



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

NONPROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 PANAMA CITY
 FL 32402
 PERMIT #212

CONSERVATION CHRONICLE



**BAY COUNTY
 AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Mar - Apr 2015
 Vol . 39, Number 4

CURRENT OCCUPANT OR

This newsletter is published 5 times each year: Jan., Mar., May, Sept., and Nov. -SAVE THIS ISSUE UNTIL APR, 2015
 Our Motto is **"From Birding to the Total Environment"** Website Address: <http://www.baycountyaudubon.org>
 Bay County Audubon Society's 51st year of continuous successful operation

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

Chapter Contacts

President	Mary Jo Capra	233-1313
Vice President	Fred Borg	271-2674
Treasurer	Neil Lamb	265-0646
Recording Sec	Robin Shader	522-2109
Corresponding Sec	Debbie Greiner	215-3580
Bald Eagle Stamp	Candis Harbison	381-7500
Bird Records	Richard Ingram	871-1736
CBC	Raya Pruner/Marvin Friel	233-5110
Conservation	Norm Capra	233-1313
Education	Susan Llorca	249-2862
Field Trips	Ron Houser	763-7485
Rare Bird Alert	Tony Menart	234-8042
Film Series	Jeff Palgut	763-4415
Historian	Beth Miller	872-7080
Hospitality & Merchandise	Wendy Hunsicker	258-3442
Inventory	John Donlon	
Laidlaw Preserve	Dawn Barone & Neil Lamb	258-7927/265-0646
Membership	Diane Houser	763-7485
Memorials	Ann Ingram	871-1736
Newsletter Editor	Jim Miller	872-7080
Outreach Speakers	Ron Houser & Neil Lamb	763-7485/265-0646
Parker Preserve	Al Clare	872-8260
Programs	Fred Borg	271-2674
Publicity	Al Clare	872-8260
Web/Facebook Master	Susan Lamb	265-0646

WELCOME NEW BCAS MEMBERS December 2014 – January 2015

Stacia DeLaney, Frank A. Depinto, Marguerite Munzel, Marion Friel, Pamela Delaney, Lockliar Levone, Theodore G. Lenz, Lauren Wilson, Wallyl White, John Russo, Stephanie Lardner, Deana Allen, Ruth Wendorf, Lee Smassanow, Carol Bryan, Susan Rydberg, Wanda Goodwin, Cathy Jo Laventure, Shari Swickard, Jo Goering, and Vanessa Serio.

WELCOME BACK TO BCAS

Barbara Swenson, Alan Humphrey, Kathleen Baha-Dirli, John Ackerman, Joyce Odom, Inia J. Plumb, Fran Holt, and Robert and Sandra Holden.

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 your newsletter on the top line of your address. Example: Mr. John Smith 6/30/14. 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

CALENDER OF EVENTS

PROGRAMS

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

Monday, Mar 9th, 2015 at 7 p.m. Marvin Friel and Raya Pruner will present a program on the Shorebird Monitoring Research Project.

Monday, Apr 13th, 2015 at 7 p.m. We will have a presentation by Julie McConnell, a Horticultural Agent with the Bay County Extension Office.

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, Mar 14, 2015 Laidlaw Preserve.

Come and enjoy this beautiful area and see what we've done on our workdays. Birding should be getting good. Bring a sack lunch to eat on the pavilion overlooking the pond. Bring your camera to check out our photo blind. Moderate walking required. Meet at Porter Park in Lynn Haven, on Hwy 77 at 7:15am to leave at 7:30 sharp. This park/boat landing is on the south end of the Bailey Bridge going across the bay. Bring binoculars and insect repellent. Cancel if it's raining heavily. FMI call Ron 763-7485 or 381-5651.

Saturday, Mar 21, 2015 Bird Walk at PCB

Conservation Park. 7:30am. Moderate hiking required on easy flat trails and boardwalks. Binoculars available.

Fri, Sat, Sun, Apr 10 - 12, 2015 Dauphin Island, AL and Fort Morgan.

Join us for a 2-night stay on this barrier island just south of Mobile. Birding should be excellent, since this is in the middle of migration, and there is always a chance of a "fallout". On the way home Sunday we will take a ferry across Mobile Bay to Ft. Morgan where more birds should be seen. You will need to make your own reservations at the Gulf Breeze Motel on the island. Their phone # is: (251)861-7344 or 1-800-286-0296. Rates are \$104 + tax. Make your reservations as soon as you can to make sure you get a room. This is a popular place in migration! I am getting a trip list together, so please let Ron know if you plan to go so we can make more arrangements.

PRESIDENT'S CHAT

By Mary Jo Capra

This year has been busy already. We completed another successful Adventure Film Series season. A great big *Thank You* to all who supported the series, whether sponsors, volunteer, or attendees. We could not make this happen without each and every one of you. We started the year with a bird walk at Conservation Park and had fabulous field trips to St. Mark's Wildlife Refuge and the Woodruff Dam. If you did not have an opportunity to go on these field trips, please plan to go a future trip before the end of our year in May.

It is the time of the year when we start thinking about our leadership for next year. Our nomination committee needs three members who are not board members. If asked to participate, please say yes. If you would like to serve as an officer or if you know of someone who would like a fresh challenge, please speak up. We would love to hear from you.

Our legislature is back in session. Please take the time to contact your legislative representatives and let them know your feeling on the allocation of the Amendment 1 monies. They need to hear from all of us.

MORE EVENTS

By Ron Houser

Sat. Apr 18 – Earth Day downtown in McKenzie Park.

Please come and show your support of your local Audubon chapter as well as other environmental, business and governmental groups who appreciate nature. We need people to help with our table, giving out information to people and helping set up and take down our tent. But come even if you can't do that. Meet people in other groups and find out what they are all about. Food and entertainment will be on hand. 9:00am – 4:00pm.

Fri. – Sun, April 24-26 Chipola Feather Fest. This 1st

annual birding/nature festival, located in Marianna, features various field trips and Elam Stoltzfus as a keynote speaker. Elam, a Grammy film award recipient, has shown his films locally, including the Martin Theater and at our film series. The festival is sponsored by the FWC. To get more information and to sign up, visit www.myfwc.com/chipolafeatherfest or www.facebook.com/chipolafeatherfest

LIDLAW WORKDAY

By Neil Lamb

A work day at the Laidlaw Preserve is March 7th. We will meet at Porter Park by the Bailey Bridge in Lynn Haven and depart by 7:30. This will get us to the gate at Laidlaw by 8:30, if anyone wants to meet us there. We will be doing some mowing and trail clearing, so bring some gloves and clippers or loppers. If you just want to walk around and enjoy the property independently, this is a good time to do so. Bring rubber boots in case we start trail clearing for Al's Cut where we will be building a loop trail from Reed's Blind to Sundance Meadow. Please contact Neil Lamb if you have any questions or want to register your plans to join us. 850-814-1276.



Recently completed Levee Boardwalk

BCAS BIRDING COURSE

By Norm Capra

Last fall the Gulf State College ENCORE program requested that Bay County Audubon Society offer an introductory birding course in the "Spring" 2015 session. We responded with a team taught course consisting of five lectures and two fields. We met weekly on Friday mornings from January 23 - February 27. Thirty students ranging from beginners to experienced birders enrolled in the class. The class was very well received. A popular course activity was the weekly "show and tell" preceding each class where students would report birds they had seen and/or photographed the previous week and asked questions about bird identification.

Lecture topics included essential bird anatomy, taxonomy, use of binoculars and field guides, etiquette, strategies for finding and identifying birds in the field, and how create a backyard environment to bring the birds to you. Field trips included a campus walk in Carl Gray Park, and Conservation Park.

The faculty included Norm Capra, Richard Ingram, Ron Houser, Al Clare, Cindy Wolf, Neil Lamb, and Gail Casteel. As measures of success, we enrolled 10 new members in BCAS, and sold 9 copies of The Birds of Bay and Gulf County. Plans are already in the works to present the course again in the fall. If you would like to help with the course, please contact Norm Capra.

2014 BCAS BACKYARD BIRD LIST RESULTS

By Jim Miller

Each year members of the BCAS are encouraged to participate in the annual BCAS Backyard Bird List. The rules are simple, from Jan 1st thru Dec 31st, just keep a list of bird species you see or hear in (or from) your backyard. You may also choose another location like a local park. After the year ends, contact Jim Miller to give your results.

This is a great way to increase your birding skills, whether you are an experienced birder or a novice. It will also make you aware of what birds are in your yard each year, what time of year they appear. Some members who participate keep a year-to-year running list which helps to compare total numbers of species for any given year, but also aids in predicting when a particular species may appear. So here is just a cross-section of what was seen this or heard this year by BCAS participants:

American Woodcock	Baltimore Oriole
Black-crowned Night Heron	Eastern Screech Owl
Groove-billed Ani	Magnificent Frigatebird
Marsh Wren	Northern Gannet
Ovenbird	Painted Bunting
Peregrine Falcon	Rufous Hummingbird
Swainson's Hawk	Western Kingbird
White Ibis	White-winged Dove

In 2014 there were 10 participants. Their total species (species count is the first number; the number in parentheses is the difference from 2013, if reported):

John Benton	34	Richard Ingram	119 (+7)
Mary Jo Capra	64 (+5)	Neil Lamb	120 (-15)
Norm Capra	58 (+5)	Bill McCandliss	95 (+6)
Emily Ellis	86 (-6)	Tony Menart	60 (-3)
Ron Houser	51 (+2)	Jim & Beth Miller	112 (-11)



Pine Siskin

Photo courtesy of Jim Miller

APPS FOR BIRDING

By Ron Houser

It's like having a birding field guide on your smartphone, pad, tablet or computer, with the added benefit of having bird sounds and other features that a field guide just can't provide. Birding apps are becoming more popular with birders for this reason and also because they are inexpensive and sometimes even free. You can download them from your app store and they are fully functional even without wi-fi. Here are a few of my recommendations:

Merlin - by Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Includes over 350 birds and sounds. A basic app designed for beginner birders. Free.

National Geographic Birds - Includes almost 900 North American birds and 3000 color illustrations, videos and extensive information about the birds and birding in general. A good choice for beginner to intermediate birders. \$10

Peterson - 3 different products; the Feeder Birds edition, which is limited in scope but free, the Pocket edition, for \$1, which shows 820 birds, and the Birds of North America edition, also with 820 birds, but with much more information for \$15.

Sibley e-Guide to Birds - \$20. Very extensive app, with 810 species and 6600 illustrations. An excellent choice for the intermediate to advanced birder.

Audubon Birds - Very good value for \$4. Integrated with Cornell Lab of Ornithology and **e-bird** using GPS to expand bird reporting.

iBird - 3 different products, from the free Lite version, the Plus version, highly recommended, for \$10, and the Pro version, possibly the most extensive and best birding app on the market. \$20.

All these apps include bird calls and songs and are upgraded from time to time. Don't let them replace your field guide, but use them to expand the information and to record your own sightings and photos.

BIRD IDENTIFICATION QUIZ (answer below & right)



SHOREBIRD ROOFTOP NESTING

By Candis Harbison

The following is from Michelle Landis, Audubon Florida's rooftop nesting coordinator, who can be reached at 850-276-4069 mobile or mlandis@audubon.org. She could use volunteers, as could the beach nesting team later in the year.

"Now that spring is getting closer, Audubon Florida is preparing for the shorebird/seabird nesting season! As you know, many of our threatened beach nesting birds nest on gravel rooftops in the Florida Panhandle. While this artificial nesting habitat does have its perks (no ground predators), it also comes with a great risk-falling chicks! Least Tern chicks are often flushed from the rooftops during routine maintenance or repairs, or as an attempted escape to avian predators. This results in chick mortality, which can be easily prevented by installing "chick fencing." Fencing the rooftops during the nesting season prevents young chicks from falling to the ground, where they can be stepped on, run over, eaten, or lost.

Audubon Florida has gained permission from our most critical rooftop nesting sites to install temporary chick fencing in 2015! In order to accomplish this enormous task, we need as much help as possible. It would be much appreciated if you could share the following information with your friends, neighbors, members, and/or volunteers. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me!"

The rooftop preparation dates are:

Thurs, Feb 19 - Bayou Dwellers Cabana (Fort Walton Beach)

Mon, Feb 9 & Tues Feb 10 - Chateau Motel (Panama City Beach)

Wed, Feb 25- Inn on Destin Harbor (Destin)

Tues, March 3- Old Time Pottery (Destin)

Tues, March 10- Emerald Coast Shopping Center (Destin)

Silver Sands Outlets (Sandestin) **Will be rescheduled, likely for mid-late March

ANSWER TO BIRD ID QUIZ

I am a **Wilson's Snipe** - Beth Miller took my picture this February as I was foraging with four of my buddies in a water-filled ditch on Hwy 2321. I am a long-billed, probing sandpiper about 10 1/2 inches tall. If flushed, I fly a distinctive zig-zag pattern, and I am surprisingly fast. I winter in the Southern U.S. and as far south as Venezuela.