



Scolding Carolina Wren at Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve. Photo: Mary Keim

Monthly Field Trip:

March 19, 2016

Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve

On Saturday, March 19th, from 8 a.m.–noon Orange Audubon Society (OAS) will visit Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve in Christmas. This 1126-acre Orange County Green Place preserve consists of sandhill, pine flatwoods and cypress domes. We will walk about 4 miles observing plants and animals along the way. For more information about the property, see [this link](#). Photos taken at this location qualify for extra prizes in OAS's Chertok Photo Contest (p.8).

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Preserve parking lot on West Christmas Rd., Christmas, FL 32709, approximately 2.7 miles north of SR 50. Bring birding gear, sun protection, plenty to drink, and lunch for after the hike. There are no facilities. The trip is free, and no registration is required.

If you have questions about the trip, contact us at rsmhk@gmail.com or (407) 851-5416. We hope you join us!

Mary Keim, Field Trip Chair

Spring 2016 Beginners' Bird Watching Class March 5, 12 and 19, 2016

Bob Sanders will teach Beginners' Bird Watching this spring. In addition to the many classes he teaches for Orange Audubon Society, Bob has taught the Elderhostel/Exploritas program "Beautiful Birds of Central Florida" and is an independent birding guide who has escorted U.S., Canadian and European visitors to some of Central Florida's best birding spots.

The class includes an "outdoor" classroom session and a mini-field trip on March 5th at Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) and 2 field sessions on March 12th and 19th at OWP and Lake Jesup; all sessions are 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Goals of the course are to increase knowledge and awareness of North American bird species; go over basic birding principles and bird ID techniques—including bird habitat and anatomy; provide binocular basics (OAS has "loaner" binoculars for use during the class) and tips on using field guides and checklists; and discuss birding ethics.

The class is limited to 20 students and registration is required. Total cost for all three sessions is \$30 for Audubon members, \$45 for non-members and \$10 for children through age 12 with a registered adult. Non-members can join Audubon when registering, per instructions provided. For registration, contact me at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. For questions about the class, contact Bob at (407) 459-5617.

Teresa Williams

This Month's Program:

March 17, 2016

Planting for Wildlife by Mary Keim

Mary Keim and Randy Snyder, long-time Orange Audubon Society (OAS) board members, take a different approach to landscaping from most homeowners. They hear no noise from mowing and blowing, waste no water to maintain poorly chosen plants and use no pesticides or fertilizers that leach into our water bodies. Yet Mary and Randy DO have a home landscape full of interesting and attractive butterflies, birds, and other wildlife. They save money and effort to boot!



Mary Keim admiring a native butterfly plant
Photo: Randy Snyder

Their landscape was one of the most popular on last year's Florida Native Plant and Wildlife-Friendly Yard Tour.

For our March program, Mary will share the couple's landscape strategies: what plants they choose and other ways they create habitat for wildlife within an urban setting. Mary and Randy lead OAS' field trips, teach butterfly identification courses, and are both great wildlife photographers. This program will be well-illustrated as well as information-packed. Join us March 17th at 7 p.m. for a great program. See box at left for location details.

Brook Rohman, Programs

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/



Our Volunteer Chapter



Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is the largest chapter in the Southeast run entirely by volunteers (possibly the largest all-volunteer Audubon chapter in the country). We have an amazing 50-year legacy and an amazing team of volunteers, including board and non-board members. Every month except June through August we offer multiple field trips, classes, events and/or programs. The large Orlando Wetlands Park and Birdapalooza festivals have been run since their inception with OAS as a key partner.

Through our strategic fund-raising efforts and the generous donations of our members, we have been raising money toward building a nature and environmental education center in the Lake Apopka North Shore area. A real Capital Campaign will only start when we are able to specify the exact location for this center, but philanthropies (most notably the Edward E. Haddock Jr. Family Foundation) are beginning to find us!

I encourage you to consider joining the OAS board or a committee. With almost 20 committees, there are many places where we can use your talents and interests. OAS committees include conservation, education, field trip, finance, hospitality, membership, OASis (newsletter), programs, publicity, sanctuary, website, wildlife survey, birdathon, Chertok nature photography contest, silent auction, nature education center, nominating, brochure, climate, and speakers bureau. If you possibly have time, we'll be most appreciative of your stepping up as a volunteer!

Deborah Green, President

Orange Audubon Society Board Elections

At the Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) general meeting in April, we will be electing Officers and new members of the Board of Directors. As with any organization, we need to have a constant flow of "new blood" coming into leadership positions, or we will become stagnant. If you are at all interested in serving on the Board, please consider stepping forward.



See Mom, I Can Fly! - Great Egrets. Honorable Mention, 2014 Chertok Photo Contest. Photo: Gini Henry

Board terms are 3-years, but we have several one-year terms, completing unfinished terms of other board members. These one-year terms are a great way for you to see if this works for you.

You do not need previous experience on a board of directors and we don't expect you to take on any great responsibilities. We will find what your interests are and channel you in that direction. Our new board application clearly spells out expectations.

The slate of nominations for April's election will be announced at the March 17th OAS meeting, so take time now to contact me at skirby1964@gmail.com or (407) 257-7361 or nominating committee members Teresa Chin at tschin@mindspring.com or Victoria Schwartz at victoriaschwartz628@gmail.com. Thanks!

Susan Kirby, Nominating Committee Chair

Conservation Update

The Florida legislative session is winding down. Fortunately Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is part of Audubon Florida (AF), which has effective advocates on staff. Using sound negotiating approaches with key legislators, AF has been successful in improving some of the worst bills that have come up so far in the 2016 legislative session. Get updates through AF's [Audubon Advocate](#).



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 a link is e-mailed to all OAS members.

Address Change or E-Delivery:
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LIKE OAS ON [FACEBOOK](#)

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**2016 Birdapalooza
A Great Success!**

The 4th annual Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival and Birdapalooza on February 6, 2016 was a big hit! Nearly 3,400 entered Magnolia Park in Apopka before rains rolled in by early afternoon. Over 200 people participated in the bus tours on the Lake Apopka North Shore Wildlife Drive led by St Johns River Water Management District and Orange Audubon Society personnel.



Owl Pellet Dissection-Photo: Bob Stamps

Many families came this year and stayed for the owl pellet dissection, kids' walks, bird banding, Ibxex Puppetry, face painting, and kids' art.

The sunrise nature photography hike led by Milton Heiberg had 40 participants. The later photo walk led by Scott Simmons saw an Ash-throated Flycatcher and other rarities. Nature bike rides used bikes lent by Spin City, a cycle shop in Apopka. Thanks to Publicity Chair Danielle Ponsolle, Birdapalooza was one of National Audubon's [5 Audubon Birding Festivals To Hit Up This Winter!](#)



Milton Heiberg's Sunrise Photo Shoot at Birdapalooza
Photo: Celeste Monsour

Birdapalooza Friday

This year in addition to the free Saturday festival, OAS added a Friday Birding Festival with field trips led by well-known birding trip leaders, for a donation toward OAS' Nature and Environmental Education Center fund. We started small with three field trips: an all-day trip covering a wide range of habitats, a morning waterfowl trip, and an afternoon raptor trip. Donating their time to lead the field trips were Michael Brothers, Lorne Malo, Gallus Quigley, Brook Rohman, Bob Sanders, and Andy Wraithmell.



Birdapalooza Friday trip led by Lorne Malo and Andy Wraithmell. Photo: Deborah Green

People from ten states participated! The Lake Apopka North Shore's reputation for birding is spreading!

2016 Orlando Wetlands Festival Is Best Ever!

Mark Sees, Wetlands Manager, City of Orlando Public Works Department and past Orange Audubon Society (OAS) board member, thanked the team that made the 16th annual Orlando Wetlands Festival (OWF) on February 20, 2016 so successful. Mark believes that this was the largest festival to date, with around 6,000 people in attendance. Special thanks go to Randy Snyder for being OAS' liaison to Orlando Wetlands Park and coordinator for guided bird walks and bus rides.

OAS' Big February

Co-sponsoring Birdapalooza and Orlando Wetlands Festival make February Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) busiest month. We provide great nature experiences for families, conduct outreach on conservation issues, garner new members and fundraise by selling nature-inspired merchandise. Thanks go to Maria Zondervan and others from the District, to Loretta Satterthwaite and Bob Stamps for lining up volunteers at Birdapalooza, to Lori Parsons' husband John and son Kyle for constructing a new t-shirt display that shows off 45+ designs and to Brent Mobley whose volunteer time yields OAS \$25 per hour through his employer Microsoft's matching program!



OWF merchandise sales with Wayne Kennedy, Melissa Gonzalez, and Brent Mobley. Photo: Lori Parsons

Everyone Pitched In

Cyndi Kay, Wayne Kennedy, Lori Parsons, Brent Mobley, Loretta Satterthwaite, and Teresa Williams are OAS' nature-oriented merchandise team and did an amazing job at both events. When rains ended Birdapalooza early, Cyndi took the t-shirts home to dry and refold for the OWF event.

Birdapalooza's guided nature walks were led by Mary Keim and Randy Snyder, with kids' walks by Deborah Green and Melissa Gonzalez. Bus trips were led by Brook Rohman, Gallus Quigley and Bob Sanders. Photo walks were led by Milton Heiberg and Scott Simmons, assisted by Michael Kay and Kathy Rigling, respectively. Nature bike rides were led by Bob Stamps, assisted by Melissa Gonzalez and David Marano. Kids' art was led by Dominique Shimizu with son Dominic, Deborah Green and Kathy Rigling, while Phyllis Hall helped Ibxex Puppetry with puppet making. Rick Baird, Linda Carpenter, and Dena Wild did OAS outreach while Michael Kay, Susan and Charlie Kirby, Sue Ledbetter, Gallus Quigley and Becki Smith pointed out birds and other wildlife at the lake's edge. At OWF, Rick Baird, Linda Carpenter, Melissa Gonzalez, Susan and Charlie Kirby and granddaughter Caroline, Dominique Shimizu and son Dominic, and Dena Wild made the kids' art possible and talked with event-goers about conservation.



OWF Bird Banding Station, with Andrew Boyle and Maria Paasch. Photo: Bob Stamps

Sherri Brown, Karen Hamblett, Killian Hiltz, Michael Kay, Mary Keim, Lorne Malo, Larry Martin, Lori and Jerry Mathis, Brook and Brad Rohman, and Becki Smith led walks at OWF, while Sondra Driscoll, Deborah Green, and Bob Stamps led bus rides.

Andrew Boyle, Christine Brown, Richard Poole and Becki Smith did bird banding, along with Susan Angermeier, Lynn Folts, Phyllis Hall, Killian Hiltz, Maria Paasch, and Isaac Smith. Many hands helped with setup and teardown. Thanks to all for amazing teamwork!!

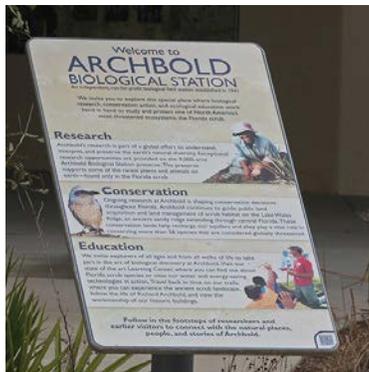
Deborah Green and Teresa Williams

Volunteers Needed: International Flower and Garden Festival

For the 23rd EPCOT International Flower and Garden Festival, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) will be maintaining an information table inside the Festival Pavilion. There remain a few dates between March 4th and May 30th when volunteers are needed to hand out materials and/or answer conservation questions. Shifts are 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Audubon Florida also seeks volunteers to showcase its Purple Martin exhibit. Outdoor shifts are from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and 2 p.m.-6 p.m. In both volunteer opportunities, after your shift you are free to tour EPCOT.

If you are interested in representing OAS at the Festival, please contact me at skirby1964@gmail.com or (407) 440-3448. If you can volunteer for the Purple Martin exhibit, contact Brook Rohman at brookrohman@gmail.com or (407) 921-8008. Susan Kirby, OAS EPCOT coordinator



Audubon Academy

Three 2016 Regional Audubon Academies provide opportunities for networking and leadership training. If you are interested in joining the Orange Audubon Society board (p.2), consider attending one of these one-day events. The South-Central Florida Audubon Academy on March 5th is at Archbold Biological Station. [Archbold](#) is where Florida Scrub-Jay research has been centered, and if you have never visited this interesting place, this is a great opportunity. The Indian River Lagoon Academy on March 19th is in Vero Beach, and the Gulf Coast Academy on April 23rd is in Hillsborough County. For information, please email Deborah Green at sabalpress@mac.com.

In Case You Missed the Program.... Help for Florida's Scrub-Jay

Florida Scrub-Jays are clever, beautiful, cheeky birds known for their lack of timidity. Endemic to Florida, they are found “nowhere else in the world,” according to Maria Zondervan, wildlife biologist and Senior Land Resource Planner with the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Due to excessive development and habitat loss, scrub-jays are now “a federally threatened species.” The birds need dry, scrubby flatwoods on Florida’s “ancient sand dunes” to thrive. Their optimum habitats have scrub oaks only four to six feet high. It is important that there are few tall trees where predators, usually raptors, can hide.

“We have seen a 90 to 95 percent decline in the species since the 1950s,” Zondervan said at the February Orange Audubon Society program. “In 2010 only 10,000 Florida Scrub-Jays remained and they were still declining,” she said. “Eight counties that used to have scrub-jays no longer do. Only 5 counties in Florida have more than 30 families, while another 9 counties have less than 30 families.” To enhance their habitat and preserve the species, prescribed fires, called “burns,” are used to keep these lands “scrubby,” she explained. Land managers also use mechanical restoration to bring down large trees, like sand pines, before burning.

What can we do to aid the plight of our threatened Florida Scrub-Jay?

- Support public land acquisition to prevent destruction of precious scrub habitat, the controlled burning of suitable lands and the mechanical process that rids the land of large sand pines.
- Do not feed scrub-jays, particularly during breeding season February through June when the nestlings must have plenty of soft protein-rich caterpillars to thrive.
- Participate in Audubon’s Jay Watch program. “Citizen Scientists” statewide help count scrub-jays annually from June 15 to July 15. Jay Watchers choose a site to monitor for three days, record what they see, and collect habitat data.

For more information about the Audubon Jay Watch program, e-mail Maria at mzondervan@sjrwm.com.

Linda Carpenter



Maria Zondervan presenting to Orange Audubon Society. Photo: Milton Heiberg

Jays and Crows and Reforestation



Young Blue Jay. Photo: Mary Keim

Corvids, the family of birds that includes jays, crows, ravens, magpies, and nutcrackers, are called *scatter-hoarders*. In a [paper published in the journal *The Condor*](#), a group of U.S. scientists describe how corvids’ unique food-gathering strategies have transformed forests around the world. Corvids roam large territories to scavenge seeds, fruit, and even meat. They store as many morsels as possible to eat later — the “hoard” part. They hide each bit of food in a separate place, occasionally moving it around to prevent other animals from finding it — the “scatter” part. Corvids are incredibly intelligent, with excellent visual memory. Scrub-jays, for example, can remember up to 200 different cache locations at any given time. Biologists have seen how corvids, like Blue Jays, bring in the acorns and other seeds that allow forests to grow back after disturbance. Today environmental scientists are actively using these intelligent birds as part of their reforestation strategies!

Deborah Green and Dena Wild

Birding and Ecotourism at Lake Apopka

On May 1, 2015, the St. Johns River Water Management District opened the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. Have you been on it yet? This Drive traverses eleven gravelly miles of berm roads through the District's 20,000-acre Lake Apopka North Shore. Starting at Lust Road and ending at Jones Road, the Drive is open on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays, from sunrise to one hour before sunset.

In its first eight months, nearly 28,000 visitors enjoyed the Drive, finding it easy to spot birds of prey like Osprey, Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons, along with beautiful wading birds and interesting resident and wintering waterfowl, songbirds, and many other bird groups. Nature photographers are finding the Wildlife Drive more than they could have ever hoped for and are posting great photos on the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive [Facebook page](#).

The Lake Apopka Loop Trail, a biking and hiking trail managed by Orange County and Lake County in cooperation with the District, now goes 15 miles one-way from Magnolia Park to the Green Mountain Scenic Overlook. Although the two Lake County trailheads do not yet have counters, the Magnolia Park trailhead alone had nearly 7,000 visitors in 2015. We hope that Orange County will soon tie this trail into the West Orange Trail and other paths enabling bicyclists to circle the 50-square-mile lake.



Riders on the Lake Apopka Loop Trail
Photo: Bob Stamps

The Drive and Loop Trail give Central Floridians and visitors (ecotourists) the opportunity to experience wide open spaces along the North Shore in areas that were once the lake-bottom and shallow marshes. Lake Apopka's history of drainage of the north shore for farming and subsequent pollution of the lake led to the District's purchase of the farms in the 1990s. Through stopping inputs of fertilizers and strategies like a marsh flow-way system, planting native aquatic vegetation and removing gizzard shad, a bottom feeding fish that accumulates nutrients, the District has made considerable progress in cleaning up Lake Apopka. Water clarity has improved, phosphorus concentrations are trending downward, and submergent native vegetation is re-establishing. Sport fish populations are increasing. Boating on Lake Apopka today is remarkably different from 20 years ago. Kayak launches and boat ramps are in the works.



Visitors at the kiosk on the Loop Trail; Close-up of the kiosk on the Wildlife Drive. Photos: Deborah Green

Birds are attracted to this large lake in the center of the Florida peninsula with its 20,000 acres of adjacent wetlands. In fact, Lake Apopka is one of the most important ornithological sites in Florida, according to Audubon Florida. With more than 360 species recorded, it has the highest identified bird species diversity of any inland site in North America. Through an

Audubon Collaborative Grant, OAS developed 3 copies of an interpretive sign. We have also secured a 2016 grant for additional signage.

To replace the farm economy, Apopka and surrounding cities are trying to build ecotourism. The North Shore is only a 20-40 minute drive from the tourist attractions.

OAS has been on a mission, first to show that local residents will enjoy birding and other wildlife-watching and photography on the North Shore once they have access, and second to show that out-of-town birders will recognize the area as the world class birding site that it is. Four years ago OAS worked with Orange County and many other partners to develop the Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival and Birdapalooza. This festival has introduced over 10,000 Central Floridians to wildlife-watching.

With Birdapalooza already a success, OAS has added a Friday Birding Festival with skilled well-known birding guides. This year paying attendees came from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and 24 Florida cities and towns, bringing in tourism dollars. We are well on our way to showing that wildlife watching is a key component of ecotourism for Lake Apopka.

Deborah Green with Bob Stamps and Loretta Satterthwaite

March Species Highlight:

Mottled Duck



Mottled Duck Female (left) and Male (right).
Photo: Brad Rohman

While many ducks only visit our state during the winter, the Mottled Duck, *Anas fulvigula*, is one that can be found year-round in many spots in Central and South Florida.

This large, stocky duck prefers fresh-water. The Mottled Duck is a Species of Greatest Conservation Need, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

This is due partly to hybridization with their close relative, the Mallard, that is native farther north but that has been introduced into our urban ponds. This hybridization may eventually lead to no "pure" Mottled Ducks being found in Florida. Many of the Mottled Ducks identified in our area are in fact Mallard-Mottled hybrids.

This so called "dabbling" duck feeds on aquatic vegetation and invertebrates. It may also be seen "grazing" on land. They nest on the ground, with the hen incubating 8-12 creamy, greenish-white eggs. The drake and hen are very similar in appearance — they are mottled brown in color with a yellow bill, dark tail and buffy throat. The hen is slightly paler and her bill may appear more orange in color.

The Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive is a good place to see these ducks. They are usually in pairs or small flocks. Get your binoculars and get outdoors! Go and see these beautiful ducks.

Brook Rohman, Education Committee

Youth/Family Photography Workshop, March 19, 2016



Young photographers, clockwise from top left: Mason Theurer stalking a wetland bird, *Photo: Jenny Welch*; Reese Rubio photographing an alligator crossing the road at Orlando Wetlands Park, *Photo: Melissa J. Peacock*; Shaw Frederick photographing a sea turtle, *Photo: Vince Lamb*; J.J. Clark with Mallards, *Photo: Susan Kirby*; Jack Rogers' granddaughter Soleil focusing on you, *Photo: Jack Rogers*.

Young people are taking some great nature photos, as seen in the Youth Category winners of the [Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest](#) in the past few years. To help those who wish to gain some extra skills, award-winning bird and nature photographer, Jack Rogers, will present a Youth/Family Photography Workshop on March 19th from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Orlando Wetlands Park. Young people, age 10-17, must be accompanied by a registered parent or other authorized adult for the entire workshop, to allow one-on-one help. Adults must be accompanied by at least one child. No photographic experience is necessary for children or their adults.

Cost per adult is \$10 (Audubon members) and \$25 (non-members). Cost per child is \$5 with a registered adult. To register contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. If you have questions about the workshop, contact Jack at (407) 341-7709 or jrogers62@cfl.rr.com.

Photographers' Walk Isle of Pine Preserve March 12, 2016

A FREE guided hike to the Isle of Pine in South Orange County will be held on Saturday, March 12th, 8-11 a.m., sponsored by Orange County Environmental Protection Division.

A professional photographer will offer tips on how to create captivating images in the field, and any photos taken at this Green PLACE property are eligible for bonus prizes in the Chertok Photo Contest (p.8).

[Isle of Pine](#) is at 14032 Lacebark Pine Rd., Orlando. For further information or to RSVP, please email OrangetoGreen@ocfl.net.



Pale Meadowbeauty at Isle of Pine
Photo: Mary Keim

Ethos Vegan Kitchen 5% Day to Benefit Orange Audubon Society, March 12, 2016

On Saturday, March 12, 2016, Ethos Vegan Kitchen will be donating 5% of its sales throughout the day to Orange Audubon Society (OAS). Some OAS folks will be meeting at 12:30 p.m. for lunch, and we would love to have you join us. But you can dine in anytime from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. or take out, and 5% of your check will go to our chapter. This is the fourth year that Ethos has selected OAS to benefit from their generous 5% Day. The first year marked its best day ever. We hope to keep breaking records this year. Ethos has a varied and delicious menu, available [on its website](#). The restaurant is located at 601-B South New York Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789, phone (407) 228-3899.



Limited Edition Field Trip, Lake Jesup Conservation Area, Marl Bed Flats Tract, March 26, 2016

Join popular Orange Audubon Society (OAS) field trip leader Bob Sanders on Sunday, March 26th for a Limited Edition Field Trip to the [Lake Jesup Conservation Area](#). This 6000-acre + St. Johns River Water Management District property on the north shore of Lake Jesup is rich in bird life. With oak and palmetto hammock, pasture, and wetlands adjacent to Lake Jesup, past sightings have included American White Pelicans, Bald Eagles, Limpkins, 7 species of shorebirds, Bonaparte's Gulls, Black Skimmers, American Pipits, 6 species of warblers, Blue-headed Vireos, and Eastern Meadowlarks.

Limited Edition Field Trips have a maximum of 15 participants, so that beginners can receive individualized attention. Cost is \$10 per person per trip for OAS 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) 459-5617.

Wildlife-Friendly Yard Tour, April 16, 2016

The second annual Florida Native Plant and Wildlife-Friendly Yard Tour will be Saturday, April 16th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This tour will showcase 5 or 6 yards and one commercial landscape from Winter Park to Longwood that use Florida native plants, are wildlife-friendly, and attractive. The tour is a collaboration between Orange Audubon Society (OAS) and the Cuplet Fern and Tarflower Chapters of the Florida Native Plant Society

Attendees will do their own self-paced tour of these exemplary landscapes. A tour map, information on the individual landscapes, and an annotated plant list will be emailed to ticket purchasers a week before the event. The owners and helpers will be on-site to answer questions, and plants will be labeled.

Tickets are \$5 per person and can be purchased at Wild Birds Unlimited in Winter Springs, at the Tarflower booth at the Leu Gardens Plant Sale March 12th and 13th, and at Tarflower, Cuplet Fern, and OAS meetings. Tickets can also be purchased on the day of the tour at the first of the locations, Dix.Hite + Partners, 150 West Jessup Avenue, Longwood, Florida 32750. If you have any questions or wish to help, please contact Neta Villalobos-Bell at (407) 302-7616.

Connecting Children, Nature and Fun This Summer

For the children in your life, check out these summer nature camps. The first is an overnight camp while the others are day camps. They fill up fast, so don't delay!

Wekiva Youth Camp is a residential nature camp for 3rd through 8th graders, sponsored by the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. Campers stay at Wekiwa Springs State Park in the Youth Camp for a one-week session, of which there are six available during June and July. Kathy Rigling, Orange Audubon Society Board member, is nature director for the Wekiva Youth Camp, and we know it is a great program. As this is a statewide camp, located at the park since 1972, and very popular, only limited spaces are available at this point. Visit [this link](#) or contact camp director John Morand at campwekivadirector@gmail.com.

Raptor Camp at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, Maitland, is two one-week sessions, each day from 9:00 a.m.–2 p.m. The June 13–17 session is for children 6–8 years old. The June 27–July 1 session is for children 9–12 years old. The Center also offers early care from 8–9 a.m. and after care from 2–3 p.m., for a small additional fee. The camp is fun and educational. For information, see [this link](#) or contact Michael Goldman, Education Manager, at (407) 644-0190 ext. 107.

Mead Botanical Garden Young Naturalist Summer Camp, Winter Park, has week-long camp sessions, starting the week of June 13th and ending the week of July 25th. All weeks are open to children ages 5–12. This year sessions for teens, ages 13 and 14, are offered Week 3 (June 27–July 1) and Week 5 (July 18–22). Camp director Stephanie Manor is a Seminole County 5th grade teacher known to us through the *Audubon Adventures* program as a skilled environmental educator. More information is at [this link](#).

Oakland Nature Preserve, Oakland, offers week-long environmental day camps from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., for students in grades 1–8. First and second graders are together for one week, third, fourth & fifth graders together for one week, etc. For information, visit [this link](#), call 407-905-0054 or email education@oakland-naturepreserve.org.

Connecting children, nature and fun is what it's all about!

Chipola Feather Fest, April 15-18, 2016

Orange Audubon Society's Birdapalooza Weekend Festival was aided by our collaboration with the Great Florida Birding Trail, part of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The Second Annual Chipola Feather Fest in the Florida Panhandle is sponsored by FWC, Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida, Jackson County Tourist Development Council, and Chipola College and based out of Citizen's Lodge, 4574 Lodge Drive, Marianna, FL. Andy Wraithmell, Information Specialist for the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail, one of the trip leaders at Birdapalooza Friday, will be leading field trips to Apalachicola National Forest on April 15th and 16th to see Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, a night Drive to Apalachee Wildlife Management Area on April 16th to look for nightjars, owls, and reptiles, a trip on April 17th to look for Horned Larks and on April 23rd a trip to St. George Island, one of Florida's top spring songbird migration hotspots. Orange Audubon has been offered a [registration discount code for festival registration](#), up until March 15th. The code is orange2016. This is an opportunity for some great birding!

Prepare Your Yard for Spring Migrants and Summer Residents

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird is moving north from tropical wintering grounds to Eastern breeding grounds.

The native coral bean or Cherokee bean shrub has red tubular flowers that bloom precisely as these hummingbirds move north in March. Purchase this plant at one of the native plant sales, for example at the Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society booth at the Annual Leu Garden Plant Sale, March 12th & 13th.

Other tubular red-flowered plants like coral honeysuckle, trumpet creeper, tropical sage, and red buckeye are also attractive to hummingbirds.

Another tip is to put Spanish moss on your trees to attract Northern Parula warblers. These beautiful blue-backed yellow-breasted warblers nest in clumps of Spanish moss.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird on Coral Bean.
Photo: Mary Keim

Last month I mentioned putting up wooden nest boxes for the Great Crested Flycatchers that will be migrating back to the area from their tropical wintering grounds.

Learn other tips from Mary Keim's presentation *Planting for Wildlife* (p.1) and from the homeowners on the 2016 Florida Native and Wildlife Friendly Yards Tour on April 16th.

Deborah Green

Get Out Your Cameras! 28th Annual Photo Contest

Florida Native Nature is the theme of Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) 28th Annual Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest. There are three competition categories: *Youth*—for photographers age 17 years or younger by April 21; *Novice*—for new and less experienced photo hobbyists; and *Advanced Amateur/Professional*—for experienced photographers who have practiced and honed their skills over time. The Youth/Family Photography Workshop described on p. 6 supports this contest. See past winners at [this link](#).

The deadline is April 21, 2016 (postmarked by date). *Eligible photos may not include humans, human artifacts or introduced plant or animal species.* Participants will be notified of any ineligible entries and given the option to replace such images at no extra charge. Fillable PDF entry forms are now online at [this link](#).

New this year are bonus prizes for 1st through 3rd place winners photographed at Orange County Green PLACE properties. Green PLACE entries may also be included in Orange County's 2017 nature calendar. A special photo walk will be at Isle of Pine, a Green PLACE (p.6). Information on Green PLACE properties can be found at this [link](#).

Winners will be announced and prizes awarded at OAS' June 16th program. So get outside with your camera and start shooting to capture Florida's amazing native nature! Contact me at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796 if you have questions.



Sandhill Cranes Checking on the Babies.
Honorable Mention, 2010 Chertok Photo Contest.
Photo: Myrna Erler-Bradshaw

Contact me at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com
Teresa Williams, Photo Contest Chair

Flamingo Quest Update

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Flamingo Quest field trip to South Florida on April 9th and 10th filled up quickly. A wait list is being kept and cancellations will be filled through April 2nd. OAS will issue a full refund for cancellations made by March 17th and 50% refund for cancellations made March 18th–24th, after which no refund will be issued. If you didn't get in on this exciting trip for this year, we hope to run it again next year.

Teresa Williams

MARCH/APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring Beginners' Bird Watching Class

March 5, 12 and 19, 2016

Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com

Audubon Academy, Archbold Biological Station

March 5, 2016

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Ethos Vegan Kitchen 5% Day to Benefit Orange

Audubon Society, Winter Park

March 12, 2016

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Photographers' Green PLACE Nature Walk

Isle of Pine Preserve

March 12, 2016

Contact OrangetoGreen@ocfl.net

Monthly Program, Planting for Wildlife by Mary Keim

March 17, 2016

Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

Youth & Family Photographers' Workshop with

Jack Rogers, Orlando Wetlands Park

March 19, 2016

Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com

Monthly Field Trip, Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve

March 19, 2016

Contact Mary at rssmhc@gmail.com or (407) 851-5416

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

March 26, 2016

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Migration Bird Walks, Mead Botanical Garden

April 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30, 2016

Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

Bird-a-thon

April 9, 2016

Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

Overnight Field Trip & Flamingo Quest

April 9-10, 2016

Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com

Florida Native Plant and Wildlife-Friendly Yard Tour

April 16, 2016

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Limited Edition Field Trip, Ft. De Soto Park

April 17, 2016

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Chertok Photo Contest Deadline

April 21, 2016

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

Monthly Program, Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition: Everglades to Okefenokee by Elam Stoltzfus

April 21, 2016

Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

Monthly Field Trip, Rock Springs Run State Reserve

April 23, 2016

Contact Mary at (407) 851-5416

Central Florida Earth Day, Lake Eola

April 23, 2016

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525