



"The voice of Conservation in Central Florida"

OASIS



*Orange Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society and Audubon of Florida*

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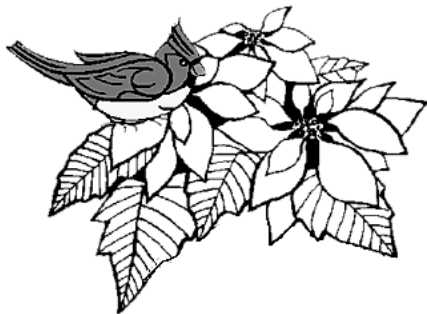
This Month's Program: December 18, 2003 - 7:00pm Brazil's Pantanal by Bill Partington

The Pantanal region of Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay is the world's largest freshwater wetland, 15 times bigger than our Everglades. Last year local naturalist Bill Partington visited the Pantanal as an Earthwatch volunteer. He and other volunteers researched prey items taken by jaguars, among these giant river otters, peccaries, capybaras, rheas, and caimans. Hyacinth macaws (the world's largest parrot) and jabiru storks were among the other animals Bill was able to see in the same area. With excellent slides and his usual entertaining presentation style, Bill will describe the research project, the animals, and measures proposed to protect this unique area. Join us December 18 for a fascinating program.

Deborah Green, Vice President

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

May you and yours have a safe and joyous holiday season.



December Field Trip - Join a Christmas Bird Count

Because of the two Christmas Bird Counts in the immediate area, and several more within just a few hours driving time, we will not have a field trip in December. You are urged to participate in one of these worthwhile experiences.

Wekiva River Basin- Count will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2003. Contact

Fred Hardin 407-323-5678 (Home) or Kathy Hale 407-854-3550 (Work)

Econlockhatchee River Basin-Count will be held on Sunday, December 28, 2003. Contact Lorne Malo 407-349-2536 (Home) or 407-659-4853 (Work) or Randy Kiefner 407-880-2424 (Home).

November Field Trip Report DICK SMITH, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

The weather was fantastic and the birds abundant! Thirty-five bird enthusiasts spent their Saturday morning enjoying the hospitality of the St. Johns River Water Management District at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area. We saw a total of 56 species ranging from the tiny Blue-gray Gnatcatcher all the way up to, and including, about a dozen Bald Eagles. Our thanks to Jim Peterson of SJRWMD, for giving up his Saturday morning, and acting as our host. Zellwood is usually a great place to bird, and it did not dis-

appoint on this day. Although we could not possibly cover all of this birding hot spot in one morning, we saw some wonderful birds.

One of the purposes of these field trips is to attract people to bird watching or to get new people to join us. We had twelve people who had not been on a field trip with us previously. We thank you for coming and hope you will join us in the future. All in all, it was a good day to be in the great outdoors with good birding friends.

Orange Audubon Society meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of every month (Sept - June) at 7:00pm in the Camellia Room at

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

For directions, call 407-246-2620

President's Message LORETTA SATTERTHWAITE, PRESIDENT

I hope you are all having a wonderful holiday season. Doesn't it seem to come faster every year? Some of these cooler days may be the most comfortable for taking nature hikes with your binoculars and field guides. Don't forget to also carry your camera so you can take photographs to enter in the annual Chertok Nature Photography Contest. Whatever you do, get out and enjoy natural Florida.

We spotted a goldfinch at our feeder the weekend before Thanksgiving. Chipping Sparrows have been here for a while now. Keep us informed of your special sightings.

The Governor's Wekiva Coordinating Committee will be meeting Dec. 17 & 18. This committee is scheduled to make its recommendations the first of next year; be sure to attend the meetings if you can. It's a good chance to see many elected officials trying to work together to come up with a solu-

tion to some of our regional problems – water quality, water quantity, rural quality of life, and transportation, to name a few.

The term of the Southeast Regional representative on the National Audubon Board of Directors expires in 2004 and nominations for that position are now being accepted. Deadline for nominations is January 31st. If you would like more information about the requirements, expected duties, etc. regarding this position, please contact me (407/886-2925 or LNS-oas@att.net).

My sincere wishes to each of you for a safe and peaceful holiday season.



Thanks to Volunteers

Sincere thanks are extended to those who helped with OAS' two-day Fiesta in the Park fundraising event on November 1st & 2nd. They were: Joanna and Charles Campanelli, Chris Gandy, Claire Hilliker, L. D. Lambright, Ayme Smith, Laura Streeter and Leesa Sward. Although this was not our best Lake Eola event, it was worth while, and would not have been possible without your help.

Jennifer Potocki and daughter, Amanda, also participated at Lake Eola by donating a percentage of Discovery Toys sales to OAS. We appreciate the support and thoroughly enjoyed getting to better know Jennifer and the other volunteers.

OAS' next volunteer opportunity, Green Gifts Day, takes place December 7th at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey. Call Teresa for information: 407-644-0796. We hope to see you there. Loretta Satterthwaite and Teresa Williams

Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

The Orange Audubon sponsored Outstanding Florida Waters workshop held on November 6th was well attended, with 27 people from several city and county governments, as well as DEP and OAS, learning about the details of the OFW designation. The Environmental Regulatory Commission must make 2 findings to designate a water body an OFW: The water body must have either exceptional recreational or ecological significance, and the environmental, social and economic benefits must outweigh the costs. In OAS's membership area the OFWs are: The Econ Rive system, the Wekiva River, the Butler Chain of Lakes, and the Clermont

Chain of Lakes. The St. Johns River Water Management District have rules that require that discharging into an OFW requires 150% of the regular rules for retention and stormwater treatment. Stormwater treatment must include provisions that protect the upland riparian habitat of an OFW designated water body. Eric Shaw of DEP and Bill Carlie of St. Johns Water Management District did an excellent presentation for our group.

Directly related to an OFW, is a proposed Orange County Comp Plan amendment to change the land use on property directly connected to the Econ River in the Waterford Lakes area. Orange County's Land Planning Agency voted to recommend denial of this proposal that would require filling 17 acres of Class 1 wetlands hydrologically connected to the Big Econ River. The 34 acre site is being purchased for the construction of a super Walmart, at East SR 50 and Avalon Park Blvd. The County Commission is voting on this proposal on December 9th. OAS Board voted to send a letter of opposition to this proposal and will speak against approval on December 9th. Even with proposed mitigation for the filling of the 17 acres of Class 1 wetlands, this proposal could set a precedent for future requests to fill even more valuable wetlands that we find unacceptable. If you can, please let your County Commissioner know this is an unacceptable plan, that does not provide a public benefit that would justify destroy-

ing more of our valuable Class 1 wetlands.

Good News - The restoration plans at Lake Apopka are moving forward again with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Dept. of Justice over the pesticide poisonings of 1998-1999. The first phase of the marsh flow-way has begun that will help remove more phosphorus from the lake water. The 700 acres that has been shallow flooded on the Duda Farms east tract is now being increased by up to 1,000 more acres. The revegetation of these acres has helped provide more bird habitat in that area. Rare birds continue to be sighted on the North Shore, including 3 Grove-billed Ani, sighted on November 13th.

The Audubon of Florida Assembly, held in October, passed several new conservation resolutions that we support. These include resolutions on Land Acquisition, The Green Swamp, The Least Tern, Citizen Science, and Coastal Resources Protection. Several resolutions were revised that continue to be worked on by AOF and chapters include; Climate Change, Everglades Ecosystem, and Fire Management. Orange Audubon has previously specifically worked on issues involving Land Acquisition, Transportation (includes the Wekiva and toll roads issue), Ocklawaha River Restoration, Florida Water Resources, Growth Management. You can read all the resolutions (33 total) and send any comments to Audubon of Florida from their website at: www.audubonofflorida.org.

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

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<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

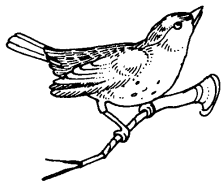
Christmas Bird Count

The National Audubon Society calls upon volunteers everywhere to join with birders across the western hemisphere and participate in Audubon's longest-running winter-time tradition, the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). This year, nearly 2,000 individual counts are scheduled to take place throughout the Americas from December 14, 2003 to January 5, 2004.

This year, Audubon scientists are highlighting the fact that many of the birds to be counted are produced in the great North American boreal forest, which extends from Alaska to Eastern Canada. Boreal species traditionally seen on the CBC that appear to be declining include Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and especially Rusty Blackbird.

The data, 100% volunteer generated, have become a crucial part of the U.S. Government's natural history monitoring database. Articles published in the 103rd CBC issue of *American Birds* helped ornithologists better understand the effects of West Nile virus on regional bird populations. For the full story, visit www.audubon.org.

For local Christmas Bird Counts, see the December Field Trip article on page 1 or consult the Calendar of Events on page 4. Thanks for all your help in collecting this invaluable data!



Miscellaneous Events Need Volunteers

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is asked frequently to participate in events where we could have a simple display (we have a small tabletop tri-fold display), talk about our organization and try to entice new members to join our ranks. Our board of directors is pretty well stretched to the limits with the events to which we have already committed; however, we are losing some valuable opportunities to obtain new members. If you could help by 'working' at one of these events if it is near your neighborhood, please contact me and put your name on a volunteer list. This could enable OAS to participate in more of these events.

As an example, we have been asked to participate in the Dr. Kelly Day at Kelly Park in Apopka on February 21, 2004 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Likewise, we have been asked to participate at the Central Florida Fair's Horticultural display from February 26th through March 7th. If OAS were to set up a display at this latter event, it would remain 'unmanned' much of the time, but since hours are 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. during the week, some of you might be able to devote some time after work or work a couple of hours on the weekends (10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.). Because of a need for volunteers, OAS has not yet committed to either of these opportunities. If you could help at either of them, please contact me (407/886-2925 or LNS-oas@att.net). Please give freely of your time; we can always use the help. Thanks. Loretta Satterthwaite

OAS Board of Directors Changes

In October, OAS' Board of Directors voted unanimously to welcome Mary Keim to the 3-year open seat on the Board, leaving us with a vacant 2-year position.

In November, OAS secretary Terry Godts tendered her resignation. Unfortunately for OAS (in one respect), the Land Acquisition Referendum in Lake County was unanimously approved by the Board of County Commissioners to be placed on the November 2004 ballot. Terry had chaired the Lake County advisory committee on this referendum and now wants to devote her attention to the effort of getting this referendum passed. We thank her for her service to OAS and wish her well in her efforts on this referendum. Any of you who can help her toward this goal, please do so.

However, now OAS needs a secretary whose term will expire in June 2003. The main responsibility of this position is to take the minutes at our board meetings each month, type them up, and submit them to the board at the following meeting. Board meetings precede our monthly programs (except for June) and begin about 5:30 p.m. If you can assist Orange Audubon by volunteering to be secretary or for the open 2-yr. board position, please contact me (407/886-2925 or LNS-oas@att.net) at your earliest convenience. Thanks in advance. Loretta Satterthwaite

Mini Silent Auction Returns for the Holidays

Those who come to enjoy the December 18th program can also enjoy a mini silent auction – just in time for last minute shoppers. Auction items will be displayed so that bidding can begin before, and resume after the program. Rules are the same - highest bidders take great auction items home for the holidays. Bring your friendly competitive spirit, your checkbook and cash ('cause we don't do plastic). Proceeds will benefit the Chertok Nature Photography Contest (CNPC) Endowment Fund. What a fun way to support OAS by helping to build a lasting endowment for CNPC. Thanks for your participation. Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair

Tax Tip for Charitable Giving

As the end of 2003 approaches, those who generously make year-end donations should be aware of timing rules for taking charitable deductions. A donation you wish to deduct in 2003 must be made (i.e., unconditionally delivered) either in cash or property to the charitable organization by December 31st. A check that is mailed to a charity is considered made on the date you mail it. Hence the postmark date determines the time of deductibility. Teresa Williams, Treasurer

Hawk ID Field Trips

The 1st Hawk ID Field Trip was very well attended, and from the e-mails I received, and the comments of the participants, enjoyed by all who were there. The weather was great and the birds of prey plentiful for the 25 birders who took advantage of the opportunity to learn the "holistic" method of bird identification. Bob Sanders really knows hawk ID and is an excellent teacher. A total of nine (9) different species were observed.

The 2nd Hawk ID Field Trip will be held on Saturday, January 10, 2004 at the same location. Meet at the old Bass Sod Farm gate, located 1.1 miles west of U.S. Hwy 441 on Jones Ave., at 9:00 AM. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, folding chairs, water, and your enthusiasm for raptors, and please be on time. Contact Dick Smith 407-834-2197 (Home), 407-257-2197 (Cell) or dick.smith@zepamfg.com if you have questions.

Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair

OAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

VICE PRESIDENT
Leesa Sward 407-677-5374

VICE PRESIDENT (PROGRAMS)
Deborah Green 407-869-7762

SECRETARY
Available

TREASURER
Teresa Williams 407-644-0796

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EDUCATION Deborah Green & Leesa Sward

FIELD TRIPS Dick Smith

FINANCE Milton Heiberg

HOSPITALITY Tom & Ruth Williams

MEMBERSHIP Mike Daley

NEWSLETTER Claire Hilliker

Calendar of Events

December 6, 2003 - Saturday

LANSRA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870
pbowen@sjrwmd.com

December 7, 2003 - Sunday

Give Green Gifts for the Holidays at CBOP;
10am-4pm Katie Warner 407-644-0190
audubonofflorida.org/conservation/cbop.htm

December 14, 2003 - Sunday

Christmas Bird Count - Wekiva River Basin
Fred Hardin 407-323-5678 (H) or Kathy Hale
407-854-3550 (W)

December 18, 2003 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.
OAS Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

December 27, 2003 - Saturday

Hal Scott Regional Preserve & Park and Long
Branch Park Butterfly Survey. Call Randy
Snyder (407-851-5416) or Lorne Malo (407-
349-2536)

December 28, 2003 - Sunday

Christmas Bird Count - Econ River Basin.
Lorne Malo 407-349-2536 (H) or 407-659-
4853 (W) or Randy Kiefner 407-880-2424 (H)

January 10, 2004 - Saturday

Field Trip - Birds of Prey ID @ LANSRA
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

January 15, 2004 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens. OAS
Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

January 17-19, 2004 - Sat-Mon

Everglades BirdFest - Everglades Nat'l Park
Broward Audubon Society 954-776-5585
www.browardaudubon.org/birdfest

February 13-16, 2004 - Fri-Mon

Great Backyard Bird Count
<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

February 28, 2004 - Saturday

Orlando Wetlands Park Festival; 9am-3pm.
Mark Sees 407-568-1706

April 2-4, 2004 - Fri-Sun

Big "O" Birding Festival; Lake Okeechobee FL
www.bigbirdingfestival.com

Important Audubon Election Under Way in the Southeast Election Region

Nominations are now open for the Chapter-selected candidate from the Southeast Election Region to the National Audubon Society Board of Directors. Any Chapter in the Southeast Region may nominate one candidate for the Board this fall and winter. The election will be held in the spring. Nominees should be willing and able to:

- Help set overall national policies.
- Articulate the issues and concerns of our region.
- Participate in fund raising, and maintain the fiscal integrity of National Audubon Society.
- Attend 3 Board meetings per year, each 3 days in length.
- Fill the position for the next three years, beginning December 2004.

Contact a Chapter officer with your suggestions.

The nominations from your Chapter should be sent to Chapter Services Office by January 31, 2004

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