



This Month's Program: December 15, 2022 on YouTube LIVE Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park by Catie Welch



The Kissimmee Prairie Preserve is the largest remaining stretch of wild prairie in Florida, a breathtaking expanse of infinite grassland. Called a "land of fire and floods," Florida's dry prairie is a complex ecosystem.

From the critically endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrow to Crested Caracara to Burrowing Owl, the wide-open landscapes allow birders and photographers opportunities to survey an astounding biodiversity and encounter rare birds, butterflies and plants.

Being so far from bright city lights also makes the Kissimmee Prairie one of the last remaining places in Florida where you can see the full beauty of the night sky. In 2016, Kissimmee Prairie Preserve was recognized as Florida's first Dark Sky Park by the International Dark Sky Association.

Orange Audubon Society's December 15th program will be on YouTube, since Leu Gardens is closed for holiday events. Our speaker Catie Welch has been a park biologist at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve since 2019, but her love of this park and its unique ecosystem began years earlier when she did sparrow surveys there after completing her biology degree. Catie will share how the preserve's wildlife is managed, including prescribed fire as a tool for restoration and renewal. On YouTube, put Orange Audubon Society in the search field, and at 7 p.m. December 15th, the program will be viewable. Join us!

Paula Duenas, Programs Chair

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

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

Harry P. Leu Gardens

in the Camellia Room at 1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando, FL 32803

For map and directions, visit:

www.leugardens.org/plan/directions/



Christmas Bird Counts December 14, 2022 through January 5, 2023

The longest-running citizen science survey in the world is the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC), now in its 123rd year. Volunteer counters in more than 2,100 locations across the Western Hemisphere track the health of bird populations at a scale that professional scientists alone could never accomplish. A 22-minute video on how you can get involved is posted on [Orange Audubon Society's YouTube channel at this link](#). For dates and contacts for the local CBCs, see this OAS*is* issue, page 8

Young Birders Club

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) hosted a field trip for the Florida Young Birders Club on November 13th at Orlando Wetlands Park, and we had a wonderful time! Club members from around the state were able to meet in person and spend time birding at one of Central Florida's best birding hotspots.

It was amazing to see how much skill these young birders have attained through careful practice and studying field guides. Highlights were seeing a Red-shouldered Hawk steal a frog from an American Bittern, a light morph Short-tailed Hawk soar over, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo near the picnic area and a flyover of a flock of Lesser Scaup trailed by a Redhead. An amazingly sharp spot by Blair and Alex was of a Cassin's Kingbird.

The OAS Young Birders Club joins the Florida Young Birders Club on monthly zoom programs on the third Saturday of each month. The program on December 17th will feature Heather Levy on secrets of the elusive Black Rail.

The next Young Birders Club field trip will be February 5th to Lyonia Preserve to observe Florida Scrub-Jays and other scrub inhabitants, led by Sherri Brown and myself.

To register for the February 5th field trip or the monthly Zoom program, please email riglingkathy@gmail.com.

Kathy Rigling



Orange Audubon Society's Big Year

This year-end recap comes with hopes that members of our community have not experienced damage from this season's hurricanes and are in good health and surviving economically.

Since our founding in 1966, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) has worked to be "the voice of conservation in Central Florida." With Central Florida consistently *ground zero* for land clearing and development, we have real challenges. Our volunteers give their personal time because we believe in OAS' mission.

2022 started off with the hiring of OAS' first employee since Myrt Kennedy was paid to send out print newsletters in the 1970s. OAS' part-time Education Coordinator (retired teacher) Kathy Rigling gets out into the schools (see p. 3). Kathy's programs—and the Young Birders Club she started with Susan Thome-Barrett—contributed to OAS' winning Audubon Florida's Chapter of the Year.

I am proud that OAS has continued to fulfill our mission of "Connecting People with Nature" throughout the pandemic, both virtually and in person. Having started our [Zoom Bird Chats](#) in August 2020, OAS has nearly 80 videos posted on its [YouTube Channel](#) and over 600 subscribers.

Using masks and other COVID precautions, OAS restarted field trips in fall 2020. Our Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive (LAWD) Ambassador Program started in July 2020, just as the St. Johns River Water Management District reopened LAWD. Getting out on the Drive gave families something wonderful to do during the pandemic shutdown.

Our 7th annual NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL was a big success, back to pre-pandemic attendance levels with over 300 attendees and participants from 18 states and Canada.

OAS has returned to in-person programs at Leu Gardens (except this month when the program is online). It's great to see those who come out on the 3rd Thursday.

And we now enter the season of our Chertok Photo Contest, in its 35th year.

Thank you for being a part of our chapter and community! I wish you a wonderful holiday season.

Deborah Green, OAS President



Above, OAS President Deborah Green enjoys an honored place in the 2022 Apopka Christmas Parade put on by Foliage Sertoma Club. The club awarded Deborah its 2022 Service to Mankind Award in April for her work to maintain public access to the Lake Apopka North Shore and presented a \$250 check to Orange Audubon Society. *Photo: Bobbie Dougherty.* Below, OAS board members who were present at the November 15th meeting prepare to enjoy a cake celebrating OAS' Chapter of the Year award. *Photo: OAS.*

Announcing the 2023 Photo Contest

Deadline: April 20, 2023

It's time to get out and start photographing nature! Orange Audubon Society's 2023 (35th Annual) Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest was created to promote interest and concern for preserving the native fauna and flora of Florida and enhance enjoyment of Florida's natural wonders through photography.

There are three contest divisions: Novice, Advanced and Youth (open to photographers 17 years of age or younger, as of the entry deadline).

To be eligible, subject matter must be native to Florida, images must not contain human components and must have been taken while complying with [NANPA ethical field practices](#). Please watch for prize details and other entry requirements to be posted soon and meantime start shooting and preserving Florida's natural wonders. If you have questions, contact (407) 718-1977 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.

Teresa Williams, Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest Chair



Orange Audubon Society (OAS) mission: To promote public understanding of, and an interest in, wildlife and the environment that supports it; 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.

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The OAS*is* (Orange Audubon Society information source) newsletter is published monthly, September–June, and posted on the OAS website. A link announcing new issues is e-mailed to subscribers.

Never miss out on OAS happenings. Add or update your email address by contacting newsletter@orangeaudubonfl.org.

For other membership information, contact: membership@orangeaudubonfl.org

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New CLI Cohort

Audubon Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) program, pairs college students with chapter leaders. Thanks to some generous donors from the National Audubon Society board, the program has a full-time staffer, Kristen Kosik. As publicity has improved, the CLI program has a growing number of applicants, so the 25 selected from colleges around the state are "cream of the crop." Linda Gaunt, Kathy Rigling, Susan Thome-Barrett and I have volunteered and been assigned students for 2022-23. The term for the relationship is "co-mentors," because both parties learn from each other.



Top, Audubon Center for Birds of Prey Clinic backstage tour. Bottom, CLI students open their new binoculars. Photos: Deborah Green

In November, we participated with the students in a visit to the Wekiva Basin Bird Banding Station at Lake Lotus Park, Altamonte Springs, and to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey (CBOP), Maitland. In addition to CBOP staff, Center volunteer and past CLI student Jenny Bouchenot showed us some of her favorite raptors. Our backstage tour greatly impressed us all as to what CBOP does.

The funds were available this year to buy binoculars for the current CLI students. The students were extremely excited to receive the binoculars, We look forward to being co-mentors with these students and involving them in our activities in the coming year.

Deborah Green



Photographing the sunset on Creatures of the Night trip. Photo: Charles Guthrie

Creatures of the Night

On November 19th, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) took a trailer tram ride around Orlando Wetlands Park led by park volunteers. Sunset, the return to the roost of wading birds, alligators with eye shine and the night sounds were spectacular. If you missed this year, watch for the opportunity next year.

LAWD Ambassadors Appreciated by District

The Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive (LAWD) Ambassador Program is an Orange Audubon Society program in coordination with the St. Johns River Water Management District. By volunteering in two shifts from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday, the Ambassadors help keep the large number of LAWD visitors touring without incident.

In appreciation of our service, the District land managers gave us an eco-buggy tour of the Western side of the North Shore in November.

Since some of our Ambassadors have been serving since July 2020, we could use some new volunteers. Email volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org to find out more. Requirement: That you know and love LAWD and wish to share. *Deborah Green*



Ecobuggy Tour for LAWD Ambassadors. Photo: OAS

Education Coordinator Update

In November Orange Audubon Society (OAS) had more opportunities to interact with the community and local school children. On November 7th, I presented to the Wild and Free homeschool group at Mead Botanical Gardens with interactive games to help students understand bird characteristics. Students practiced identification skills on our bird walk. The students loved watching a Ruby-throated Hummingbird feeding on flowers.

On November 8th, Deborah Green and I presented on Plants for Birds at the Lakes and Hills Garden Club in Mount Dora.

On November 14th, I did my monthly visit to Zellwood Elementary School's Evergreen Club. I could really see the students' interest and excitement growing as we did our monthly bird walk on their school grounds. They were thrilled at the numerous Palm Warblers feeding on the ground and observed Eastern Phoebes and Eastern Bluebirds. One student asked "Are we going to send our count to the scientists?" After our walk and eBird report, the students used the field guides that OAS purchased through the National Audubon/Audubon Florida FLEDJE grant to create a poster about a bird that they wanted to become an "expert on" to teach others about at a future meeting.

On November 15th and 16th, Orange County Public Schools held its annual Teach-In event, a career day in which community members share about their jobs. I visited Hamlin Elementary, Ocoee Elementary and Zellwood Elementary and presented on my role with OAS both as education coordinator and as volunteer. The students loved the photos of Central Florida birds observed during field trips and surveys.

On November 16th, I held my monthly Zoom for educators, this month on feeding birds and Project Feederwatch. That presentation can be viewed at [this link](#). To sign up for the monthly educational webinars, register at [this link](#). To schedule an educational visit for a school group, after-school group, scout troop or any other interested party, please email education@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Kathy Rigling

As Leaves Fall Off the Tree, Please Let Them Be

Growing up for some years on a small farm, raking leaves was never a priority — there was always too many other things to do. We never engaged in fertilizing or spraying pesticides on the grass either. It was nothing I really considered until much later in life and living in a suburban neighborhood.

Suburbanites are famous for their passion of well-manicured lawns and decorative landscapes. In the fall, many folks bag their leaves, others may compost or burn them. Some cities will pick them up if raked into the road.



Ovenbird, a species that feeds on bugs in leaf litter.
Photo: Robert Sena

Fortunately, there has been a modest movement to appreciate nature in its natural state — skipping the fertilizer and pesticides. Homeowners are letting grass grow where it can, making a commitment to native plants and putting in pollinator gardens. But what to do about all the leaves?

I like to say that everything in nature is connected, and certainly that is the case when it comes to birds and leaf litter. In general, nature is resilient, but for specific species, it can be quite precarious. Without this important ecosystem, many of our favorite birds wouldn't exist.

Below our feet and under the leaves, there is another world made up of insects, arthropods and microscopic organisms that both rely on the leaves as habitat and provide a valuable part of the circle of life. Dr. Kefyn Catley calls life beneath our feet a “poor man's rainforest.” Scott Hoffman Black for *Insect Ecologist* writes, “We worry about saving the grizzly bear, but where would it be without the bee that pollinates the berries or the fly larvae that sustain baby salmon?”

There are about 6,000 species of insectivorous birds who eat upwards of 500 million tons of insects and

arthropods per year. Many nestlings need the protein of insects to grow and fledge. Ornithologists in Europe have found that insectivorous birds are in trouble — from partridges and nightingales to bee eaters and little owls.

In “Leave the Leaves for the Birds,” Jerry Davis for Audubon Arkansas writes, “It is time to leave your leaves for birds until the spring when you can mulch them with a mower. Throughout the fall and winter birds such as American Robins, Brown Thrashers, Eastern Towhees, and White-throated Sparrows flip leaves in search of food. Leaf cover improves their odds of finding protein-rich invertebrates such as beetles, earthworms and millipedes, which seek shelter under the security of leaves. Leaves also provide food and shelter for toads, frogs, salamanders, lizards and turtles.”

I recently attended the program, “Leave the Leaves: Life in the Leaf Litter” with Dr. Catley — presented by the Western Reserve Land Conservancy. It is available on their YouTube channel.

He recommended a book called, “Life on a Little Known Planet: A Biologist's View of Insects and Their World.” The book is from the 1960s and written by Howard Ensign Evans, a former curator of the Department of Entomology at Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology. I love books that have stood the test of time and are still suggested today.

Evans writes, “it is said that a square yard of good soil may contain more than 10 trillion bacteria and other microorganisms. The tragedy is that we on the top are so large that, even with our remarkable brains, we have difficulty understanding the creatures on the bottom — and very little time for that sort of thing — though without them the whole edifice would come tumbling.”

The leaf litter and soil are divided up into composers and predators. The primary decomposers are the bacteria and fungi, aided by the large decomposers such as millipedes, potworms and earthworms. Secondary decomposers include

the mites and springtails. Large predators, often known as “creepy crawlies,” include centipedes, spiders and beetles, while small predators include predatory mites and other arthropods such as pseudoscorpions.

The essential decomposers are bacteria and fungi, which release the nutrients back into the soil, but arthropods, by shredding the litter into small pieces, enable decomposition to occur more effectively. Mites and springtails are the largest groups of organisms; they are even found in Antarctica. A square meter of leaf litter and soil may contain 40,000-50,000 springtails, second only to mites. Springtails are hexapods, a subphylum that includes most arthropods. There are approximately 751,000 insect species and 123,161 arthropods. By comparison, there are about 10,000 bird species and only about 4,000 mammal species.

A soil sample studied by George Salt of Oxford calculated that one acre of pasture soil in November would contain 666 million mites, 248 million springtails, 71 million aphids, 26 million bristle-tails (wingless insects), 22 million various centipedes and millipedes, 17 million beetles and 15 million other arthropods.

Their abundance is breathtaking and critical for our planet. We need to care more about life in the litter. Dr. Catley commented, “Biological recycling — the foundation of soil fertility provides the greatest diversity of any terrestrial habitat, yet we know virtually nothing about it.”

Brooke Larvis for *New York Times Magazine* wrote in 2018, “The insect apocalypse is here: What does it mean for the rest of life on Earth?” And CNN reported a study, “The repercussion of insect extinction would be catastrophic to say the least, insects are the structural and functional base of many of the world's ecosystem since their rise almost 400 million years ago.”

The causes of their struggle include habitat loss (agriculture and urbanization), pollution (pesticides and fertilizers), non-native species and climate change.

Rob Swindell, *The Chronicle*

Limited Edition Field Trips

Orange Audubon Society's Limited Edition field trips are restricted to 12 people. Cost is \$12 for Orange Audubon members and \$17 for nonmembers. The February 12th trip is Bird and Bike to Clay Island on the Lake Apopka North Shore. To register, email Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com.

Fiesta Volunteer Thanks

The Lake Eola Fiesta in the Park Arts and Crafts Festival is Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) biggest public outreach event for introducing new people to our chapter and boasting the array of nature programs offered by OAS. It's also a great fundraising event for selling nature-inspired merchandise to help cover program costs.

Rick Baird coordinated Friday tent setup, assisted by Mike Daley and Susan and Pete Ledlow. Mike transported merchandise and he and Rick were part of the super sales team that also included Cyndi Kay, Marian Lichtler, Brent Mobley, Lee Ann Posavad, Sonia Stephens and Matt Wilfong. In addition to promoting the NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL and other upcoming OAS events, volunteers sold 100+ pieces of merchandise and raised nearly \$2,000! Many hands made for lighter work, successful fundraising and fun. Thanks to all for contributing!

Teresa Williams, OAS Treasurer

Bird Chats with OAS

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) continues its fun weekly "Bird Chats" on Zoom each Thursday at 7 p.m. (except the 3rd Thursday) with identification of mystery birds, discussion of new arrivals, and a topic of the week—generally a guest presentation. Register at [this link](#) to participate live. Past bird chats are archived on [OAS' YouTube channel](#). Please SUBSCRIBE to our channel to show your support. To see the schedule of upcoming Bird Chats, see p. 8.

Costa Rica Trip

Orange Audubon Society's Wildside Nature Tours Costa Rica trip will be March 27th to April 4th. The trip is 9 days, 8 nights and costs \$3000, exclusive of your flight to San Jose. To learn more, email info@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: No Warbler Neck!

One morning in October a male Black-throated Blue Warbler, *Setophaga caerulescens*, inspected my dry bird bath and fed on the fruit of a beauty berry shrub. I was thrilled: it was the first time I had seen this species in my yard. And these warblers, although common, are not easy to see well during migration. I added water to the bird bath, and in the afternoon the warbler returned to bathe and devour more fruit. He continued this fascinating routine for several days.

My bird bath is sheltered by a low thick canopy of tangled shrubs, an attractive habitat for Black-throated Blue Warblers. They forage by moving through dense foliage like this and other shrubby understories found in woodlands and gardens. Insectivorous, they snatch their prey—insect larvae, flies, butterflies, moths, and spiders—from leaves while hovering or flying past.

Males maintain their unique coloring—blue-black back, black throat, and sharp white belly—throughout the year. That is, their colors don't change during breeding season, making them unmistakable. The drab females, however, are more difficult to identify: they are a plain olive color with whitish under-tail coverts, dark cheeks, a narrow pale "eyebrow" and pale arch under the eyes. Most females also have a small white patch at the base of their primaries (longest lower part of the wings). This small detail helps identify them. Female Black-Throated Blue Warblers look so different from the males they were originally described as a different species.

These warblers breed in Canada and the northern U.S. and can be very aggressive when protecting their territories. Males fly toward intruders while making a rapid series of chips and lift their heads up with wings drooped. Rival males will knock each other to the ground and peck each other. When females arrive on the breeding grounds, males follow them around, and chase them through the understory. Once paired, these birds are socially monogamous.

The population of this species increased by 163 percent from 1970 to 2014 according to Partners in Flight. The estimated global population is 2.4 million. While they appear to be resilient to climate change at this time, significant changes in the environment could negatively affect the future stability of their populations. These changes include habitat loss and degradation, the increased use of architectural glass, wind turbines, and the increase in predators like feral and domestic cats.

How to find this striking warbler? Black-throated Blue warblers don't spend much time in the treetops, so search the shrubby understory and lower canopy of forests. During migration, they forage in all types of woodlands, parks and gardens, still keeping to lower levels compared to some warblers. (Warbler neck not necessary for this one!)

Attract them to your yard by planting American beautyberry, a native shrub many birds enjoy.

You also might find one or two during an OAS bird walk at Mead Botanical Garden, held in April and October annually. Check it out! Another beautiful, fascinating species to add to your life list! You will fall in love as I have with the elegant Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Linda Carpenter



Black-throated Blue Warbler male, above and female, below. Photos: Mary Keim

2022 NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL: A Success!



Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) seventh annual NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL, December 1-5, 2022, encompassed seventy field trips over 5 days. The combination of great birding locations and the incredible trip leaders are what make this festival work. Although we do not have an exhibit hall for vendors, the festival brings together a critical mass of leaders and participants to catch up on their common interest—birding.

Before the pandemic, the NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL sought participation from around the country, demonstrating the economic importance of birding and nature photography ecotourism. After a pandemic-related dip in number of attendees and the states they came from, this year's festival was back to pre-pandemic levels with over 300 participants from 18 states and Canada, plus over 60 Florida cities.

The start location for most field trips was in Lake County at the McDonald Canal Pavilion, 24600 CR 448A, Mount Dora, FL 32757. In cooperation with the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), the festival has access to the western part of the Lake Apopka North Shore, where normally a visitor can only walk or bicycle in.

The NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL is a big fund-raiser to support OAS' nature and environmental center fund and related educational programs thanks to it being run by volunteers and almost all of the 60 trip leaders donating their time. A big thanks to the planning committee of Kathy Rigling, Jack Horton, Lee Ann Posavad, Susan Thome-Barrett, Alan Shapiro and Teresa Williams. Lee Ann almost single-handedly pulled off the printing of our new Painted Bunting T-shirts and dedicatedly sold them at all the gatherings. The excellent dinners were put on by Jennifer Coleman, Mary and Steve Van Egmond assisted by Carol Hebert. Serving and cleanup helpers included Marian Lichtler, Sonia Stephens, and Pete Johnson. Lunch service was made possible by Linda Gaunt, Jack Horton and Shawna Resnick with help from David Marano, Mike Daley, Stephanie Nieves, and Susan Ledlow. Jack and Shawna were at the McDonald Canal early with muffins and were there to solve any logistical problems with the trips.

Sales of the new T-shirts by Lee Ann on Friday were supplemented by sales of older T-shirts by Lori Parsons and Mike Daley at Saturday and Sunday lunches. Teresa Williams assisted with registration, including refunds for cancellations, and paid the bills. With such a large event, we could use help. Particularly if you already participate and love our festival, consider volunteering. Email festival@orangeaudubonfl.org. Finally, a big thanks to SJRWMD for hosting us.

Deborah Green, Festival Chair



Left, Hannah and Erik leading Wekiwa trip. Photo: Kathy Rigling. Center, Mary Soule shows participant how to digiscope. Photo: Deborah Green. Mariah uses her PhoneScope to show birds. Photo: Luis Gles. Kayak trip on the A-B Canal with kayaks courtesy the Lake County Water Authority. Photo: Alan Shapiro. Right, Lee Ann Posavad shows new T-shirts to trip leaders Alex Lamoreaux and Lauren DiBiccari. KOWA representatives Robert Wilson visits with trip leaders Luis Gles and Mariah Hryniewich. Photos: Deborah Green. Luis leads the Best of Birding of the Lake Apopka North Shore Trip. Photo: Jack Horton. Young Birders trip allows a first time visit to the A-B Canal area. Photo: Kathy Rigling. Thursday Waterfowl Trip led by Chris Newton and Craig Watson, Photo: Pam Ford. Alan Kneidel and Kathy Rigling lead trip to Oakland Nature Preserve. Photo: Nicola Dronoff-Guthrie

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Beginners' Bird Watching Class, Jan. 8, 15 and 22, 2023

Would you like to improve your bird identification skills? Take Orange Audubon's Beginners' Bird Watching Class starting January 8, 2023. It's three Saturday mornings, and if you have to miss one, you can make it up in the fall 2023 series. Instructors are Susan Thome-Barrett and myself.

All sessions are 8:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. An "outdoor" classroom session and mini-field trip is January 8th at Orlando Wetlands Park. The January 15th and January 22nd field sessions are at Mead Botanical Garden and the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, respectively.

The class is limited to 12 students and registration is required. Total cost for all three sessions is: \$50 members; \$65 non-members; \$10 youth (12 & under) with registered adult. Non-members can join when registering, directly through



Barred Owl at NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL, Photo: Mark Hainen

OAS, as instructed when you register. To register email Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. For questions about the class, contact me at riglingkathy@gmail.com or (407) 488-9559.

Kathy Rigling

Your Biggest Year Yet Trip

Do you want to get a head start on your list for 2023? Then join us for the Biggest Year Yet field trip on January 1st at Orlando Wetlands Park from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Led by top local birder Lori Mathis with Kathy Rigling, this annual Orange Audubon Society trip will see how many species we can find on the first day of the new year at a great birding spot.

The Field trip is \$12 for members and \$17 for nonmembers. Space is limited and registration is now open. Email Kathy to reserve a spot riglingkathy@gmail.com

Hal Scott Preserve Trip Recap

Participants in the November trip to Hal Scott Preserve had good looks at Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and Brown-headed Nuthatches and heard Bachman's Sparrows. A distant Northern Bobwhite, lots of Eastern Bluebirds, Eastern Meadowlarks and American Robins were other highlights. This important preserve along the Econlockhatchee River is definitely worth visiting.

Susan Thome-Barrett

DECEMBER/JANUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bird Chats with OAS via Zoom

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

- Christmas Bird Counts by the Bird Chat Team

December 8, 2022

- The Sax Zim Bog by Mark Hainen

December 29, 2022

- Florida Shorebird Monitoring by Holly Short

January 5, 2023

- Winter Birding in Washington State by Ed Pullen

January 12, 2023

NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL, Lake Apopka

December 1-5, 2022

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Christmas Bird Counts: Contact the compiler

- **Zellwood/Mt. Dora:** December 15, 2022
Contact Gallus Quigley at gallusq@gmail.com
- **Bay Lake:** December 17, 2022
Contact John Thomton at john.thomton@gmail.com
- **Wekiva River:** December 17, 2022
Contact Jay Exum at jay.h.exum@gmail.com
- **Kissimmee Valley:** December 18, 2022
Contact Chris Newton at dexterdevon68@gmail.com
- **Econlockhatchee:** December 23, 2022
Contact Lorne Malo at lornekmalo@gmail.com
- **Clermont:** January 2, 2023
Contact John Thomton at john.thomton@gmail.com

December Program: Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park by Catie Welch

December 15, 2022

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Your Biggest Year Yet Listing Field Trip, Orlando Wetlands Park, Kathy

January 1, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Birds of Prey Identification

January 8, 2023 (and February 5, 2023)

Contact Bob Sanders at (407) 459-5617

Beginners Bird Identification Class

January 8, 15 and 22, 2023

Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com

Oakland Nature Preserve Survey

January 7, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Wekiva Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

January 14, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Clay Island Trailhead, Astatula, Regular Field Trip

January 21, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Rock Springs Run State Reserve Bird Survey

January 25, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Limited Edition Field Trip: Gainesville Hotspots

January 28-29, 2023

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

New Field Trip Contact

Please make sure to pre-register for our free monthly field trips to Susan at conservation@orangeaudubonfl.org. Times and meeting locations may change.