

Pelican Island Audubon Society

Peligrum



- founded in 1964 to serve Indian River County -

P.O. Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org

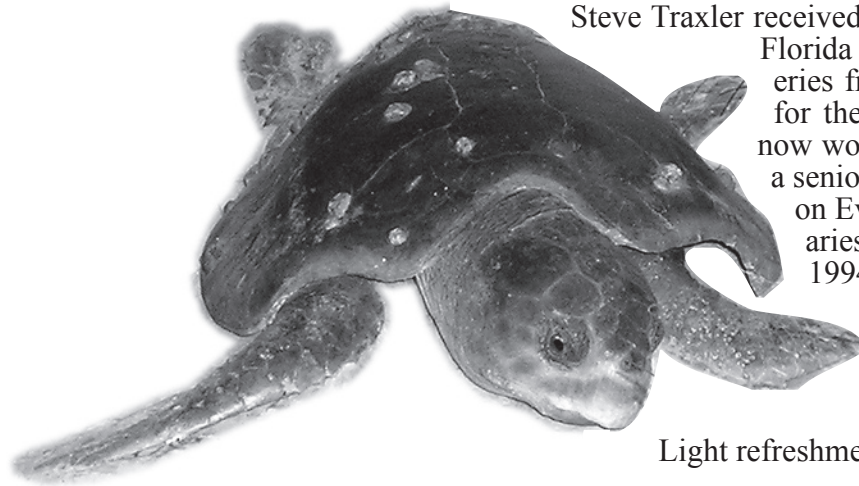
Our 45th Year Vol. 45 No. 6 September 2009

Our Mission: To preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities in Indian River County through advocacy, education, and public awareness.

Sea Turtle Research in Florida

September 21 • 7:30 p.m. • Vero Beach Community Center

The September 21, 2009 general meeting of the Pelican Island Audubon Society at the Vero Beach Community Center, 2266 14th Avenue starting at 7:30 p.m., features Steve Traxler from the Inwater Research Group. Inwater Research Group (IRG), is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation devoted to marine research and conservation. Recognizing the need for basic population studies of wildlife in coastal habitats throughout Florida, a small group of biologists formed IRG in 2001 as part of a commitment to conservation of these coastal species and their aquatic habitats. Projects IRG are currently pursuing include the visual counting, capturing, tagging, collecting blood for genetic analysis, and the release of Loggerhead, Hawksbill, Green, and Kemp's Ridley sea turtles in Indian River, Palm Beach, and Monroe Counties.



Steve Traxler received a bachelor's degree in marine biology from Florida Institute of Technology and a Masters in fisheries from Texas A & M University. Steve worked for the Army Corps of Engineers for 8 years and now works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a senior biologist where he spends his time working on Everglades's restoration, primarily on the estuaries such as the Indian River Lagoon. Prior to 1994, Steve spent 7 years studying estuarine fish, primarily juvenile drum and their relationship to seagrass. His main hobbies include fishing, scuba diving, canoeing, kayaking, and hiking.

Light refreshments to be served following the program.

Loggerhead Sea Turtle by Bob Montanaro.

"It is the people who must save the environment. It is the people who must make their leaders change. And we cannot be intimidated. So we must stand up for what we believe in."

Wangari Maatha, Nobel Peace Prize, 2004

September & October Field Trips with Rick Lucas

September 19, 2009—Sebastian Inlet State Park. Meet in the “L” parking lot across from the campground at 7:30am. You must enter at the south entrance in Indian River County. Bug repellent will help. Directions: US1 to CR510, East to A1A, North to the Indian River/Brevard County Line.

October 3, 2009—Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay. Carpoolers meet at Wal-Mart on US 1 in Sebastian. Park next to US 1 west of the gas pumps. We will leave promptly at 7am. Directions: US 1 north to Port Malabar Blvd, West to Turkey Creek.

Please call 772-567-3520 for reservations & information.



Laughing Gulls by Bob Montanaro.

Upcoming events

SEPTEMBER 19, 2009 - INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP - 8:00 am-11:00am - Volunteer to help clean Indian River County's beaches! For more information or to volunteer call 772-388-5472 or visit www.kirb.org

OCTOBER 23-24, 2009 - AUDUBON ASSEMBLY ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The two-day program brings together conservation leaders and scientists—as well as policy makers, and business people from across Florida to discuss strategies to protect our coasts, birds, and wildlife, and secure our quality of life. Come and enjoy two days of Audubon fellowship. Connect with nature and birds on expert-led and self-guided field trips. Learn more at www.audubonofflorida.org or call Lisa Reichert at 1-305-371-6399, ext 120.

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Calling all members!

We need your help in our next fund raiser endeavor. We are putting together a PIAS Cookbook and **we need your recipes!**

We are looking for the great recipes you have brought to our Christmas Vegetarian potluck or the ones passed down in your family or the new ones you have created. The more recipes we include the better! We have enclosed a recipe sheet with the instructions on the back. Please copy or ask our office if you need more forms. Please remember to include your name so we can give you credit. Also proofread your recipe.

We will also be including a section for **advertising**. If you have a business or organization that you would like to advertise in our cookbook please let us know.

The cost is as follows:

Full-Page (4 1/8" X 7 1/4") \$160.00
plus a free cookbook

•
Half-Page (4 1/8" X 3 1/2") \$90.00

•
Third-Page (4 1/8" X 2 1/4") \$70.00
(business card size)

•
Quarter-Page (4 1/8" X 1 5/8") \$60.00

Cookbooks are kept for many years so your advertisement will benefit your business for many years additional to helping us offset printing costs. If you do not have a business but would like to contribute you could add your name to our patrons page for \$10.00.

Please send your recipes to

Darlene Halliday

c/o PIAS

P.O. Box 1833

Vero Beach Fl, 32961

or e-mail PIAudubon@bellsouth.net them to us.

Time is of the essence.

We need all recipes and advertising information by
September 10th.

We thank you in advance in your help to make this cookbook a success!



Welcome back to another Audubon season! After a 3-month break in our

general meetings and Peligrans, we come back with enthusiasm to carry out our mission to preserve and protect the animals, plants, and natural communities in Indian River County through advocacy, education, and public awareness. Our family took a wonderful birding trip to Ecuador. A major objective was to soak up the Galapagos again this time with our grandkids (and their parents) showing them the genius of Darwin and the islands that changed the world. Moreover, we have been fascinated with the wildlife particularly birds found in beautiful rain and cloud forests of mainland Ecuador as well.

Dr. George Cruz at the 2008 Space Coast Birding Festival gave a presentation of his outstanding photography about the excellent birding opportunities at his series of lodges at different elevations called the San Jorge's Magic Birding Circuit of Ecuador. Instead of a self-guided tour renting a car like we did in 2001, we decided to visit the various eco-lodges of Dr. Cruz having him arrange our 8-day Galapagos cruise and our 5 days stay on mainland Ecuador around Quito.

In establishing the various eco-lodges Dr. Cruz, a renaissance veterinarian, has a vision to preserve the wonderful tropical cloud and rain forest habitats at different altitudes for the birds and wildlife and to teach local people that tourism to wilderness areas can be a productive and sustainable source of revenue rather than clear cutting and farming all within a 2-3 hour road trip from Quito in the Andes. He has a dedicated and in-depth knowledge of birds and plants (their medicinal value handed down for generations), photography, digiscoping, and respect for the Ecuadorian people, their culture, and their cuisine, which he generously shares this all with his guests. He and his wife along with their staff have provided a unique experience—that is rustic, rugged, and rigorous. Yes, there are steep climbs to get to his lodges, but the views! Spectacular.

Designed with the idea to bring nature to the human, yet to provide the basic necessities, the lodges are not luxurious. In such a beautiful setting, one does not want to spend much time in the room, but would rather be up early for birding or owling at night, viewing the exquisite plant life and varied flora and fauna at each lodge that differ because of the contrasting habitats. Each lodge had its charms and different subset of the total 52 species of hummingbirds and

The President's Hoot **San Jorge's Magic Birding Circuit**

904 bird species. The night sounds of the frogs were amazing.

In Quito, we stayed in a restored hacienda, at about 10,000 ft elevation, built in 1790 on the old Inca Trail about 20 minutes and a 600 plus ft rise up a bumpy dirt road above the 9,348 ft high airport in the middle of the city completely surrounded by many volcanoes. Dr. Cruz shared the history of the villa and his family's involvement for the last 20 years. He has replanted the mountainside acreage of the former farm back to the native plants found in this area particularly those that attract birds. The hacienda and rooms overlook the garden with feeders and various colors and shapes of beautiful hummingbirds. Oh, to watch the Sparkling Violetear, Shining Sunbeam, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Great Sapphirewing! buzzing around the flowering bushes! In two hours we saw 32 species of birds. And beyond, far below, is the magnificent view of Quito the city, surrounded in the background by snow-capped volcanoes. Dr. Cruz is an expert bird guide, providing quick identification of their calls as well as their flashing visual images. The lodge is decorated with his art...with paintings of bird life and murals on walls that depict the history and area sights. What an opportunity to experience the Ecuadorian cuisine, its unique sauces, soups, varied fruits, and always 4-5 courses while we watch birds on or near feeders.

On our way to Tandanyapa, we stopped at the Yanacocha Hummingbird Preserve (elevation 10,500 ft—11 bird species including the amazing Sword-billed Hummingbird, the Sapphire-vented Puffleg, and the Andean Condor). What a view!

At the lower Tandanyapa lodge (5,500 ft elevation), we trekked up the steep mountain side to get to the lodge, on the high edge, of this cloud forest. The sight is spectacular and the bird life (53 species...Green-crowned Brilliant, Booted Racket-tail, Purple-throated Woodstar, Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager, Metallic-green Tanager, Orange-bellied Euphonia, Golden-headed Quetzal, Crimson-rumped Toucanet and Andean Cock-of-the-Rock were favorites) and flora entirely different from Quito area. Nita kept saying, "all those 'exotic and beautiful leafed plants' in our nurseries are growing wild here!" Our group ranged from 9 years old to 70 plus, yet we all managed the extensive trails.

The Milpe Lodge (elevation 3,280 ft) had 200 acres of subtropical rainforest...lodges newly built and 7 miles of trails including water falls, and a hilltop overlooking farmland...many birds, good chance for photogra-

phy. We spent two days in this beautiful area, seeing 109 bird species...such as Rose-faced Parrots, Black-capped Tanager, Golden Tanager, Masked Flower-piercer, Golden-winged Manakin baby, Cinnamon Becard, Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser, Guayaquil Woodpecker, Pale-mandibled Aracari, Rufous Motmot, Andean Emerald, Green Thorntail, White-necked-Jacobin, Bat Falcon. Gorgeous!

In the 4 days of intensive birding at differing elevations, we hiked 4-6 hours daily up and down narrow cleared trails seeing about 165 different bird species yet spending ample time viewing and photographing them, stopping whenever needed to catch our breath, swimming at a waterfall, appreciating a plant, insect or butterfly that happened to be near, or spotting the White-throated Quail-Dove fleeing in the undergrowth.

We in Indian River County can learn from Dr. Cruz's vision...of thinking how to turn our whole county into a tourist haven for artists, birders, photographers, botanists, butterfly specialists, canoe and kayakers, fishers, hunters, hikers, and campers getting close to nature. We too have wonderful resources and all our yards and ponds could be native habitats with shade trees and diverse flora to recreate our paradise in all

our mobile home parks, gated communities, businesses, parks, schools, hospitals, churches and plazas. Working together we would preserve water, reduce chemical pollution from fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides that are used for the current lawn and pond maintenance. We would reduce energy and water use and enhance economic opportunities for our youth, the beauty of our community, and certainly our quality of life.

We are trying to arrange for Dr. Cruz to talk about the birds of Ecuador in January, followed by a chapter-sponsored tour to Ecuador and the Galapagos. He has the following websites

<http://picasaweb.google.com/sanjorgecolodges> with some of his excellent photos (click on the last box/album for birds) and a map and <http://www.hostsanjorge.com.ec/Download/Ecuador%20Bird%20list.pdf> for a list of the possible 904 birds at found on his San Jorge's Magic Birding Circuit in Ecuador.

Next month we will bring you up to date on our progress with the new Audubon House.

Richard Baker, President



Photos by Richard & Juanita Baker.

The mountainous terrain of Ecuador.

*Green-crowned Brilliant
Milpe*



September means Fall football season. For Floridians it means Hurricanes and the HURRICANES of the University of Miami. I am not an avid football fan, but I am partial to a few teams because of their mascots. One of my favorite mascots is the Ibis for the University of Miami and maybe because I was a Hurricane (but that is another story). In 1926 the University of Miami chose the Ibis as their mascot and named him Sebastian. Folklore says that the true Ibis has a reputation for being a leader and that it is the last bird to leave before danger from a hurricane strikes and the first to return when the skies have cleared and it is safe.

Often we see Ibis, *Eudocimus albus*, in small groups of adults, with their pure white plumage, and juveniles with their plumage in shades of gray. The juveniles develop their breeding plumage the second year. They use their long curved orange bills to probe for grubs, insects and small lizards. Ibis seen near shorelines usually are probing for small crabs, etc.. Ibis are easy to recognize when in flight as their white bodies and black wingtips show clearly against the sky. They roost in large colonies in trees and lay 3 or 4 light colored eggs. Their conservation status is Least Concerned as noted by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources).

Today we see Ibis as part of the “city” wildlife and sometimes consider them a nuisance due to their droppings on our sidewalks. Once these were considered tasty pioneer food known as Chokoloskee Chicken, It was often served with Swamp Cabbage salad.

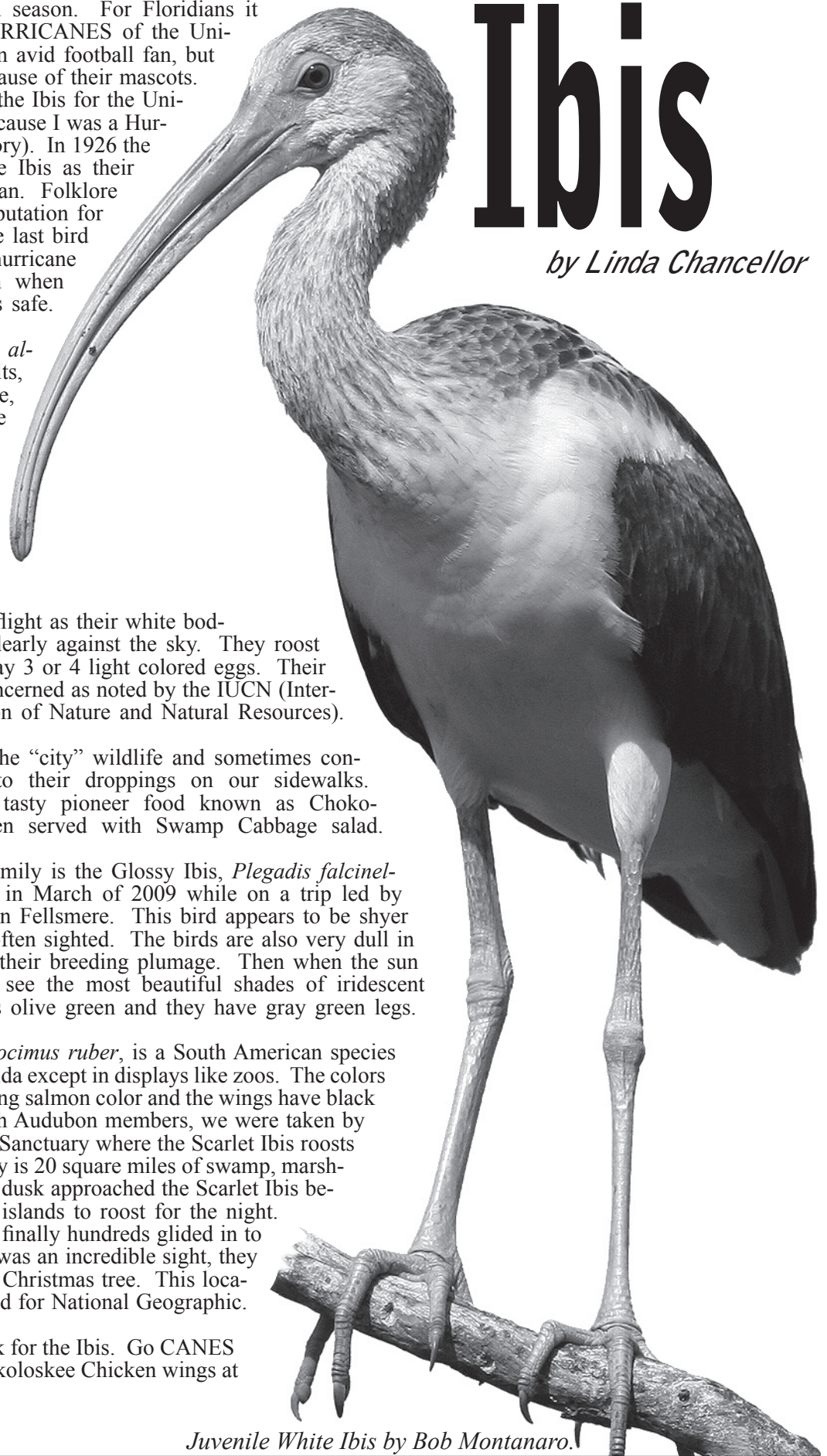
Another member of the Ibis family is the Glossy Ibis, *Plegadis falcinellus*. I first observed this bird in March of 2009 while on a trip led by Rick Lucas to T.M. Goodwin in Fellsmere. This bird appears to be shyer than the white ibis and is not often sighted. The birds are also very dull in color except when they are in their breeding plumage. Then when the sun reflects off their feathers you see the most beautiful shades of iridescent black and purple. Their bill is olive green and they have gray green legs.

The beautiful Scarlet Ibis, *Eudocimus ruber*, is a South American species that is not normally seen in Florida except in displays like zoos. The colors of the feathers are a bright flaming salmon color and the wings have black tips. On a trip to Trinidad, with Audubon members, we were taken by small boat into the Caroni Bird Sanctuary where the Scarlet Ibis roosts in large numbers. The Sanctuary is 20 square miles of swamp, marshland and mangrove islands. As dusk approached the Scarlet Ibis began to return to the mangrove islands to roost for the night. First a few, then more and then finally hundreds glided in to land among the mangroves. It was an incredible sight, they looked like red ornaments on a Christmas tree. This location has even been photographed for National Geographic.

So if a storm starts brewing look for the Ibis. Go CANES and make sure those aren't Chokoloskee Chicken wings at your next Tailgate Party?

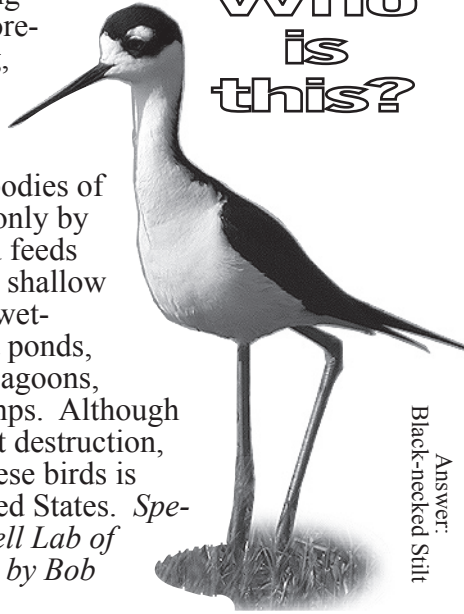
Ibis

by Linda Chancellor



Juvenile White Ibis by Bob Montanaro.

These gangly looking black-and-white shorebirds with very long, thin red legs have the second-longest legs in proportion to their bodies of any bird, exceeded only by flamingos. The bird feeds on insects it finds in shallow fresh and saltwater wetlands, including salt ponds, rice fields, shallow lagoons, and mangrove swamps. Although vulnerable to habitat destruction, the population of these birds is growing in the United States. *Species info from Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Photo by Bob Montanaro.*



Answer:
Black-necked Stilt

Who
is
this?

Plant of the Month

by Janice Broda

Sensitive Brier

Some special plants are sensitive to touch. Thigmonasty is the technical term for touch-induced movement in plants.

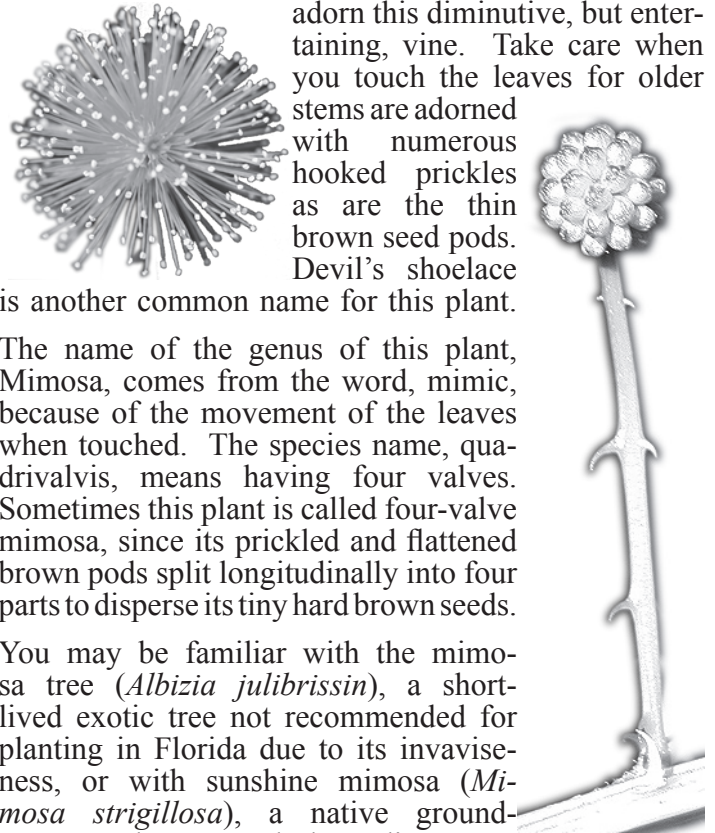
Sensitive brier (*Mimosa quadrivalvis*), so named for its thigmonasty, is in full bloom at the Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area, growing in full sun atop saw palmetto along the trail in the scrubby pine flatwoods. Pink "powder puffs" about the size of a dime on long stalks adorn this diminutive, but entertaining, vine. Take care when you touch the leaves for older stems are adorned with numerous hooked prickles as are the thin brown seed pods. Devil's shoelace

is another common name for this plant.

The name of the genus of this plant, *Mimosa*, comes from the word, mimic, because of the movement of the leaves when touched. The species name, *quadrivalvis*, means having four valves. Sometimes this plant is called four-valve mimosa, since its prickled and flattened brown pods split longitudinally into four parts to disperse its tiny hard brown seeds.

You may be familiar with the mimosa tree (*Albizia julibrissin*), a short-lived exotic tree not recommended for planting in Florida due to its invasiveness, or with sunshine mimosa (*Mimosa strigillosa*), a native groundcover or lawn weed depending upon your proclivities. These plants like sensitive brier are members of the pea or legume family, Fabaceae. The pink powder puff flowers on these plants are an attractive nectar source for bees and other insects. Sensitive brier is by far the most sensitive to touch.

Photos by Bob Montanaro.



Pelican Island Audubon Society 2009 Membership

Because each Audubon chapter is expected to support its operations without retention of members' dues -- which are sent to and retained by National Audubon -- **WE NEED YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT** for our many educational programs, field trips and environmental advocacy projects; for our handling of public questions; and the ten issues of our newsletter the *Peligram* we send to each member.

National Audubon*	\$20	_____
Pelican Island Audubon**		
Individual	\$20	_____
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Supporting	\$50	_____
Contribution	\$	_____
Total	\$	_____

***National Audubon membership**

This includes subscriptions to *Audubon Magazine* and *The Florida Naturalist*.

****Pelican Island Audubon membership**

Dues which PIAS will use for environmental education and advocacy and subscription to the *Peligram*

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ADDRESS: _____

E-Mail

Please send your name and address along with a check payable to the "Pelican Island Audubon Society" to:

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P.O. Box 1833, Vero Beach, FL 32961

Credit card payments call (772) 567-3520 M - F 9AM-1PM

Please email us if there is a local environmental issue which concerns you at piaudubon@bellsouth.net

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