



"The Voice of Conservation in Central Florida"

OASis

Orange Audubon Society
A Chapter of National and Florida Audubon Societies



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Calling All Members—We are going **GREEN!**

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Board of Directors has concluded that it is time for OAS to Go Green! This move will allow us to save valuable resources – trees (paper), money (printing and mailing the *OASis* is our largest expense item) and time (that of our loyal volunteers who tape, print labels and affix them, then deliver nearly 2,000 newsletters to the post office every month). Our June 2014 issue of the *OASis* will be the last paper copy that will be sent out to all our members.

Please help us by sending your email address (subject: go green) now to Mike Daley (miked129e@gmail.com), membership database chair, so that we have a smooth transition this fall.

If you do not have access for electronic mailing, please let us know by sending a note to Orange Audubon Society - *OASis*, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. Please include your name and address and tell us that you do not have electronic access. Please don't delay; we want to be able to stay in touch with all of our members. Thanks.

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) meetings & programs are free & no reservations are necessary. Programs are held the 3rd Thursday of every month (September–June) usually at 7:00 p.m. in the Camellia Room at:

Harry P. Leu Gardens
1920 North Forest Avenue
Orlando, FL 32803-1537

For map and directions, visit:

www.leugardens.org/plan/directions.htm

Thursday, March 20th–7:00 pm "Western Hummingbirds That Winter in the Southeast" by Fred Dietrich

Our speaker shared information with Orange Audubon Society about hummingbird biology and what had been learned from banding studies at the November 2011 program in which he dispelled the long-thought-to-be-true fallacy that the Ruby-throated Hummingbird was the only hummingbird in the eastern U.S. Fred reported banding a Rufous Hummingbird in Tallahassee that was recaptured in Alaska in June 2010, the longest documented migration route of any hummingbird species. This year, Fred will update his bird-banding story and include photos of the only Costa's Hummingbird recorded in Florida (and only the second record of it in the east) and two Broad-billed hummers in Tallahassee in 2012. Please join us at 7:00 p.m. at Leu Gardens to hear Fred's stories.

Loretta Satterthwaite, Programs Chair

**VOTE
YES ON 1**

2014 Florida Land and Water Conservation Amendment Summary:

Funds the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire, restore, improve, and manage conservation lands including wetlands and forests; fish and wildlife habitat; lands protecting water resources and drinking water sources, including the Everglades, and the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; beaches and shores; outdoor recreational lands; working farms and ranches; and historic or geologic sites, by dedicating 33 percent of net revenues from the existing excise tax on documents for 20 years.

Saturday, March 22nd, 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.**Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area Field Trip**

On Saturday, March 22nd, OAS will visit Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area near Narcoossee. This 2,000-acre property is part of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Mitigation Park Program. For more information about the property, see this website: <http://myfwc.com/viewing/recreation/wmas/lead/split-oak-forest>

Meet no later than 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot on the north side of McDonald's at 10701 Narcoossee Rd. Bring plenty to drink, sun protection, insect protection, birding gear, and lunch (for after the hike). Free. No registration is required. We will walk about three miles at a pace to observe plants and animals along the way. Please join us. If you have questions about the trip, contact us at rsmhk@gmail.com.

*Mary Keim and Randy Snyder,
Field Trip Committee*

Time for Elections Volunteer Today!

The Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is looking for members to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors after the June meeting. The Board is comprised of twenty volunteer members who serve staggered two- and three-year terms. Each year one-third of the non-officer positions are open for election/re-election at the April meeting. The officers' positions, a two-year term, will also be up for re-election this year.

If you or someone you know is interested in being on the Board of Directors please let us know. To be eligible, you must be a member of Orange Audubon, have an interest in wildlife and the environment that supports it, and be able to attend monthly board meetings held on the third Thursday of most months at Leu Gardens in Orlando.

This is a great opportunity to get involved with environmental projects and events as well as help make decisions that will have a positive impact in your community. If you wish to volunteer and serve on the Board, please contact Cynthia Gosiewski at cyngos@aol.com or (407) 426-8982 or any Board member. All of their names and numbers are listed in the OAS brochure or online at www.orangeaudubonfl.org. Thank you very much for your interest.

Cynthia Gosiewski, Nominating Chair

Genius Drive Workday

On Sunday, March 16th, 9:00–11:00 a.m. volunteers will plant native trees at Genius Drive Nature Preserve. Please contact Teresa to sign up: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796. Details will be provided the week before Workday.

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) promotes the understanding of and an interest in wildlife and the environment, recognition of the intangible values in the remaining natural areas of Florida and the World, and the responsibility for the conversation of these remaining resources.

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The *OAS* is published monthly from September through June and is sent free to all members of the Orange Audubon Society.

Nestboxes at Valencia College

One of the most rewarding things I have been able to accomplish in my 2 plus years as Director of Sustainability at Valencia College has been using my OAS connections to help Valencia's natural environments. We now have 20 nestboxes in the wooded areas of West Campus or around Lake Pamela and the retention ponds.

OAS nestbox experts Richard Poole and Christine Brown and one of the construction professors led nestbox building on Learning Day in February 2012. About 40 Valencia faculty and staff constructed 14 boxes that day. Later Student Government installed an additional 6 boxes that they had purchased. One of the professors of computer engineering set up electronic monitoring capability on three of the boxes.

Richard and Christine came out for Learning Day 2013 and worked with staff to check and number the boxes. Wood Ducks nested in several of the boxes this past summer as well as one Great-crested Flycatcher. For Learning Day 2014, Bob Stamps joined Richard and Christine on West Campus to help staff construct more boxes. This time, the boxes were built to install on East, Osceola, Winter Park and Lake Nona Campuses, as all campuses want nestboxes. This has been a great OAS-Valencia volunteer partnership that has enhanced Valencia's natural environments. Go to <http://wp.valenciacollege.edu/thegrove/duck-nesting-a-key-impact-of-learning-day-volunteerism-on-the-west-campus-environment/>. Thanks Richard, Christine, and Bob!

Richard has been making and installing nestboxes since 1968 and knows more than anyone in our area about them. For instructions on nestbox making and some of Richard's insights, see *Birds Can't Read*, posted on the OAS website.

Deborah Green, OAS President

OAS Call to Action

We at Orange Audubon Society (OAS), the third largest chapter in the southeast, call ourselves "The Voice of Conservation for Central Florida" – and we need to be in order to preserve our beautiful natural areas. Central Florida's construction of homes and businesses is picking up at a rate faster than most parts of the country. So, as president, I am asking you – our membership – to help our chapter be more effective.

The OAS Conservation Committee led by Bob Stamps works hard to identify and address every threat that arises. Committee members attend endless meetings, speaking up and writing letters as needed. We are getting our message out there, but we need reinforcements.

If you are one of our many members that uses email and the Internet, you can help from the comfort of your home and on your own schedule. Joining Audubon Florida's Conservation Network on the Audubon Florida website is a great step. Click on *Ways to Help* and then on the *Audubon Florida's Conservation Network* button. Audubon Florida will send regular email alerts about conservation issues with easy links for writing letters to legislators and agency chiefs.

But, since so many of our important conservation issues are local, our chapter needs to develop a Conservation Network for Central Florida. In order to create this network, we will work to provide you all the facts, even a sample email, and the pertinent addresses, so that you can join our collective voice and help save our local community. An example of this kind of call to action was the Shiloh Launch Complex application that most of you received an email from me about (and hopefully had a chance to respond to).

Our plan is to only contact everyone on the email list on issues as big as the Shiloh Launch issue, in other words, hopefully quite rarely. In my next email, I will provide a way to opt in for more frequent conservation emails, stay as a contact for urgent issues only, or else opt out entirely. If more of our membership takes action, we can hold on to our wonderful preserved areas in Central Florida.

Deborah Green, President

A Weekend Field Trip to the ‘Red Hills’ of the Panhandle

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is sponsoring a weekend trip to Tallahassee, FL to explore Tall Timbers Research Station (TTRS) and nearby Birdsong Nature Center (Birdsong) in the ‘Red Hills’ area of the Panhandle.

Arrive Friday, March 28th; enjoy birding and guided tours Saturday at TTRS and Sunday morning at Birdsong; depart Sunday after lunch. Space is limited to 40 people and reservations are required. For the guided field trips contact Teresa: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796 by March 20th for reduced rate; final deadline for registering is March 25th. For lodging at the recommended Cabot Lodge, call (850) 386-7500 by March 14th and mention OAS for special rate; note that a limited number of rooms have been blocked for this event.

Weekend birding activities include a guided ‘wagon’ tour of TTRS. Saturday’s birding guide is Jim Cox, TTRS’ scientist and Vertebrate Ecology Program Director who also promises to provide ‘front row seats’ for banding of Brown-headed Nuthatch, Bachman’s and wintering sparrows, and (optionally) Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. A picnic lunch on the grounds will be followed by guided tours of the historic Beadel House and onsite museum that houses a number of rare specimens.

About nine miles from TTRS across the GA line is Birdsong Nature Center, where naturalist Wilson Baker will be our guide on Sunday morning. Afterwards those who wish may enjoy Birdsong’s mesmerizing bird window before departing for home (bring a lunch if you’d like to eat with the group).

Early bird field trip cost is \$40 for Audubon members, \$55 for non-members and \$15 for youths ages 4-17 accompanied by paid adult (after March 20th please add \$5 each person), which includes admission to TTRS and Birdsong, lunch Saturday and snacks during socials on Friday and Saturday evenings before dinner. For full details including itinerary, Cabot Lodge information, some other hotel, camping options and area dining information, visit OAS’ website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org.

Environmental Colloquium Series Continues—March 21st and April 11th

The series of environmental presentations sponsored by Seminole State College’s Biological Sciences Department continues. All are free and open to the public. For directions, see <http://www.seminolestate.edu/slm/directions>.

March 21st, 12:30–1:30 p.m., Sanford/Lake Mary Campus, Univ. Partnership Bldg., Room 1205,—“Florida-Friendly Landscaping: The Nine Principles” by Taryn Sudol, UF-IFAS Extension

April 11th; 12:30–1:30 p.m., Sanford/Lake Mary Campus, Bldg G, Concert Hall, Room G118—“Celebrating the Wild Side of Florida: Portals into Nature, Culture, and Sense of Place” by Bill Belleville, Environmental Writer & Documentary Filmmaker (www.billbelleville.com).

Sunday, April 13th, Limited Edition Field Trip Fort De Soto Park, Pinellas County

Situated in the mouth of Tampa Bay and surrounded by miles of insanely dense development, this green gem of an island is a target for many migrant songbirds that cross the Gulf of Mexico. April is the peak month in spring and on a good day at Ft. De Soto birders may see hundreds of warblers, buntings, thrushes, grosbeaks, orioles, grosbeaks, etc. Weather is a key factor, however, and some days there may be more birders than birds, but it’ll be fun, either way.

Because it’s a bit of a drive to get there, participants should plan on a long day. Definitely pack a lunch!

This trip is limited to 15 people and has a cost of \$10 per person per trip for members and \$15 per person for non-members. Reservations are required and will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis the week prior to the trip. For trip questions or reservations call Bob Sanders at (407) 454-0542.

Statistics from The Great Backyard Bird Count 2014:

Checklists Submitted: 141,035; Total Species Observed: 4,171; Total Individual Birds Counted: 17,446,010

Photo Contest Early Entry Reminder

Participants in Orange Audubon Society's 2014 (26th Annual) Kit & Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest may enter early (by April 17th, 2014 postmarked by date) for a Free DO OVER if any entries are disqualified. Replacement of disqualified entries is due by the final deadline of May 15th, 2014 (postmarked by date). Check entry forms for complete contest rules: http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org/oas_chertok.html or contact Teresa with questions: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796.

Spring Bird Walks in Mead Botanical Gardens

The spring migration season is right around the corner. To celebrate, Orange Audubon will be holding guided bird walks at Mead Botanical Garden in Winter Park. The walks will be on Saturdays starting April 5th through April 26th. They will begin at 8:00 a.m. and last 2 to 3 hours at a casual pace. Each walk will be led by an experienced birder, is open to the public, and there is no charge. Mead Botanical Garden is located at the intersection of south Denning Drive and Garden Drive two blocks east of Orlando Ave (Hwy. 17-92).

Mead Garden has been a good migration trap, a place for migrating birds to stop for food and rest on their way back north after the Winter. The variety of habitats, wetlands, open water, and an upland area with oaks and tall pines, appeals to a number of bird species. 164 species have been documented in the past several years, including 23 warblers and 6 types of woodpeckers. Barred owls, Red-shouldered and Cooper's hawks have been nesting in Mead Garden. In the spring, many of the birds should be getting into their mating plumage, which could make for a colorful show.

A limited number of loaner binoculars are available. If you need a pair, please come a little early to sign them out and, if necessary, get a quick course on their proper use.

Please join us. The walks last Fall were lots of fun, inspired several people into the world of birding, and introduced many to the "oasis of Nature" that is Mead Botanical Garden. No need to preregister, just show up and have fun. Hope to see you there.

Larry Martin OAS-Mead Liaison: (407) 647-5834 lmartin5@msn.com

Register NOW—Audubon Academy Early Bird Registration Ends March 10th!

Do not miss this opportunity TO SAVE MONEY (Orange Audubon Society has budgeted funds to help defray costs for chapter participants) and TO HAVE A FUN, INSPIRING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE. Registration form, schedule and program are posted on the Audubon Florida website (<http://fl.audubon.org/2014-audubon-academy>).

Do not miss this opportunity to network at this "for the chapters, by the chapters" event dedicated to protecting and conserving Florida's natural resources.

OAS Selects Florida Master Naturalist Program Scholarship Winner

OAS's Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that Sandy Bauerschmidt has been selected as the winner of the \$100 OAS scholarship to help pay tuition for a Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) Core Module. FMNP is an adult education program developed by the University of Florida. The mission of the program is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Florida's natural world. For more information about FMNP see <http://www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu/about/>.

Sandy Bauerschmidt is an OAS member and is also a member of the Florida Native Plant Society, Florida Trails Association and is a frequent volunteer for Friends of the Orlando Wetlands. Sandy has completed two FMNP Core Modules and has begun her third. Since starting her FMNP training she has shared her knowledge and conservation ethic with her friends, family and neighbors. She explained in her application that she had challenged her family members to "Restore One Square Foot of Florida" in their yards in part by using the OAS brochure "Bird- and Butterfly-friendly Plants for Central Florida."

Mary Keim, OAS Scholarship Committee

February Field Trip Report

Twelve attended the OAS field trip to Orlando Wetlands Park on February 22nd despite the rainy weather. The group observed at least 79 bird species including Blue- and Green-winged Teals, American and Least Bitterns, Roseate Spoonbill, Bald Eagle, Purple Gallinule, Caspian Tern, Vermilion Flycatcher, Tree and Barn Swallows, Common Yellowthroat and Savannah Sparrow. Thanks to the experienced birders for helping the less experienced ones find and identify birds.

Other wildlife observed include American Alligator and Eastern Tiger Swallowtail. Wildflowers in bloom included Bulltongue Arrowhead and Smooth Beggarsticks.

One of the wetland cells is now being renovated by a process called de-mucking, which involves the removal of vegetation and organic sediments from the bottom. This is part of the maintenance of the wetland park that treats reclaimed water.

Mary Keim, Field Trip Chair



Orange Audubon Society

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Calendar of Events



Beginner Bird Watching Class. March 8th, 15th, 22nd. Call Bob Sanders at (407) 454 0542.

Audubon Academy. Late registration fee begins March 11th. April 11th–13th, 2014. See page 5.

Genius Drive Workday. Sunday, March 16th, 9:00–11:00 a.m. Contact Teresa: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796.

March Program: Western Hummingbirds that Winter in the Southeast by Fred Dietrich. March 20th, 7:00 p.m. at Harry P. Leu Gardens.

Environmental Colloquium Series. March 21st, April 1st. See page 4.

Field Trip to Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area. March 22nd. See page 2.

OAS Overnight Field Trip to Tall Timbers and Birdsong Nature Center. March 28th–30th. See page 4.

Spring Birdwalks in Mead Botanical Gardens. Saturdays starting April 5th through April 26th. See page 5.

Limited Edition Field Trip to Fort DeSoto Park. April 13th. For trip reservations or questions, call Bob Sanders at (407) 454 0542.

Chertok Wildlife Photo Contest. Early entry and free do-over by April 17th. Final deadline May 15th. See OAS website.