

America's
HIDDEN
Animal Treasures

Roseate Spoonbill

Pretty in Pink



by Stephen Person

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BEARPORT
PUBLISHING

New York, New York

Credits

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Publisher: Kenn Goin

Editorial Director: Adam Siegel

Creative Director: Spencer Brinker

Design: Dawn Beard Creative

Photo Researcher: Picture Perfect Professionals, LLC

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Person, Stephen.

Roseate spoonbill : pretty in pink / by Stephen Person.

p. cm. — (America's hidden animal treasures)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-61772-570-8 (library binding) — ISBN 1-61772-570-6 (library binding)

1. Roseate spoonbill—Life cycles—Juvenile literature. I. Title.

QL696.C585P47 2013

598.3'4—dc23

2012014338

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For more information, write to Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., 45 West 21st Street, Suite 3B, New York, New York 10010.

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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An Early-Morning Search

The workday starts early for **biologist** Jerry Lorenz. Long before sunrise, Jerry and his team of scientists climb into a boat and cruise into Florida Bay. Their goal is to find roseate (ROH-zee-ayt) spoonbill nests on the tiny islands that dot the bay—but it's not easy.



Jerry on the lookout for
roseate spoonbills



When they come to an island, Jerry jumps out and splashes to shore. As he climbs up the beach, thick vines wrap around his legs and buzzing mosquitoes surround his head. “Most days it’s sweltering hot,” says Jerry. “Other days it’s pouring rain, or you’re shivering with cold.” It’s all worth it, though. The reward comes when Jerry gets a close-up look at the amazing bird he has come to see.



The roseate spoonbill is named for the color of its feathers and the shape of its bill. “Roseate” means pink-colored, and “spoonbill” describes the bird’s bill—which is shaped like a spoon.

The Big Reward

“To see the roseate spoonbill is really great,” Jerry explains. “They are like huge flowers, with wings!” Spoonbills stand nearly three feet (.9 m) tall, with a long **wingspan** of more than four feet (1.2 m). They have skinny red legs, bright pink wings, and long white necks. They have no feathers on their greenish heads, and their eyes are a glowing red.



A close-up view of a spoonbill is worth all the hard work.

Does Jerry search for spoonbill nests just so he can see these birds? No—his real job is to count them. Jerry wants to figure out if the **population** of roseate spoonbills in Florida is rising or falling. Just over 100 years ago, these birds nearly became **extinct**. Jerry and his crew of scientists are working hard to make sure this never happens again.



With their long wings,
spoonbills are powerful fliers.

Jerry Lorenz works for an **environmental** group called the Audubon Society. Audubon was founded in 1886 by people who wanted to protect spoonbills and other birds.

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About the Author

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. His first job after college was with the National Audubon Society, in Washington, D.C. He lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, New York.

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Look inside to find out more about Jerry Lorenz and his efforts to protect the roseate spoonbill. Along the way you'll discover how this beautiful bird hunts, raises its young, and stays safe from hungry predators. You'll also find out how humans are working to help save the habitat of the roseate spoonbill—an animal that is truly one of America's greatest hidden treasures.

Collared Peccary
Cactus Eater

Ringtail
Miner's Cat

Cougar
A Cat with Many Names

Roseate Spoonbill
Pretty in Pink

Jaguarundi
Otter Cat

White-Nosed Coati
Raccoon's Cousin

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