



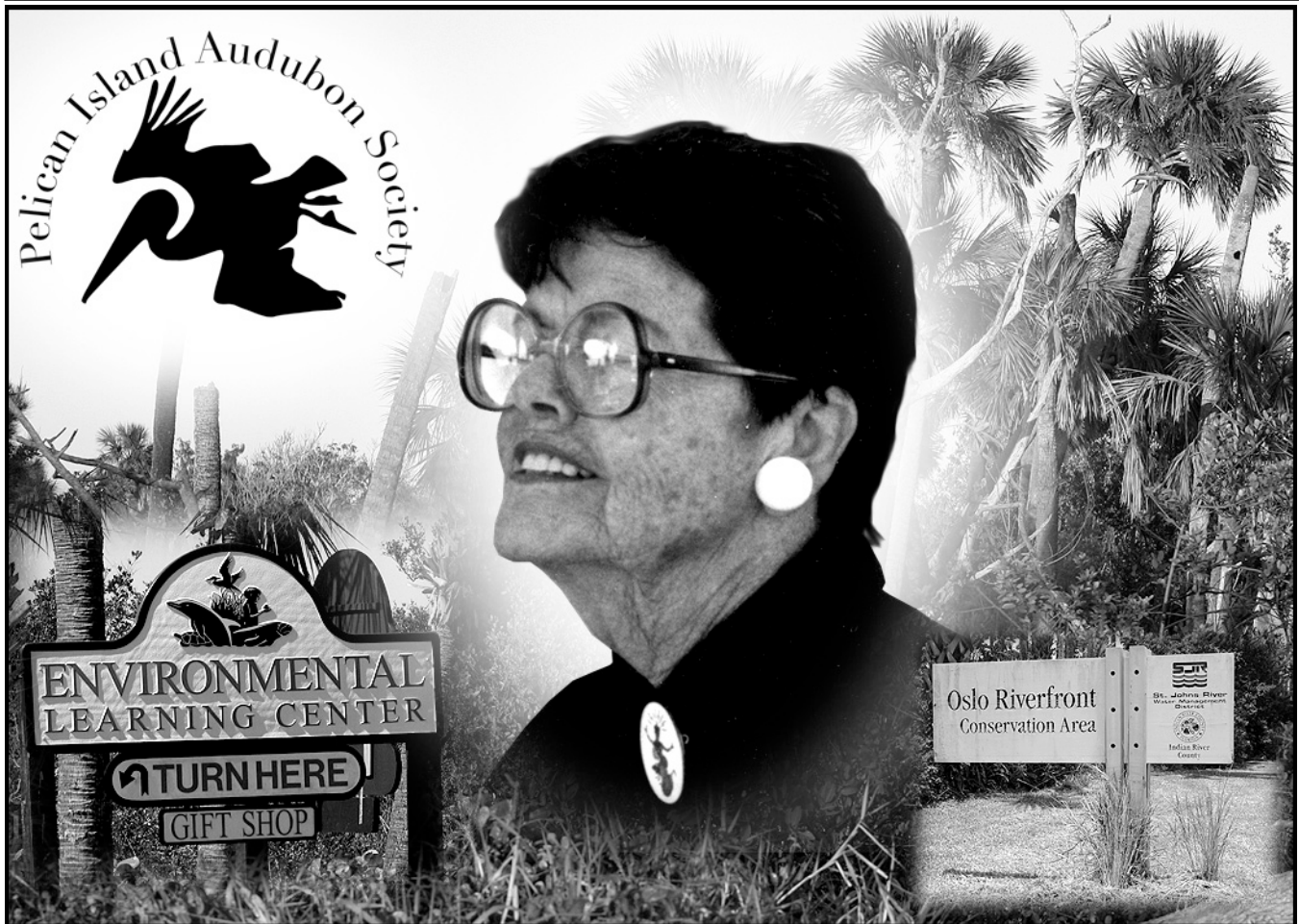
The Pelican Island Audubon Society

Peligram

- SPECIAL EDITION -

P.O. Box 1833, VERO BEACH, FL 32961 772-567-3520 Fax 772-567-3521 www.pelicanislandaudubon.org

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



In memory of

Maggy Bowman

A Legacy of Conservation & Education

REMEMBERING MAGGY

By Donna Anderson

Maggy has known me for all of my life. That's because she was my mother's sister—the older one, who so the story goes, was always keeping my mom out of trouble like the night she pulled her out of the bar! As teens, my brother and I loved to hear these stories from Maggy, much to my mother's chagrin. Of course, she got even by telling us Maggy's real middle name---Gladys.

She was our quirky aunt, kinda like Auntie Mame. She always walked to her own tune, and it usually was an original one. She must have driven her mother crazy. She was so damned independent and tremendously intelligent. She graduated from Elmira College in 1936—at a time when many women graduated high school, married and raised a family. Not our Aunt Maggy. She taught primitive camping skills at Girl Scout camps, hiked the Adirondack Mountains alone for weeks at a time (mailing food to herself rural delivery to the closest post offices), taught the deaf, and enlisted in the Women's Army Corp after World War II started. She went to Europe the hard way and worked at the Army headquarters in Paris and then in Frankfort as the front moved eastward. She decoded and encoded messages sent to and from the Army command.

After the war she lived in NYC and worked as a buyer for B. Altman, a large department store. Soon though she moved back to her hometown, where we lived, and managed the retail side of our family flower business. She was a designer and a good one. We lived over the flower shop, so we got to see her daily. One day when she returned from lunch, she announced that she had gotten married on her lunch hour! Never the traditionalist! She met John at an archeological dig, a common interest they had. She was 42 when they married.

We loved to spend time with them at their house or their cabin in the Catskill Mountains. It had a wood stove for cooking and heating, and we carried water in pails from the spring. Warblers were abundant there as were the trout in the Beaver-kill.

She and John bought the house in Florida in 1964 and she has lived here ever since. In the beginning they were snow birds, keeping the house in NY also. Eventually the NY house was sold and she lived here all year.

What times we had with our Aunt and Uncle. She taught us birding and plant identification, and he taught us to fish, clam, shrimp and open oysters. We visited them in Florida each spring break. I was attending PIAS meetings and BOD meetings when I was a teen! Her love of nature and the outdoors was infectious, and she was a wonderful teacher. The world was our classroom. We traveled to Arizona, the Dry Tortugas, and St. Croix to bird.

One of my favorite Maggy stories is about our trip with Frances Graves to Arizona. They had previously been there and were enjoying participating with me as I added many life birds to my list. Both had a few life birds that they hoped to find during the trip, and one of Maggy's was the Montezuma's Quail. We must have tried dozens of areas that were the right habitat, but we always came up empty. Finally it was time for us to journey to the airport and on home. I was driving and noticed a carcass on the roadside and asked Frances if that was what I thought it was. She agreed and I turned around for a better look. Maggy was in the back seat so she didn't see what we had seen. We parked and walked back to the carcass and sure enough it was a Montezuma's Quail. Frances and I just laughed. Maggy, however, in her typical style just kicked the carcass and muttered, "You dirty bird"!

It is hard to say which passion was greater in Maggy—birding or saving the environment. We all benefited from her desire to educate others on these topics and her environmental advocacy, especially while on the County Commission. Her passion in these regards lead to her involvement in the founding and development of PIAS and the ELC.

She was a gem! We will miss our quirky, independent, non-traditional Maggy. I will think of her each time I go birding or journey to the ELC. I won't mourn for her. She was fiercely independent even to the end handling things her way. I believe her legacy will be that each of us continues her advocacy for the environment.



Maggy on a sunset cruise to Pelican Island.



*Maggy Bowman, George Bunnell,
& Herb Kale*

Maggy was a giant for conservation in the community. Birds were very special to her. She trained many of the best birders in our county by leading varied trips throughout the county. She, of course, was a founder, president, recording Secretary, and Peligram editor of our Pelican Island Audubon chapter. Through her efforts we have an Audubon office and a major presence in the community.

She extended this to forming the Environmental Learning Center that has since then taught all our grade school children and future citizens the importance and value of protecting our natural world. What a legacy!

Maggy was an activist not only generous with her time and wisdom but also her monetary resources. She was very good at writing and with this talent served in many organizations as corresponding secretary of the Environmental Learning Center, Marine Resource Council, and Friends of the Sebastian River where she could voice her concern for the environment. Besides serving in the military during WWII, she also contributed to all of our county's citizens by being appointed to the county's planning and zoning commission and then was appointed and elected to serve on the board of county commissioners where her influence can be felt for many generations.

Having good grammar was very important to Maggy. Renown for her editing skills, her bias and love for birds showed brightest when she always insisted and never wavered that the common names for birds always be capitalized. However, other animals as is usually done by most writers could be in lower case!

Her life of serving and generous giving provides an excellent role model for us all to speak up and run for public office, and generously contribute our time and money to Audubon and its mission. -- *Richard Baker, President*

Immediately upon moving here in 1987, a name and an environmental issue in the newspaper caught my eye:

Maggy extolling the virtues of our unappreciated scrub habitat. I contacted her for more information and began to absorb the wealth of birding lore she harbored. We took field trips and did Christmas Bird Counts together. Maggy knew Florida birds through and through. She compiled, arranged by species, and published 30 years of Florida bird records from Audubon Field Notes and American Birds. In other words, she knew what should be here, when and where. She was a stickler for accuracy. The best mentor a person can have is the one who starts you out and is generous, passionate and knowledgeable on the subject. Thank goodness I had few bad habits to unlearn as I had only recently begun birding.

Maggy also had a gift for writing. She authored the Peligram for years and fired off letters to agencies and elected officials. But most entertaining and educational were her columns on particular bird species:

"... hangs around the fish-cleaning table...a tall-as-the-door-knob, blue, gray bird ... [that will] help itself if the fisherman is foolish enough to turn his back for a second. One assumed it was a male, but nobody really knew. It's hard to tell unless you yourself are a Great Blue Heron."

You are drawn in to the habits, struggles and triumphs of various birds; enlightened about common misconceptions; and cautioned on how best to assist wildlife either passively (by leaving untouched and unmolested) or actively (detailed instructions on building nest boxes).

I was inspired by Maggy's citizen activism; she raised awareness of our county's rich and diverse natural treasures as she worked harder than anyone to protect them. -- *Billi Wagner*

Maggy Bowman was a great friend of the GFWC Vero Beach Woman's Club. -- *Dorothy L. Smith*

Of her many talents that come to mind as I remember Maggy, one stands out and that is TEACHER. It was a great experience to go on a field trip with her. She was a font of knowledge about the environment, the flora and the fauna, especially, of course, the birds. She was clear and concise and obviously enjoyed sharing her extensive knowledge. She was a stickler for accuracy. Certainly her strong promotion of the ELC also bears witness to her concern with teaching. We shall all truly miss this great lady. -- *Katherine Schenk*

Maggy Bowman was an intelligent, dependable, thoughtful member of the League of Women Voters of Indian River County for many years. Whenever issues were discussed, Maggy would either have pertinent knowledge of the issue, or at the next meeting, enlighten the group with information and an unbiased thoughtful opinion. Her long residency in this County was invaluable to our studies and her past involvement in the local government offered information on issues being discussed at the present time. Maggy was a quiet, calming influence and always ready for a laugh. She will be missed as a friend and a good Leaguer. -- *Joan Walsh*

Maggy Bowman was a founding member of the Marine Resources Council in 1983 and served on its board of directors until her death. She was the recording secretary for most of that time.

Maggy worked tirelessly with the MRC to restore and maintain the fishery of the Indian River Lagoon and the birds and other creatures that it supports. Her creative imagination and determination to succeed engendered the respect of the entire membership and she was awarded the Stan Blum Conservation Award in 2003, our highest honor, for her many years of achievement in conservation. She was best known for her leadership and energetic participation in a wide range of activities and organizations dedicated to the natural resources of the region. Maggy was a shining example because of her commitment to preserve the benefits of nature for her fellow man. The membership of the Marine Resources Council will always hold this great lady in our hearts. -- *Jim Egan*



Maggy, at right, during the opening of the Herb Kale Nature Trail at ORCA.

Maggy may have had a hand in the formation of the Friends of St. Sebastian River. I just learned the other day that the PIAS "hosted" FSSR while in its formative stages. That was before my time and I never realized it.

Maggy was our Secretary for a number of years and was always very efficient in producing them. She was well respected by other board members and always had thoughtful opinions on where we should be going. She also was quite familiar with Robert's Rules and our own bylaws and kept us in order when we need it.

I remember my first encounter with Maggy, not knowing who she was. When I first moved into the area, I noticed an ad in the paper for one of her wine and cheese cruises to Pelican Island. I think I was the only single person on the trip and when she was checking us off her roster, when she got to me, she said, "you must be...". For some reason that struck me. Think I may have written her a letter previously commenting on something at a PIAS meeting that I had attended, when she was perhaps an officer? As a result she may have already been familiar with my name and wondering who I was.

Anyway, she was quite a lady and much admired by myself. -- *Tim Glover*



Maggy with National Audubon Society President Peter Berle in January 1990.

I first met Maggy on my first visit to PIAS sometime in the late 1970s. We hit it off immediately. We had a great deal in common. She was also a fountain of information on just about any subject that would come up for discussion. It wasn't long before Maggy had talked me into running for a board position in PIAS, and subsequently, the presidency. There was never anyone in public life more persuasive than Maggy Bowman! And she always accomplished her objectives with a great deal of élan.

We all worked closely together for quite a long time during the initial stages of the "Nature Center," which, of course, subsequently morphed into the Environmental Learning Center. In addition to the business at hand, Maggy showed a sense of humor that was priceless. Dr. Simmons and I began to see her socially, mainly at dinner parties at our home, and she was always a welcome addition to the group. Everyone enjoyed talking with her. She had nearly total recall concerning so many significant events throughout her long environmental career, and they were all interesting and inspiring. I called Maggy our own Marjorie Stoneman Douglas.

I have often wondered what Indian River County or the State of Florida would look like today had it not been for Maggy Bowman? We do know one thing; I'm certain; i.e., Florida in general, and Indian River County in particular, are far better places to live today because of Maggy.

Maggy was one of a kind, and she will be greatly missed. Dr. Simmons and I feel very fortunate that she was a part of our lives. Maggy's spirit, I'm sure, will live on in others. -- *Stuart A. Miner*

Being asked to write a tribute to Maggy Bowman is a task not to be taken lightly. By the same token, one cannot cover her contributions to our welfare no matter how much one writes. People not yet born will benefit from her vision. My family and I had the privilege of knowing her over 20 years. Shortly after Pelican Island Audubon Society moved to its present location, they acquired a computer. With enthusiasm, she dove into the mechanics of learning about what the computer could do for us. One Saturday, she and I worked cleaning up after the move. When I arrived home, I stated, "When she dies, a library closes." She had an insatiable appetite for knowledge, preserving the environment and helping others. She will be sorely missed. -- *Steve Harber*

Please accept this gift in memory of Maggy. She was one-of-a-kind and she gave herself selflessly to our lucky community. Countless times she had the nerve to say what we were thinking, to do what we only hoped to be able to accomplish. Although she will be missed, she is one of the great ones that leaves a legacy of environmental wealth.

--Ellie & Andy Van Os

I was a very good friend of Maggy's with many happy memories of past Christmas get-togethers. She worked at Arnold Constable's on Fifth Avenue during the late '30's---I worked at Abercrombie & Fitch on 45th and Madison Avenue in New York City. We met at Audubon on 14th Avenue when Joe and I moved to Wabasso. We "3" enjoyed many happy memories chatting about "old times" and "birding travels." --Marie Maus



Maggy & Nancy Irvin

I'm not going to write about all the prodigious things Maggy did for Indian River and the environment like ELC, PIAS, MRC, because there are too many. Maggy had a great sense of humor and was a great friend; her innate ideas made her a great educator and definitely a leader. She is my hero and will be truly missed.

Thank you, Maggy, for the Peligram you published for so many years and all the birding trips. I learned so much and still use your tips!

*"The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on; nor all they piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to council half a line, Nor all they tears wash out a word of it."*

--Nancy Irvin

"...in memory of Maggy Bowman, a friend and a mentor" --Dorothy Reutlinger

One of our first stops when my husband and I arrived in Vero Beach was the PIA office, inquiring about where to go birding. Maggy was on duty. She told us to drive out Route 60, turn right on 512, turn left at a certain intersection, then "Look up. you will see a caracara sitting on a post."

We had our doubts, but we followed Maggy's directions precisely and there it was: The caracara was sitting right on the post where Maggy said it would be. --Debby Ecker

On the first Monday of January 1986 I attended a PIAS board meeting and was appointed to the board and made Endangered Species chair. After the meeting someone asked if I was a member and after a moments hesitation I said, "No, actually I am not." Well every one got all upset about what to do and Maggy calmly said "Just date your membership check for yesterday and everything will be all right." That was the beginning of a long friendship between Maggy and me. She was a constant source of ideas, strategy and support not only in my affairs concerning Audubon but in my personal life as well. On the few occasions when we disagreed it did not alter our friendship except for the better. She was the best birder I have met to date and the most generous with tips for easier identification. My only regret is that I didn't know Maggy Bowman sooner.



Donna Anderson, Sharon Marable, & Maggy at the For The Birds Art Show, March 2005.

One day Maggy and Ruth Davies and I were sitting around the PIAS office just chatting and the phone rang and Ruth answered and after a few yeses and unhuhs she held the phone away and asked if either of us would tell someone what to do about pigeons in the eves of their house...Maggy said "Sure I'll talk to them" and then she proceeded to ask some questions and then she said "I think you ought to poison them, that's really the only way to get rid of them. They're nothing but a pest you know." That was Maggy in her beautiful brutal honesty. I miss her in my life. Goodbye and Thank you Maggy, the world is definitely a better place because you were here.

--Jens Tripson

Maggy Bowman was a most remarkable person. She seems to have done EVERYTHING---and done it all very well. Maggy was a Girl Scout leader and counselor. She was a teacher all of her life. I felt I learned something every time I had a conversation with Maggy! She was an excellent birder and a great naturalist. She ran a successful business as a florist in New York. She was a WAC in World War II and landed in France on D-Day plus 6. She followed the Army all across France and into Germany. She served the people of Indian River County as a County Commissioner. Maggy was also a founding member of the Pelican Island Audubon Society. I learned a lot about nature and the environment just by listening to Maggy. It was a pleasure to know her and I will remember her fondly. Happy Birding, Maggy!!!

--Ruth Davies

In memory of Maggy Bowman who taught me about the native plants of Florida years ago. - - *Christina Purinton*

We mourn the passing of Maggy Bowman on February 8 of this year. She was an original supporter of organizing Indian River NOW and a strong feminist. Maggy will be sorely missed. - - *Gloria Wood*

Maggy Bowman, a lover of the natural world. - - *Henry M. Doremus*

Another big tree has fallen.... - - - *Patricia Lyons*

I'm happy to say that Maggy Bowman was one of the first people I met after moving to Vero Beach in 1991. My mother was an avid birder and I had spent most of my life birding, albeit not very seriously, and I certainly was a novice at birding in Florida. I happened to stop into the PIAS office one day after a morning spent birding at the IRC West Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Maggy, ever interested, asked me what I had seen. I listed the usual herons and egrets and then mentioned that I had seen an Eastern phoebe.

"A phoebe," Maggy said.

"Yes, I saw a phoebe," I replied.

"A phoebe," repeated Maggy.

"Yes, I saw a phoebe, Maggy. I've been birding most of my life. I know what a phoebe looks like."

"A phoebe," once again. She didn't say anything else, but enough doubt had been cast that I went immediately to a bird book when I got home. And, not surprisingly, Maggy was right. Eastern phoebes aren't even here at the time of year I was claiming to have seen one, and I had in fact seen an Eastern wood peewee. Several days later I saw Maggy once again at the office and excitedly told her that she was right, that I had seen a wood peewee rather than a phoebe. To which she replied in her typical style, without embellishment, and in ten words making me a better birder from that day forward, "I would have thought you would have noticed the wingbars."

Thank you, Maggy. - - *Melissa Tripson*

Enclosed is a check in memory of Maggy. I've already made a donation to the ELC because she had a great vision for establishing that learning center. God Bless her. She'll be missed for many years. I learned so much from her the past 20 years. We arrived in Florida about the same time. I'll miss her smile and happy thoughts as well. - - *Marge Konopaska*

"Maggy" – The epitome of Audubon Membership

- She was in a special class of birders knowing the birds and their habits, and where the rare ones were this week
- She was energetic and founded the Pelican Island Audubon Chapter as part of Florida Audubon
- She believed in educating children about the natural world and was a founder of the Environmental Learning Center
- She was an advocate for saving natural resources by limiting development of our special places like the Indian River Lagoon
- She was a doer and that led to a political office of County Commissioner where she stood up for natural resource in the decision making process.
- She was an organizer and editor and this was demonstrated by putting out a quality newsletter for more than a decade
- She saw the potential for using sewage effluent for creating wetlands and convinced the county officials to create such a marsh for final sewage treatment which is one of the best birding areas in Florida

I will always remember Maggy coming out to help with the "Bird-a-thon" in cold rainy weather when she was older and frail. Shivering and wet she continued on until we saw an American Bittern. At that moment I could see great joy in her eyes – seeing an uncommon visitor to a marsh that you had a hand in creating – what could be better than that?

- - *Joe Carroll*

Maggy Bowman, our beloved contributor whose column *Florida Birds* ran in these pages since our very first issue back in 1996, died peacefully in her sleep on February 8, 2006. Maggy's column that ran in our January-February, 2006 issue was the last one she submitted to us. Her columns over the years were a great joy for the editor to read; Not a word had to be changed---not even periods or commas---and the column went in exactly as submitted. Maggy's lively articles were treasured by many of our readers who are interested in Florida's birds and the environment. Rest in Peace Maggy Bowman. - - - *Southern Festivals---The South's Festival Newspaper---Sunshine State Edition, May-June-July 2006*

Maggy Bowman touched many in her quest to protect natural resources. Maggy Bowman, a legendary birder and advocate for the environment, quietly died in her sleep on February 8, at age 91, in Vero Beach. "She was a giant in the community," said Richard Baker, president of the 41-year-old Pelican Island Audubon Society that Bowman helped found. "It was her idea to start the Environmental Learning Center," which eventually opened in 1992, Baker said. Since then, the center has hosted thousands of county schoolchildren on annual field trips to the Indian River Lagoon.

A native of Rhinebeck, N.Y., Bowman came to Indian River County in 1964 with a background as a military cryptographic technician. In 1980 she was appointed to the county's Planning and Zoning Commission, and was appointed a county commissioner in 1983. An advocate of low density, low-rise development, she was elected to the position she held until 1992. - - - *Audubon of Florida, Florida Naturalist, Spring 2006*

MARCH 25th FIELD TRIP IN MEMORY OF MAGGY BOWMAN TO THE WEST COUNTY WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

By Billi Wagner

This series of impoundments, or "cells", surrounded by dikes was constructed to polish or purify used water. Aquatic plants are used for this instead of chemicals, and the area is a haven for wetland birds and other wildlife. A total of 10 people gathered at 8 a.m. on a cool and windy Saturday; the gate was left unlocked for us by prior arrangement. The day before I scouted the area for unusual birds and just to see what was around in general. Jens Tripson said he had been by the week before and we compared notes. He also shared a personal anecdote involving Maggy, for whom this wetland was a favorite birdwatching destination.

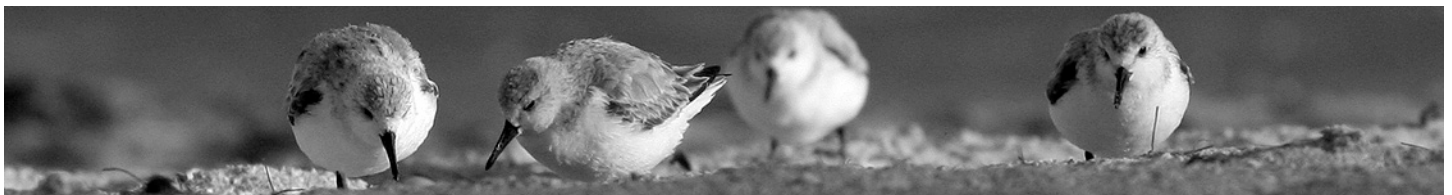


*Carol Christy, Trish White, Jens Tripson,
Nancy Irvin & Tim Towles.
Photo: Billi Wagner*

A Bald Eagle, one of 4 raptors in the area, launched from her usual perch on the elevated platform. There were 4 duck species; besides the year-round Mottled, some migratory stragglers were observed: many Blue-winged Teal, a couple of Green-winged Teal and one Northern Shoveler.

Not one Pied-billed Grebe showed up, they must have gone already. Shorebirds using the wetlands as a stopover on their northward journey included at least 200 Yellowlegs (Greater and Lesser), several Least Sandpipers, dowitchers, and in the same place along the boardwalk as the day before, 3 Solitary Sandpipers. Again skittish, they returned to the spot after flying off. They clearly prefer shallow water/mudflats with vegetation instead of open water. We could see the eye ring and plumage details, especially the tail feathers spread during flight, which differentiated them from the similar sized Lesser Yellowlegs. A Dunlin, Killdeer and Wilson's Snipe were also seen.

Besides the yellowlegs, the most abundant birds were Tree Swallows and Boat-tailed Grackles. One pond was full of waders: Glossy and White Ibis, egrets and herons. The resident Sandhill Crane pair nested again this year; they were accompanied by 2 golden, downy chicks. The family foraged along the canal by the entrance road. We tallied 50 species for the day.



Pelican Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1833
Vero Beach, FL 32961-1833

REMEMBERING MAGGY

Maggy Bowman helped found the Pelican Island Audubon Society in 1964 and in the ensuing years gave much of her time to see the organization become a conservation and educational resource for Indian River County. Please help us to carry on Maggy's work by making a donation or volunteering your time.

**Yes, I want to help
Pelican Island Audubon Society
carry on Maggy's dream!**

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of:

\$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I would like more information on volunteering or serving on one of the various committees.

Please mail to:

**Pelican Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1833
Vero Beach, FL 32961-1833**

I recently read the obituary in the Poughkeepsie (NY) Journal for Maggy C. Bowman whom I understand was President Emeritus of PIAS. I met Maggy long ago at Tivoli Bays, an important natural area and birding area on the Hudson River that I have studied for many years. Maggy told me that she had birded Tivoli Bays in the late 1950s and mentioned an active osprey nest (osprey nesting records are very rare on the Hudson River).

I'm wondering if Maggy left any field notes or journals? If so I would be very interested in viewing them as a source of historic natural history data about Tivoli Bays and possibly other areas here in the Hudson Valley.

Thank you for your assistance,

Erik Kiviat, PhD
Hudsonia Ltd. and Bard College

If anyone has anything to contribute to Dr. Kiviat's project, please contact the office at 772-567-3520.

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