



**Bay County Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 1182**  
**Panama City, Florida 32402**

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# CONSERVATION CHRONICLE



**BAY COUNTY  
 AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Sept-Oct 2015  
 Vol . 40, Number 1

## CURRENT OCCUPANT OR

This newsletter is published 5 times each year: Jan., Mar., May, Sept., and Nov. -SAVE THIS ISSUE UNTIL SEP, 2016  
 Our Motto is **"From Birding to the Total Environment"** Website Address: <http://www.baycountyaudubon.org>  
 Bay County Audubon Society's 52<sup>nd</sup> year of continuous successful operation

**it out!!!** baycountyaudubon.org or follow us on Facebook.

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Co-President	Ron Houser	763-7485
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Parker Preserve	Al Clare	872-8260
Programs	Fred Borg	271-2674
Publicity	Al Clare	872-8260
Web/Facebook Master	Susan Lamb	265-0646
	(See a gap? Help us fill it!)	

## WELCOME NEW BCAS MEMBERS

**May – August, 2015**

Keith Price, Marianne S. Mauro, Gail Weinsheimer, Patti McKenzie, Amos Tindell, Paul Folse, Barbara Revell, Louisa Petrosino, James Dudley, Jane Street, Ashley Gaia, Ann Lahan, Lucinda Simonson, Henry Boyd, and Martha J. Woods.

## WELCOME BACK TO BCAS

Virginia A. Barnett, Tina Kirchoff, Nellie Tully, Wally White, and Frances Jameson.

We look forward to seeing you at our BCAS meeting on Monday, September 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Science & Discovery Center of Northwest Florida, 308 Airport Road. Membership renewals: BCAS, the local chapter affiliated with National Audubon Society, does not handle renewals—only new memberships. Please use the form sent by the National Audubon Society for renewal. Your membership expiration date can be found on the top line of your address on your newsletter. Example: Mr. John Smith 06/14. Those receiving electronic newsletters please contact Diane Houser, membership chair, for that date.

## NEW MEMBERS FORM (Not for renewals)

Yes, please enroll me as a new member of the National Audubon Society and of the local chapter, Bay County Audubon Society (C5ZE200Z) (Be sure to put this number on your check). Please send Audubon magazine, Conservation Chronicle, and my membership card to the address below.

\$20 One-year introductory membership  \$15 Friend (*The Conservation Chronicle* only)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the National Audubon Society and mail this application to the local chapter:  
 Bay County Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1182, Panama City, Florida 32402

## CO-PRESIDENT'S CHAT

*By Robin Shader*

This year I have the honor of being a Bay County Audubon Society Co-President, along with long-time member Ron Houser. It is my pleasure to report to you that the Board has been hard at work preparing a years' worth of activities.

In August the Board met for the annual planning meeting, where the goals for the year were set. We will monitor and advocate for the Water and Land Legacy Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) that was passed last year; educate the public on the effects of climate change, habitat change and habitat loss on the environment; advocate for trail development and greenways; protect our state parks and much more.

In addition to working toward these goals, members have been hard at work planning field trips and monthly programs. Details about these events can be found in the newsletter and also on the BCAS website. Our monthly membership meetings are only about 10% meeting and the rest consists of great presentations from local experts and, of course, refreshments! It's a great opportunity to learn from the presenter and get to know your like-minded neighbors.

Audubon is about much more than birds, but there are always opportunities for birding. Field trips are a great opportunity for new birders to learn from experienced members. Binoculars are available to borrow, so you don't need to buy any gear to join in.

Bird identification books are available to borrow from your local library.

Bay County Audubon Society offers something of interest to everyone who cares about birding and the environment. I hope each of you will be able to join us.

## CO-PRESIDENTS CHAT

*By Ron Houser*

Welcome, everyone, to a new season of Audubon activities. This year, to split up president duties, Robin Shader and I are sharing the office of President as Co-Presidents. Although we don't have formal meetings during the summer, we haven't been idle. BCAS hosted and signed on to the Dogwood Alliance's Save our Southern Forests tour here in Panama City, where we were able to find out more about the effects of the wood pellet/biomass fuel industry. If you didn't attend the citizen's meeting, please log on to their web site or just do a Google search on the subject to find out how harmful this is to our hardwood forests. This is a concern locally, because there is a mill about 50 miles away and their product goes through our port to fuel generators in Europe. We have participated in the Breeding Bird Atlas again and have been busy applying for a Fish and Wildlife grant to treat exotic invasive plants at the Science and Discovery Center and to create new Panama City Crayfish habitat. Others have been protecting nesting shorebirds and recording bird species at Camp Helen State Park. If you would like to participate in any of these activities or need more information, please contact us through our web site or Facebook page, where you can find out what we've been doing.

## New BCAS Officers for 2015-2016

Co-Presidents – Robin Shader and Ron Houser  
 Vice President – Susan Llorca  
 Treasurer – Neil Lamb  
 Recording Secretary – Robin Kitson  
 Corresponding Secretary – Debbie Greiner

## CALENDER OF EVENTS

### PROGRAMS

All membership meetings will be held at the Science & Discovery Center of Northwest Florida, 308 Airport Road, Panama City

**A few dates to mark in your calendars for this coming fall. Some great programs and a few important meetings that you may want to attend.**

Monday, Sept. 14 Membership meeting 7:00PM at the Science and Discovery Center on Airport Road. Our own Neil Lamb will present his program "Birding Kiwi Land – A Trip to New Zealand"

Monday, Oct. 14 Membership Meeting 7:00 at Science and Discovery Center. Member Ron Merritt will be presenting: Birds and Aviation Safety; A Journey to South Africa

Monday, Sept. 28 Board Meeting, 7:00 at Forest Park Methodist Church on Lisenby and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Board members are invited to join us at Newk's on 23<sup>rd</sup> St. at 6:00 for dinner prior to the meeting.

Monday, Oct. 26 Board Meeting, 7:00 at Forest Park Methodist Church. 6:00 at Newks for dinner if you can make it. All members are invited to attend board meetings.

### BIRD IDENTIFICATION QUIZ

(Just to the lower right.....don't look!)



Photo by Neil Lamb

### Field Trips By Ron Houser

Saturday, Sept. 12 Bird Walk at PCB Conservation Park. Meet at parking lot at 7:30am. Bring binoculars but we will have extras to loan. This is also the date of the Regional Audubon Academy in Panama City and some of the attendees will be enjoying our field trip before driving to the U.F. Cooperative Extension Service in Cedar Grove for some workshops to learn how we can be more effective in the community. If you would like to attend, contact Mary Jo Capra at [maryjocapra@hotmail.com](mailto:maryjocapra@hotmail.com)

Saturday, Sept. 19 Lake Powell/Camp Helen Coastal Cleanup Day

Saturday, Sept. 26 Camp Helen Species Survey. FMI contact Emily Ellis [emilyellis@gmail.com](mailto:emilyellis@gmail.com)

Saturday, Oct. 3 Bay Day at St. Joe Bay Buffer Preserve. Come enjoy tours in the area, a delicious low-county boil to support the Friends of St. Joe Bay group. See web site for details: [www.stjosephbaypreserves.org](http://www.stjosephbaypreserves.org)

Wednesday, Oct. 14 Bird Walk at PCB Conservation Park 7:30am. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 4 scheduled bird walks in this park. This should be a great time for migrants. Easy walk.

Saturday, Oct. 17 Rivercamps field trip. Led by members John and Kim Ackerman, we will walk the nice trails along Crooked Creek in North Bay in this well-planned St. Joe Company development. Meet at Porter Park in Lynn Haven, by the Bailey Bridge at 7:00 to leave at 7:15 sharp. Meet in the parking lot. This will be an easy walk. Bring binoculars, bug spray. Call Ron FMI: 763-7485 or 381-5651 (c)

### Milestone Bird for Local Birder By Ron Houser

Our very own member, Tony Menart of Panama City, Florida, saw world life bird #6,000, a female Pringle's Puffback, on Sunday, January 18, 2015. He was on the road to Bogol Manyo in eastern Ethiopia when he spotted the milestone female, gray-brown above with bright red eyes. As soon as he spotted the female, a male came into view and started to display and call loudly. Tony has served as our rare bird coordinator and has done an outstanding job letting us all know what has been observed and reported in our area. Congratulations Tony, on that milestone Puffback!



### This Month's Program by Neil Lamb Birding Kiwi Land

**Come see this travelogue of scenery, birds, wildlife, and culture from the North, South, and Stewart Islands of NZ. Enjoy the photography of many endemic species, especially the wonderful world of the pelagic birds from the Tasman Sea and South Pacific. The boat trip off Kaikoura is probably one of the best pelagic seabird trips in the world. Over 12 species of pelagics close enough to touch! Learn about the conservation efforts in NZ to preserve and flourish many of the endemic birds on small off-shore islands where non-native predators have been eliminated. If you have plans for a future trip to New Zealand, this will provide ideas and help you anticipate some wonderful opportunities.**

### ANSWER TO BIRD ID QUIZ

I'm a Weka, *Gallirallus australis*. The weka is one of New Zealand's iconic large flightless rails

### An Important Topic for Consideration By Ron Merritt

As many of you may already know, the St. Andrews State Park is in the beginning phases of developing a new ten-year management plan. This planning process has already become a contentious issue with several local special interests groups voicing concerns in the newspaper and on television about the loss of "freedoms" at the island as well as the concerns of excessive "government oversight". These groups have been invited to participate in a special advisory group that is providing input into the development of this plan. Audubon Florida as well as the Bay County Conservancy was also invited to participate on this advisory group along with several other government agencies, NGO's, and private businesses. The hot-button issues revolve primarily around management at Shell Island. The park has proposed a wide range of initiatives and management options ranging from the park taking full responsibility for the Island (excluding the Coast Guard and U.S. Air Force lands) but including the future acquisition of the privately held parcels in the Spanish Ante area to relinquishing that responsibility to the county. The park also suggested a 150-foot extension of authority and management into the waters surrounding those portions of the island. This would allow the staff to periodically close of areas that may be damaged or to protect species of concern such as breeding shorebirds and beach mice. The most contentious issue, however, appears to be dogs on the beach. While many dog-owners are conscientious and maintain control of their dogs when visiting the beach, there are many who either do not know about the impacts these animals have on the local fauna and flora, or they simply do not care. The drum-beat of opposition to any management is simply that people want to continue to do what they have always done at the island. Unfortunately, these people are now joined by hundreds and hundreds more each weekend who want to join the fun and the island is suffering cumulative impacts over time from prop scouring of bay grasses to increased nutrient loading and contamination from trash and human and pet waste. It will become increasingly important for all who treasure this barrier island to become more actively involved in this issue and to contact political and civic leaders in the coming months to inform them on the incredible impacts the increased number of visitors to the island are having. Before the whole thing goes to the dogs. Send comments and letters to your local county commissioners or contact DEP official below.

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