



There are 23 state programs, 41 Audubon centers, and nearly 500 society chapters throughout the United States.

“The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation.”

“In order to protect waterbird population, Harriet Hemenway and Minna B. Hall, of Massachusetts founded the Audubon Society in 1896. By 1898, state-level Audubon Societies had been established in Pennsylvania, New York, New Hampshire, Illinois, Maine, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, Minnesota, Texas, and California.”

<audubon.org>

### Who was John James Audubon?

“John James Audubon (1785-1851) was not the first person to attempt to paint and describe all the birds of America (Alexander Wilson has that distinction), but for half a century he was the young country’s dominant wildlife artist.” <audubon.org>

“It’s fair to describe John James Audubon as a genius, a pioneer, a fabulist, and a man whose actions reflected a dominant white view of the pursuit of scientific knowledge. His contributions to ornithology, art, and culture are enormous, but he was a complex and troubling character who did despicable things even by the standards of his day. He was contemporaneously and posthumously accused of—and most certainly committed—both academic fraud and plagiarism. But far worse, he enslaved Black people and wrote critically about emancipation. He stole human remains and sent the skulls to a colleague who used them to assert that whites were superior to non-whites.” <audubon.org>

“Audubon died decades before the first Audubon societies were founded, so how did National Audubon Society come to bear his name? George Bird Grinnell, one of the founders of the early Audubon Society in the late 1800s, was tutored by Lucy Audubon, John James’s widow, and chose the name because of Audubon’s stature in the world of wildlife art and natural history.” <audubon.org>

In 1954 the Society purchased the last great stand of cypress trees in Florida’s Corkscrew Swamp to create “the crown jewel of sanctuary systems.” <audubon.org>

“A visit to Audubon’s Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary is a journey into the heart of the Everglades ecosystem. Discover the rugged beauty of this famed natural area on Corkscrew’s famous boardwalk - a 2.25-mile adventure through pine flatwoods, wet prairie, around a marsh, and finally into the largest old growth Bald Cypress Forest in North America. Located about 30 minutes east of Naples, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary is home to hundreds of alligators, otters, white-tailed deer, and red-bellied turtles. A wide variety of wading birds, songbirds, and raptors can be seen throughout the year, while the fabulous Painted Bunting is one of many winter visitors. Photo opportunities are available at every turn of the boardwalk trail.” <corkscrew.audubon.org>

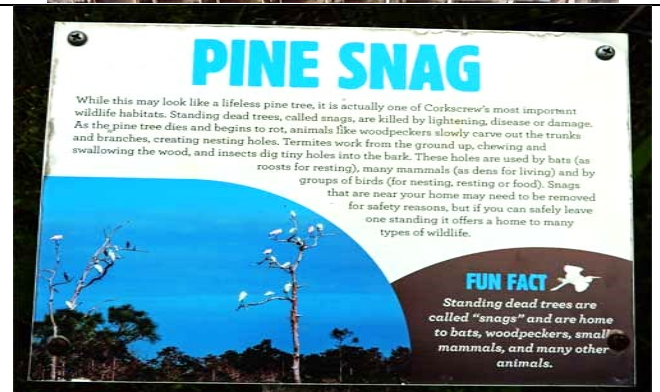
“Specifically, one may see a Florida panther, American alligator, gopher tortoise, Florida sandhill crane, Limpkin, Roseate Spoonbill, Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, White Ibis, Big Cypress fox squirrel, and the Florida black bear. Several rare plants are also found here, most notably the ghost orchid.”

<corkscrew.audubon.org>

This photo program shares our visit to the Audubon Corkscrew Sanctuary Swamp. My wife saw several birds and animals during our walk, but I was not able to photograph any of the sightings, except a Brown Anole Lizard. There are two other types of lizards along the boardwalk Green Anoles and Skinks. The 2.25-mile boardwalk made one feel that the surroundings were untouched or scarred by human intervention.



"Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary occupies approximately 13,450 acres in the heart of the Corkscrew Watershed in Southwest Florida, part of the Western Everglades. It is primarily composed of wetlands. These include the largest remaining, virgin bald cypress forest in the world (approximately 700 acres), which was historically the site of the largest nesting colony of Federally Endangered Wood Storks in the nation." <corkscrew.audubon.org>





One of the guides on the boardwalk told us to look for a W shaped tree to see the **Ghost Orchid** (*Dendrophylax inderii*) in bloom. Found only in Southwest Florida and Cuba. I had to use a telephoto lens since the tree was a distance from the boardwalk. It was a hot and humid day and without a tripod I took the pictures below and luck was with me. The other photo was taken in the Blair Center.



"The ghost orchid is aptly named for a few reasons. Its white flowers have a vaguely spectral appearance, and they seem to hover in the forest due to an illusion created by the leafless plant. This effect also makes the rare orchid even harder to find, especially outside the brief, unpredictable window when it blooms in summer." Facts: "Blooms once a year for few weeks or not at all; has scales, not leaves; mostly made of roots; its roots like leaves; its flowers look like they are floating in the forest; smells like apples, especially in the morning; and relies on a moth for pollination." (Note other interesting facts are on the source.) <treehugger.com>

"Growing ghost orchid flowers at home is nearly impossible, as it's extremely difficult to provide the plant's very particular growing requirements. People who manage to remove an orchid from its environment are usually disappointed because ghost orchid plants almost always die in captivity." <gardeningknowhow.com>



#### Other plants and flowers photographed







"Lettuce lakes are marvelous place for wildlife to find food. Microscopic creatures are food for small fish which in turn feed bigger fish, wading birds, alligators, otters, and more. When water levels are low in other parts of the swamp lakes like this one are lifesavers for wildlife." <info sign>



"Some commonly seen plants found at Corkscrew include cypress, slash pine trees, wax myrtle, cabbage palms, saw palmetto, red maple, goldenrod, swamp lily, bushy bluestem, wiregrass, tickseed, sawgrass, live oak trees, resurrection fern, pond apple trees, and others." <corkscrew.audubon.org>







Sources: <https://www.audubon.org/>, <https://corkscrew.audubon.org/>,  
<https://srelherp.uga.edu/lizards/anosag.htm>, <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/orchids/ghost-orchid-information.htm>,  
and <https://www.treehugger.com/facts-about-endangered-ghost-orchid-4868399>.

**acuri.net John R. Vincenti Audubon Corkscrew Sanctuary**