



# Habi-Chat

Newsletter of the Merritt Island Wildlife Association

Volume 13, Number 2

Summer 2007

## Trash Bash 2007

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge participated in the Keep Brevard Beautiful effort by holding a Trash Bash event. For the past 22 years, individuals and groups have joined Keep Brevard Beautiful, Inc. by volunteering to clean up litter in our communities. The Trash Bash is sponsored by Florida Inland Navigation District and Waste Management of Florida, Inc. and is supported by the Brevard County Commissioners and county municipalities. The event is an opportunity to provide positive behavior to help change attitudes about litter resulting in a more beautiful and cleaner community that generates a sense of community pride.

Despite a cloudy day and light early morning showers, Refuge volunteers showed up bright and early to participate by

hiking and kayaking to clean litter throughout the Refuge. Jesse Ingram, a Trash Bash volunteer and owner of Blazing Paddles ([www.floridablazingpaddles.com](http://www.floridablazingpaddles.com)), generously provided kayaks for those volunteers who paddled Haulover Canal to collect trash. MIWA members Warren and Betty Camp joined Jesse in the kayaks. Armed with gloves, pick-up tools, and large black plastic bags, the volunteers headed out. What started as a rainy day quickly changed to a cool and breezy day perfect for working outdoors. Sixty-eight bags of trash were collected by twelve volunteers from the Legendary Jeep Club, Gary and Kathy Londo, Ron and Charlene Spangler, Eric Coleman, Ron Watson, C.S. and Joe Richardson, Brandon Alley, Doug McFadden, Vicki Cook and Daniel Canten. The approximate weight of the litter collected by the kayakers was 600+ pounds and included a water tank, fender and gas tank skid plate. Those volunteers who hiked on Live Oak Trail collected a total of 25 bags of litter separated into fifteen garbage bags of trash and ten recyclable bags of aluminum, glass and plastic. The hikers, Sandee and Ed Larsen, Curtis and Patricia Arnold, Jill Craig, Laura Capozzi and Bob Armbruster also picked up seven tires and five galvanized fence posts.

Everyone was left with a sense of pride and accomplishment at the end of the day and the Refuge was a lot cleaner. Thank you to everyone who participated in the Trash Bash.

Why Recycle? How long does it take for some of the things we use everyday to decompose into a non-recognizable form? How about an orange peel? One day, maybe two? Try up to six months!

Paper doesn't take very long to decompose, does it? Only 2-5 months!

- Plastic Coated Cartons – 5 years!
- Cigarette butts – 10 to 12 years!
- Plastic bags – 10 to 20 years!
- Plastic containers – 50 to 80 years!
- Aluminum – 80 to 100 years!
- Styrofoam – NEVER!

All the things listed above are seen along the roadways and shorelines every day. Everything can be recycled in some way (except cigarette butts). Many of these things are a danger to wildlife and to us. Please don't litter!

*(Data from Keep Brevard Beautiful, Inc. website)*

**Laura Capozzi, Refuge Volunteer**



**The Live Oak Trash Bash crew.**  
Photo by Betty Camp



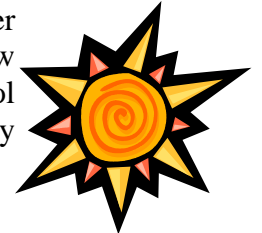
**The Legendary Jeep Club.**  
Photo by Nancy Corona



### The Heat Is On!

Heat related illness is a year-round concern for Central Floridians, but it becomes an even greater potential problem during our summer months. Heat illness comes in increasingly serious stages. These are heat cramps, syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion and heatstroke. It can kill you! More than half of those suffering heatstroke die! Some people are especially susceptible to heat illness. If you have health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease, are on medications or take over-the-counter medicines, are on a salt restricted diet, have had a heat illness before, are not accustomed to working in the heat and don't drink enough fluids (are dehydrated) then you are at high risk for problems.

Heat illness is preventable. When you are working or playing in the heat, don't wait until you are thirsty to drink. Your body will lose about a quart of water (32 ounces) per hour just by sweating. That should be replaced by drinking at least four 8-ounce cups of cool, fresh water each hour while working or playing in the heat. You should also know the symptoms to watch for. These are headache, excessive sweating, muscle pain or cramping, irritability, dizziness, weakness, poor concentration, nausea and/or vomiting, vision problems and uncomfortable fatigue. Late symptoms that herald the onset of heatstroke are loss of ability to sweat, syncope (fainting), confusion and seizures. If you feel any of these symptoms **GET OUT OF THE SUN AND HYDRATE!** If you have any of the conditions listed above that increase your risk for heat illness then you should get your doctor's advice regarding your plans to work or play in our hot Florida summer environment. It is best to have company when you are working or playing, and always know how to get help if you need it. When you drink, have water, not sugar, caffeine or alcohol containing beverages. These actually add to the problem of dehydration. Stay cool and stay well.



**Emmett B. "Bud" Ferguson, MD, MPH, FACP, MIWA Board Member**



*The purpose of the Merritt Island Wildlife Association is to promote conservation, awareness, and appreciation of the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and to provide assistance to Refuge programs.*

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The Merritt Island Wildlife Association (MIWA) is a nonprofit, cooperating association for the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The *Habi-Chat* is published quarterly. For MIWA information, call **321-861-2377**.

**Newsletter Editor** Brad Sloan     **Technical Consultant** Cheri Ehrhardt  
*Habi-Chat* **Committee** Brad Sloan, Sandee Larsen,  
Dorn Whitmore, Cheri Ehrhardt  
**Official Photographer** Joel Reynolds

### Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors

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**Incognito eagle in flight.**  
Photo by Joel Reynolds

I had my Canon Mark II 1D camera in the car and the 500 MM lens was attached. I pulled over, slowly got out of the car, opened up the passenger door and got out the big rig. I carefully walked over to where I saw the eagle in the pine trees. I crossed over the mostly dried-out ditch, wondering if I would get stuck in the mud. My heart was pounding by this time. I laid down and began shooting. I remember the sun coming over my shoulder, wonderful light toward the eagle group!

The eagles were flying back and forth and I don't remember them being bothered by me being close. I shot away. Did I remember my camera settings – no! Did I know what the camera settings were – no! Did I even look at the settings while I was taking the pictures – No! I was way too excited. (That happens to me a lot, it seems.) The settings (from Breeze Browser later) were aperture priority (f/7), ISO 400, 1/1000 second shutter speed (mostly), and “0” exposure compensation.



**Stately.**  
Photo by Joel Reynolds

### *Species in Focus (Literally):* **Incognito Eagle**

It was April 28, 2006, about 9 AM, and I had just left the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center heading South on Florida State Road 3, going home. I had been out for an early morning of looking for Florida Scrub Jays on the John F. Kennedy Space Center, touched base at the Visitors Center, then decided to drive through the Space Center as I had often done.

Between the Launch Complex 39 area and the Industrial area, I noticed a group of vultures feeding on an animal that had been recently killed by a passing car on SR3. Then in the same group I noticed a white head. Then there was another. Bald Eagles were sharing this meal along with the Turkey Vulture. They flew up into the pine trees then flew back to get more of their share.



**To the tree.**  
Photo by Joel Reynolds

I got home and downloaded the images on my computer, maybe 40 or more images that I had taken. Then I found several that blew me away. One was an eagle flying low with the trees making a nice background. Another was an eagle going up into the pine trees and the branches which made an intriguing background sight, at least for me. Then to the one I could not believe. It was of an eagle twisting around, launching off the top of a nearby power pole. And it was sharp, unbelievable.

What a great day this was, and as usual, I never know what will reveal itself or what God will reveal and allow me to capture.

If anyone wants to see some more of the photos taken that day, you can visit the National Wildlife Refuge Association Website (<http://www.refugenet.org/default.htm>), click on *Refuge Image Library*, click on *View Photo Library*, then type in “Reynolds” for the photographer. Plus you can see other finalists' images of the National Refuge 2007 photo contest at that site.

**Joel Reynolds, MIWA Board Member**

## MIWA Minute

I hope you will come out and visit the Bookery with visiting family members this summer. It's a great stop on the way to the beach or a great way to spend some time in the Visitor Center (enjoy some AC!).

Kudos to MIWA Members, **George & Christine Gloeckler** for their donation of \$200. Your generosity is appreciated. We are lucky to have such giving members in our organization. Thank you! :-)

I am happy to report MIWA now has two Patron Memberships. This is the highest level of Life Membership. We welcome our Patron Members, **Dale & Maggie Nichols** of Orlando, FL, and **Laurilee Thompson** of Mims. Thank you Dale, Maggie, and Laurilee for giving your generous support to MIWA!

We would like to thank all of our Life Members for their loyal support.

<i>Halifax River Audubon Society</i>	<i>Judy &amp; Jim Dryja</i>	<i>Carl L. Jones II</i>	<i>Kerry Palermo</i>
<i>Space Coast Audubon Society</i>	<i>Cheri Ehrhardt</i>	<i>Darlene Koenig</i>	<i>Charles Platt, 3<sup>rd</sup></i>
<i>Tommie Barron</i>	<i>Lori &amp; Steve Emly</i>	<i>Kerri Lambert</i>	<i>Roy Roberts</i>
<i>Sam Beddingfield</i>	<i>George English</i>	<i>Daniel LeBlanc</i>	<i>Dr. Bill Rylander</i>
<i>Mary Beyrer</i>	<i>Jim Escoffier</i>	<i>Judith Lindquist</i>	<i>Cary &amp; Betty Salter</i>
<i>John &amp; Linda Boucher</i>	<i>Emmett B. Ferguson, MD</i>	<i>Richard &amp; Carol Loehr</i>	<i>Charles Schneider</i>
<i>Kathryn Brown</i>	<i>Dennis &amp; Kathleen Gasick</i>	<i>Marian Lunsford</i>	<i>Cynthia Schneider</i>
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<i>Robby &amp; Sue Buckalew</i>	<i>Robert R. Green</i>	<i>Captain Fredrick Mastin</i>	<i>Robert &amp; Nancy Sieck</i>
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<i>Paul &amp; Leah Casper</i>	<i>(Ret.)</i>	<i>Bob Merrilees</i>	<i>Rick &amp; Diane Stees</i>
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	<i>Darleen &amp; Jerry Hunt</i>	<i>Lewis Oliver</i>	<i>Nan Wilson</i>
	<i>Barbara Hutchinson</i>	<i>Gerry &amp; Arline Oppliger</i>	

As Patron and Lifetime members they will receive benefits, including discounts on field trips and educational programs, and purchases at the Bookery Gift Shop. Patron members receive the additional benefit of a private Refuge tour. We encourage all members to become actively involved in our programs and we ask you all to promote membership to your friends and families. Feel free to call MIWA's direct line, 321-861-2377 if you need membership or retail information.

I'll see you at the Refuge!

**Sandee Larsen, Bookery Manager**



## Easy, Breezy, Turtle Walk

I can honestly say the June 29<sup>th</sup> Sea Turtle walk was, perhaps, the best I have been on. More than anything, this was due to Mother Nature's total cooperation. The program began like normal; around 30 MIWA members attended, and we were all treated to a very informative presentation in the Refuge Visitor Center by Environmental Educator Beverly Osborne.

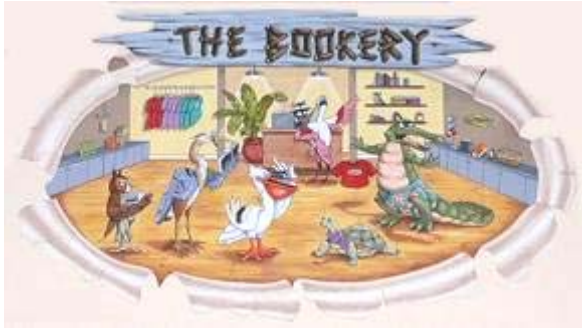
Upon completing the program, we all got into our vehicles and caravanned to Canaveral Seashore. We arrived at the Eddy Creek parking lot to await word from the scout on the beach. As soon as we arrived, a few of us took the boardwalk to the top of the dune. Lo and behold, we could see the scout nearby. He came over and told us he had seen two turtles on the beach. One was very close and had just crawled up; the other was only one lot away and was already beginning digging. Unfortunately, the close one false crawled, so we jumped into our cars and headed up to the next lot within a mere ten to fifteen minutes of first arriving at the beach. We were able to head straight out to the sand, as the turtle was already laying her eggs. This was definitely some of the most perfect timing you can get, since we had pretty much no wait at all.

The tides were high, so there was a very nice breeze that kept the normally thick mosquitoes at bay. And the moon was full, lighting the scene so brightly that we cast shadows and barely even needed the red flashlights that we carried. We stood by and watched in awe as the Loggerhead dropped her many eggs into her nest. After a little while, she finished up and slowly packed in the sand on top of the eggs. When she was finally satisfied that the eggs were secure and that we posed no threat, she retreated to the ocean as we wished her farewell.

Thanks to volunteer turtle scouts, Kevin and Debbie Pihl for a job well done.

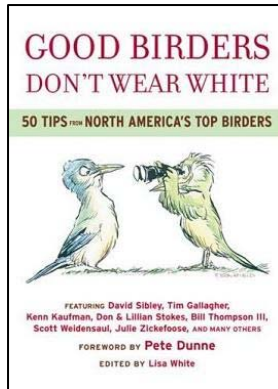
**Brad Sloan, Habi-Chat Editor**

## New Items in



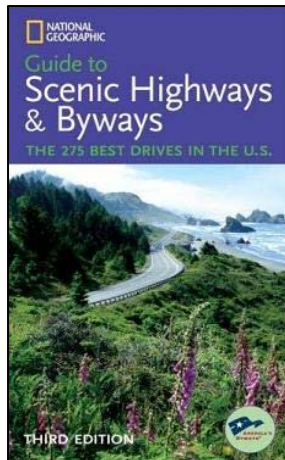
### Good Birders Don't Wear White: 50 Tips from North America's Top Birders

Houghton Mifflin.....\$8.95  
 In these 50 light and fun original essays, the biggest names in birding dispense advice to birders of every level, on topics ranging from feeding birds and cleaning binoculars to pishing and pelagic birding.



### Guide to Scenic Highways & Byways: The 275 Best Drives in the U.S.

National Geographic.....\$25.00  
 Includes All-American Roads, National Scenic Byways, State Byways, National Forest Service Scenic Byways, National Park roads, and many more. With 275 distinctive drives and descriptions and firsthand guidance from expert travel writers.



Baby Sea Turtle  
 Safari Ltd.....\$5.95  
 A stunning replica of a baby sea turtle that even floats! Includes 5-language educational information.



*For retail information, call the MIWA Office at 321-861-2377*

#### Visitor Information Center Hours

Monday through Friday  
 8:00 am – 4:30 pm  
 Saturday and Sunday\*  
 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

\*VIC is closed Sundays from April – October  
 The Refuge is open daily from sunrise – sunset, except during Shuttle Launch/Landing operations.

Habi-Chat has email! If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive MIWA announcements, please add us to your safe senders list and send a request to [HabiChat@MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org](mailto:HabiChat@MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org)



*Gifts in remembrance were donated by...*

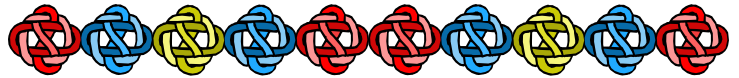
... the many friends and family of **Eugene Parkhurst**.

... New York Public School #189 and the friends and family of **Robert Nociti**.

... Dan and Beth Cox in memory of **Herman Beach**.

*Donations in remembrance of loved ones and friends can be sent to:*

MIWA, P.O. Box 6504, Titusville, FL 32782



### Merritt Island Wildlife Association

Supporting the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Joining is simple. Just fill out this form and mail it to the Merritt Island Wildlife Association at P.O. Box 6504, Titusville, FL 32782

or join online at

[www.MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org](http://www.MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership:

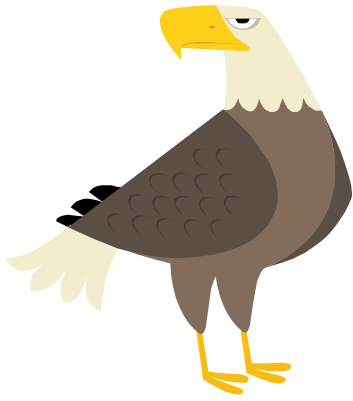
- Seniors and Students – \$10
- Individual – \$15
- Senior Couples – \$15
- Family Membership – \$20
- Supporting Membership – \$50
- Senior Couple Supporting – \$75
- Life Membership – \$250
- Patron – \$1000
- Optional – Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to MIWA. For credit card payments please call the MIWA office at **321-861-2377**.



## Summer Wildlife Driving Tour



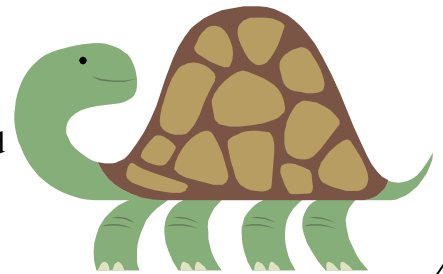
Beat the heat by joining Merritt Island Wildlife Association Environmental Educator, Beverly Osborne, for a driving tour of Bio Lab Road in the refuge van. Beverly will provide an overview of the summer wildlife, plants, and refuge management during the tour.

The program is scheduled for Saturday, July 28, 2007 at 9:30 am. Meet at the Refuge Visitor Information Center. Cost is free and group size is limited to 9 people.

Participation is limited, so please contact Beverly Osborne to make reservations at 321-861-5601 or email at [beverly\\_osborne@hotmail.com](mailto:beverly_osborne@hotmail.com)

## Call for Silent Auction Donations

MIWA is requesting donation items for our upcoming annual meeting fundraiser. Gift certificates, artwork, handmade items, and anything with a nature theme are needed. All donations are tax deductible and will be displayed with your name or company name. Contact Sandee Larsen at 321-861-2377 for additional info.



Merritt Island Wildlife Association  
P.O. Box 6504  
Titusville, FL 32782  
[www.MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org](http://www.MerrittIslandWildlifeAssociation.org)

