



# FIELD TRIPS

2011 - 2012

audubonmartincounty.org ~ 772-288-2637

**Audubon of Martin County** is delighted to present you with the 2011-2012 Field Trip schedule. 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 leaders 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, spotting scopes, 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: [aomc.fieldtrip.scrubjay@picasaweb.com](mailto:aomc.fieldtrip.scrubjay@picasaweb.com)

**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 & Kathy Petteruti are serving as field trips co-chairpersons this year. H: 772-221-9953. C: 772-233-2820 (Mary); 772-233-2819 (Kathy). Email address is [fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org](mailto:fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org)

## SIGN UP AND RESERVE YOUR FIELD TRIP SPACE

Click here: <http://audubonmartincounty.org/php/calendar.php> or call or email your individual trip leader. Please include: 1) your full name 2) the full names and number of people in your party 3) your membership status 4) willingness to carpool and serve as either driver or passenger.

### Saturday, October 29, 2011: Kissimmee River Eco-Tours at Riverwoods Field Lab

Interested in learning about the Kissimmee River and the world's largest river restoration venture? AoMC will join Florida Atlantic University's Center for Environmental Studies (FAU) Loisa Kerwin, who will be our guide on the pontoon vessel "Kissimmee Explorer". We will receive a first-hand view of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project, a cooperative endeavor between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). But don't forget those binocs—because, as always, we're goin' birdin'. A \$25 fee, in addition to our \$5 fee for members, is required. This trip is limited to 30 people total, which will require two boats. Please let us know in advance if you're interested as these boats must be reserved. We will LEAVE the KOC at 8 am for an on time arrival for the 10:00 am-3:00 pm trip. Water will be provided onboard. Bring your own picnic lunch to enjoy along the river.

Contact your trip leader Wren Underwood for further details at 772-971-5611 or via email at [dancingwren@bellsouth.net](mailto:dancingwren@bellsouth.net)

### Saturday, November 12, 2011: Palm Beach Zoo

Wear your walking shoes and join us for a trip to the Palm Beach Zoo, a 23 acre non-profit zoological organization located in the lush tropical habitat of Dreher Park, West Palm Beach, Florida.

Upon arrival Keith Lovett, Assistant Zoo Director and head of the animal collection, will give us a special guided tour through the zoo's avian exhibits. At 10:30 am, we will take a "behind-the-scenes" tour of the Melvin J. and Claire Levine Animal Care Complex, which opened in 2009 and is the first LEED-certified zoo hospital in the nation. At the hospital we will see how the zoo manages veterinary care for over 1700 animals. This includes 175 avian species. Note that this building is not open to the public, so we are being given a unique opportunity to get a tour of this facility. After the second tour is completed, you are free to visit the other exhibits at the zoo on your own. There is also a restaurant on the premises for those who would like to stay for lunch. Cost will be \$17.50, which includes admission to the zoo and the tours. This is in addition to our \$5 AoMC member fee.

We will leave the KOC at 8:00 am sharp. Leader: Pat Eltz. 772-245-8564. [pprich39@aol.com](mailto:pprich39@aol.com).

## **Thursday, December 15, 2011: T.M. Goodwin Waterfowl Management Area**

AOMC's inaugural trip will visit the T.M. Goodwin Waterfowl Management Area near Sebastian. Similar to STA-5, this huge wetland restoration project in the upper St. Johns River basin hosts large concentrations of wintering waterfowl, raptors and other Florida snowbirds.

This Thursday trip will allow us to visit both the 3,870 T.M. Goodwin Unit and the 2,400-acre Broadmoor Marsh Unit. We will meet at the Home Depot parking lot just east of exit 129 (Okeechobee Road) off of I-95 in Fort Pierce at 7:15 am, departing no later than 7:30 am. Carpooling will be arranged at the meeting place. The drive from there to the Goodwin WMA is about one hour or less. If you have a spotting scope, it will be very helpful for identifying distant birds. The leader will have a scope for community use.

We will have a picnic lunch, so please plan to bring food and drink. Bring insect repellent - a warm day can get buggy! Rest rooms are available at the marsh. Leader: Sam Fried. 860-690-8599. [sam.fried@live.com](mailto:sam.fried@live.com).

## **Saturday, January 14, 2012: Florida Oceanographic Society**

Join us for a boardwalk stroll through a biodiverse mangrove swamp with Ellie Van Os, Director of Education and Exhibits at Florida Oceanographic Society. We will augment our understanding of native plants and habitats while we search for migrating warblers and great horned owls in the forest. At 10:00 am we will meet Vincent Encomia, Ph.D., who will lead a tour of the private oyster farm located on the property and tell us about the oyster restoration project.

We will meet at 8:30 am at the Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center located on Hutchinson Island across from the Elliott Museum. FOS has graciously granted us free admission. Please park near the employee gate.

After the tours you may explore the Center's exhibits or walk the nearby Stuart Beach to check for shorebirds. Bring a snack, drink or picnic lunch if you plan to stay later. Leader: Ann Powell. 716- 481-4777.

[manateeharbor@yahoo.com](mailto:manateeharbor@yahoo.com)

## **Thursday, February 16, 2012: Merritt Island NWR and Viera Wetlands**

Ideal for birders with difficulty walking, this field trip to Merritt Island NWR and Viera Wetlands will be primarily from the vehicles. We'll leave from the KOC promptly at 6:00 am, take a break at the Titusville Burger King and then continue on to Black Point Wildlife Drive. We will spend 1 ½ hours on Black Point drive, then split into two groups. Group one with leader George Mirka will proceed to Bio Lab Road. Group two with leader Soo Whiting will head to Peacock Pocket Loop.

After birding these areas for about 1 ½ hours, we'll meet up at the Nature Center at 11:45 am for a rest & snack stop. From there, the groups will divide again and bird either the Bio Lab or Peacock Pocket loops. This time line covers 12:30 pm-2:00 pm. At 2:30 pm, hot, tired, sweaty and thirsty, both groups will meet at Dixie Crossroads for a late lunch/early dinner (optional).

Please let George Mirka know if you are interested in dining so he can make reservations. After eating we'll head south to Exit 191 and go west on Wickham Road (about 1 ½) miles to Viera Wetlands. Then bird and leave at your own pace. Trip limit: 32. Contact George Mirka@ 740-816-4624 or [Georgemirka6@gmail.com](mailto:Georgemirka6@gmail.com). Soo Whiting will be the second on-site leader.

## **Friday March 9-Sunday March 11, 2012: Devils Garden Bird Park, Uncle Joe's Fish Camp and Lake Okeechobee Pontoon Boat Cruise**

Join us for a fabulous field trip to Clewiston and Hendry Glades County for a little bit of birding heaven. We'll plan to arrive on Friday afternoon in enough time for check-in at the Clewiston Inn (CI) and a visit to the Clewiston Museum prior to its 4:00 pm closing time.

Please make your reservations early and explain that you are from Audubon of Martin County to obtain the special room rate of \$89.00/night (800-749-4466 or 863-983-8151). Our group dinner/buffet follows at 5:30 at the Clewiston Inn (\$11.69/person). At 7 pm, museum curator and self-described Florida "cracker" Butch Wilson will give us a brief presentation on a local topic of interest.

On Saturday morning, we will carpool from the hotel at 7:15 am to arrive at the DGBP by 8:30 am. Our half-day experience at the Bird Park will include a boxed lunch. We should be finished there by about 1 pm. Cost with box lunch is \$53.00/person.

From there, your choices will be to 1) bird some local hotspots on your own or 2) return to the CI for a little down time. We'll regroup at dusk to head out to Uncle Joe's Fish Camp for the evening fly-in. Dinner is on your own, but we are suggesting eating at the Tiki Bar at Roland and Mary Ann Martins Marina.

On Sunday morning, we'll head over to the marina for a pontoon boat excursion on Lake "O" with Captain James (\$45.00/person). From there you'll be on your own to leave or bird your way back home. Leaders: Mary Starzinski and Kathy Petteruti: h: 772-221-9953; c: 772-233-2820 [fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org](mailto:fieldtrips@audubonmartincounty.org) Barbara Nafpliotis will be an on-site assistant leader.

## **Friday, April 13, 2012: Sexton Ranch**

Attention all cowgirls and cowboys. Come bird Sexton Ranch, a working Florida cattle ranch comprised of over six hundred acres located in Indian River County.

Mr. Sean Sexton and Bob Montanaro will be our hosts. We will meet them at 7:00 am on Friday, April 13, 2012. They will guide us on a two hour walking tour of the ranch for our last field trip of the season. The Sexton Ranch aka Treasure Hammock Ranch is owned by the Sexton family. It consists of woodlands, wetlands and open pastures. The diversity of the property attracts an abundance of wildlife and avian species. Owls, hawks, warblers, nighthawks, buntings, ducks, shorebirds, and shrikes are just a few of the species that can be found on the ranch.

We will leave from the Knights of Columbus at 5:30 am and carpool to the ranch. An early start will insure the best opportunity to view the wildlife. Anticipate the field trip lasting between two-three hours. Leader: Wren Underwood. 772-971-5611 [dancingwren@bellsouth.net](mailto:dancingwren@bellsouth.net)



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