



RESTORE Act brings opportunity to restore habitat and create a better community

Nobody will ever forget the Gulf oil tragedy in 2010.

While the tragedy wasn't a purposeful act, it was the logical result of an extreme quest for cheap energy to support a society living far beyond its ecological means. But from that tragedy can come the opportunity to make sure it never happens again, and, in some way make things right by restoring the coast's once fertile ecosystems for birds, fish, wildlife, and people. A huge part of that opportunity comes from the RESTORE Act. Therefore, I'd like to issue a challenge to the members of the Francis M. Weston Audubon Society.

Pushed by environmental groups and the people of the Gulf coast, the U.S. Congress passed the RESTORE Act in the summer of 2012. The Act directs that 80% of the civil penalties paid by the responsible parties (mainly BP) go back to the Gulf coast states to be used for environmental and economic restoration. Those penalties are expected to total somewhere between \$5 billion and \$21 billion.

There are five different "pots" of RESTORE Act monies, but local control rests in what's often called "pot 1"—the equal share allocation that in Florida will flow to coastal counties from Escambia all the way down to south Florida, though the majority will come to NW Florida. Escambia County could see between \$100 and \$150 million; in Santa Rosa it could be between \$45 and \$90 million. The Act provides great leeway in how to use the monies, listing as eligible projects things like restoration of natural resources, job training, infrastructure, flood protection, and mitigation of damage to fish and wildlife.

The tragedy of the oil and now the availability of RESTORE Act monies is bringing together people, businesses, organizations, and government to chart a course for a better future. It's providing an exciting forum to discuss how to repair the environmental and economic damages, and to decide what kind of community we want to be.

Scientists are talking about the need to improve water quality in our bays first. That will mean projects to capture and purify stormwater runoff, and to trap sediment from dirt roads.

Then there's the need to restore habitat like seagrasses, the underwater plants that have been almost completely eliminated from Pensacola and Perdido Bays by decades of pollution. Those seagrasses once supported massive quantities of fish and shrimp, as well as diving ducks like canvas-backs and mergansers.

The potential use of monies for infrastructure is the one most fraught with peril, as traditional infrastructure like highways could cause environmental damages that negate many of the benefits that restoration projects will bring. On the other hand, revitalizing older neighborhoods and investing in infrastructure that makes walking and bicycling safer and more pleasant would bring great environmental and health benefits.

These possibilities are being weighed by citizens and the RESTORE Act Advisory Committees that are meeting in both Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. More information on the Committees is available on the Committee pages of the County websites: myescambia.com/restore and santarosa.fl.gov/bocc/restore.cfm. In Escambia County there is also a coalition of environmental groups pushing for the responsible use of monies: [facebook.com/RestoreEsc](https://www.facebook.com/RestoreEsc).

And so I want to issue a challenge to Audubon, the most active conservation organization in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, and one that should embrace this golden opportunity to repair the damages from decades of assaults on our environment, to set a course for a healthier and more sustainable future.

I ask the members of the Francis M. Weston Audubon Society to attend RESTORE Act Committee meetings and to bring forward a clear voice for conservation. If you accept the challenge, the rewards could be great: clear water and seagrass beds in our bays; more open space for habitat and recreation; safer, healthier communities; and birds and wildlife thriving along a restored Gulf Coast.

Christian Wagley is a member of the Francis M. Weston Audubon Society and serves as the environmental representative on Escambia County's RESTORE Act Advisory Committee.

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Field Trips

All field trips are open to the public and free of charge, but contributions are appreciated. All experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars and/or a spotting scope on birding trips. A camera, sunscreen, insect protection, appropriate shoes, hat, water, and snacks or lunch are recommended on all trips. Carpooling is encouraged. Questions? Call Lucy Duncan at 932-4792 or email her at town_point@bellsouth.net.

□ **Thurs., Oct. 3, Ft. Pickens birding.** Launching three “Height of Migration” trips, Lucy and Bob Duncan will lead the group looking for neotropical migrants and early winter birds at Ft. Pickens. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the Gulf Breeze Office Depot across the highway from Gulf Breeze Hospital. We expect to finish by noon. Insect repellent, sunscreen and a hat are recommended.

□ **Sat., Oct. 12, Fort Morgan birding.** Merilu Rose will lead us to bird one of the South’s finest birding spots for the second “Height of Migration” field trip. We will visit the HBSG banding station (so bring a chair if you plan to sit and watch). Expect moderate walking exploring Ft. Morgan. The Ft. Morgan preregistered group admission is \$4 per person. Bring your picnic lunch and drinks for the day. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot in front of Greer’s Cash Saver (formerly Food World) at 4051 Barrancas Ave., just east of Navy Blvd. Insect repellent, sunscreen and a hat are recommended. We expect to return by midafternoon.

□ **Sat., Oct. 19, Dauphin Island birding.** The third fabulous birding site in our trio of “Height of Migration” series takes us to Dauphin Island on coastal Alabama. This day trip, led by Lucy & Bob Duncan, should yield fall migrants and winter visitors. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Publix parking lot on the corner of Nine Mile Road and Pine Forest Road, or at 8:30 a.m. in Daphne in the parking lot behind the Shell gas station which overlooks the bay. (This is the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail [ACBT] site #25). Bring a picnic lunch and drinks for the day, or plan to pick up a sandwich at The Bakery on the island. Expect moderate walking, some of which is in sand. Insect repellent, sunscreen and a hat are recommended. You will have the option of driving back to Pensacola via the interstate or riding the ferry to Ft. Morgan (weather permitting; \$16/car + driver and \$4.50 for each additional passenger, plus an entrance fee to Ft. Morgan).

□ **Sat., Oct. 26, Ft. Pickens, Native Plants.** Meet leader James Burkhalter at 7:30 a.m. at the north end of the Pensacola Bay Bridge at the Visitor Center. Carpool to Ft. Pickens for a morning on the Blackbird Marsh and Dune Nature trails. Expect moderate walking, some of which is in sand. Insect repellent, sunscreen and a hat are recommended. Bring drinks for the morning and a picnic lunch if you’d like. If time permits, we may visit the new trail at Shoreline Park South in Gulf Breeze.

□ **Fri., Nov. 8 – Sun. Nov. 10, St. Marks birding; Optional extension to Steinhatchee through Mon. 11th.** The Duncans will lead us on a long weekend birding trip to one of the southeast’s finest birding areas. We will see an array of birds from late migrants and shorebirds to ducks that winter on the refuge. The pace will be moderate. Arriving Friday in time to bird the afternoon, we’ll finish the St. Marks part of the trip Sunday around noon at Wakulla Springs State Park. Definitely on the agenda will be manatees and close views of water birds on the Wakulla River boat trip (\$8). Rooms are held for us at the Best Western Wakulla Inn & Suites located on Highway 98 near Crawfordville. To make reservations, call [850-926-3737](tel:850-926-3737) before Oct. 25. Mention FMWAS and Pensacola to receive the best rates (king at \$65 and double queens at \$75 + tax). Sunday night, Nov. 10th will be at the Steinhatchee River Inn (\$86.90 inc. taxes and fees) at [352-498-4049](tel:352-498-4049). On the Steinhatchee/Cedar Key leg of the trip, we expect excellent shorebirding and a visit to the Scrub Jay Reserve near Cedar Key. To sign up, send a \$40 per participant contribution to FMW Audubon Society and call Lucy Duncan at 932-4792 and leave your name, telephone and email address, or email her at town_point@bellsouth.net

A detailed itinerary will be emailed prior to the trip.

□ **Sat. Dec. 7, Pensacola birding.** Join leader Powers McLeod to explore some of the best birding nooks and crannies about town. We’ll likely visit Long Hollow, Project GreenShores, the new Admiral Mason Park pond and a few other areas as time permits. We expect to find wintering songbirds and a good variety of both bay and pond ducks. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the north end of the Pensacola Bay Bridge at Wayside Park near the Visitor Center. We plan to finish by noon.



Sat. Dec. 14, Christmas Bird Count
See details on bottom of page 7.

Chapter Meetings

Pensacola State College, 7:00pm, Main Campus, Baroco Science Center, Room 2142, unless otherwise noted. Guests are welcome!

□ **Thursday, October 24**—Mr. Rick O'Connor, a Sea Grant Extension Agent with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension, will present the program entitled "Living with Snakes."

□ **November—No Meeting.**

□ **Thursday, December 12**—The program will consist of a slide show of bird photographs presented by various members of our Society. This has become a favorite holiday tradition with our chapter. If you would like to present some of your recent photos, please contact Larry Goodman, 433-5135. Members attending are requested to bring a snack or dessert to share.

Board of Directors

□ **Oct. 3, Nov. 7 and Dec. 5**—The Board will meet at 7:00pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 33 East Gregory St. Meetings are open to the public. Location may change. Please contact a Board member for location if you wish to attend.

Birdwalks

□ **Sat., Sept. 28** (9:00 to 11:00)—Meet at 9:00 at the **Wildlife Animal Sanctuary** at 105 North S. Street. We will get good looks at the raptors and other wild birds in Northwest Florida. We will study these caged, injured birds at the Sanctuary so that we can learn some good field marks for IDing them in the wild. Bring your binoculars for closer looks at the wild birds that are in the trees there. For more details, call Peggy Baker at 564-1482.

□ **Sat., Oct. 26** (9:00-10:00)—Meet at 9:00 at the north-west end of the 3-Mile Bridge on Hwy 98 in Pensacola. Park along the dirt road overlooking the **GreenShores Project**. Cheryl Bunch will share her scope to introduce you to the birds that roost on the rocks of GreenShores. The group will walk along the sidewalk to find wading birds and ducks that hunt along the shore. Call Cheryl for details (572-5669).

□ **Sat., Nov. 23** (9:00-10:00)—Meet at 9:00 on the **Observation Deck** behind the Main Office building at the **Gulf Islands National Seashore** on the south side of Hwy 98 in Gulf Breeze (East of the Office Depot Shopping Center). Dana Timmons will be there looking for ducks, grebes, gulls and terns in Santa Rosa Sound. He will also walk the trails in search of migrating warblers, vireos and sparrows. Call Dana for details (256-505-1143).

President's Column

Come Join Us!

This is the theme adopted by your Board of Directors to guide our programs and, we hope, your actions in the 2013-14 season.

How can you join us?

Attend one of our traditional field trips and monthly science presentations, open for our members and the public.

If a newcomer or a beginning birder, learn more on one of our regularly scheduled monthly birdwalks.

Become a team member on the Christmas Bird Count (Dec), the Backyard Bird Count (Feb), or join a Birdathon team (Apr).

Look for notice of these events in *The Skimmer*, on our website, our Facebook page, and Meet Up. Read the superb journals published by our state and national organizations that you receive with your membership.

Participate in Audubon Assembly and Audubon Academy, Audubon Florida events supported by your local chapter.

Support our Audubon Naturalist at Roy Hyatt Environmental Center and our Audubon Adventures project.

Sign a petition for the Water and Land Legacy project (see the article on page 6)

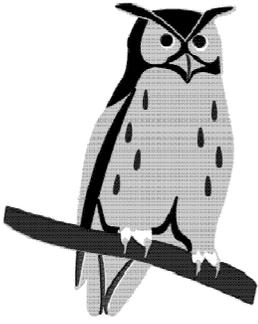
We also will advocate for our special places in NW Florida, including our state and county parks, our state forest, our water management lands, and our fabulous beaches. All of these are under assault from unexpected quarters and this year will see a veritable onslaught of pressure that threatens the wildlife that depends on our public lands. **Come join us** in our efforts to preserve the natural landscape that makes up so much of what we call our "quality of life." And bring a friend.

We are pleased that Jennifer Butera will again serve as our Audubon Naturalist, teaching students at Roy Hyatt Environmental Center, and offering environmental seminars and workshops to other student groups in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. Please let us know if you or a group you know of would benefit from a session with Jenn. Come to the open house at the Hyatt Center on Oct. 12 and learn about the programs.

Good Birding,

Jim Brady, Member,

Past Audubon Presidents' Council



FIELD NOTES

Bob Duncan

Wet. That's what summer in the Panhandle was. With over 6 inches of rain in June, 12 inches in July and 14 inches in August in Gulf Breeze, the summer can only be described as soggy.

Ornithologically, it was not a season for noteworthy birds. Only reports from the intrepid birders covering Taminco Sanctuary and International Paper Wetlands livened things up a bit, with exceptions noted below.

But on schedule, fall migration began in July with the first reports of **Yellow Warblers** trickling in. The area's 12th, 13th & 14th records of **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** were found at Taminco Sanctuary 3 – 29 Jun (Les Kelly, Bruce Furlow and in Milton 7 Jul [Kyle Holley]). Reports of **Pin-tailed Whydah** continue to come in from east Pensacola with one reported there 5 Jun (James Brinson) and 24 Jul (Andrew Carr, Scott Rose). Very early (or late?) **White Pelicans** were reported with 26 at Taminco Sanctuary 7 Jul (Les Kelly, Bruce Furlow), 32 at IP wetlands 13 Jul and 52 there 27 Jul (Jerry & Brenda Callaway). Two rare **Marbled Godwits*** were observed at Opal Beach mudflats 19 Jul (Jerry & Brenda Callaway).

Rare in any season, 3 **Magnificent Frigatebirds** were observed by John Simmons at Pensacola Beach on 8 Aug. A rare **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was identified by Daniel Stangland at the Okaloosa County Water and Sewerage Facility (Mama Rosa ponds) on 24 Aug. An early arriving **Wilson's Snipe** was at the International Paper Wetlands (IP) 25 Aug (Jerry Callaway). Three very rare **Cerulean Warblers*** graced Patrick, Jerry and Brenda Callaway's Cantonment home on 25 Aug. The species is declining throughout its range and is much sought after in migration.

Only the second area Aug record, a **Redhead** was at IP Wetlands 4 Aug (Jerry & Brenda Callaway). Once considered extremely rare locally, **American Oystercatcher** reports appear to be increasing. Two were seen at Ft. McRae by Ann & Dan Forster on 4 Aug. A lucky and rare find were 3 **Brown Boobies*** spotted by John Simmons at Pensacola Beach on 8 Aug. Unrecorded in our area prior to 2000, Les Kelly and Bruce Furlow's two **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** at Taminco on 13 Aug was the 15th area record!



The species is spreading east from Louisiana and north from south Florida. Very rare in Aug, a **Dickcissel*** was in Gulf Breeze 15 – 18 Aug (Scot & Bob Duncan).

By the time this Skimmer arrives, fall migration will be well underway. Fall migration is my favorite season to bird, partly because it is so protracted, beginning with the July arrival of Yellow Warblers, and ending with the arrival of winter sparrows in October and November. Fall is the season for rarities, vagrants far out of range which get our birding adrenalin going and heighten email chatter. Wayward young birds, unfamiliar with the correct route south, sometimes occur in odd places, like Ft. Pickens or Ft. Morgan.

So get out there and get something "good." Ft. Pickens, Ft. Morgan and Dauphin Island are great places to look for southbound migrants before they take off across the Gulf. And don't overlook the trails on the south side of US 98 at Gulf Islands National Seashore in Gulf Breeze or the new trail through Shoreline Park South in Gulf Breeze. Both places can be good for migrants and are an alternative if the Ft. Pickens road is closed. Of course, there is Dauphin Island, the premiere birding spot on the Gulf Coast for those of us willing to make the drive.

For shorebird and duck enthusiasts, the Okaloosa County Water and Sewerage Facility can provide birding entertainment when the holding ponds (informally called the Mama Rosa ponds after the restaurant at the intersection near the ponds) retain water. As of this writing (4 Sep), the ponds were full of water and birds. Birders are seeing Buff-breasted, Upland and Stilt Sandpipers, Wilson's Phalaropes and several species of peeps there. Not to be overlooked are the small, but productive, Opal Beach mudflats which provide great shorebirding (typically 4 – 5 plover species present) for those of us willing to hike out there. This is located 8/10 of a mile east and north of the Opal Beach pavilions on Santa Rosa Island.

Fall migration is here! Come join us, - let's *BIRD!*

The *Skimmer* welcomes reports of noteworthy birds. If you have something to report, please call Bob or Lucy Duncan at 932-4792. Species with asterisks require documentation, so that they may become part of the ornithological record.

As exciting as trips to far-away birding places are, some of our favorite trips are our chapter field trips with old and new F.M. Weston members and friends. Many of our outings are designed to add information to the birding data base...the Christmas Bird Counts, the Breeding Bird Surveys, the shorebird nesting censuses, Breeding Bird Atlases, and nightjar counts. These counts can be hard work, and through them we Citizen Scientists make a major contribution to the understanding of our bird populations. One count isn't science, but when hundreds of us around the country put all our information together we can estimate such important factors as population changes and changes in ranges. The members who lead these efforts are skilled at identifying the birds and at estimating numbers. It takes years to feel that you are good enough to lead these counts.

The best path to becoming that confident birder is participating in the local chapter field trips. Our current Field Trip Chairman is Lucy Duncan. Lucy has taught birding classes in the past, so brings that talent to our outings. Further, she has expanded our horizons by adding several new and different trips in and out of our area. We

had the somewhat frigid Pascagoula Marsh boat trip in May. There are plans for a November trip to St. Marks, a perennial favorite. The one we are really looking forward to is the Tall Timbers Research Station trip in April. With all the forest fires out west this year, a visit to Tall Timbers is a must. They were the first organization to predict the forest fire situation we have today. They have partnered in recent years with the Nature Conservancy to



spread the word, as well as spreading controlled burns to protect our forests from decimation by true wild fires. Tall Timbers manages many acres of beautiful pristine long leaf pine forests in north Florida and south Georgia. These forests are fire managed and we will have the privilege of visiting one of these magnificent places at the best time of year for birds and wildflowers. We will see

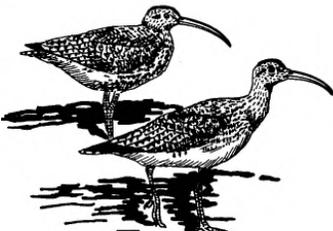
most of the native terrestrial orchids and hear the calls of Bachman's Sparrow and Bobwhite, which all evoke the spirit of the long leaf pine forest.

To me a good field trip combines having fun and being productive at the same time. Hope to see you on one soon.

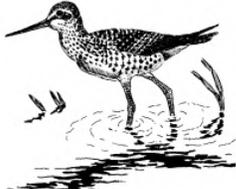
BOOK REVIEW

The Armchair Birder Goes Coastal: The Secret Lives of Birds of the Southeastern Shore
By John Yow, The University of North Carolina Press Chapel Hill, 2012
Audubon Magazine's 2012 List of Notable Books

Familiar birds. Familiar places. John Yow takes us on a coastal birding adventure from North Carolina, south around Florida and along the Gulf of Mexico coast. He features 28 common wading birds and shorebirds of our beaches and marshes through the year. He begins in the spring with the Black Necked Stilt. You'll learn more about the Laughing Gull, Brown Pelican, Royal Tern, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone and Willet, so easily seen on our beaches. His writing is not about field marks but rather about the history, habits and characteristics of each species. In addition to his own observations, he quotes from field notes and writings of John James Audubon, Arthur Cleveland Bent, Rachel Carson, Peter Matthiessen, David Sibley and other naturalists. He takes us to Dauphin Island, St Marks, and Cedar Key. You'll enjoy the stories and observations. Did you know that the Willet was a favorite of hunters and its eggs were also taken for food? So many were harvested in breeding season that by the end of the 19th century willets stopped breeding between Nova Scotia and South Carolina. Ever wonder why you see Black Skimmers feeding at dusk? They feed by touch, enabling them to feed at dawn, dusk and at night when prey may be closer to the water's surface.



Whimbrel, Steven D'Amato



Yellowlegs, Steven D'Amato

Carol Ascherfeld

Conservation

Have You Signed Florida's Water and Land Legacy Petition?

Carole Tebay



“Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got till it's gone.....” Joni Mitchell's lament runs through my mind when I go out to collect petition signatures for

Florida's Water and Land Legacy Amendment. We've collected 150,000 signatures, but we only have until November 30 to collect the 683,149 signatures needed from Florida voters to get the amendment on the 2014 ballot. We need your help! If you haven't signed the petition, please visit <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/> and print, sign and mail in a petition today. All the information you'll need is at the website. Save a little postage by having all the registered voters in your family include one, too.

Haven't made up your mind about the amendment? When I was asked to volunteer to collect signatures I did a little research myself. Here is what I found.

In 1998 Florida voters passed a constitutional amendment which called for the acquisition and improvement of land and water areas for the purpose of conservation, outdoor recreation, water resource development, restoration of natural systems, and historic preservation. This became “The Florida Forever Program” and led to the purchase of many environmentally sensitive lands. You may have enjoyed trips locally to the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie, buffer areas on the Perdido River, Garcon Point, Escribano Point, St. Marks, Upper Shoal River, or Natural Bridge Creek. Credit “Florida Forever” for helping to protect these sensitive environments from becoming just a memory.

Funds to support “Florida Forever” acquisitions came from a portion of the state document tax assessed on the

transfer of real estate. But, with the downturn in the economy most of the funds were used elsewhere. The Water and Land Legacy Amendment would mandate that one-third of the net revenue from the document tax is dedicated to the purchase and maintenance of some of Florida's special places for the next twenty years. A nice trade off; when property is purchased, a small amount of tax revenue is set aside.

If the amendment is passed, funds for the Water and Land Legacy program will be dedicated to:

- Restore, manage and acquire lands vital for protecting Florida's drinking water sources
- Protect the water quality of Florida's rivers, lakes and streams
- Protect Florida's beaches and shores
- Protect and restore the Everglades
- Manage fish and wildlife habitats and restore conservation lands important to Florida's natural heritage, economy and quality of life
- Provide funds to manage existing natural areas, parks and trails

With Florida's economy improving, growth will bring more demands for water and development, along with a loss of our natural habitats. Imagine if the Water and Land Legacy program had been in place before 90 million acres of old-growth long leaf pines were clear cut? Now, imagine what you would like to see saved for future generations.

Please, complete a petition today at <http://floridawaterlandlegacy.org/> and tell your friends.

“Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. Paved paradise, put up a parking lot.” Joni Mitchell

Upcoming changes to the Skimmer—The Skimmer has been the publication of the Francis M. Weston Audubon Society for many years. We currently spend about \$1,800 a year to print and mail our quarterly newsletter to over 700 members. The Skimmer has been available online at our website, www.fmwaudubon.org, since December 2008. In an effort to save money and trees, the Board of Directors has decided to limit the number of printed copies that are mailed and encourage members to access our newsletter on our website.

Please go to our website and click on “Skimmer Newsletters” at the top of the page for the most current as well as prior editions. Also, click on “Join Us On the Web.” This will tell you other ways to stay connected to the chapter so you don't miss any news or activities. If you would like to receive e-notifications when the latest edition of the Skimmer is available, please send your email address to Cheryl Bunch, chapter e-mail coordinator, at bunchc@cox.net and ask to be added to the Chapter's email list.

2014 will be the last year that the Skimmer is mailed to all our members. The exception is those who do not have access to a computer and would like to receive the printed copy by mail. If you would like to keep getting your Skimmer by mail, please send us a letter with your name and address to: Francis M. Weston Audubon Society, PO Box 17484, Pensacola, FL 32522.

Why is a robin a Robin?

Why is a warbler called a Warbler? They don't really warble. And why do we call a vireo by such a name? Green bird? None is green, so why the name? Legend tells us that Aristotle named the bird *viridos* (green), but some years later it was determined that he'd likely been looking at a Green Finch, after which European taxonomists of a later time, embarrassed no doubt by his gaffe, dropped the name 'vireo' from usage forthwith. But for some reason, by no means a logical one, we determined over here on this side of the sea to keep the name *vireo*, thereby condemning an entire North American family (*Vireonidae*) to taxonomic ridicule as not one of ours as well, is actually green.

Plate tectonics, a fairly new theory, explains quite logically why we have similar, even the very same animals, living on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Our Winter Wren, for example, is *Troglodytes troglodytes* everywhere it's found in the world, and so many such examples of close relationships abound that we no longer puzzle over what was once seen as an arcane caprice of the natural world.

But it was those oft-befuddled British naturalists, striding purposefully onto our shores, who set about naming our birds—after theirs. And thus we have a robin that, save for a similarity of color, is not at all a Robin. Ours is a large thrush (*Turdus migratorius*), theirs is a tiny songbird (*Erithacus rubecula*), again a different family entirely, and plate tectonics has nothing to do with it.

Then take the Warblers. New World birds are of the family *Parulidae*, of which there are fifty-seven species in North America. They are, for the most part, colorful to dazzling—at least the males. And as mentioned, they don't really warble. The European warblers, some fifty-

six species from the Family *Sylviidae*, are similar to ours in size, but that's about all. Most are drab, furtive woodland birds, with little to distinguish them—save for their occasionally pleasant voices. Maybe we can excuse John LeConte, Thomas Nuttall, William Leach and all those others for their exuberance in trying to tie the world together naturally. It was perhaps a noble gesture (or simply a thick-headed one) but nonetheless, in an accidental sort of way, they anticipated the discovery of plate tectonics. They may have tried too hard to see the same species here as back there, but in doing so they have also led the way towards our growing realization of the singular nature of our singular world—and it is truly such, until some astronomer genius finds life elsewhere in the Grand Scheme of Things. The Vireo, however, is entirely our own fault.

Then at last we come back again to Aristotle, who seemed to have opinions about nearly everything, with little need for confirming data. Thus he concludes that the family *Caprimulgidae*—Whip-poor-wills and such—should be known as 'goatsuckers' and/or 'nightjars' for their propensity to suckle female goats and thus blind them (*"flying to the udders of she-goats, it sucks them . . . and the goat goes blind"*), or for nightjars, to make very loud noises around midnight in order to scare the living daylight out of the peasants on a moonless night. And so he must have believed, and therefore so must have everyone else—for long enough to have had those odd titles enshrined in our taxonomic lore. In his day, apparently, there just wasn't anyone willing to challenge him, even on the misnaming of birds.

Okay, our robin is now the American Robin. I might have preferred *Red-breasted Thrush*.



Christmas Bird Count



The Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held this year in Pensacola on Saturday, December 14. This year is the 114th CBC conducted by the Audubon Society, a tradition which was started in 1900.

Everyone is welcome to participate. Expertise level is not a criterion, the more eyes and ears we have the better the results. If interested contact Bill Bremser at [850-934-3395](tel:850-934-3395) or billbremser@gmail.com.

Christmas Wreaths and Greenery Fundraiser

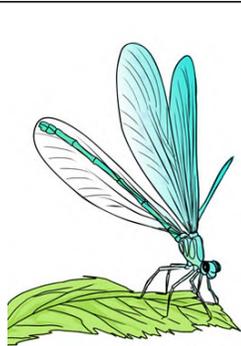
Our chapter will again continue this popular fundraiser. Fresh wreaths and greenery will be available for your holiday decorating. Contact any board member to place an order and for more details. Information will also be available on our website.



Francis M. Weston Audubon Society
P. O. Box 17484
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Chapter Meetings
Oct 24 and Dec 12

Field Trips
Oct 3, 12, 19, 26 and
Nov 8-10

Birdwalks
Sep 28, Oct 26 and
Nov 23

Details on pages 2-3

www.FMWAudubon.org

www.facebook.com/FMWAudubonPensacola



about 25% postconsumer waste

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