



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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www.sfwmd.gov/news

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Join the 114th Christmas Bird Count in a Showcase of Wildlife, Recreation on Public Land

Everglades stormwater treatment areas are renowned bird-watching havens



Red-Shouldered Hawk

Ibis

Roseate Spoonbill

Bald Eagle

(Click on the pictures for larger versions.)

WHAT: The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is joining with the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society once again as the group conducts its portion of the 114th Christmas Bird Count in Stormwater Treatment Area 5 (STA-5) in Hendry County.

Stormwater Treatment Areas are the water-cleaning workhorses of Everglades restoration. They have also become renowned havens for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts alike.

Data collected during the annual bird counts – which span North America and beyond during the weeks surrounding Christmas – are critical to studies of the long-term health and status of bird populations, according to Audubon. The STAs, managed by the SFWMD, attract large numbers of birds and also provide the public with a variety of recreational opportunities, such as hiking, biking and excellent bird watching.

During last year's 113th Christmas Bird Count, Audubon teams in STA-5 and the surrounding area documented 109 avian species and more than 83,400 individual birds.

Throughout South Florida, the District provides recreational access to its public lands while continuing to manage them to support environmental restoration, water supply, water quality and flood control missions. At present, the District owns approximately 600,000 acres of land that are open to the public. Many of these properties are in their natural state or have enhancements such as picnic tables, informational kiosks, primitive campsites and hiking trails.

For more information on recreational opportunities throughout the District's 16-county region, visit www.sfwmd.gov/recreation.

WHEN: January 4, 2014

TIME: 7 a.m.

WHERE: [Click here for a map and written directions.](#)

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About the South Florida Water Management District

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.