

THE IBIS



APRIL 2012 Jay & Donna Bushnell, editors

The IBIS is the journal publication of The Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges

The mission of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges is to provide active advocacy and physical support for the successful stewardship of the Refuges.

- ***Advocating***
- ***Educating***
- ***Volunteering***
- ***Funding***
- ***Fellowship***



Booth, the News Brief, website posts, and January *Ibis*...all of this was volunteer work by Friends members.

Then there was the Annual Meeting. It is hard to even imagine the number of volunteer hours that made the Silent Auction such a huge and successful event for us. The Welcome Team was volunteers. The food was volunteered. The marvelous keynote speaker was a volunteer. Volunteers led the River Trail Walk, the Group Paddle, and one of the Boat trips on the Suwannee River. Volunteers led all four of the afternoon mini-workshops. The set up and break down...all volunteers.

We have an excellent Refuge staff and they were right there beside us all the way. But my message to the Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWR for this *Ibis* is---You are a fantastic group of volunteers. You make this organization the success that it is. Right on, Friends. Keep on, keeping on!

Your president, Peg Hall

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Annual Meeting was the prime example, but far from the only one, of how an organization runs on the energy and enthusiasm of its members. Volunteers initiated and organized the many events and activities that we have all enjoyed over the past few months. The Gopher Tortoise survey days and Reforestation project days, the library programs on Cranes and Butterflies, the monthly Nature Walks and Photo Walks, the preparation of the Paddling Project panels, the selection and ordering of the new shirts, hats, visors, and earrings for our Friends



ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

The Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWRs Annual Meeting was well attended and was a financial success. We collected over \$3000 for the day. New and renewal memberships at the annual meeting brought in \$745, the silent auction and other donations totaled \$1402, and sales of t-shirts, hats, earrings, etc. brought in another \$1029. summary by Jerry Salamon, Treasurer



In line for silent auction

The 2nd Annual Silent Auction of the Friends of the LSCKNWR was a great success. Thank you to all of the special people who donated 69 fantastically varied items for the sale. And thank you to the wonderful people who bid and purchased those items.

In the photo, Donna and John Thalcker perform the day of labor they donated, by tiling the kitchen back splash at the Bushnell's. They did an outstanding job! by Donna Bushnell



PADDLE PROJECT UPDATE

The printed copies of the Paddle Guide have been received. The Guides will be available for a replacement cost rental fee from four points of distribution:

in Cedar Key from Kayak Cedar Keys Outfitter; in Suwannee from Bill's Fish Camp; in Trenton from Pure Water Wilderness



and from the Refuge Headquarters. Check online at www.paddleLSCKrefuges.org for downloadable maps, scheduled paddles and future updates. In the photo Russ Hall shows a paddle guide. by Mark Gluckman

MEET OUR NEW DEPUTY MANAGER

No doubt many of you met Larry Woodward, our new deputy manager at the Annual Meeting. Larry grew up in Florence, South Carolina. After high school he attended Haywood Community College in North Carolina. There he completed a unique A. S. program, Fishery Wildlife Management. Next, he completed a Marine Science degree at Coast Carolina University.

With his degree in hand, Larry started his career at Belle W. Baruch Forest Science Institute of Clemson University. Located on the coast near Georgetown, SC, his research focus at Baruch was on evaluating estuary health, especially the effects of feral hogs. Here he was also involved with studying deer herds that were not affected by hunting. Not surprisingly, what they discovered was that the health of the herd was very poor. Without any control on population, the herd suffered from malnourishment. Parasitic conditions resulted and a shorter life expectancy was the norm. This was especially true for bucks during the fall rut when they expend so much

energy. In short, the research reinforced the importance of hunting as a deer management tool. As we know, in many areas there no longer is the level of natural predation necessary to



balance the health of deer populations.

From 1990-2000, Larry worked at Clemson University. Here his research covered a wide field of conservation. It included beavers and their importance in creating healthy habitats. He stressed, “Beavers have a positive impact on the environment and it is puzzling that culturally this is not recognized.” While at Clemson, he also was involved with studying the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, hurricane ecological damage, and aqua culture.

In 2000, Larry joined the Santee National Wildlife Refuge in South Carolina. Here he applied some of his skills in helping to establish a fire program and in developing a waterfowl management program. You could tell that he was particularly proud of the work on bird banding, especially wood ducks. He stressed that only by banding is it possible to evaluate the population trends of wood ducks. Santee NWR was recognized as a leaders in this field of preseason banding of wood ducks. It was while he was at Santee that he also became certified as a law enforcement officer in the refuge system.

In 2009, Larry moved to Philadelphia to work at the John Heinz NWR a 1000 acre urban refuge. Here he enrolled in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services management program.

Larry brings some very important skill sets to us. High on his “things to do list” is to work on creating better wetland management practices. The emphasis is on creating healthy bird habitats for wading and marsh birds. Of course, it is great to have another certified law enforcement person. While he has only been on station a little over 3 month, he has been impressed with the staff.

Larry lives in Gainesville with his wife, Nancy Lee, and their three children Roland, Tucker, and Lisa.

If you have not met him, be sure to stick your head in the door the next time you visit the refuge and say howdy. by Jay Bushnell

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REVIEW **COMMITTEE REPORT**

John McPherson, Jay Bushnell & Jerry Salamon

The Committee’s task was to review the procedures used to account for the Friends’ finances. The internal control of finances are recorded as follows:

- Monthly accounting of deposits and expenditures are balanced,
- Jerry, our treasurer, collects the mail, records the membership funds and then sends the memberships to Joan Stephens to add to membership list,
- Bills are paid on a monthly basis as approved by the Board,
- Quarterly sales tax is paid as follows:
 - Our sales of products includes sales tax so the actual sales tax must be subtracted from the total amount of sales,
 - Example, on \$10.00 dollars of sales divide by 1.07=\$9.35 x .07 sales tax=\$.65 (in years past we have actually been paying more than double taxes on our sales),
- Donations are recorded as such,
- An annual fee of \$61.25 is filed with the State,
- A 990 IRS form is filed with the Federal Government

The question of the relationship of expenditures to the budget were discussed. It was the opinion that the budget was a guide and that adjustments would be made throughout the year as needed.

There was also discussion about maintaining an inventory list which seemed to be adequate.

Report submitted by Jay Bushnell

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Two festivals are coming up. As usual, the **Friends** will have a booth at the **Cedar Key Arts Festival** on Saturday and Sunday, **April 28th and 29th**.

Also on Saturday **April 28**, the **Refuge** staff will have a booth at the **Town of Suwannee Stone Crab Festival**. If possible, we would like to have some Friends volunteers to work with the



refuge staff. This would be a good opportunity to promote what we do and why we need folks from the Town of Suwannee to participate in Friends.

We cover these events primarily as a means of meeting the public and informing them of the Friends conservation mission. It is also fun.

If you could volunteer a few hours to work in either Cedar Key or Town of Suwannee, please email friends@friendsofrefuges.org, or call Marci Wilcox 1-813-215-0050

APRIL NATURE WALK

Because of the warmer weather, this month's nature walk featured butterflies. The thirteen

people who showed up for the walk got plenty of warm weather – and more deer flies than any of us cared to experience. We started the walk with a little tick identification, as the first flower we



saw had Lone Star ticks on it. Soon thereafter, someone spotted a little snake, which we later identified as a Blue Striped Ribbon snake, and all of this before we spied many butterflies!



But the butterflies showed up, and we counted about 15 different kinds of butterflies, including swallowtails, crescents, skippers, satyrs and hairstreaks. In addition to the fleabane wildflowers and white sweet clover in bloom, there were still some blue flags and lyre leaf sage wildflowers and wild petunias in bloom. On the way out, a few of us stopped by the new observation deck and were surprised to see Swallowtail Kites, Little Blue and Tricolor Herons, Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets, Lesser Yellowlegs, and 4 baby alligators and a one big alligator! Taking a walk in the refuge is always

fun. We may go for a nature walk intending to see butterflies, but there never fails to be something new and different to see and learn about in our precious Lower Suwannee NWR! John and I have enjoyed leading the first Monday of the month nature walks in the refuge. We will be leaving soon to head north to Iowa, but are already looking forward to leading walks in the refuge next fall. Have a wonderful summer and we hope to see you in the fall! by Donna Thalacker

FLORIDA MASTER NATURALIST UPDATE

Some of you may remember reading in the May 2009 IBIS that according to Sandy Mickey, program coordinator at the time, “The Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) is coming to the Dixie-Levy-Gilchrist tri-county area in 2009!” The Friends were ready. Unfortunately it did not happen. Yet we may now be back on track to have all three units offered here. As expected in 2009, there was and is a great deal of interest in the program among the Friends. As an



John Lohde leading field trip

indication of this, there were 20 folks that recently completed the Coastal unit taught by John Lohde. There were even folks turned away.

We will be working to get all three units, coastal, wetlands and uplands offered here. We will be developing a team to explore how to make this happen.

For now, you can check out the program on the web (www.MasterNaturalist.org). Part of the problem has been having folks willing and qualified to teach the units. After reviewing the

program, please determine your interest and also evaluate your level of training. We have many very talented folks in the Friends group that could be great resource persons for the program.

If you would like to participate in making these courses happen, contact Jay Bushnell, 352-493-1807 or djbushne@bellsouth.net

BRIEF REFUGE UPDATE

If you attended the Annual Open house meeting, you know from Andrew Gude’s year in review, things are really hopping. Our new Deputy manager just arrived in late December. Law enforcement officer, Kenny McCain is again working with a law enforcement trainee, Andy Berrey. Andy comes from Region 8 or the California/Nevada area.

Andrew indicated that a major concern right now is with the very dry conditions. There is a very high fire alert in effect.

ONE FINAL NOTE ABOUT THE ANNUAL MEETING

Over the years we have had some outstanding speakers. Dr. Nick Whitney has to be considered one of the best. Not only was he informative but he was fun. He did a wonderful job of weaving the story of shark “romance” into scientific terms. His initial findings on why sturgeon jump was fascinating. To top it off, Nick kept us



wanting more thus he covered the boa issue. I just hope we can drag him away from the Mote Marine Lab for another visit. On behalf of the Friends, thanks to you Nick. by Jay Bushnell

**FRIENDS OF THE LOWER
SUWANNEE & CEDAR KEYS
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES
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WEB PAGE

www.friendsofrefuges.org

BOARD MEMBERS

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION-ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUE IN JANUARY

NAME/S: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

Species of membership-please check level of membership

* Swallow-tailed Kite--\$1000 or more, *Life membership*; * Bald Eagle--\$500-999

Life membership; * River Otter--\$250-\$499 *Life membership*

* White Ibis--\$20 annually *Family membership*; * Gopher Tortoise--\$10 annually

Individual membership; * Other--annual plus any additional contribution.

I understand and agree to abide by the Friends' Code of Ethics: available on our webpage.

Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Please check one of the follow: __1. Send my IBIS in printed hard-copy through the mail __2. Send my IBIS digitally in an email (except for the one with the Annual Renewal Form)