

FEBRUARY 2020

VOLUME 45, ISSUE 5

# St. Lucie Audubon Society

Fostering appreciation of nature in St Lucie County, Florida, since 1954



## The Laughing Gull

### President's Message

By Ellen Lynch

Our chapter is in the middle of a very busy season and I would like to share with everyone what our Board is up to and how hard they work.

Diane Goldberg has shown wonderful leadership skills and accomplished a well-planned event to plant native plants in a county park. She partnered with St. Lucie Co. Environmental Resources and many volunteers (33!) at the Becker Preserve in Ft. Pierce. She chose the plants, grew some herself, ordered more and even made soft pillows for the volunteers to kneel on or sit on. The group was able to plant 150 different plants of all sizes in three hours! Kudos to Diane and her commitment to "Plants for Birds" Initiatives!

Our Membership Chair, Carol Pembroke, along with our Corresponding Secretary, Jan Nuhn, have worked out the details of contacting all people from St. Lucie County who have joined the National Audubon Society to let them know about our local chapter and how to join. Ed Bowes designed a two-sided postcard and had them printed, the ladies took all the home addresses provided by National Audubon and sent the postcards out to about 200 prospective members. This was a large undertaking and it was done so professionally and efficiently. A huge thank you to this team effort!

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*Photo by Dan Marinelli*

Thursday, Feb. 6:  
Speaker: Ken Warren

The speaker for our February general meeting will be Ken Warren on the topic of “The Mission, Accomplishments & Current Priorities of U.S. Fish & Wildlife. and What the Future Holds.”

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**Saturday, February 22, 2020**

**Joe Overstreet Road & Landing**

**Where:** 3701 Joe Overstreet Rd., Kenansville FL.

**When:** 7:00 am N. Canoe Creek Rd if you want to look for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. 8:15 am at Joe Overstreet Rd for a Later start.

**Guides:** Doris & Steven Brookens

**Details:** Regularly sighted birds in this area include Snail Kites, Wilson’s Snipe, Bald Eagles (including nests), Crested Caracara, and Eastern Bluebirds. Full details at

<https://www.stlucieaudubon.org/field-trips>

**Contact:** Doris Brookens at cell: 717-576-7876 email: [dorisbrookens@gmail.com](mailto:dorisbrookens@gmail.com)



**“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.” ~John Muir**



## The Laughing Gull

Photo by Ed Bowes

# Citizen Science

BY ED BOWES

It's time to plan for participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count! This global bird count takes place annually on President's Day weekend. That means this year's count runs from February 14 to 17. Count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days that weekend at one or more locations—it's your choice! Keep track of the kinds of birds you see and how long you watched.

- Make your best estimate of how many birds you saw of each species. For example, 5 Northern Cardinals, 3 American Crows. Huge flocks may be a challenge, but your best guess is still valuable.
- Enter your list(s) online at [www.BirdCount.org](http://www.BirdCount.org). Put in a new checklist: --for each new day --for each different location --for the same location, same day, if you counted at a different time of day You can start entering bird lists at midnight local time on the first day of the count, anywhere in the world.

For all the details, visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website at <https://gbbc.birdcount.org/>.

**Project Feederwatch** starts Saturday, November 9 and runs through April 3, 2020. Join the team of citizen scientists by counting birds who visit your yard and feeders! The Cornell Lab of Ornithology uses the data to identify changes in winter ranges and bird species at risk. You can join Project Feederwatch here: <https://feederwatch.org/about/how-to-participate/>

### St. Lucie Audubon Officers & Board Members

President – Ellen Lynch

Vice President – Ed Bowes

Treasurer – JoAnn Stillman

Recording Secretary – Kathy Mayshar

Corresponding Secretary - Jan Nuhn

Program Chair – Kevin Hinkle

Birding Adventure Co-Chairs – Adella Blacka, Doris Brookens

Conservation Chair – Diane Goldberg

Membership Chair - Carol Pembroke

Events Chair – Harriet Scott

Public Relations – Ruth Neese

Directors at Large – Adella Blacka, Roger Laliberte, John Nelson

Science Advisor – Matthew Anderson

Raffle Coordinator – Wayne Pembroke

Board members may be contacted by email at [stlucieaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:stlucieaudubon@gmail.com)

# The Laughing Gull

## Feathered Friends

BY RUTH NEESE

Only one member of the Swift family visits St. Lucie County, the Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). They are present here from April to early September to breed, then fly to western South America for the winter. Interestingly, they are found in the eastern portion of the county where human-made vertical surfaces are more common.

Chimney Swifts spend most of their time on the wing, clinging to vertical surfaces only when roosting and nesting. They even bathe and drink on the wing! Their time in flight is spent hunting airborne insects during the day.

As for identification, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology states that Chimney Swifts are best identified by silhouette. Their color is a drab gray-brown overall that can appear black when the birds are backlit. They have slender, rounded bodies with a rounded head; nearly invisible bill; and short, tapered tails. Their wings are long, narrow, and curved with stiff, near constant wingbeats. The old ID adage is that Chimney Swifts resemble a “flying cigar.”

Look for Chimney Swifts skimming low along canals, flying over open terrain, or diving through insect swarms. Listen for their characteristic chittering call. You can find them in Ten Mile Creek Preserve, George Lestrangle Preserve, Savannas Recreation Area, Fort Pierce Inlet State Park, Sheraton Scrub Preserve, and Indrio Savannahs Preserve.



## Coming Attractions

### **FIELD TRIP**

Monday, March 16, 2020

Orlando Wetlands Park

### **GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Tyler Beck, FWC Snail Kite Coordinator

## We're on the Web!

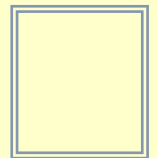
Visit us at:

<http://stluciesudubon.org>

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