



Fort Mose salt marshes. Audubon Assembly Conservation Leadership Initiative field trip.
Photo: Lindsey Green

This Month's Program:

November 16, 2017

Troubled Waters: Connections and Consequences by Jane Durocher

Water is the lifeblood of Florida's economy. It is essential to our health and quality of life. And it is up to us to determine its future. Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) November 16th program will be presented by Jane Durocher of the [St. Johns Riverkeeper](#), an organization that defends, advocates, and activates others to protect and restore the St. Johns River.

Jane will be showing a new film *Troubled Waters*, which is a call to action for the St. Johns River and for all of Florida's rivers, lakes, springs, and aquifers. Timing is perfect, as Audubon Florida's theme for this year's Audubon Assembly was Water for Florida's Future. As the ecological future of Florida's waters hangs in

the balance, will we continue with the status quo or choose a more sustainable path forward? Join OAS Thursday, November 16, 2017 for a fascinating program. Location details below. *Dena Wild, Programs Chair*



Mirror, Mirror: Pied-billed Grebe. 2017 Chertok Photo Contest Honorable Mention Winner, Novice category. Photo: Debra Harper

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/



November Field Trip:

November 18, 2017

PEAR Park, Leesburg

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) has scheduled its November 18th field trip to the Palatka Environmental and Agricultural Reserve (PEAR) Park - Wildlife Conservation Area in Leesburg.

This 314-acre Lake County park is bordered by the Palatka River on the North and West and was used for University of Florida watermelon and grape research projects before these were transferred to the Mid-Florida Research and Education Center in Apopka. The PEAR Association Inc., a volunteer group, worked with Lake County to find funds for the purchase and restoration of PEAR Park as a wildlife viewing site.

More than 180 bird species have been recorded here, including Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Meadowlark, and Cooper's Hawk.

The address off US 441 is 4800 University Ave., Leesburg, FL 34748.

The trip will start at 8 a.m., and we will be joined by some members of Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society.

Loaner binoculars will be available. If you need to borrow a pair, please arrive a little early to sign them out.

If you have questions, contact me at (407) 647-5834 or lmartin5@msn.com.

Larry Martin, Field Trips Chair

A T-Shirt in Every Stocking!

Orange Audubon Society's nature-inspired adult and youth t-shirts and hoodies, tote bags, signs and mugs will be sold at the November 16th program. Arrive at 6:30 p.m. for an early start to holiday shopping and enjoy first dibs on new and restocked favorite designs. We have bears and tigers and vultures, oh, my! Cash, checks and credit cards accepted.



Audubon Assembly Informs and Inspires

Audubon Florida's Audubon Assembly 2017, this year held in St. Augustine, demonstrated the connection between Florida's citizens and our natural environment, and the event impressed all from Orange Audubon Society (OAS) who attended: Melissa Gonzalez (who was one of the organizers of the Conservation Leadership Initiative), Deborah Green, Mike Jones and me.

The Assembly began with a series of field trips to engage attendees with a variety of Florida habitats, and birders were able to see all manner of wading birds, raptors, and migrants passing through the region. Conservation priorities had been agreed upon in advance in each region and these were read and approved in the closing session. OAS was pleased that one of the Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee priorities is (for the second year): Promote Lake Apopka Restoration, Visitor Access, & New Audubon Nature Center. The other Central Florida Regional Priority was: Monitor and Act on Local & State Government Land Use Decisions Impacting Wildlife Habitat.

With the theme "Water for Florida's Future," Assembly offered an engaging opportunity for attendees to understand the perils affecting Florida's water supply and comprehend means to positively engage with politicians to advance conservation legislation. This year's Assembly encouraged all who attended to understand that although threats to our state's water supply continue and grow year by year, we are part of an organization that is determined to press conservation forward into the future.

Danny Raleigh, OAS Board Member

Conservation Leadership Initiative

The Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) at Audubon Assembly is a unique experience where Audubon brings together two different generations to learn from each other. Audubon leaders want to know how to engage younger generations in conservation issues, and the students want to learn how to immerse themselves in the conservation field. "I had a wonderful time at CLI!" says Jenny Koestler, UCF Junior in Biology. "The mentors were very knowledgeable and insightful. The assembly itself included a lot of information on things individuals can do to protect and conserve Florida's water. I'm very excited to get involved with my local Audubon chapter." I concur. Without CLI, I think I would have barely known about Audubon. It's a great program.

Melissa Gonzalez, OAS Board Member and CLI Co-coordinator

Wekiva Alert! Your Participation Needed

There is a move afoot from development special interests to add an interchange to the Wekiva Parkway. [This last minute scheme](#) threatens the careful compromise of environmental, agricultural, elected and appointed government officials, business interests, and developers that resulted in the 2004 Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act. The proposed new interchange would be built right in an essential recharge area in the Wekiva basin; and would harm springs, forests, wetlands, conservation lands, and wildlife. Making this change would require the legislature's re-opening up the 2004 Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act and since it was such a long effort of compromise, we don't want that to happen. Your Orange Audubon Society (OAS) Conservation Committee has spoken to our regional State House and Senate members, the Orange County Commission, and the City of Apopka to protect our Wekiva basin. The City of Apopka passed a resolution opposing this unneeded and environmentally detrimental interchange.

The Orange County Board of County Commissioners will consider this matter at its November 14, 2017 meeting. We invite EVERYONE to show up before the public comments time at 9:00 a.m. that morning. You don't have to speak if you don't want to - just showing up will let County Commissioners know that you want to protect the Wekiva. For more information on this issue, please contact me at mjonesenvironment@att.net.

Mike Jones, OAS Conservation Chair



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's 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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Water For Florida's Future

“There is but one water in Florida. More so than any state in the US, Florida’s surface water and ground water is so interconnected, it’s almost unrealistic to talk about them as being separated from each other.”

*Jim Gross, Geologist and Executive Director,
Florida Defenders of the Environment*

Water, Water, Everywhere

Audubon Florida’s Conservation Leadership Initiative was a truly unique experience for me as a senior at UCF studying Environmental Science/Biology. I was surrounded by like-minded individuals from all over Florida. The assembly’s theme, *Water for Florida’s Future*, was very fitting because we live in a state surrounded by water on three sides. I learned about the importance of making [small changes in my life to conserve water](#) for future generations and working hard to protect important areas like the wetlands. Wetlands serve as natural barriers against storms and as an area for roughly half of the North American birds to nest or feed. *Lindsey Green*

Water for Many Uses

It’s the same water cycle that children are taught in fourth grade. The amount of water on earth is finite and it just cycles around — evaporation, precipitation, infiltration or runoff, more evaporation, precipitation, ...

Florida’s household water primarily comes from the underground aquifer (which has infiltrated from current and prehistoric rainfall from wetter eras). This water is used to convey waste away from our homes to wastewater treatment plants. Wikipedia’s article on [the History of water supply and sanitation](#) is fascinating. Water to convey away waste was necessary as humans settled close to each other. But water is valuable. Water is finite on earth. So reuse of water, not letting it “go to tide” (run out to sea, where it becomes contaminated with salt), is important.

The other way water can be lost from use, including to replenish wetlands, is if it is allowed to evaporate, for example if overhead irrigation is done during the warm part of the day.

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Aerial view of Orlando Wetlands Park. Top left is St. Johns River. Wheeler Road is to the right. Water enters the park from the Iron Bridge Wastewater Treatment Plant. Photo: City of Orlando

Water Treatment Wetlands Host Wildlife

At Audubon Assembly, City of Orlando was reinforced in its bragging rights for being a pioneer in treating wastewater using recreated marshes in its Orlando Easterly Wetlands, aka Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP), and we couldn’t be more proud.

The Orlando Wetlands Festival used to celebrate the reopening of OWP each early spring, after the original owners who retained hunting rights finished their hunting season. In 2015, [City of Orlando](#) bought back the hunting rights from the original owners, so the park is open year round. After a year’s hiatus, the Orlando Wetlands Festival will be back on February 17, 2018!

I have for many years been one of the naturalist guides on the bus trips at the Orlando Wetlands Festival and am always paired with one of the engineers who explained the workings of the Park in treating wastewater effluent, including Jo Ann Jackson, who with associates at the PBS&J engineering firm did the original design.

The 1200 acres that comprise OWP were once wetlands draining slowly toward the St. Johns River. The original wetlands were “dewatered” in the 1940s by building canals that shunted water into the river. This created more dry land for cattle ranching and a dairy. In 1986, the City of Orlando bought the land and began constructing artificial wetlands for the purpose of filtering 22 million gallons of wastewater from the Iron Bridge (Wastewater) Treatment Plant that serves much of eastern Orlando. Here in these artificial wetlands, just as in natural wetlands, the marsh vegetation takes up excess nutrients. Water with lower nutrient levels eventually flows into the St. Johns River and protects water quality in the river.

At this year’s Audubon Assembly, Alachua Audubon Society President Debra Segal was honored for the design of Sweetwater Wetlands in Gainesville. [Sweetwater Wetlands](#) filters Gainesville’s stormwater and treated wastewater before it reaches Paynes Prairie. She mentioned Orlando Wetlands Park as the pioneer in this technique! From Orlando’s pioneering effort have come many new treatment wetlands, some treating stormwater alone, others both wastewater and stormwater. All are wonderful wildlife viewing sites, among them [Viera Wetlands](#) near Melbourne, [Wakodahatchee](#) and [Green Cay](#) near Boynton Beach (visited on OAS’ first Flamingo Quest trip), [Blue Heron Wetlands](#) in Titusville, and [Circle B Bar Reserve](#) near Lakeland. A new site in St. Johns County that we visited on our field trip with the Conservation Leadership Initiative at Audubon Assembly, [Masters Tract Regional Stormwater Treatment Facility](#), drains 1000 acres of agricultural and residential areas before discharges to Deep Creek and ultimately into the St. Johns River. The Lake Apopka North Shore could be seen as a treatment wetlands too, with restored marshes improving water quality in the lake. *Deborah Green*

**November Bird Highlight:
Wood Stork**

The Wood Stork is Florida's only stork and one of our birds most dependent on abundant wetlands. Distinctive features include black flight feathers, a featherless head, and a wingspan over 5 feet. This species feeds in wetlands on small fish, crayfish, amphibians, and reptiles.

Wood Storks often nest in large colonies. Most nests are built in trees that stand in water. This water often has alligators that protect the storks from predators like raccoons.

These storks nest during our dry season when water traditionally is low and prey is most concentrated in shrunken wetlands. This provides good hunting so the storks can feed their young. But, we have altered the cycle of high and low water in many of Florida's wetlands. When Wood Storks can't find enough food, their young may starve. This species is classified as "Threatened" by the State of Florida and by the federal government.

Mary Keim



Wood Storks. Photos: Mary Keim

It's Lake Eola Fiesta Time!—Please Help November 4-5, 2017

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) annual participation in Orlando's Fall Fiesta in the Park Arts and Crafts Festival in Downtown Orlando takes place November 4-5, 2017. The 2-day event, with expected attendance of 200,000, makes this OAS' biggest fundraising and outreach event annually and we still need help both days between 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

We provide on-the-job training so that you can help display and sell OAS' nature-inspired merchandise and tell festival participants about the awesome conservation and nature education programs, activities and advocacy efforts that your Orange Audubon chapter provides to the Central Florida community.

We need 4 people, minimum, throughout each day to maximize sales and outreach. Four-hour time slots are ideal, but any time you can contribute will be much appreciated.

Please contact me to volunteer or if you have questions: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796. Then mark your calendar and commit to help OAS meet its financial and outreach goals. Thank you!

Teresa Williams, Treasurer

Water for Many Uses, continued

What goes up, comes down. But if water evaporates from an area, it doesn't necessarily come down as precipitation in that area, so it's a net loss. Doppler radar maps, that everyone is familiar with, show how winds move across our state, driving storms to another area or out to sea.

So what can we do? Be as efficient as possible with water use, especially in irrigation. More than half of Florida's water goes to residential irrigation involving automatic sprinkler systems, and this presents a danger to our very wildlife watching spots.

The treated wastewater that goes to Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) has a new purpose, to be reclaimed for use by some new developments in East Orlando. Certainly not all of it is being diverted yet, but potential diversion is a threat to the water for wildlife at OWP.

Water conservation/water use efficiency is a very difficult problem, since people move to Florida and have a vision of green landscapes. They don't know about our scrub vegetation that is evergreen and

highly adapted to conserve water.

And homebuilders find it least expensive to clear all existing vegetation so new vegetation has to be planted and irrigated until establishment.

The concept of irrigation until establishment and choice of water-wise plants are very important, plus mulch to conserve water also helps.

Indoors, the toilet is the biggest water user, and those from the 1950s used 5-7 gallons per flush, more if they had persistent leaks (running toilets). New toilets by law use only 1.6 gallons per flush, and for 10 years or more 1.28 gallon per flush toilets have been sold.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [WaterSense program](#) labels toilets and other water fixtures that meet this standard and perform well.

Audubon Florida has a [Water Ambassadors program](#) with tips [at this link](#). Speak up for water for wildlife whenever and wherever you can. Thanks! *Deborah Green*

Thanks For Your Donations

Thank you to all who have already donated in response to Orange Audubon Society's once-a-year Letter Appeal sent to you in September to request financial support. If you have not already done so, we hope you will consider donating to your local Audubon chapter. You can mail a check to Orange Audubon Society, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, Florida 32794 or use the [link on our website to donate](#). Thanks again for your support.

Mead Botanical Garden GrowVember Plant Sale November 4, 2017

If you missed Backyard Biodiversity Day, here's another chance to buy wildlife-friendly native plants—Mead Botanical Garden's GrowVember Plant Sale, November 4th 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 4, 2017

Orange Audubon Society's first Youth Field Trip of the season is on November 4th at 9:00 a.m. to Mead Botanical Garden, 1500 S. Denning Drive, Winter Park. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Contact leader Melissa Gonzalez at melissagonzalez@knights.ucf.edu or (239) 404-9248.



Split Oak Forest Walks

Orange Audubon Society has been having a lot of fun on a series of Split Oak Forest walks with Friends of Split Oak Forest, and we have brought in a lot of new advocates to speak up to keep an expressway from transecting this public land. On Saturday, November 18th, starting at the main entrance at 9:30 a.m., we will hike to the namesake Split Oak. An upcoming hike will be December 6th, an Escape from Holiday Madness Hike. Meet at the Split Oak trailhead, 12176 Clapp Simms Duda Road, Orlando. Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525 or sabalpress@mac.com if you have questions. Join us!

Polasek Museum Birding

The Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Gardens held a bird walk on October 8, 2017 in conjunction with the museum's fall exhibit, *Captured in Paint: Central Florida in Art*. The walk was led by Larry Martin and enjoyed by the participants.

Bob Sanders Article

Popular birding guide Bob Sanders is also an amusing writer. Check out his piece "Heroes" in the November/December *Bird Watcher's Digest*. It is set during Hurricane Matthew, and the heroes are not people.

Limited Edition Field Trip to Lake Apopka North Shore, Clay Island November 11, 2017

On Saturday, November 11th, popular birding guide Bob Sanders will lead a Limited Edition Field Trip to the Lake Apopka North Shore are known as Clay Island. Due to Hurricane Irma damage, some changes may be necessary, so after registration you will be informed of the details.

Limited Edition Field Trips are limited to 15 people. Cost is \$10 per person per trip for members and \$15 per person per trip for non-members. Required reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis the week prior to the trip. Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617.



Orlando Wetlands Festival is Back!

Mark your calendars for February 17, 2018, and if you wish to volunteer, contact Mary at rsmhk@gmail.com.

2017 Mead Botanical Garden Walks



Female Yellow-winged Warbler, Mead Botanical Garden. Photo: Frank Salmon

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) traditionally organizes bird walks at Mead Botanical Garden, a migration hot spot, every Saturday in October and again in April. The Garden is centrally located, and these walks have brought in many new people to OAS. The walk on October 7th was cancelled due to Hurricane Irma flooding and boardwalk damage in the 48-acre park. The walk on October 14th, simultaneous with Backyard

Biodiversity Day, was good, according to OAS Field Trips Chair and Mead Liaison, Larry Martin. But the walk on October 21, which I was fortunate enough to assist with, was extraordinary! Guided by Larry and Renee Thomas, thirty-four people participated. Among them was Jose Salguero, an ornithologist from Puerto Rico, his wife and 2 sons who were displaced by Hurricane Maria and living with relatives in Apopka. His ten-year-old son, Jordy – already expert in identifying birds by sight and sound – aided guides by flushing birds from areas with tall plants and trees. Over 70 species were identified, including 18 warbler species. Most notable were Golden-winged, Tennessee, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, and Magnolia warblers. An Eastern Gray Squirrel that fell into the creek was quickly grabbed and drowned by an opportunistic rat snake that brought its prey out of the water and ascended about two feet up a tree where it had a nice Saturday meal. Quite a sight! And proof that it's a little jungle out there, even in an urban park like Mead Botanical Garden.

OAS thanks Renee and Bob Sanders for leading this fall's walks, and Bob Siculo and Ellen Rocco for spotting birds and letting us know. With many eyes, including some experts, these OAS-organized walks are great opportunities to bird at Mead Botanic Garden, but you can go on your own. Mead Botanical Garden, 1500 S Denning Dr, Winter Park, FL 32789, is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to dusk. Admission is FREE.
Linda Gaunt, OAS Board Member



Lori Mathis receives a muzzle greeting from a North American Gray Wolf, Seacrest Wolf Preserve. With Brook Rohman.
Photo: Orange Audubon Society

Panhandle Birding and North American Wolf Encounter, December 7-10, 2017

This season's away-from-home trip on Dec 7-10, 2017 takes us back to the Florida Panhandle for birding at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge and two spots in the Red Hills Region: Tall Timbers Research Station (TTRS) and the privately-owned Greenwood Plantation; and Seacrest Wolf Preserve, home to North American Wolves.

Our weekend birding guide, Jim Cox, is a biologist and director of the vertebrate ecology program at TTRS. The weekend includes 4 birding/botany field trips, other natural history indulgences, and a private, hands-on tour at Seacrest Wolf Preserve. Weekend and birding/botany-only participants should arrive Thursday, Dec 7, 2017. Seacrest-only participants should arrive at Seacrest on Friday, Dec 8, 2017. A brief outline follows.

- Thursday: Arrive by 1 p.m. for birding, an introduction and brief history of TTRS, the bird museum collection, a possible Beadel House tour and a stroll down to the bird window as Red-cockaded Woodpeckers return to roost around 5 p.m.
- Friday: Start with early morning birding at TTRS' Woodyard Hammock, a nice beach-magnolia forest, and the boat launch at Lake Iamonia. Afterwards, answer "the call of the wild" by carpooling to Seacrest Wolf Preserve near Chipley, FL, to meet, touch and forever revere Seacrest's Arctic, British Columbian and Grey wolves; and smaller animals like Arctic Fox, Coyote, Raccoons and huggable Skunks. Imagine getting a muzzle greeting from one of this year's Grey Wolf pups or their pack's female alpha, Grey Cloud!
- Saturday: Carpool to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge for birding and other coastal encounters. Targets are wintering ducks and shorebirds and rare sightings.

- Sunday: carpool to Greenwood Plantation in nearby Thomasville, GA, for a birding/botany field trip in pristine, old growth longleaf pine forests. Jim will demonstrate bird banding, targeting wintering Henslow's Sparrows. After lunch an optional stopover at Maclay Gardens is offered before leaving the Red Hills Region for home.

Early Bird Registration for the entire weekend is \$80 Audubon members/\$95 non-members; birding-only trips are \$55/\$70. Both include guides, field trip fees, 3 lunches and 1 dinner prepared at Walter Lodge. The Seacrest-only private tour is \$35/\$45 and includes private tour admission and lunch. A late registration fee of \$10 applies after Nov 30, 2017. Final registration deadline is Dec 4, 2017. Residual profit, if any, will benefit OAS' future nature and environmental education center to be located on or near the Lake Apopka North Shore.

Lodging is first come, first served at TTRS' Walter Lodge, which has 8 private bedrooms (double occupancy; twin beds). Guests share 5 bathrooms and large open living, dining and kitchen areas. The lodge is offered to OAS participants for a discounted rate of \$37.50/night + tax if we fill it each night. Otherwise, the cost is pro-rated. Because space is limited, priority will be given to weekend participants. Free, primitive camping for tents or campers is available on the grounds near the lodge.

Contact me for details and to reserve field trip spots, a room at Walter Lodge or a camping spot under the big trees: (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. Alternatively, you may make your own hotel reservation. Teresa Williams

Genius Drive Nature Preserve Workday November 12, 2017

The 48-acre Genius Drive Nature Preserve in Winter Park needs some maintenance. The Preserve is home to many resident bird species and an important ecological stepping stone for migrants. It is not open to the public, so workdays are a great way to bird there. Workday will be November 12th from 9-11 a.m. To participate, contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796.

Birdapalooza Birding Weekend: Reserve Early

The [Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival & Birdapalooza Birding Festival](#), January 18-21, 2018, is now a weekend event with field trips led by expert birders and keynote talks with dinners. Although the Saturday Birdapalooza family festival at Magnolia Park was cancelled, Orange Audubon Society's birding festival goes on, bigger than ever. Trips start from the McDonald Canal area. Tell your out-of-town family and friends who have wanted to visit that Birdapalooza weekend is a great time. Registration is now open at [this link](#). For further information, contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525 or sabalpress@mac.com.



In Case You Missed the Program...

Nature Photography Tips from a Master

For October's monthly meeting, the charismatic and experienced Reinier Munguia shared an inside look on the art of nature photography. Just in time for the annual Chertok photography competition, guests learned the fundamentals and fine details of capturing breathtaking snapshots of nature and wildlife

Reinier is a well travelled and experienced photographer, regularly making tours of places like the Galapagos, Costa Rica and Mexico, just to name a few. In all his years of experience, he stresses that the first and most important rule of photography is to know how your equipment works! He emphasized that the price and technical caliber of one's camera matters far less than being able to operate it confidently. Secondly, Reinier highlighted patience and respect as important components of engaging in this kind of art. In order to catch the perfect shot, Reinier has found himself waiting hours or returning for multiple days to the same spot. This doesn't seem to bother him too much, however, as he spends this waiting time simply admiring and enjoying his subjects. Holding this kind of curiosity and respect for your subjects is important for catching a good shot as well. The more that you know about your subject, the more likely you are to catch it at the right time doing something amazing. It is a slow process, but an enlightening one that reaps great rewards. This is why, Reinier claims, being a naturalist is an important part of his job. Looking at the environment holistically and taking time to appreciate all the pieces of the environment that can make a great shot is what makes his photos stand out.

On the more technical side, Reinier's technique makes for beautiful photos as well. At any given time, he carries a variety of lenses and a DSLR, sometimes bearing a load of up to 42 pounds. It's important to be diversely equipped and ready to shoot any scene that you may come across. Other equipment that can give shots an extra boost are reflectors, mirrors, tape and a white umbrella. These pieces of equipment allow a photographer to play with lighting and shadows.

In terms of what the camera can do itself, Reinier focused on experimenting with exposure, shutterspeeds and auto focus. Exposure refers to how light and backgrounds are perceived by a camera. When adjusting exposure, it helps to envision images in black and white and identify where the brightest and darkest areas of the scene lie. Reinier recommends referencing histograms to avoid overexposure of subjects. After getting into the habit of analyzing scenes by tones rather than colors, it is best to adjust camera settings manually, setting the aperture yourself. Another feature to play around with is auto focus. Auto focus can be set either to single or continuous. For a moving subject, such as a gliding raptor, it is best to use a continuous auto focus with about 9 focus points to follow the subject as it moves.

Aesthetically, Reinier had a number of tips to share about composition as well. The Rule of Thirds is the golden rule of photography and, according to Reinier, greatly affects how the message of a photo is read. The rule says that if you divide a focus area into three sections, either horizontally or vertically, your subject should lay neatly within one of those thirds. Portraying some kind of guiding line in your shots gives it a dynamic aspect and also helps it stand out. In terms of cropping, Reinier cautioned against selecting frames that are too tight. He also warned that a viewer should not be able to complete the rest of the picture in their mind, as this takes the focus off of the actual subject. Lastly, when deciding whether to take a shot horizontally or vertically, take both! As Reinier stressed multiple times, it is always good to have options and be prepared!

Playing with settings on your camera and thinking artistically about shots is only half the fun. The other half, of course, is being in the field. In addition to patience, Reinier shared that preparation allows you to make the most of your outings. It is always best to shoot early in the morning and wear protection. He encourages people to be over-prepared, bringing more than what they think they will need and doing background research on the subjects they hope to encounter. A surprising pro tip that Reinier shared was to take shots from the car, as certain wildlife can not see us making eye contact with them and they may be more accustomed to vehicles than we realize. Other tips include knowing when your subject will be most active, approaching your subject slowly and non-obtrusively and bringing enough equipment to play with the light.

Reinier's photos are beautiful, genuine and compelling and are used to communicate a story to the general public. It is through these photographs that Reinier hopes to promote appreciation for our environment. The photos surely had an impact on the audience and likely inspired a few to experiment with the art form on their own. No matter what subject captures your heart, just remember to know your equipment and appreciate what you are shooting! For more information on the Chertok photography contest and how to enter (deadline April 19, 2018), visit www.orangeadubonfl.org/oas_chertok.html. To view samples of Reinier's work, go to www.wildstockphotos.com. *Gabbie Buendia, OAS Board Member*



Galapagos Sea Lions, Waved Albatrosses, and Sally Lightfoot Crab. Photos: Reinier Munguia

Announcing the 30th Annual Chertok Nature Photo Contest



Last Words - Reddish Egret. Honorable Mention, Advanced Amateur/ Professional category, 2017 Chertok Photo Contest. Photo: Peter Brannon

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) announces its 2018 (30th 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 19, 2018 (postmarked or electronically submitted 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 this year: in addition to the prize package of \$1,300 from OAS and co-sponsors Colonial Photo & Hobby and Tarflower Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society, plant aficionados from Tarflower will be available as mentors to help participants with plant identification.

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 19, 2018; 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 or (407) 644-0796 if you have questions.

Teresa Williams, OAS' Chertok Photography Contest Chair

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Youth Field Trip, Mead Botanical Garden

November 4, 2017

Contact Melissa (239) 404-9248

Lake Eola Fiesta in the Park, Orlando

November 4-5, 2017

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

Limited Edition Field Trip to Lake Apopka North Shore, Clay Island

November 11, 2017

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Genius Drive Nature Preserve Workday

November 12, 2017

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

November Program: Troubled Waters with Jane Durocher

November 16, 2017

Contact Dena at 4shosha@gmail.com

November Field Trip: PEAR Park, Leesburg

November 18, 2017

Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

November Field Trip: Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area

November 18, 2017

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Florida Panhandle's Red Hills & St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge & Seacrest Wolf Preserve Field Trips

December 7-10, 2017

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

December Field Trip: Christmas Bird Counts

December 15, 2017-January 6, 2018

Details in the December OASis

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

December 17, 2017

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

December Program: Backyard Jewels by Dena Wild

December 21, 2017

Contact Dena at 4shosha@gmail.com