



FIELD TRIPS

2010 - 2011

audubonmartincounty.org ~ 772-288-2637

Audubon of Martin County is delighted to present you with the 2010-2011 Field Trip Line-up. We welcome all birders from novice to experts on our trips. Our intention is to increase our understanding of bird identification and behavior while having great adventures and great fun. So whether we stray hither or yon, please join us and contribute to the diversity of Martin County's wonderful Audubon chapter. Please register with the field trip chairs in advance to reserve a space.

****MEETING LOCATION:** The car pool meeting location is at the Knights of Columbus rear parking lot located off Cove Road at 7251 SW Gaines Avenue, Stuart, FL 34997, just east of Kanner Highway (SR 76). Parking passes will be distributed and must be displayed on your windshield. THE TIMES INDICATED ON THE FIELD TRIPS ARE THE TIMES WE WILL LEAVE THE MEETING LOCATION.

WHAT TO BRING: Binoculars, sun block, reference books, water and snacks, cameras, insect repellent, comfortable walking shoes, hat, sunglasses and protective wear. At times you may want to bring a sack lunch.

FEES: The fee for most trips is \$5 for Audubon members; \$10 for non-members. Proceeds go to our local chapter. Additional fees are charged as dictated by transportation or entrance requirements. Please carpool and please offer a donation for gas to your driver.

PHOTOS: We appreciate the field trip participants who take digital photos during our outings and share them with us. Photos are used to accompany field trip summaries in our monthly newsletter. Send them with your permission to use them to fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org.

EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST: Let us know if you would like to be added to our email distribution list for field trip related information.

FIELD TRIP CHAIRPERSONS: Mary Starzinski and Kathy Petteruti are serving as co-field trips chairpersons this year. Please contact them directly to sign up for a field trip either via e-mail at fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org or telephone at 772-221-9953 (home). Cells are 772-233-2820 (Mary) and 772-233-2819 (Kathy).

Sign up and reserve your field trip space by emailing fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org or calling 772-221-9953 (home) or 772-233-2820. Please include 1) your full name 2) full names and number of people in your party 3) membership status 4) willingness to carpool and serve as either driver or passenger.

Wednesday, October 20, 2010. Lakeside Ranch STA

Anticipate a busy field trip to Martin County's Stormwater Treatment area in-progress, Lakeside Ranch STA. We will meet SFWMD Education and Program specialist Niki Spencer along with scientists and field managers there at 9 am. This 2700-acre wetland is designed to use emergent vegetation to remove phosphorus from contaminated water flowing into Lake Okeechobee from farmland around the Okeechobee-Martin County line. At 10:30 am we will then be escorted to examine Taylor Creek STA which is located about two miles north of the city of Okeechobee. This will be followed by a tour of Lemkin Creek HWTT. This hybrid facility combines both wetland and chemical treatments by incorporating the use of lime rock beds and aquatic vegetation to maximize nutrient removal. Our hosts will join us for a brown bag picnic lunch at Okeetantie Park on Lake Okeechobee. Bring your lunch. These tours will be highly educational and bird friendly relative to the evolution of each individual STA area. We will be leaving the KOC at 7:30am.

Saturday, November 20, 2010. Blue Cypress Lake

Register early, as this sunrise birding/paddling trip is limited to 12 lucky participants. We will launch at 6 am from the Middleton Fish Camp at Blue Cypress Lake with our guide, Dr. Richard Baker, president of the Pelican Island Audubon Society and Dr. Juanita Baker. At over 6500 acres, Blue Cypress Lake is the largest lake on the Treasure Coast. It derives its name from the blue appearance of the cypress trees as the rising rays of the sun reflect off the water. Expect to see hundreds of osprey in the cypress trees. There is a charge of \$20/person in addition to our regular \$5 fee for members. This is Dr. Baker's requested contribution to the Pelican Island Audubon Society. Please bring your own boat. Dr. Baker will provide canoes if you do not have access to a boat but please let us know ahead of time. There will be no extra canoes unless requested. Consider staying at the Middleton Fish camp (800-258-5002 or 772-778-0150) as the put-in time is early. Toilet and showers are available. The Bakers will be in a van on site during the night. We will meet at the Middleton Fish camp at Blue Cypress Lake at 5:30 am. Directions will be provided to participants.

Saturday, December 18. STA-Stuart and St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park

Let's bird STA-Stuart! Join us at 7 am at the Salerno Creek Stormwater Retrofit which is about ¼ mile west of the Manatee Pocket. It was constructed as a stormwater retention and treatment facility to reduce nutrient runoff into the St. Lucie Estuary at the Salerno Creek drainage basin. We will bird there until 8:30 am. From there we will carpool to the Intracoastal Waterway at Cove Road. Twenty persons will be shuttled via motorboat to the pier and boardwalk at St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park, compliments of Florida State Park staff. Maggy Hurchalla, native plant specialist and former Martin County commissioner, will join us there for a walking tour of the boardwalk and beach. As a special treat, we plan on having a picnic lunch at the pavillion/restroom area. We are requesting an additional \$5/person for the picnic supplies. After lunch, the Park Service will ferry us back to the Cove Road put-in, still in plenty of time to wrap up your holiday shopping.

Saturday, January 22, 2011. STA-5: Stormwater Treatment Area 5

Back by popular demand, we will once again travel to STA-5, a 76,000 acre site about 20 miles south of Clewiston. This is a specially constructed wetland which naturally removes excess nutrients thus preventing them from entering the Everglades Ecosystem. Serendipitously, it has also become an oasis for tens of thousands of birds daily. We will meet our guide at STA-5 and be provided a short overview of the area. Then we will carpool along the levees and stop and bird when a good opportunity presents itself. In addition to our standard fee, plan on a \$3-5/person donation to the Glades Audubon to help to defray their costs. Be prepared for a 6 am departure from the KOC parking lot. For those who prefer not to make the early morning drive to STA-5, lodging is available at the Clewiston Inn (800-749-4466) or the Holiday Inn Express (877-863-4780). Please register early as the trip is limited to 40 participants. Bring walkie talkies if you have them. Please volunteer vans and larger passenger vehicles in order to optimize this experience. Remember

to pack water and lunch. STA-5 is 20 miles from the nearest gas station.

Friday, February 18 and Saturday, February 19, 2011. The Everglades

Boy, do we have a treat for you. Let us start our field trip by meeting at KOC at 8:30 am. From there we will caravan to Florida City and bird prior to registering at the Best Western (304-246-5100). You may choose to register for one or for two nights (Feb. 18 and 19). Make your room reservation before 1/31/11 to guarantee your room rate of \$99. The afternoon will be your free time to relax, exercise or bird the Everglades. We will plan on a group dinner on Friday. On Saturday, we will meet with Paul Bithorn, Field Trip Leader for the Tropical Audubon Society who will be our guide in the Everglades. The "River of Grass" is home to several endangered species of birds including the Woodstork, Everglades Snail Kite and the "Cape Sable" Seaside Sparrow. Paul, who is a world renowned birder, will share his vast knowledge of the Everglades fauna and flora with us on Saturday. Besides leading field trips for multiple groups for greater than 20 years, he has contributed to several bird-finding guides, including 1) *the ABA's A Birders Guide to Florida, Fourth Edition* 2) *A Birders Guide to the Bahama Islands, the Falcon Guide and 3) Birding in Florida and the Parrots of South Florida*. What a memorable and exciting field trip this will be.

Saturday, March 12, 2011. Hackberry Hammock

This month we will visit Hackberry Hammock which has been the home of Sam and Allie Comers for 25 years. They have graciously permitted us to visit their 17-acre homestead in St. Lucie County. The property has many natural areas and additional plantings including both bird-friendly native and non -native species. Their gardens attract a multitude of avian species including hawks, meadowlarks, cranes, warblers, vireos, woodpeckers and hummingbirds. Hackberry Hammock is especially noted for its ability to attract to its feeders both indigo and painted buntings. On any given day in March, up to 80 indigo and 20 painted buntings can be seen

at the feeders. Plan to leave from the KOC at 7 am. We will finish and be off the property before noon.

6 am Friday, April 8 to 6 pm Saturday April 9, 2011. The Birdathon

Come all, come fast to the Birdathon Blast! We would like to encourage all Audubon members to participate in our final field trip of the season. We are organizing this field trip for both educational and fundraising purposes. We need your help! AoMC's Birdathon will start at 6 am on Friday, April 8 and finish at 6 pm on Saturday, April 9. Participants will be divided into groups of 2-4 with experienced birders serving as team leaders. The Birdathon is a National Audubon event and its goal is to count as many different species as possible within a designated time frame as a measure of the ecological health of the community. Teams will be free to bird early, late, either day or both days. Our educational goal is to team rookie, intermediate and advanced birders with the dual purpose of facilitating field identification and maximizing fun. Participants may opt out at the time of their choice. Our financial goal is to raise \$5000 via pledges from family, friends, ourselves and corporate sponsors. (Pledges can be donated in a set amount or per numbers of birds counted). To support you in your Birdathon preparation, our March program meeting will focus on Bird ID. AoMC has over 400 acres of property to maintain and restore. We are avidly involved in local and national conservation issues which are supported in large part by our hard-working paid staff. We need your help, both physically and financially, to continue our mission and expand our outreach to children, adults and the community at large. Please call or e-mail us ASAP to volunteer as team leaders and participants. Don't be shy. We are **your** Audubon and we need you whatever your level of expertise. We'll figure out those birds together and wrap it all up on Saturday night with a potluck dinner and prizes after we collate our field lists. Be there or be square!