



Left, Garden Orbweaver. Photo: Mary Keim. Right, Green Lynx Spider Feeding. 2014 Chertok Photo Contest Honorable Mention, Advanced category. Photo: George Carson

This Month's Program: February 16, 2017

Our Amazing Arachnids: Florida's Spiders and Their Kin by John Serrao

People are fascinated by spiders, scorpions and other arachnids, but not always in a positive way, according to Orange Audubon Society's February speaker John Serrao. To inform and delight us, he will showcase more than 65 spider species. These range from tiny, silvery "dewdrop spiders" that loiter in the webs of big orb-weavers to steal unattended prey, to gigantic fishing spiders that can overpower and eat tree frogs, to all four species of Florida "widows." He will also tell us about scorpions and their bizarre cousins, the whip scorpions and wind scorpions, as well as daddy-long-legs, ticks, and other relatives of spiders.

John is a free-lance naturalist from Pennsylvania, now living in DeLand, who has many photos published in magazines, books and field guides. His career has been devoted to studying nature and interpreting it for the public.

John has promised to bring some live spider specimens for our up-close examination, so this is a program suitable for children (10 and up suggested).

Join us February 16th at 7 p.m. for this interesting program. See box below for location.

Deborah Green, First 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/



Birds of Prey Identification February 5, 2017

Orange Audubon Society will hold its final Birds of Prey Identification Class of the season on the [Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive](#) on Sunday, February 5, 2017 from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Instructor Bob Sanders has taught raptor identification for many years. Before moving to Central Florida, he was co-founder of the Chimney Rock Hawk Watch in Martinsville, New Jersey. No registration is required. Suggested donation is \$5 (Audubon members) or \$10 (non-members). Bob can be reached at (407) 459-5617. See you out there!

Monthly Field Trip: February 18, 2017 Joe Overstreet/Three Lakes

Orange Audubon Society will explore Joe Overstreet Road in Osceola County and nearby Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA). We will be looking for Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Crested Caracara, Bald Eagle, Snail Kite, Sandhill Crane, waders,



Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity trees. Photo: Patrick Craig

waterfowl and songbirds. Bring drinks, snacks, lunch and sunscreen, as there are no stores. Restrooms are also limited. Bring \$6 per vehicle to enter Three Lakes WMA. Meet us at 7:45 a.m. at the Publix parking lot, 3372 Canoe Creek Rd., St. Cloud. If you have any questions, contact me at lmartin5@msn.com or (407) 647-5834. Hope to see you!

Larry Martin, Field Trips Chair

Split Oak Forest Comments Due by February 3rd

Will Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area be split by an extension of the Osceola Parkway? This 1,689-acre property that our members enjoy recreationally was conserved in part with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Gopher Tortoise Mitigation Program funds to offset development impacts to Gopher Tortoises, along with funding from the Florida Community Trust Program, Orange County and Osceola County environmental land acquisition funds. Split Oak is east of Narcoosee Road (SR 15), and is about 2/3 in Orange County and 1/3 in Osceola County. Twenty-two years of restoration efforts have gone into recreating excellent wildlife habitat, a mix of uplands and wetlands.

Split Oak provides the hiker a wilderness experience and the naturalist much to look at. Northern Bobwhite quails are easy to see, and Zebra Swallowtail butterflies breed on several species of pawpaw that grow there. Brown-headed Nuthatches feed in the pines. Florida Scrub-Jays were there in the 1990s and could be reintroduced.

Routing the Osceola Parkway Eastern Extension through Split Oak, possibly elevating the road, is part of the plan that was presented at a public meeting in the Osceola Heritage Park Exhibition Building this January 24th.

More than 165 people attended, and 20 or so made comments or asked questions of the project engineer. Many expressed concern for Split Oak. Others raised issues that would impact people living along the route. Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge & Environmental Center is directly adjacent to the proposed road, and its director and staff are very concerned.

The idea of "mitigating the mitigation area" with new land donated by Deseret Ranch is not acceptable in light of the 22 years of Gopher Tortoise relocation, prescribed burning, invasive plant removal and habitat restoration, as well as passive recreation infrastructure development. Many neighbors and recreational users spoke of the importance of that open space and the wildlife. Nothing was



Zebra Swallow-tailed Butterfly laying eggs on Big Flower Pawpaw. Photo: Mary Keim

said by the project engineer about the tons of fertilizer to be spread on roadsides, nor how new electric generation will be managed.

No one asked whether the overall plan for growth eastward was a good idea in the first place. It seems that development for developers is just accepted by Osceola County, whose Expressway this is. But Orange County may not accept this particular plan. Before long, the Orange County Commission will have to decide whether to accept the part of the plan that crosses into our county. Be alert for this. The Orange County Commissioners may be moved to send the project back to the drawing board if citizens make cogent objections.

The entire proposal of miles of multilane toll roads would carry traffic from proposed new development, mostly in Osceola County and largely in the Deseret Ranch area. The road avoids planned new houses but some older homes will be sacrificed. It is so important to leave room for the planned houses (the reason for the final proposed route of the road), yet so legally difficult to completely devastate the Split Oak wetland area, that a fantastic bridge clear across the Preserve is proposed. But even this will wreak environmental havoc.

How to comment

To add your voice to those objecting to this road or its routing, email jjon3@osceola.org (Mr. Jeffrey Jones, Executive Director of the Osceola County Expressway Authority) on or before *Friday, February 3rd* or mail comments to him at Osceola County, 1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1100, Kissimmee, FL 32741. For further information, email Deborah at sabalpress@mac.com. Thank you!

Pete Dunkelberg, Orange Audubon Society member, with Deborah Green



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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In case you missed it ... Swallow-tailed Kites by Dr. Ken Meyer

Orange Audubon Society was treated to a terrific presentation on January 19th by Dr. Ken Meyer of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) on the amazing Swallow-tailed Kites. In the early 1900s these kites ranged throughout the south but are now rare outside of Florida. ARCI has been monitoring kite populations since 1989. Earlier population estimates were based on little data, and Dr. Meyer cautiously announced that populations were probably 15,000 individuals, more than had been thought. However, there are many threats to this species, so continued monitoring and protection are necessary.

Swallow-tailed Kites nest in the tallest trees, so they can easily fly in and out. Although they favor pines and nest in the summer fire season, they nest above the level where fires generally burn. Males and females migrate separately to South America and then find each other back at the nest tree. In migration the Yucatan is the main stopover, with Cuba the “safety net” when weather is bad. The overwintering destination is Brazil at 30 degrees latitude (about the same as Florida) on family-owned ranchlands. Unfortunately, these formerly diverse ranchlands are being turned into sugarcane and soybean fields.

ARCI learned details of the kite’s migration over the last 6–7 years by capturing and fitting a few kites each year with solar powered satellite transmitters. In recent years tracking data has been shared on [Facebook](#).

Dr. Meyer talked about the large pre-migratory roosts that he has been monitoring for 27 years. The birds put on 25% of their body weight to use as fuel for the long journey feeding and returning to these roosts. The largest, at Fish-Eating Creek, is now up to 4000 birds, and much as birders and photographers would love to see it, it is off limits, which has helped populations grow. He asked us to reinforce protections for the roost near Lake Woodruff, recently under pressure from photographers. Consider [donating to support ARCI’s worthy research](#).

Deborah Green



Above, gull congregation late afternoon on Daytona Beach Shores beach. Photo: Kathy Bargar; Below, dusk with gull experts still scanning for rarities. From left to right, Chris Brown, Michael Brothers, Richard Crossley (hidden) and Amar Ayash. Photo: Deborah Green

Spectacular Gull Fly-In - See It Yourself!

Working in Daytona Beach for years I noticed a line of gulls traveling west from the beach to the Tomoka landfill in the morning and back again to the shore in the late afternoon, but I never realized what a phenomenon we had here. The largest concentration of gulls in the world congregates at Daytona Beach Shores in late December through late March, as Michael Brothers told us in his excellent program this October (summarized by Linda Carpenter in the November *OASis*).

Michael told us that at this time of year you can see over 100,000 gulls at the Shores two hours before sunset—just before they settle for the night on the water offshore. Gulls are intimidating to identify due to the different plumages at different ages (called cycles). So I signed up for Michael’s Gulf Fly-In trip at this year’s Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival. I highly recommend this trip, led not only by Michael, who is director of the Marine Science Center in Ponce Inlet, but also by Amar Ayash, a Chicago area mathematics professor who is the country’s foremost gull expert, along with Chris Brown of Wildside Tours. Among the celebrity experts who had also shown up was Richard Crossley, a Brit who lives in Cape May and is author of the Crossley ID Guides.

During Birdapalooza I had asked Greg Miller for tips on getting ready for this gull trip, and he suggested studying the stages of the four common gulls wintering in this area: Laughing Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull and Black-backed Gull. That was helpful as we saw only these four species plus two individuals of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, one Bonaparte’s Gull, and a probable Thayer’s Gull.

Most common on the beach were Laughing Gulls, and the experts told us that this was the *largest concentration of this species anywhere*. It nests along the east coast in the St. Johns River marshes of Jacksonville into Canada. Next most common were Ring-billed Gulls, the noisiest ones at this time of year. A few large Herring Gulls were scattered among these, mostly in their brown “first cycle” stage. We saw only a handful of Great Black-backed Gulls, similarly colored to Bald Eagles and almost equally large.

Offshore Northern Gannets were diving. Chris Brown who does Seawatch at Cape May and knows his offshore birds, identified several Parasitic Jaegers harassing the gulls. This is known as the best location in Florida to see jaegers from shore. To see this gull fly-in yourself, go to Frank Rendon Park, 2705 S. Atlantic Ave, Daytona Beach Shores between about 4:30 to 6 p.m. Although the sun set behind us to the west, the eastern sky and beach were imbued with a pink glow. This magical experience watching and trying to identify gulls takes one away from the cares of daily life. I highly recommend it. *Deborah Green*

**Great Backyard Bird Count
February 17–20, 2017**

The 20th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is this month! This four-day event, led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, engages birdwatchers of all ages in citizen science, counting birds. Dates are Friday, February 17th through Monday, February 20th. Scientists use GBBC information, along with observations from other citizen science projects, to learn about bird populations, for example: how weather influences populations; how diseases affect birds in different regions; and what differences in bird diversity exist in cities versus suburban, rural, and natural areas. No single scientist or team of scientists could document the distribution of so many species in such a short time as this citizen science effort.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period and enter the numbers on the GBBC website. There is a print option to mail in your observations checklist. However, the GBBC has encouraged online data submission for years and data entry is now integrated with eBird. If you're new to the count, first register online, then enter your checklist. If you already have an eBird account, use that login. Please consider participating in this fun event. See the GBBC website at birdcount.org for more information.



**Youth Field Trip
February 19, 2017**

The third Youth Field Trip of the season is on February 19, 2017 at Maitland Community Park, 1400 Mayo Avenue, Maitland, Florida 32751.

The walk starts at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot. Children must be accompanied adults. Cost is free and loaner binoculars are available. No reservations are required. Please take advantage of this opportunity!

Contact Deborah at sabalpress@mac.com or (407) 637-2525 with your questions.



Sunrise Photo Workshop at Orlando Wetlands Park. Photo: Milton Heiberg

**Sunrise Photo Workshop by Milton Heiberg
February 19, 2017, Orlando Wetlands Park**

Renowned professional photographer and instructor of nature photography Milton Heiberg is teaching a sunrise photo workshop on Sunday, February 19th from 6:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. Milton has written 7 books and numerous articles and teaches nature photography at the Crealdé School of Art.

Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) provides opportunities for beautiful sunrise images. After time in the field, the workshop moves to the OWP education center for a question and answer session, a slide program to emphasize topics covered in the field, and a session on winning images from a judge's perspective. Participants should have a working knowledge of digital SLR photography.

Cost is \$70 (members); \$85 (non-members), and class is limited to 12 participants. Contact me at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796.

Teresa Williams Chertok Photo Contest Chair

**Limited Edition Field Trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
February 26, 2017**

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge in Titusville is the destination for Orange Audubon Society's Limited Edition field trip on February 26, 2017.

Limited Edition field trips are led by popular birding guide Bob Sanders.

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge offers outstanding scenery and very interesting birds, including resident Roseate Spoonbills and Reddish Egrets, other residents and overwintering species. Avocets, other shorebirds and ducks are here at this time of year. Previous trips at this time of year have yielded nearly 70 species.

This trip is limited to 15 people and has a cost of \$10 per person per trip for Audubon members (\$15 per person for non-members). Reservations 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.

Bird-friendly Yards

As you may know, one of National Audubon's and Orange Audubon's goals is to create bird-friendly communities. To that end, one of Orange Audubon Society's activities is to promote bird-friendly yards. Several Orange Audubon members also work toward bird-friendly communities at local parks in addition to our own yards.



Cedar Waxwings at bird bath. Photo: Mary Keim

with bird-friendly, caterpillar-supporting Florida native plants. A few of these are native oaks, black cherry, native plums, longleaf pine, beautyberry, saw palmetto, native blueberries, coral honeysuckle, corkystem passionflower, dune sunflower, and native goldenrods. For more ideas on bird-friendly plants, see [this link](#). For a better understanding of why it is so important for your yard to have native plants, see [Dr. Doug Tallamy's website](#).

Besides feeding birds by fostering native berries and seeds as well as native insects, another way you can help birds is to provide cavities for nesting. Snags (dead trees) are excellent, but in urban areas those are often removed because of proximity to houses and streets. Cavity-nesting birds that can be helped by providing nest boxes include Carolina Wren, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Screech Owl, Tufted Titmouse, Eastern Bluebird, Great Crested Flycatcher and Wood Duck.



Northern Parula in Spanish Moss. Photo: Mary Keim

Get Ready for Migrants

The Great Crested Flycatcher will be arriving from tropical wintering grounds in March. It's time now to put up bird boxes or clean out old ones. Orange Audubon's nest box expert Richard Poole has written an article posted [at this link](#) on the bottom left.

Northern Parula warblers nest in Spanish moss, so if you want to attract these beautiful warblers to your yard, introduce Spanish moss to your yards. This is a tip I learned from our dear friend Bill Partington, and it works.

Deborah Green

The first rule to be bird-friendly is to minimize harm. Stop outdoor pesticide use that could harm birds or their food chains. Many small birds feed on caterpillars, so if you kill caterpillars in your yard you take away a vital food source from them.

A second important step toward a bird-friendly yard is to replace exotics, especially invasive exotics,

Birds also need fresh water. Water features can be as simple as a shallow bowl. Bird baths can also provide you with hours of entertainment watching visiting birds. The rarest visitors such as [Worm-eating Warbler](#) and [Chestnut-sided Warbler](#) come at spring migration (especially April and May) and fall migration (especially September and October). A 7-minute video (no narration) is at [this link](#).

Mary Keim

Beginners' Bird Identification

March 4, 11 & 18, 2017
Orlando Wetlands Park

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Bob Sanders will teach a Beginners' Bird Watching Class this spring to enhance bird identification skills using sight, sound, behavior and other clues. An "outdoor" classroom session and mini-field trip on March 4th at Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) are followed by 2 field sessions on March 11th and 18th at OWP and Lake Jesup, respectively. All sessions are 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The course will teach basic birding principles and ID techniques, including bird habitat and anatomy, use of binoculars ("loaner" binoculars available), field guides and checklists, and birding ethics. If you miss a session, you may catch a make-up session during the fall 2017 class at no additional charge.

Registration is required, limit 20 students. 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 when registering for \$50, which includes registration plus 3-way membership in Orange, National and Florida Audubon societies. New memberships must be paid directly to OAS, as instructed when you register, by contacting Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796. For questions about the class, contact Bob at (407) 459-5617.

Guided Nature/Photo Walk, March 4, 2017

For the 2017 Chertok Photo Contest (p. 8), additional prizes are available if your winning photo is taken on one of [Orange County's Green PLACE properties](#). Orange County Environmental Protection Division offers a guided nature walk led by Beth Jackson, Green PLACE program Environmental Program Supervisor, and Susan Kirby, experienced photographer. The walk is at Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve, 11046 NW Christmas Road, Christmas, FL 32709, a Green PLACE property, on March 4, 2017 from 7:30-9:30 a.m.

Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve covers 1,126 acres and features pine flatwoods, cypress domes and a sandhill community. You will have the opportunity to view a variety of bird, wildlife and wildflower species. Bring your binoculars and cameras to enjoy an early morning hike focusing on native species identification and nature photography. Open to all ages and hiking experience levels. FREE but limited to 30 participants. Visit www.greenplacewalks.eventbrite.com to register. Send questions about the walk to OrangetoGreen@ocfl.net or call (407) 836-1400.



Friday Sunrise Photo Workshop, *Photo: Lynn Marie Folts*; Friday all-day trip led by Gian Basili, Lorne Malo, Greg Miller, Brook Rohman and David Simpson. *Photo: Beverley Sinclair*; Saturday keynote by Greg Miller. *Photos: Steve Shaluta*; Sunday all-day trip with David Simpson and Gallus Quigley (at scopes) and Becki Smith; and Sunday all-day trip with bad weather approaching, Greg Miller and Gallus Quigley in foreground. *Photos: Tina Pruitt*

2017 Birdapalooza Birding Festival – A Lollapalooza!

This was the first year the birding element stretched over three days and there were guided field trips by professional birders. I was glad to co-lead and share my knowledge of local avian fauna with some new and out-of-area birders.

The festival kicked off Thursday evening with a great program on Swallow-tailed Kites by Dr. Ken Meyer. Earliest to rise for Friday field trips were intrepid participants of a sunrise photography and birding trip that began at 5:30 a.m. with leaders Scott Simmons and Lynn Marie Folts. Others left at 7:30 a.m. for an all-day Lake Apopka North Shore field trip and still others spent the morning looking for sparrows at Ferndale Preserve on the western shore of Lake Apopka with Gallus Quigley and Jerry Walker. On Friday afternoon, Ralph Risch and I lead a Florida Scrub-Jay trip at Seminole State Forest, while Lorne Malo and Bob Sanders led a group in search of raptors of the North Shore.

On Friday evening, dinner at the University of Florida Mid-Florida Research and Education Center (MREC) was followed by keynote speaker, Dr. Gian Basili, who presented a wonderful program about the restoration of the North Shore of Lake Apopka. Saturday was the 5th Annual Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival and Birdapalooza at Magnolia Park, and I spent the day helping the Wekiva Basin bird banding station. Dr. Richard Poole brought hand-crafted nestboxes and taught people how to attract cavity-nesting birds to their own backyards.

Later in the evening at the MREC Auditorium, Birdapalooza’s headliner birding guide, Greg Miller of *The Big Year* fame, was the keynote speaker. Greg is a fantastic story-teller and everyone crowded around him before the talk began to hear about his birding adventures. Pizza from Mellow Mushroom was provided by a generous sponsorship from First Green Bank.



The last day of the festival again had early risers on a sunrise photo shoot, led by Bud Horn and Lynn Marie Folts. I co-lead the all-day field trip along with Lorne Malo, Greg Miller, Gallus Quigley, and David Simpson. Notable species seen included a Groove-billed Ani that was visible, though it remained low in the brush due to very high winds, one of the resident Barn Owls, Painted Bunting, American Wigeon and several other waterfowl species with a total of 61 species for the trip. The afternoon Wings Over Florida trip led by Brook Rohman and Lorne Malo also saw a lot, although bad weather was approaching.

Becki Smith

This year participants came from 11 states including Florida, where 36 cities were represented, plus 3 provinces of Canada. These visitors boost sales at local hotels, restaurants and other businesses.

Some comments were: “My first time ever on a birding trip. I can’t believe it took me this long to do this!!!” and “I really appreciated how the key message of the whole event was focused on the successful ongoing restoration of the north shore of Lake Apopka. It left us with a sense of hope that bird habitat can be successfully restored.”

Next year Birdapalooza is scheduled for the same weekend, January 19–21, 2018 with Birdapalooza Saturday on January 20th. Thanks so much to all the trips leaders, speakers, and helpers!

Deborah Green



Above: One of the two Groove-billed Anis, Southwestern birds, that were must-see birds for birding festival participants. *Photo: Steve Shaluta*; Below: The most common ducks were Ring-necked Ducks. *Photo: Kathy Rigling*

Flamingo Quest! April 22, 2017 Time to Register!

American Flamingos were a rare sight in the wild in Florida for a century *until 10 years ago*. At that time the tall pink and black birds showed up on a South Florida Water Management District (District) property south of Lake Okeechobee. They have been appearing annually by late March and disappearing by mid-May. Exactly where they breed is unclear, but two flamingos with leg bands came from Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.



American Flamingos at STA-2. Photo: Reinhard Geisler

American Flamingos like mudflats and shallow brackish coastal or inland lakes. The long-legged wading birds have found these habitats in a restricted property that is one of the District's Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) south of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades Agricultural Area. STAs are designed to filter and clean water flowing south through the Everglades.

The location where the flamingos have been seen within the 15,500-acre STA-2 was kept secret until it was leaked about 2 years ago. Fearing that unregulated visits would disturb the birds, the District asked Audubon Society of the Everglades (ASE) to organize weekend tours of the area. The first year these trips filled immediately and had a long waiting list. Orange Audubon Society (OAS) member Reinhard Geisler (our November speaker) was fortunate enough to hear about the trips and took the wonderful photograph above. Now ASE prefers working with other chapters to organize group trips.

OAS has booked Saturday, April 22, 2017 from noon to 4 p.m. for the 20-mile loop tour into STA-2. Please be aware that there is no guarantee that we will see flamingos, as they do move around. Last year with heavy rains in the winter, water levels in the spring were too high for the flamingos in early April when we went, although flamingos were seen later in April. Fortunately, STA-2, which is managed for seasonal waterfowl and alligator hunts, has many other exciting birds at that time of year, more species reported than any of the other STAs. To help us find great birds, OAS has again booked David Simpson, one of Florida's top birders, who has extensive field experience in South Florida.

We will meet at noon on Saturday, April 22nd at the entrance to STA-2 and carpool into STA-2, four per car. The trip from Orlando is approximately 3 1/2 hours. This can be a day-trip. However, since April 22nd is during spring migration, the trip will include additional birding with David after we leave STA-2 through Sunday about 4 p.m. Possible locations for Saturday afternoon and Sunday birding are Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, Spanish River Park, Snook Island Preserve, Green Cay Nature Center and Wetlands, Wakodahatchee Wetlands and others, to be narrowed down based on reported sightings.

The weekend-field trip fee is \$40 for Audubon members and \$55 for non-Audubon members, covering trip leaders' time, contributions to ASE and to OAS to assist our fund-raising toward a nature center. The Saturday-only field trip fee is \$25 for Audubon members and \$40 for non-Audubon members.

Early registration is recommended as the slots are limited and reservations are required. Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com for space availability and registration and payment instructions. Full payment is needed to confirm your spot. Participants are responsible for meals, transportation, lodging and incidentals. If requested by 10+ registered participants, OAS will try to secure a discounted group lodging rate for Saturday night in the Boca Raton area as we did last year. Think pink!

Deborah Green

Volunteers Needed: International Flower and Garden Festival

For the annual EPCOT International Flower and Garden Festival, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) will again be maintaining an information table inside the festival pavilion. From March through May volunteers are needed to hand out materials and/or answer conservation questions. If you are interested in representing OAS at the Festival, please contact me at skirby1964@gmail.com or (407) 440-3448.

Susan Kirby, OAS EPCOT coordinator.

Ethos 5% Day March 25, 2017

On Saturday, March 25th, Ethos Vegan Kitchen will be donating 5% of its sales throughout the day to Orange Audubon Society (OAS). Simply dine in or take out and 5% of your check will go to our chapter. This is the fifth year that Ethos has selected OAS to benefit from their generous 5% Day.



[Ethos Vegan Kitchen](#) is located at 601-B South New York Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789, phone (407) 228-3899.

Birdapalooza Thanks

For Birdapalooza Saturday many hands made the work fun and successful! All of Orange Audubon's board and many other regular volunteers pitched in. Thanks to Andrew Boyle and his bird banding crew, and Christine Brown and Richard Poole for telling about bird boxes. Thanks to those who did outreach, led walks, bike rides, bus tours, kids art, or helped fund-raise by selling tee-shirts: Rick Baird, Linda Carpenter, Melissa Gonzalez, Deborah Green, Phyllis Hall, Karen Hamblett, Milton Heiberg, Killian Hiltz, Cyndi and Michael Kay, Mary Keim, Wayne Kennedy, Susan and Charlie Kirby, Larry Martin, Jackie and Tom Masterski, Brent Mobley, Lori Parsons, Gallus Quigley, Kathy Rigling, Bob Sanders, Loretta Satterthwaite, Dominique and Dom Shimizu, Scott Simmons, Randy Snyder, Bob Stamps, Dena Wild and Teresa Williams.

Phyllis Hall

Chertok Photo Contest Deadline is April 20th! Get Out and Take Nature Photos!

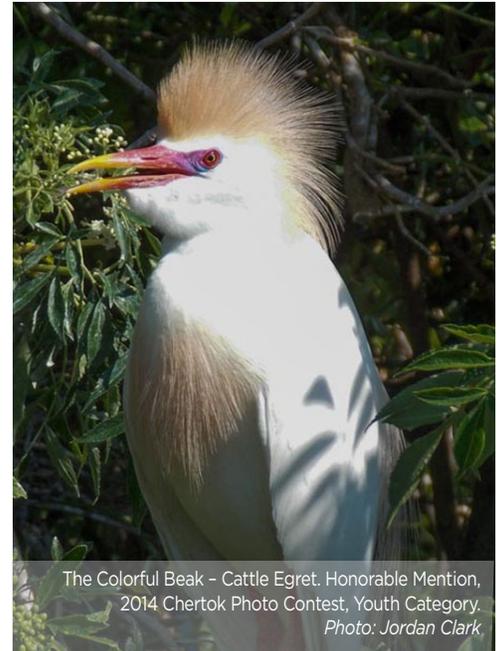
Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) 2017 Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest, is themed: *Florida Native Nature* and has a deadline of April 20, 2017 (postmarked by date). This 29th annual contest is open to all photographers (except members of OAS' board and Chertok contest committee). There are three skill level competition categories: Youth—for photographers age 17 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.

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.

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. The list of Orange County's Green PLACE properties is at [this link](#). Orange County Environmental Protection Division is offering a final Green PLACE photo workshop on March 4th to Savage-Christmas Creek Preserve in Christmas.

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](#). Participants will be notified of any disqualified entries and may optionally replace them at no charge. See contest rules for details. Entry submission details are now on the OAS website. So get outside with your camera and start shooting and preserving Florida's amazing native nature! Contact me at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796 if you have questions.

Teresa Williams, Chertok Photo Contest Chair



The Colorful Beak - Cattle Egret. Honorable Mention,
2014 Chertok Photo Contest, Youth Category.
Photo: Jordan Clark

FEBRUARY/MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Birds of Prey Identification, Lake Apopka

February 5, 2017
Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

February Program: Our Amazing Arachnids: Florida's Spiders and Their Kin - John Serrao

February 16, 2017
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Great Backyard Bird Count

February 17-20, 2017
See birdcount.org

Monthly Field Trip to Joe Overstreet/Lake Kissimmee, Kenansville

February 18, 2017
Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

Sunrise Photo Shoot - Milton Heiberg, Orlando Wetlands Park

February 19, 2017
Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

Youth Field Trip - Maitland Community Park

February 19, 2017
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Limited Edition Field Trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

February 26, 2017
Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Beginner's Bird Identification

March 4, 11 & 18, 2017
Contact Teresa at (407)644-0796

Photographer's Green PLACE Nature Walk Savage Christmas Creek Preserve

March 4, 2017
Contact Nancy at (407) 836-1442.

March Program: If You Plant It, Birds Will Come - Lavon Silvernell

March 16, 2017
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Monthly Field Trip to Green Mountain Overlook, Monteverde

March 18, 2017
Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

Youth Field Trip - Mead Botanical Garden

March 19, 2017
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Limited Edition Field Trip to Ocala National Forest, Paisley

March 25, 2017
Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Ethos Vegan Kitchen, Winter Park 5% Profit Day to benefit Orange Audubon Society

March 25, 2017
Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525