 woodpecker species including an immature Red-headed Woodpecker (with brown head), a pair of Florida Scrub Jays, Brown Thrasher singing from the top of a snag, 2 Red-tailed Hawks and, an amazing 8 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks on the small pond there. Flowers of note were of Crestless Plume Orchid *Pteroglossapsis ecristata*, just coming into bloom, several gorgeous unexpected Blue Curls *Trichostema dichotomum*, and a couple of Toothed Rein Orchis *Habenaria odontopetala*, just coming into bloom. Eight butterfly species were I.D.ed, best being Giant, Zebra, and Spicebush Swallowtails, and ten each Zebra



County Commissioner,
Bob English and family
Photo by Herman

Heliconians and Gulf Fritillaries.



Blue Curly
Photo by Herman

On 9/30 with a 6:00 a.m. start we birded Turkey Creek Preserve at Palm Bay in the a.m. and Merritt Island NWR in the p.m. Migrants were scarce at Turkey Creek with only 6 warbler species, but a great look was had at a Cooper's Hawk; and 2 Swainson's Thrushes and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird were nice. A first visit to Lori Wilson Park below Melbourne resulted in a few more birds including another Cooper's Hawk at close range. At Merritt Island we had scope studies of an American Bittern and Great White Heron (white morph of the Great Blue Heron, a lifer for Liz Lane), 2 Reddish Egrets, Roseate Spoonbill, 100 Green-winged Teal, 30

Mottled Ducks, 200 Blue-winged Teal, 5 Black-bellied Plovers, 3 Marbled Godwits, Western Sandpiper, 4 Short-billed and 8 Long-billed Dowitchers. Dinner was at my favorite seafood restaurant - Dixie Crossroads in Titusville to wind up another great day in the field.

John H. Chestnut, Jr. County Park located on the SE corner of Lake Tarpon NE of Tampa on 10/7 was a first for the group to experience. It's a great place with 3 super trails, all about a half-mile or so in length and mostly on boardwalks. Foliage is outstanding and quite jungly. We did very well here for migrants logging 11 warbler species including 2 Chestnut-sided, 4 Magnolia, 4 Yellow-throated, 16 Pine and 6 American Redstarts. Additionally, we saw a gorgeous golden Summer Tanager, 2 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and a whopping 6 Acadian Flycatchers. We all wanted to see the relatively new Brooker Creek Nature Center located nearby - wow! what a facility!, complete with a fully-stocked gift shop. Keen-eyed Liz Lane spotted one of the best birds of the day, a soaring light-morph Short tailed Hawk. Our final stop was the causeway and Osprey Trail at Honeymoon Island. Eleven shorebird species were good including Wilson's and 6 Black-bellied Plovers, 2 Marbled Godwits, 2 Western Sandpipers, and 14 Short-billed Dowitchers. Supper at the Spaghetti Warehouse in Ybor City was excellent with much camaraderie.



Prothonotary Warbler
Photo by Les Twining

I had been looking at a couple of Florida field guides and another field trip that looked promising was a 3-mile loop trail at Hillsborough River SP which I was not familiar with. In addition, there's a short loop trail, and the trail to the rapids from near the concession stand that my family and I used to take years ago when we went there for picnicking and swimming in their pool. So on 10/14 I planned a field trip there which was a big success. The 3-mile trail was a gem going along the river for a good way before heading away from the river. Really big trees were along the trail from time to time. Migrants were great with 10 warbler species, best being Chestnut-sided, 4 Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, female Black-throated Green, and 4 Black and white Warblers. Other good birds were a Red-shouldered Hawk perched on a limb over the rapids, 2 Acadian Flycatchers, Barred Owl, and 2 Scarlet Tanagers. Amazingly, a Green-fly Orchid *Epidendrum canopseum*, was in full bloom totally out of season much to the delight of photographer Les Twining. I wish to highly recommend the 3-mile loop hike at the park.

The Pfundstein Road trail at Tiger Creek Nature Conservancy Preserve on 11/4 had recovered nicely from the burn there a few years back, but damage from the hurricanes of 2004 was very evident. Birds were in short supply with the best being 2 Red-shouldered Hawks, mature Bald Eagle and a pair of Phoebes. Garberia put on a grand show. Most of the Blazing Star *Liatris sp.*, and Paintbrush *Carphephorus corumbosus* had already bloomed, but we did see a few in their prime. Palafoxia was in bloom here and there on the trail. At the creek we noticed Zebra Heliconian butterflies on Climbing Aster *Aster carolinianus*. In the small swamp off to the right about 200 yards from the trail junction near the creek were a half dozen Toothed Rein Orchis *Habenaria odontopetala*. And on the edge of the trail near a pool of water Jim Olmstead spotted a 3-4' brownish water snake that was still there 15 minutes later when we returned along the same trail.

Veteran's Day found us hiking the 2.5 - mile round trip at the Lake Marion Creek Mgmt area near Poinciana purchased by "Save Our Rivers" funds. A few of the birds observed included 2 Red-shouldered Hawks (one adult perched on a snag at the end of the trail), Sharp-shinned Hawk, a couple of Ruby-crowned Kinglets at very close range, House Wren and 4 woodpecker species. The flowers in the wet area at the terminus of the trail did not disappoint us, especially the regal *Aster elliotii* which really put on a show, many of the stalks reaching 3-5' in height laden violet-purplish flowers. Several species of butterflies were having a great time including a Eastern Tiger Swallowtail. Other asters were White-top *A. reticulatus*, Bushy *A. dumosus*, Climbing *A. carolinianus*, and Silvery-leaved *Pityopsis graminifolia*. Lots of Beggar's ticks *Bidens mitis*, put on a yellow display in the wetland as well. An uncommon flower along the trail (2 plants) was Skullcap *Scutellaria integrifolia*. In the wooded swamp at the end of the trail we found several Toothed Rein Orchis. Unfortunately, the Vanilla Plants *Carphephorus odoratissima*, had already bloomed out. This interesting plant has a vanilla odor when dried. On the loop trail back, in the middle, were several beautiful Blue Curls *Trichostema dichotomum*. After we hiked out it was off to lunch at the Osceola School District Environmental Study Center, and a hike out to Reedy Creek on their neat boardwalk. A migrating Sharp-shinned Hawk floating overhead during lunch and spotted by Liz Lane was nice. A group of small birds along the boardwalk livened things up, but a bird sporting lots of yellow eluded our identification. Perhaps it was a Wilson's Warbler? Too bad, so sad! At the creek were several wading birds, the ever present gators, and a big brownish water snake snoozing on a log. Dahoon Holly *Ilex cassine*, some loaded with red berries, were along the boardwalk.

Perhaps we'll see each other again on upcoming field trips . Happy trails! ***

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.

Be a Bird Lister—It's Fun!

Paul Fellers

To help get more pizzazz into birding, a birder can join thousands of other birders around the world and become a lister. Every year the American Birding Association publishes people's bird lists for different states and regions, including the world, and ranks them. I've been a lister for many years—it was natural as I've always had a bit of a competitive nature, and it's kind of fun.

Thirty-five years ago I had an especially high Florida list. This was because that was the year that my old birding buddy, John Edscorn, one of the most competitive persons that I've ever known, decided to go for the Florida year record for number of bird species. I went along on many of his jaunts and was inspired to work harder on my own too.

If I remember correctly, he managed 330-something species in that year. If he heard about a good bird spotted somewhere, he was usually able to get out and about at a moment's notice. At that time he was a Farm Bureau insurance agent and could schedule his appointments at his convenience. His wonderful wife, Helen, was also often able to go as John's mom was living with them in North Lakeland and could baby sit. So that year—it was 1971—I recorded 308 species (many with John and sometimes John and Helen) and John got his big number.

There were a lot of "chases" in our new '71 Mercury with John driving (he loved to drive). At the time of the final tally, my final bird was an Oldsquaw (Long-tailed Duck) with John Patterson on a late December North Florida birding trip off Alligator Point. My most memorable bird for the big year was a 15-second look at a spectacular Connecticut Warbler on May 8 at Panther Point along Saddle Creek near Bartow. I walked out and called John—he came but we could not find the bird again. To my knowledge the only other Connecticut ever recorded in Polk County was by my very good friend the late Don Ford several years ago in May near the boardwalk out to Lake Arbuckle at the Avon Park Air Force Range.

A great group effort during the year was by John, his teen-age son Chris, and myself going for a "Big Day" during which birders try to ID as many bird species as possible in 24 hours. And what a day we had—171 species on April 10, 1971. We lucked into a fall-out at Fort Desoto with 20+ warbler species including Cerulean feeding on the lawn and 2 or 3 Dickcissels. This Florida Big Day record held until 1983.

I keep quite a few lists as do others. My Florida list is now a very respectable 423. The two most recent birds added were an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Saddle Creek Park and a Masked Booby at Ponce Inlet on the east coast.

This year for the world, out of the people who submitted lists, I ranked 371st with 1556 entries. This was prior to recent trips to the NW US and SW Canada (Red-naped sapsucker), and the big island of Hawaii (10 additional species). The top entry for the world list was a huge 8560. Chuck Geanangel, who has traveled to lots of countries, has a world ranking of which to be proud. Other local birders who are listers and participate in local birding events such as Christmas bird counts, spring and fall migration counts, etc., are Linda and Buck Cooper, Bob Snow and sometimes Pete Timmer. Areas in which I submit lists include Florida, American Birding Association area, Lower 48 States, United States (including Alaska and Hawaii), American Ornithological Union area, North America, Alberta (Canada), World, and Florida Annual List (which for me generally seems to be about 240-260 species. To qualify, a person needs 40% of the theoretical number for each state.)

Finally, for my own benefit, I keep a Polk County list (currently 308) and a home list (now 159) including some great birds such as a Short-tailed Hawk, Warbling Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Wilson's Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, etc. It's great fun. I know several more of you folks out there who could submit lists. Join the American Birding Association and get listed! ***

Editors Note:

Check out www.ebird.org for a great place to keep your lists and contribute to database of birding information maintained by Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

2006 - 2007 OFFICERS

Steering Committee:

Bill Karnofsky 863.324.5282

billkarnofsky@verizon.net

Bob Snow 863-644-4468

Chuck Geanangel 863.326.5748

hoatzin@tampabay.rr.com

Marvel Loftus - marvel.loftus@gmail.com

Paul Anderson 863.965.8241 jiaandr@aol.com,

VP/Programs: Marvel Loftus

VP/Conservation: Chuck Geanangel 863.326.5748

VP/Field Trips: Paul Fellers 863.293.0486

VP Membership: Gary McCoy 863.853.2643

VP Newsletter: Herman Moulden hmoul@verizon.net

Treasurer: Bill Karnofsky 863.324.5282

Corresponding Sec: Gina Lucas

Recording Sec: Liz Purnell 863.324.3181

Street Audubon Center Advisory Committee:

Chuck Geanangel, Bill Karnofsky and Paul Anderson

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

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.

Note from the Treasurer

We are still in the fund raising campaign to finance Audubon Adventures. This is one of our primary projects focused on the youth of Polk County. Each of our members should have received a letter describing this very important project. A brief reminder; we provide the county schools with learning kits exposing young children to the natural world through language arts, science and environmental literature. Each kit correlates to specific sections of the Nation's and State's academic achievement standards. To date we have had 44 members generously contribute toward this important project. Unfortunately, that is a very small percentage of our over 800 members. If you have not yet sent in your contribution, we would be most grateful if you would do it now. We pay \$46 per kit. If you would like to fund one or more kits, that would be great. If you would like to help fund a part of a kit with \$5, \$10 or more we (and the children of Polk County) would be very grateful.

Contributions should be sent to:
Lake Region Audubon Society
C/O Bill Karnofsky, Treas.
1439 Grand Cayman Cir.
Winter Haven, FL 33884-2446

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P. O. Box 93287
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Feature Photo



This American Bittern was photographed by Les Twinning at Lake Parker Park in Lakeland.

Submit your photo for the Feature Photo. Send to hmoul@verizon.net

To view these photos in color visit the Lake Region web site at www.lakeregion.net