



Least Bittern. Photo: Reinhard Geisler

(C) Reinhard G

### This Month's Program:

**November 17, 2016**

### Nature Photography Tips by Reinhard Geisler

To complement Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) long-running Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest, OAS usually invites one speaker on nature photography each season to delight an array of outdoor enthusiasts while providing pointers to shutterbugs.

With the 2017 Chertok competition now underway (entry deadline: April 20, 2017), OAS member, avid birder, Florida Master Naturalist and nature photographer Reinhard Geisler will present OAS' November 17th program. Reinhard will share tips and showcase some of his extraordinary bird photography. As a Friends of Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) volunteer Reinhard has contributed numerous images featured in *The Birds of Orlando Wetlands Park* publication, *American Birding Association* (ABA) magazine, and *ABA Field Guide to Birds of Florida* (by Bill Pranty). He also teaches workshops to benefit OWP.

Reinhard will show bird photography from his personal portfolio, identify some of Florida's most exciting wildlife, give up secrets on how he captured many favorite shots and share tips for responsible bird photography. The presentation will interest non-photographers who love nature as well as novice and experienced photographers. Join us November 17th at 7 p.m. for a fascinating program. See box below for location. *Brook Rohman, Second Vice President*

Orange Audubon Society programs are free and no reservations are necessary.

Programs are the 3rd Thursday of each month (September–June)  
and all but June start at 7:00 p.m.  
in the Camellia Room at

### Harry P. Leu Gardens

1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando, FL 32803

For map and directions, visit:

[www.leugardens.org/plan/directions/](http://www.leugardens.org/plan/directions/)



### Monthly Field Trip:

**November 19, 2016**

### Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area

The Narcoossee area, southeast of Orlando, was cattle ranch country before the Civil War. Before urbanization, 1800 acres of ranchland were saved by Orange and Osceola Counties. When the Orange County Convention Center and several private developments were built, destroying gopher tortoise habitat, Orange County and the developers were able to "mitigate" by paying towards purchase of this property.

Now called Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area, the property opened to the public in 1995 and is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, in cooperation with Moss Park.



Zebra swallowtail on scrubland goldenaster at Split Oak. Photo: Mary Keim

The massive Split Oak for which the park is named is estimated to be 200 years old. This mitigation area is threatened by plans for the Osceola Expressway, and Orange Audubon is working to protect it.

We will meet at 8 a.m. at the entrance off SR 15 (Narcoossee Road), 4 miles south of SR-417 and 1.5 miles east on Clapp Simms Duda Road.

We will walk about 3 miles. Bring water, lunch, sunscreen, and wear comfortable walking attire. If you have questions, contact me at (407) 647-5834 or [lmartin5@msn.com](mailto:lmartin5@msn.com). Join us! *Larry Martin, Field Trip Chair*



**“Buy the Land, Send It South”— Now Or Neverglades**

I went to Tallahassee in February 2015 for a rally organized by the Legacy Campaign, following up on the 75% Yes vote for Florida’s Water and Land Legacy Amendment in November 2014. At the Senate Natural Resources Committee meeting that day, among the speakers from the public were 8 children, the River Kidz, a group from Martin County. Their beaches had been fouled by excess discharges from the St. Lucie River, which, along with the Caloosahatchee River to the west, shunts water from Lake Okeechobee out to sea.

This was well before January 2016 when, to avoid flooding from El Nino-driven rains, the Army Corps of Engineers began draining billions of gallons of Lake Okeechobee water each day east and west. The term “guacamole” came to be used for the pollution-laden water that wipes out fishing grounds near Stuart and Fort Myers. Toxic algae blooms make people sick and scare away tourists.

The long-known solution to regional water quality problems is to imitate natural flow southward into the Everglades. “Buy the Land, Send It South” was the slogan we heard at the February 2015 rally. Sixteen years ago, the U.S. Congress authorized the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. Proclaimed as a major victory for Everglades conservation and restoration, this plan has been bogged down by bureaucracy over all these years.

This August, incoming Florida Senate President Joe Negron proposed buying 60,000 acres of sugar cane country (former Everglades), mostly in Palm Beach County, to build a reservoir to hold back Lake Okeechobee water. Negron is calling for the state and federal government to split the cost, with each paying \$1.2 billion. The state’s share would come from borrowing the money and paying off the debt with money voters already approved for



NowOrNeverglades Rally at Audubon Assembly 2016.

*Photo: Audubon Florida*

environmental efforts. The Water and Land Legacy Act (2014 Amendment 1), that passed with 75% of the vote, designates using a portion of Florida’s existing real estate taxes to buy land for water conservation and to pay for other environmental uses.

Eric Draper, Executive Director of Audubon Florida, supports this plan, and Audubon Assembly 2016 featured a rally at the NowOrNeverglades bus that is touring Florida to bring awareness. Eric Eikenberg, CEO of The Everglades Foundation, spoke on how urgently action is needed.

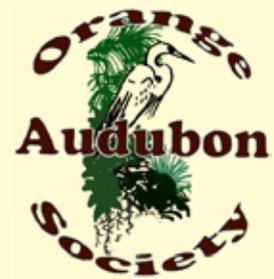
The Legislative session will begin in early March. Once we know who our new representatives in Tallahassee will be, let’s write supporting this statewide cause of keeping our coasts clean and getting more water to the Everglades.

An issue you can act on right away is the threat to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, which includes 145,800 acres of northern Everglades in Palm Beach County.

The South Florida Water Management District threatens to take the land back over an issue of invasive plant control. The [Audubon Action](#) alert from National Audubon makes it easy to send a message to Governor Scott.

If you know Loxahatchee or just love wildlife refuges in general, please act and share. Thank you.

*Deborah Green,  
Conservation Committee*



The purpose and dedication of Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is to promote public understanding of, and an interest in, wildlife and the environment that supports it.

OAS’ education programs foster the recognition of the tangible and intangible values in the remaining natural areas of Florida and the world, and our responsibility for the conservation of the Earth’s natural ecosystems and the services that they provide for the health of the planet.

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The OASis (Orange Audubon Society information source) newsletter is published monthly from September through June. The newsletter is posted on the OAS website and the link e-mailed to OAS members.

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**Protecting Split Oak**

“Build-it, they will come” is the philosophy of the Osceola Expressway Authority (OSX) that wants to build a road through Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area to support proposed housing developments moving eastward.

However, Split Oak is a “mitigation bank” paid for with state and Orange and Osceola county funds; it has provided Gopher Tortoise relocation habitat for the past 22 years. Great expense for prescribed burns, invasive plant removal and Gopher Tortoise relocation has been invested here. Developers and OSX need to understand that flipping mitigation bank lands would be contrary to the purpose of mitigation.

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) and other environmental groups have objected to the expressway going through Split Oak. Engineers now recommend bridging the entire area in the way the Wekiva Parkway is intended to be built. While better than a road going straight through, that solution leaves plenty of problems for land managers.



The Split Oak. Photo: Orange County

OAS has scheduled its November field trip to Split Oak to introduce more people to this interesting place for nature study. We hope you join us on November 19th. If you would like to learn more and potentially write letters in regard to Split Oak or other issues, please contact conservation chair Phyllis Hall at phylliscath814@gmail.com.

Photographers, note that Split Oak is an Orange County Green PLACE property. 1st-3rd Place winning Chertok photo contest entries taken here are eligible for bonus prizes.

*Deborah Green*



Above, Juvenile Ring-billed Gull. This species takes three years to acquire adult plumage. Photo: Mary Keim. Below, Michael Brothers. Photo: Deborah Green

**Gull and Tern Identification**

Birders take note. The largest concentration of gulls in the world congregates at Daytona Beach Shores in late December through late March, said Michael Brothers, director of the Marine Science Center at Ponce Inlet, at the Orange Audubon Society October meeting. A gull and tern expert, Brothers leads pelagic expeditions off Florida and Georgia. He is the Florida regional editor of the journal *North American Birds*.

At this time of year you can see about 100,000 gulls two hours before sunset at the Shores, he said—just before they depart for an evening sleepover on the Atlantic. So bring your binoculars, scope, Sibley book or app, and venture to Florida’s east coast for the challenge of your life—identifying the birds you see.

Fortunately, Florida has only 20 out of 50 worldwide gull species, making your task a bit easier. Or not. To the novice many gulls and terns appear very similar. To experts like Brothers, there are striking differences in their beaks, the length and color of their legs, markings, and size.

Most of the gulls you see are likely to be Laughing and Ring-billed Gulls. Or you could see hundreds of Herring Gulls. But in October, Brothers also saw Franklin Gulls that, although similar in appearance to Laughing Gulls, have darker hoods, pronounced eye arcs and shorter bills.

Occasionally he also has seen as many as 300 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Ponce Inlet. The Lesser Black-backed Gull—with yellow legs and smaller than a Herring Gull—is an Old World species new to Florida. It showed up in the 1920s in Iceland and in the 1970s in Florida. Gull experts are not sure where this population breeds.

Others possible sightings include Glaucous Gull, Nelson’s, Thayer’s, Bonaparte’s, Black-headed and California Gull, and the Kelp Gull (from South America). Interesting rarities include the Slaty-backed Gull, European Herring Gull, and “possibly” Yellow-Legged Gull.

Brothers also briefly reviewed identifiers for Florida’s 15 terns. There are 45 species worldwide. Those you are most likely to see around the Daytona Beach area include the Least Tern, Royal Tern, Sandwich Tern, Forster’s Tern, Common Tern, Caspian Tern (the largest), Cayenne Tern, and Arctic Tern. If you are lucky you may see the incomparable Sooty Tern, which can “fly for five years without landing as it sleeps on the wing.” Or you may see the curious and rare Elegant Tern with the “bad hair cut” or shaggy black mane.

So don’t miss the gull and tern party on Florida’s east coast in December and March. Even if you can’t identify them all, you surely will relish the challenge.

*Linda Carpenter, Publicity Committee*



## Goodbye to Our Dear Friend Bill Partington

William "Bill" Moore Partington, Jr. (February 3, 1928–October 14, 2016)



Cartoon with permission of Rob Smith

Orange Audubon Society mourns the passing of Bill Partington on October 14th. Bill was Assistant Director of the Florida Audubon Society from 1967–71 and a former director and long-time member of Orange Audubon Society (OAS). He helped found the Florida Native Plant Society. Bill was a naturalist, understood ecosystems, and knew how to make things happen to protect the environment. He was the original Central Florida environmentalist.

Bill graduated in Biology from Williams College in Massachusetts in 1950 and was proud that his alma mater awarded him a bicentennial medal in 1995 for environmental career achievement. Bill started out at Pine Jog Environmental Education Center in West Palm Beach and formed the Federated Conservation Council of Palm Beach County, where he worked from 1965–67. The council represented 20 local organizations to protect a large local marsh. He helped win Congressional wilderness designation for lands that include Everglades National Park, and worked to halt poaching of alligators at a time when they were on the verge of extinction.

Bill was a co-founder, with Marjorie Harris Carr, of the non-profit Florida Defenders of the Environment and served as President from 1969–71. This group brought suit against the Cross Florida Barge Canal that was being built by the Army Corps of Engineers. Bill was instrumental in getting President Nixon to halt

construction by Executive Order.

Bill founded and served as Director of the Florida Conservation Foundation, Inc. (FCF) from 1979–90. This Winter Park-based non-profit, that published the *ENFO* newsletter, had as its mission to provide accurate information on an array of environmental controversies. Bill received a Ford Foundation grant to fund scholarly activities in environmental law, the Everglades, Florida water quality, and impacts of waterfront canals. FCF developed the *Guide to Florida Environmental Issues and Informational Sources*, a comprehensive text used by some Environmental Science instructors.

Bill's ironic sense of humor came out in FCF's *Calamity Calendar*, published yearly in the 1990s, with cartoons that poked fun at such things as Florida's gator attacks, hurricanes, and rampant growth.

He was an accomplished pianist. His home landscape in Winter Park was full of natives and other bird and butterfly plants, and he potted up coonties and other natives to share. Some of us learned from Bill to import Spanish moss into our landscapes to help birds and bats. A great photographer, he provided photos as well as articles for the Florida Audubon Society, New York Zoological Society and Wilderness Society magazines, and several wildlife books. Bill was judge of OAS' Chertok Photo Contest several times over the years.

His wonderful presentations for OAS included one on his trip to see the monarchs in Mexico, one on an African wildlife trip and one on a trip to South American Pantanal. Regularly attending OAS programs, he always had a question for the speaker.

Bill founded the Rollins College Environmental Studies Program and a scholarship is named for him. In 2007 Bill made a presentation for OAS, "The People Who Saved Florida" that he would present again at the 2013 Audubon Academy and to other groups. Just five weeks before his death, assisted by his wife, Eloise, he

## It's Lake Eola Fiesta Time!—Please Help November 5-6, 2016

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) annual participation in the Lake Eola Fiesta in the Park Arts and Crafts Festival is November 5th and 6th. This is OAS' biggest outreach event annually, and we need lots of help.

Advanced set-up of tent, tables, etc., on Friday afternoon, November 4th (begin as early as Noon); Saturday and Sunday (-8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. each day) mainly consist of setting up and taking down of merchandise and, the fun part—helping to sell merchandise and talking to people about OAS. The event will also provide a last-minute opportunity to discuss a confusing Amendment 1 on solar energy and explain why a "Vote NO on 1"—choice will benefit the environment, people and their pocketbooks.

We need 3 or 4 people each day just for sales activities. Any time you can contribute would be much appreciated. If you volunteer early, you can have your choice of day and time. With enough volunteers, or volunteers who only wish to work with children, OAS could offer its kids' art table; however, unless we have enough volunteers, we will not be able to offer this fun, free children's activity.

Please contact me to volunteer or if you have questions: [mwilliams@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwilliams@cfl.rr.com) or (407) 644-0796 (eve.). Then mark your calendar and commit to help OAS meet its financial and outreach goals. Thanks. *Teresa Williams, Treasurer*

made the presentation again to the Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. Bill is survived by his wife Eloise, son David, and daughter Susan.

All who knew Bill will miss this remarkable man and great friend to the environment.

*Deborah Green, Loretta Satterthwaite, Bob Stamps, and Teresa Williams*

**Mead Botanical Garden  
GrowVember Plant Sale  
November 5, 2016**

If you missed Backyard Biodiversity Day, here's another chance to buy wildlife-friendly native plants—Mead Botanical Garden's GrowVember Plant Sale, November 5th from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., 1300 S. Denning Dr., Winter Park. The Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society will be selling native plants.



Native Plants for Sale at Mead Botanical Garden.  
Photo courtesy Tarflower Chapter.

**Youth Field Trip  
November 12, 2016**

The second Youth Field Trip of the season is on November 12, 2016 at Central Winds Park, 1000 Central Winds Dr, Winter Springs, FL 32708. The walk starts at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is free and loaner binoculars are available. No reservations are required.



Please take advantage of this opportunity! Turnout for previous walks has been low, and trip leader Brook Rohman plans to put her volunteer time elsewhere, if this trip is also poorly attended. Contact Brook at brookrohman@gmail.com or (407) 921-8008 with your questions.

**October Appreciation**

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) was at several festivals in October. At Wings and Wildflowers in Leesburg OAS's table was manned by Kathy Rigling and Phyllis Hall. At Backyard Biodiversity Day at Mead Botanical Garden, Deborah Green and Jackie and Tom Masterski manned the table, while Mary Keim, Randy Snyder, Larry Martin and Bob Stamps led walks and gave presentations. Thanks all.

**Limited Edition Field Trip to Merritt Island  
National Wildlife Refuge, Titusville  
November 12, 2016**

There's always something going on at [Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge](#) the 140,000-acre refuge near Titusville. At this time of year, we will see a variety of ducks, grebes, American White Pelican, Glossy Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Sora, American Coot, Black Skimmer, gulls, terns and some shorebirds, including American Avocets.

Led by popular birding guide Bob Sanders, Limited Edition Field Trips are limited to 15 people. Cost is \$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. Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617.

**Dragonfly Workshop Follow-up**

On Sunday, October 16th, twelve participants along with our instructors, Randy Snyder and Mary Keim, toured the Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) looking through binoculars for dragonfly species. This was Orange Audubon's first Dragonfly Identification workshop, and those who took it had a great time. Out of the insect order Odonata (Suborder Anisoptera) fly some of nature's most boldly colored, uniquely patterned, gossamer-winged insects on the planet.

We ended the day seeing ten species of "odonates." At first we feared that the only dragonfly at OWP was going to be the incredibly abundant Eastern Pondhawk, but by day's end we had seen Common Green Darner, Four-spotted Pennant, at least one Halloween Pennant, a Hyacinth Glider, Black Saddlebags, Carolina Saddlebags, Regal Darner, Blue Dasher and an Eastern Amberwing.

Mary introduced the five dragonfly families: Darners, Clubtails, Cruisers, Emeralds and Skimmers, and indicated which species were most common in our area. We learned how eye spacing, markings on the wings, and abdomen and coloration on the thorax can assist identification.

Randy told us of the flight patterns and habits: short-low, back and forth flights for certain species and longer distance flights for others. The class learned of the incomplete metamorphosis of the dragonfly and how the nymph can live many months, shedding its skin a dozen times before it emerges from its exuvia to live in its final adult stage lasting about 30 days.

After lunch, our group took a tram tour of the park looking for dragonflies. Even though it poured rain and we all got soaked, it was a glorious day. *Eve Barbour*



Above, Eastern Amberwing on Frog Fruit. Below, a skimmer naiad's shed exoskeleton (exuvia). Photos: Mary Keim

## Fall Mead Botanical Garden Bird Walks

Each visit to Mead Botanical Garden is an adventure, especially during migration. This fall 26 warbler species were spotted, along with Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Veerys and other thrushes, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and various flycatchers, including an out-of-range Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

Scarlet Tanager adult males molt after breeding season to yellow female-like plumage, but with black wings and tail—plumage some of us had not seen.



Male Scarlet Tanager in winter plumage.  
Photo: Andrew Boyle

October 15th was the best of the October bird walks. While people were buying plants and visiting the booths at Backyard Biodiversity Day, our birding group saw twenty warbler species and close to 60 species in all. Highlights included Wilson's, Blackpoll (a rare fall migrant, more common in spring), Nashville, Chestnut-sided, and Cape May warblers.

Orange Audubon Society leads these Saturday bird walks to introduce new people to birding, and all of the trips were a nice mix of newbies and more experienced birders. Renee Thomas lead two of the trips and John Thompton led the final one. Ellen Rocco, Tom Rodriguez, Bob Siculo, Barbara and Larry Taylor, and others were a big help. If you missed the October walks, we'll have more in April. Mead Botanical Garden has interesting birds throughout the year. We are lucky to have this site so accessible. *Larry Martin, Field Trip Chair*

## Audubon Assembly 2016

Every year Audubon Assembly allows leaders of the now 45 chapters in Florida to network and interact with Audubon Florida staff. Conservation priorities for the year are set. The theme of Florida's premier conservation event and conference this year was "One Gulf," and Assembly was held in St. Petersburg. Gulf restoration opportunities made possible by the financial settlements resulting from the Deepwater Horizon disaster present a landmark opportunity for Florida.

Audubon Florida's Executive Director Eric Draper led the proceedings, and National Audubon's David Yarnold was an honored guest. Yarnold spoke about how Florida was a national model for communication among state staff and chapters. I find hearing what other chapters are doing very valuable and appreciate help on different issues from Audubon Florida staff.

## Critical Wildlife Areas

Julie Wraithmell, Deputy Executive Director of Audubon Florida, spoke about the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) [Critical Wildlife Areas](#) program in which rookeries are nominated for special protection. Brian Yablonski of FWC, with whom she worked on reviving a FWC program that had been inactive for 20 years, was honored at Assembly with the Theodore Roosevelt award. At FWC's meeting on November 16th, we are hopeful that the 14 nominated sites will be designated as Critical Wildlife Areas by FWC.

## Conservation Leadership Initiative

Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) at Audubon Assembly 2016 was a great opportunity to recruit college students to join Orange Audubon Society (OAS). This year 87 students applied for the program and only 25 were selected, so they were the cream of the crop! I trust that Gabriel Watts, Andrea Vitiello, and Tulsi Shula from UCF plus Gabbie Buendia from Rollins College will get involved with OAS, which is how we nurture future conservationists. Melissa Gonzalez, who came to OAS through the 2014 CLI and worked with us on the 2014 Florida's Water and Land Legacy Campaign, has been a real asset to our chapter and was one of three past students to take a leadership role in the CLI. Shari Sujka of OAS, David Hartgrove of Halifax River Audubon Society, and Larry Rosen of Kissimmee Valley Audubon joined me and 21 other chapter leaders in being mentors. Make that "co-mentors," as we can learn from our students more about how to attract younger people into Audubon.

## Early Shopping for the Holidays?

Orange Audubon Society will be selling its nature-inspired merchandise (adult and youth t-shirts, tote bags, nest boxes, signs, mugs, books, etc.) at the November 17th meeting. Sales start at 6:30 p.m., so come early, browse and buy! Bring cash or check for quick check-out (PayPal for credit cards is available).



## Amazon Smile

Support Orange Audubon Society while you shop on Amazon! Amazon will donate a small amount—a half percent of the price of eligible purchases—to our chapter whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. The same great products at the same great prices are available and you should not need to change any login credentials. Click here for a [direct link](#). Every little bit helps!



Conservation Leadership Initiative field trip to North Shore Park in St. Petersburg. Photo: Melissa Gonzalez

*Deborah Green*

## North Florida Birding and Botany Field Trips and Wolf Encounter, December 8-11, 2016

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) will lead a weekend trip to the Florida Panhandle's Red Hills area, called one of America's "last great places" by The Nature Conservancy. The weekend includes 4 birding/botany field trips, other natural history activities and a private, hands-on tour at Seacrest Wolf Preserve, Dec 9-11, 2016. Weekend and birding/botany-only participants should arrive Thursday, Dec 8, 2016. Seacrest-only participants should arrive at Seacrest on Friday, Dec 9, 2016 at 11:30 a.m. CST (time zone changes). Field trips at a glance:

- Friday destinations are Torreya State Park for a biologist/botanist-led hike and optional tour of the Gregory House; and Seacrest for a private tour and one-on-one encounters with resident Arctic and Grey wolves and smaller animals including Arctic Fox, Coyote, Raccoons and huggable Skunks.



Sherri Brown cozying up to a Grey Wolf "pup" at Seacrest. Photo: OAS archives

- Saturday destinations are the ancient, longleaf pine forests of Tall Timbers Research Station (TTRS) and privately-owned Greenwood Plantation for birding/botany field trips with Jim Cox, director of TTRS' vertebrate ecology program. Jim will demonstrate bird banding targeting wintering Henslow's and rarer Lincoln's sparrows; provide a tour of the Stoddard Bird Lab with its incredible bird collection and optional pre-sunrise Red-cockaded Woodpecker banding; and share his vast knowledge of TTRS' fire ecology program, and the Red Hills area, home to ~64 federally threatened and endangered plant and animal species.

- Sunday's destination is Birdsong Nature Center for birding and some quietude at its mesmerizing Listening Place and Bird Window. We will have lunch afterwards to cap off our Red Hills sojourn before heading home.

- Early Bird Registration for the entire weekend is just \$80 members/\$95 non-members; the birding and botany-only trips are \$55 members/\$65 non-members and both include guides, field trip fees, park entry fees, 3 lunches and dinner Saturday. The Seacrest-only private tour is \$35 members/\$45 non-members including private tour admission and lunch. After Nov 30, 2016 please add \$5 each for Seacrest-only and \$10 each for other trip registrations. The final registration deadline is Dec 5, 2016 to allow organizers adequate preparation time.

Lodging is first come, first served at TTRS' Walter Lodge, which has 8 private bedrooms. Guests share 5 bathrooms and large open living, dining and kitchen areas. The lodge is offered to OAS participants for a discounted rate of just \$37.50/night plus tax (double occupancy; twin beds) if we fill it each night. Because space is limited, priority will be given to weekend participants as we must fill all three nights. If there is overflow, we will inquire about other TTRS facilities. Primitive camping for tents or campers is available at no charge on grounds near the lodge.

Contact Teresa to reserve field trip spots, a room at Walter Lodge or a spot on the grounds of TTRS for camping under the big trees: (407) 644-0796 or [mwilliams@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwilliams@cfl.rr.com). Alternatively, you may make your own hotel reservation.

### IRA Charitable Rollover

Thanks to a permanent extension of tax law enacted by Congress last year, there is now a special tax-advantaged way to support your favorite charities if you are age 70 1/2 or older—by making Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from your IRAs. The QCD rules generally require that:

- The IRA owner must be at least age 70 1/2 on the date of distribution,
- The maximum dollar amount of a QCD per taxpayer from aggregated IRAs is \$100,000 per year,
- Only distributions from an individual IRA (including a rollover IRA) are eligible, though some exceptions may apply for SEPs and Roth IRAs,
- The distribution must be made directly from the IRA to a public charity, such as Orange Audubon Society, which is described in IRC Section 170(b)(1)(A) and
- The charitable distribution from the IRA must be one that would otherwise have been deductible under IRC Section 170.

If the requirements are met, the benefit of making a QCD is that the distribution may come out of the IRA without any of the tax consequences that would otherwise apply to a withdrawal.

Individuals reading this article should seek advice from their personal tax advisors prior to making an IRA Charitable Rollover as individual circumstances can have a significant impact on whether QCDs are advantageous. Also, contact your IRA administrator as some may place a deadline on requesting these transfers.

*Teresa Williams, Treasurer*

The I-10 at Thomasville Road area will be convenient for meeting the group at TTRS and for dining.

We hope you take advantage of this exceptional opportunity!

*Teresa Williams, Co-organizer*

## Announcing the 29th Annual Chertok Nature Photo Contest

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) announces its 2017 (29th Annual) Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest, themed: *Florida Native Nature*. Competing in this contest will sharpen your photo skills, increase knowledge of Florida's amazing wildlife and wild places and teach valuable ethical field practices.

Eligible photos may not include humans, human artifacts or introduced plant or animal species—subject matter must be native to Florida—and entries must be taken in compliance with the [NANPA code of conduct](#).

The deadline is April 20, 2017 (postmarked by date). Participants will be notified of any disqualified entries and may optionally replace them at no charge by following instructions given when notified. New and bonus prizes in addition to the \$1,200 prize package from OAS and co-sponsor

Colonial Photo & Hobby have been added. Tarflower Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society will add \$100 in NEW cash prizes for 1st-3rd place Youth winners; and photographers in all categories with 1st-3rd place winning images taken on Orange County natural lands (Green PLACES) are eligible for a National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass (\$80 value) as BONUS prizes. Among Orange County's Green PLACES is Split Oak Preserve, the destination for OAS' November 19th field trip where you will find great photographic and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The contest is open to all photographers (members of OAS' board and Chertok contest committee excluded) and there are three skill level competition categories: Youth—for photographers age 17 years or younger by April 20, 2017; Novice—for new and less experienced photo hobbyists; and Advanced Amateur/ Professional—for experienced photographers who have practiced and honed their skills over time. Entry submission details will soon be available. Meanwhile, get outside with your camera and start shooting and preserving Florida's amazing native nature! Contact me at [mwilliams@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwilliams@cfl.rr.com) or (407) 644-0796 if you have questions.

*Teresa Williams, Chair*



I See You - Florida Softshell Turtle. Honorable Mention, Novice category, 2016 Chertok Photo Contest. Photo: Bonnie Lu Vanzant

## Lake Apopka Sightings

Now in November many of the winter birds are already in. Visitors to the [Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive](#) see Gray Catbirds, American Bitterns, Soras, Northern Harriers, American Kestrels, and occasionally Peregrine Falcons, along with the extremely abundant Common Gallinules, Red-winged Blackbirds and wading birds. The Little Blue Herons no longer have their blue and white coloration but are all blue or, if hatched this spring, are white. The ducks are just starting to arrive, with Blue-winged Teal first, joining the resident Mottled Ducks. The Black-bellied Whistling Ducks and Fulvous Whistling-Ducks are always fun to see. Savannah and Swamp Sparrows have arrived along with Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers, House and Marsh Wrens and rarer sparrows and buntings. Get out and see what you can find!

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### GrowVember — Mead Botanical Garden

November 5, 2016  
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

### Lake Eola Fiesta in the Park, Orlando

November 5-6, 2016  
Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

### Limited Edition Field Trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Titusville

November 12, 2016  
Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

### Youth Field Trip, Central Winds Park, Winter Springs

November 12, 2016  
Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

### November Program: Nature Photography Tips - Reinhard Geisler

November 17, 2016  
Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

### November Field Trip: Split Oak Forest Wildlife Management Area

November 19, 2016  
Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

### Florida Panhandle's Red Hills & Seacrest Wolf Preserve Field Trip

December 9-11, 2016  
Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

### Limited Edition Field Trip to Lk. Jesup Conservation Area, Marl Bed Flats Tract

December 18, 2016  
Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

### December Program: Wekiva Bears: A Collar Study Perspective- Don Brouillard

December 15, 2016  
Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

### December Field Trip: Christmas Bird Counts

December 15-January 6, 2016  
Details in December OASis