



# Crested Caracara

January/March 2010 **Hendry-Glades Audubon Society**

*Audubon mission: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitat for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.*

## **Officers**

*Margaret England, President  
Butch Wilson, Vice-President  
Kim Willis, Secretary  
Janet Falk, Treasurer*

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Martha Valiant  
Ellen Minichiello-Boles  
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## **President's Message**

Ring in the New Year with Hendry-Glades Audubon. Hendry-Glades Audubon ( 501c3) celebrates its third year as an official Audubon chapter in January 2010. Some of 2009's highlights include reaching over 100 individual and family memberships plus 3 "chapter only" memberships. HGAS joined the Clewiston Chamber, LaBelle Chamber, Glades TDC, and Big "O" Birding Festival Committee. During the past year chapter volunteers participated in the Big "O" Birding Festival, Ft. Center Trail Dedication, LaBelle Area Earth Week Field Trips, American Indian Arts Festival, LaBelle Pet Fest, DuPuis Management Area(SFWMD) outreach events, the Hendry County Fair plus other events and programs. HGAS lead over 25 trips to STA5, organized the spring and Fall Hendry/Glades North American Migration Counts, Great Backyard Bird Count for Hendry/Glades and Clewiston-STA5 Christmas Bird Count. A special thanks to Hendry Commissioner, Karson Turner who has hosted the past two Christmas Bird Count gathering. Hendry-Glades Audubon Society appreciates its members, friends and donors. If you have ideas, suggestions or would like to volunteer to help with HGAS events and projects contact me at the address below. Happy New Year!

Margaret England  
HGAS, President '09-'10  
[mleighthouse@embarqmail.com](mailto:mleighthouse@embarqmail.com)  
380 Riverview Drive, LaBelle, FL 33935, 863-674-0695

## **STA-5 2010 Schedule**

Jan 2 (Christmas Bird Count)  
Jan 16 & Jan 30  
Feb 13-15 (Great Backyard Bird Count)  
Feb 20  
Mar 6  
Mar 27-28 (Big O Birding Festival)  
Apr 10 & Apr 24  
May 8 (North American Migration Count – Spring)  
May 22  
Jun 19  
Jul 17  
Aug 21  
Sep 18 (North American Migration Count – Fall)  
Oct 16  
Nov 13 & Nov 27  
Dec 4  
Dec 18 (Christmas Bird Count)

# News You Can Use.....

## Upcoming Events

### **Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, January 2, 2010**

The Third Annual STA5-Clewiston Christmas Bird Count (FLSO) will be held on Saturday January 2, 2010. This is part of National Audubon's 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count. Hendry County Commissioner, Karson Turner, has invited us to use his family's business, Quality Electric during the CBC event and post count gathering.

For information or to volunteer for 1/2 to full day contact: Margaret England, sta5birding@embarqmail.com

Cell: 863-517-0202 Home: 863-674-0695

### **Big O Birding Festival, March 26-28, 2010**

Registration begins in January. For more information visit [www.bigobirdingfestival.com](http://www.bigobirdingfestival.com) or call Hendry County Tourism at 863-612-4783

### **2010 Audubon Academy, March 26-28, 2010**

[www.ParamountPlaza.com](http://www.ParamountPlaza.com) Gainesville, FL

## STA 5 Highlights

November yielded 82 species along with one banded juvenile Roseate Spoonbill being spotted. Additions to our species count include the Great Cormorant, Sanderling and Wilson's phalarope.

The big news is now we have two visiting Cassin Kingbirds joining the Western Kingbirds.

In 2009, STA5 was featured in a 5 page article in the April Birder's World, WGCU Gulf Coast Live and on WGCU radio. With the increased popularity of birding in our area, additional volunteers are needed to lead some of the 25 annual escorted tours, assist with the Big "O" Birding Festival and welcome birding/photography groups staying in local hotels. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce birders and photographers to Hendry County and birding opportunities. STA5 is recognized as the "Birding Oasis of South Florida".

The **Hendry-Glades Audubon Society** will be participating in the annual **Great Backyard Bird Count** at STA -5 February 12-15, 2010. Even if you can't make it out to STA-5, we encourage you to participate on your own in your own backyard for at least 15 minutes one or more days of the count. Anyone can participate from beginner to expert. It's free, fun, easy and it helps the birds! For more information visit <http://birdsource.org/gbbc>.

*The Great Backyard Bird Count is led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited.*

## Mark Your Calendar for the Big O Birding Festival March 26-28, 2010

HGAS members and friends have been invited to help with the event registration and other activities for a few hours or anytime during the 4 day event.

### **Birds, Boats & Bikes, "O" My! Big "O" Birding Extravaganza 2010**

- Welcome reception at the Historic Clewiston Inn
- Workshops: wildlife photography, turkey calling & others
- Guided and self-guided tours for 4 days throughout Hendry & Glades counties, STA-5 and the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation
- Birding by Boat on Lake Okeechobee
- Bike Hike & Birding on the L.O.S.T.
- Dinner program with Keynote Speaker
- Dinner program at Gatorama
- Evening Owl Hoot
- Breakfast & Birding Opportunities
- Lunch & Lectures
- Lynda White, Audubon Birds of Prey with "Paige the Bald Eagle"
- Birding by Horseback in the Slough
- Birding by Swamp Buggy
- Time to explore, shop and rest

**Hendry Glades Audubon Society** has teamed up with an environmental portal known as **Eco-Voice**. They have listed our organization on their website and we have done the same on ours. **Eco-Voice** includes messages about us and our activities in their Daily-Digest. This is a great service as it reduces many individual e-mails to just one, the Daily-Digest. With the Digest, you just select the items that interest you and read them, before deleting the rest. We strongly urge you subscribe to **Eco-voice** Daily-Digest by visiting [www.eco-voice.org](http://www.eco-voice.org) and selecting subscribe.

While on their web site please explore the messages, events, picture library and lots of other great information free information.

## **Global Warming: Get the Facts**

According to a recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the Earth's average surface temperature has increased 1.3 degrees F over the past 100 years. Most scientists agree that this increase is caused by human activity - primarily the burning of fossil fuels. What may seem like a small temperature change has devastating consequences - rising sea levels, loss of Arctic habitat, extinctions, increasingly intense hurricanes, and drought and famine.

Fortunately, we can make a difference. By taking individual action at home and promoting sound energy policy and legislation in our communities, states and nation, we can help protect our global habitat — for birds, wildlife and our own future.

As individuals, each of us makes countless choices each day that contribute to the amount of fossil fuels we use. We also drive the actions of corporations in our choices of consumer goods and our investment decisions. Learn how your choices can make a difference. We can also influence policymakers with our letters, phone calls, and votes - Learn how you can get involved at

[www.audubon.org/globalWarming/SpeakOut.php](http://www.audubon.org/globalWarming/SpeakOut.php)

Sign Up for Audubon email "**Action Alerts**"

<http://audubonaction.org/audubon/home.html>

HGAS Newsletter on the Florida Audubon Blog at

[www.audubonoffloridanews.org/](http://www.audubonoffloridanews.org/)

## **Stay Connected**

Audubon of Florida: <http://www.audubonofflorida.org>

## **EVERGLADES BIRDING FESTIVAL**

Festival Site-Hollywood Beach Golf Resort January 13-18, 2010

For more information: [www.birdadventure.com](http://www.birdadventure.com)

## **SOUTHWEST FLORIDA BIRDING FESTIVAL**

Festival Site-Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

January 15-17, 2010

For more information: [www.rookerybay.org](http://www.rookerybay.org)

## **RCW Safe Harbor: A creative program for conservation**

**By Kristina Jackson, FWC biologist**

Florida's natural beauty and diverse habitats attracted wildlife to the state long before they attracted people. However, as our population grows, habitat for wildlife is shrinking. More than half of Florida's endangered or threatened species live on private lands. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) have found a way to conserve this wildlife and help private landowners by offering "safe harbor."

Red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCWs) have lost about 97 percent of their habitat – old pine forests – and since 1973 have been protected under the Endangered Species Act. The occurrence of this endangered species on private property caused landowners to avoid managing for long-rotation timber or old longleaf pines, which attracted RCWs. Maintaining these old pines, can increase the RCW population and thereby increase the landowners' regulatory responsibilities. Some landowners were cutting their older pines to prevent RCWs from setting up homes there. This was a no-win situation for the landowner and the wildlife. So Safe Harbor was created.

The Safe Harbor program offers private landowners an opportunity to preserve habitat for RCWs while maintaining flexibility in using their property. A landowner commits to protecting the birds already on their land and adding to RCW habitat. If new birds move onto or are born on a property, they can be relocated by our biologists if the landowner needs to cut timber or build on the site. The program is voluntary and a landowner with suitable habitat can sign up even before they have birds.

"Most landowners are good stewards of their land and can make an important contribution to the recovery of imperiled species. Safe Harbor engages private landowners in activities that create or improve wildlife habitat. The Safe Harbor Program helps landowners balance their land-use needs with the needs of an imperiled species such as RCW.

You may not own land with old pines, but you can help by spreading the word. Contact Kristina Jackson at the FWC, [Kristina.jackson@MyFWC.com](mailto:Kristina.jackson@MyFWC.com) or 352-732-1225. Learn more on the FWC's Web site at: [www.MyFWC.com/Safe Harbor](http://www.MyFWC.com/SafeHarbor).

## **SPECIES SPOTLIGHT**



Photo credit: FWC

### **Did you know.....**

The common name "cockade" was regularly used to refer to a ribbon or other ornament worn on a hat.

In 1821, John James Audubon captured a live species near Bayou Sara, Louisiana, painted its portrait and released it two days later.

RCW's are the only woodpecker that nests only in live pines and prefers trees that are infected with red fungal heart disease which softens the heartwood of the tree.

RCW's are found in 11 US states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia & Texas.

### **Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Picoides borealis)**

A medium-sized woodpecker of black and white coloration, it is easily recognized by the large white cheek patch, black cap black, mustache and black neck streak. The Red-cockaded woodpecker is one of the few bird species endemic to the United States.

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker lives in small family groups composed of one breeding pair and several helpers. The helpers usually are sons from previous breeding seasons; daughters only rarely stay with their parents. The helpers assist in raising young, including incubation (which lasts 10-15 days), brooding, and feeding. The entire family usually forages as a group, moving together from tree to tree. A family of RCW's excavates a number of cavities within their territory. It may take two years or more to completely dig out one cavity. The breeding male roosts in the best cavity, usually the one most recently created and with the heaviest sap flow. The eggs are laid in this cavity, and the male incubates them at night. Nesting season is in full swing between April and July, so if you are planning to visit a red-cockaded woodpecker cluster during these months, please use caution and do not approach the cavity trees too closely.

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker prefers mature, old growth open, fire-maintained southern pine forests. Its preference for longleaf pine and the destruction of that habitat have resulted in the RCW becoming an endangered species. Today it is estimated that there are about 5,000 groups of Red-cockaded woodpeckers, or 12,500 birds, from Florida to Virginia and west to southeast Oklahoma and eastern Texas, representing about 1% of the woodpecker's original population.

# Photos



Photos by Larry Frogge – Glades County

## Congrats!



HGAS president, Margaret England with the winner of the HGAS bird watching basket raffle prize at the American Indians Art Festival, Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation. Congratulations to Rocket Engle, pictured here with her husband Billy.

# Speakers & Presentations



“Don’t just wait! Lessons from the Bald Eagle, European Starling and Burmese Python”

Don’t miss Dr. Jackson at the January 11, 2010 HGAS meeting in LaBelle at the Dallas Townsend Building, 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle, FL 33935

7:00 pm

This informative free presentation is open to the public.

## **More interesting speakers still to come.....**

Feb. 8 Clewiston: Rena Borkhataria “Wood Storks”

March 8 LaBelle: Phil Fenner, “Biologist, World Traveler, and founder of Hendry-Glades Audubon.

April 12 Clewiston: Bob Montanaro “Ospreys of Pelican Island: An Exploration into the Life of the Fish Hawk”.

May 10 LaBelle: Jean McCollom, FWC Biologist: “Okaloacoochee Slough”

## Join Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, Inc.

There are now two ways to join HGAS:

Chapter-only membership (\$20) and membership through the National Audubon Society (\$20).

**Chapter-Only Membership:** When you become a member of Hendry-Glades Audubon Society (HGAS) using the form below, all of your membership fees are put to use supporting local projects: Educational programs, Christmas Bird Count, North American Migration Counts, field trips and conservation activities. Chapter-Only members receive the quarterly **Crested Caracara** newsletter either electronically or in print. Make check payable to Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, Inc. (HGAS)

**YES!** I want to become a member of HGAS.

Chapter-Only Membership \$20 Annually.

Enclosed is my check payable to Hendry-Glades Audubon Society.

I would like to save HGAS postage and printing costs. Please send my **Crested Caracara** via email.

Additional Donation to HGAS Enclosed

National Audubon Society Membership \$20 Annually ( C9ZE51OZ) Enclosed is my check made payable to National Audubon Society.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**National Audubon Society Membership:** When you join HGAS through the National Audubon Society, you receive the quarterly **Crested Caracara**, 6 issues of **Audubon Magazine**, Florida **Naturalist** and membership in Hendry-Glades Audubon. Membership dues sent to **NAS** for new members are returned to HGAS if Chapter Code C9ZE51OZ is on the form. Less than \$2 per membership is returned to HGAS for renewing memberships. Mail the completed form and check payable to: Membership Chair, Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, 380 Riverview Dr., LaBelle, FL 33935