

MARCH 2022

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St. Lucie Audubon Society

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



The Laughing Gull

President's Message

By Ellen Lynch

We have some good news to share with all our members. We are going back to providing in-person general meetings beginning with our meeting on March 3rd. We will also hold our April 7th general meeting in person at the Oxbow Eco-Center. Both meetings will also have the option of viewing the meeting via Facebook Live on our Facebook page. So, those of you who cannot attend the meetings at Oxbow, please join us on Facebook to enjoy our speakers. In May, our speaker is only available on zoom, so we will go back to using the zoom option for the May 5th general meeting.

Our chapter is also committed to having a booth at this year's Earth Day Event on April 23rd held at Oxbow Eco-Center. We will share a space with Matthew Anderson and his staff at the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection. We need some volunteers to work our booth and talk to folks about our chapter and local birds found here. You need only work a few hours and this is an important event to educate our community about our chapter and provide hand-outs with conservation information. We need you! Please let us know if you can help by contacting Ellen, President, via email, at stlucieaudubon@gmail.com

Our chapter is working in partnership with Martin County Audubon on a special morning at Lakeside Ranch STA in western Martin County. On (continued on page 3)

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Photo by Dan Martinelli

The Laughing Gull

Thursday, March 3:

Presenter: Niki Desjardins

“Protecting & Monitoring Shorebirds during Coastal Construction Projects” by Niki Desjardins, Director of Operations at Ecological Associates.

Field trip: Sunset Birding at the C23/C24 Reservoir

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

4:00 – 7:00 PM

Leaders: Doris and Steve Brookens

Details: Meet at Paleo Hammock Preserve to caravan to the site. The Reservoir is a water impoundment area surrounded by a level mowed berm. We will walk along the berm looking for water birds and raptors. Target species include gallinules, Snail Kites, Roseate Spoonbills, and Northern Harriers. More details on our Web page: <https://www.stlucieaudubon.org/field-trips>

Visit this Link to [register](#).



“Water is the driving force of all nature.” ~ Leonardo da Vinci

The Laughing Gull

President's Message (continued)

BY ELLEN LYNCH

(Continued from page 1)

On Saturday, March 19th, the STA will be open to members from 8-12 am by reservation only. Our Director, John Nelson, will be there to provide a learning experience for photographers. In order to attend this birding adventure, please register at: www.audubonofmartincounty.org/happenings

The Grace Stock Conservation Awards will take place at our General Meeting on April 7th instead of our March meeting. The timing was a bit late to get the permission and arrangements made to invite the three award winners so soon. Diane Goldberg has chosen the winners and we will see them present their STEM projects in April. Thanks Diane!

Happy birding!



Chapter Dues

The year for local chapter dues runs January to January. Dues can be paid by check or credit card on our Web site: <http://stlucieaudubon.org>

- Individual: \$25
- Family (2 or more people): \$30
- Sponsor: \$50
- Patron: \$100

The Laughing Gull

Photo by Ed Bowes

Citizen Science

BY ED BOWES

The next “big event” in birding is the Global Big Day on May 14, 2022. Participation is simple, but you do need an eBird account. If you do not have an eBird account, [create one here](#). To participate in the Global Big Day, just count birds! You do not have to commit to birding for 24 hours—an hour or even 10 minutes of watching birds makes you part of the team. Visit your favorite spot or search out someplace new; enjoy a solo walk or get some friends to join in the Global Big Day fun.

Enter the birds that you see and hear via the eBird website or the eBird app on your cellphone. You can enter and submit lists while you are still out birding, and the app will even keep track of how far you have walked, so you can focus on watching birds. It is that simple!

Want to participate in additional citizen science projects? If you want one related to birds, visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology [Citizen Science](#) page. There are numerous projects to choose from. With nesting season underway in Florida, NestWatch might be a good choice.

Looking for a project not related to birds? There is a webpage for that! All federal level citizen science projects can be found at <https://www.citizenscience.gov/#> There are several federal projects active in Florida at this [link](#).

And don't forget about state-level citizen science projects! FWC has several options for participation, too. Just click this [link](#). Be a citizen scientist!

St. Lucie Audubon Officers & Board Members

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Board members may be contacted by email at stlucieaudubon@gmail.com

The Laughing Gull

Feathered Friends

BY RUTH NEESE

Recent news is not good for our avian friends in Florida. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has been notified by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory of confirmed cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) strain: H5 2.3.4.4 in lesser scaup, black vultures, royal terns, and bald eagles. Presence has been confirmed in dead birds from Palm Beach, Brevard, and Volusia counties. Tests are pending for pelicans, herring gulls, crows, and screech owls. There are also northern gannet deaths reported but these may be natural mortalities during migration.

The H5.2.3.4.4 virus affects a wide range of bird species and caused a large number of avian deaths in the Carolinas, Virginia, and Canada in 2021. Now the virus has arrived in Florida. How can you help prevent the spread of this virus?

1. **Do not handle dead or dying birds!**
2. Notify FWC of all bird mortalities via this [link](#).
3. Keep your bird baths and bird feeders scrupulously clean and disinfected or take them down.

Wildlife rehabilitation facilities may refuse the intake of ill birds from the general public at this time. If you find a bird that is obviously sick call the local government animal services number. Do not bring sick birds to a local wildlife rehabilitator without calling first to ask if they are accepting birds. I know this is distressing for bird lovers, but this disease is very transmissible amongst birds and has a very high mortality rate. Let's hope the disease passes quickly and with little damage to our beautiful Florida birds.



Coming Attractions

FIELD TRIP

Friday, April 8, 2022

Egret Marsh Stormwater Park

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, April 7, 2022

“Purple Martins: Using DNA to Investigate Behavior”

Speaker: Dr. Anna Forsman

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

<http://stluciesudubon.org>

St. Lucie Audubon Society

P.O. Box 12474

Ft. Pierce, FL 34979

