



Above left, Dr. Erich Marzolf explaining about Lake Apopka restoration; *Photo: Deborah Green*; Above right; Bald Eagle at Sunrise on Lake Apopka, *Photo: Joyce Stefancic*. Below, Lake Apopka cattails. *Photo: SJRWMD*.



This Month's Program, March 21, 2024

The Comeback of Lake Apopka by Dr. Erich Marzolf

Vegetable farms, that had been established on 20,000 acres that were formerly part of Lake Apopka, were purchased by the St. Johns River Water Management District in the late 1980s and 1990s to restore water quality in the lake. By halting nutrient inputs, restoring filtering marshes, removing bottom-feeding gizzard shad and other efforts over the past 20+ years, the District has significantly improved the lake's water quality. With algal blooms reduced, native vegetation (and, unfortunately, invasive hydrilla) have come back.

Dr. Erich Marzolf, Director of the Division of Water Resources at the District, will be Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) March 21st speaker. Dr. Marzolf has been actively involved in restoring Lake Apopka since 1996 when the State Legislature first authorized purchase of the North Shore muck farms to restore them to wetlands. While lake water quality has improved, the [Lake Apopka North Shore](#) has become one of Florida's richest areas for birding and photography. OAS has helped support public access, [document ecotourism](#) and features it in our [NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL](#).

OAS is pleased to host Dr. Marzolf in this presentation on the Comeback of Lake Apopka. The program is in-person at Leu Gardens (address below, in the Camellia Room), at 7pm on Thursday, March 21st. No reservations are necessary. We hope we see you.
Alan Shapiro, Programs Chair

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

Programs are the 3rd Thursday of each month (Sept–June) at 7:00 p.m. All but October and December (which are on YouTube LIVE) 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/



Intermediate Bird Identification

March 23 and 30, 2024

Many people have told us they are ready for an Intermediate Bird Identification Class, and Orange Audubon Society has the perfect person to teach it!

Bob Sanders taught Beginners Bird Identification for years and is full of identification tips and natural history information.



Bob Sanders showing a good raptor identification book at recent Raptor ID field trip. *Photo: Deborah Green*

The class is two-part. The sessions are on March 23rd and March 30th, both at Orlando Wetlands from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Cost for the two-part class is \$50 for Audubon members and \$65 for non-members, limited to 12 participants.

Registration is on our website: <https://orangeaudubonfl.org/field-trip-signup/>. Email any questions to info@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Buscando Pajaros, March 9, 2024

For the 3rd year, OAS is hosting a tram ride at Orlando Wetlands, led by Gilberto Sanchez in his native Spanish.

Gilberto is an Orlando Wetlands volunteer and skilled photographer.

The trip will be Saturday, March 9th, from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

It is free but limited to 20 people, with registration on the OAS website [at this link](#).

If you have any questions, contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org or 407-637-2525.

Protecting Birds in Migration



Much as we love our backyard cardinals, woodpeckers and other resident birds, birders are most enthused about migratory birds. Bird migration gives the added dimension of time and keeps birding exciting. We know that migration brings dangers to birds, and we try to provide good stopover habitat (see p. 5) and advocate for reducing hazards.

Last spring, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) was approached by the Town of Oakland about Bird-Friendly City recognition. The Town’s interest was in improving lighting on their water tower to protect birds and in protecting their peafowl colonies. Their request gave us an opportunity to research Bird-Friendly City recognitions, which started in Wisconsin over twenty years ago. Just this past summer, the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) had rolled out Bird City certification programs nationally, based on Wisconsin’s. Audubon Florida may at some time administer a statewide program, but meanwhile, OAS is happy to partner with all interested communities in our service area on these efforts.

The Town of Oakland joined OAS with a proclamation for World Migratory Bird Day and will again this year, which is a first step listed by ABC’s Bird City certification. City of Groveland has recently approached OAS to help it be more Bird-friendly also. It is already is working toward Dark Sky certification and has planted native plants in its city park. Cats Indoors (controlling feral cat colonies) is probably the hardest action for a municipality. Please contact me at info@orangeaudubonfl.org if you want to work on this with your local government or even your HOA.

Deborah Green, OAS president and Conservation Committee member



Good Intentions versus Smart Decisions

Flaco, the Eurasian Eagle-Owl that escaped from the Central Park Zoo after someone vandalized his cage in February of last year, has died after striking a Manhattan building. Testing is underway to determine if rodenticide poisoning may contributed to the building strike, a common co-morbidity with raptor strikes on buildings or moving vehicles. Flaco was born in 2010 at a bird sanctuary in South Carolina and transported to the zoo when he was less than a year old. Initially following his release, zoo officials attempted to re-capture the owl for fear that he would be unable to hunt and might be exposed to rodenticides if he was successful. Some members of the public felt Flaco should remain “free” and organized and blocked the Zoo’s attempts to capture the owl. The Zoo, caught between bad press and pretty certain failure in capturing him due to the disruptions, eventually allowed Flaco to stay free in Central Park.

The owl’s death may not have been all in vain. Between 90,000 and 230,000 birds die from building strikes in New York City each year. Two pending bird-friendly pieces of legislation in the New York legislature are being given a new “push.” The “Bird Safe Buildings Act” would reduce light pollution and require new building and window designs to decrease bird collisions. It will be renamed “The Flaco Act.”

Susan Thome-Barrett



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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Audubon Florida in Tallahassee

Audubon Florida’s policy staff in Tallahassee are still working hard on environmental issues in the last days of a difficult 2024 legislative session. See the *Audubon Florida Advocate* newsletter for calls to action, possibly to ask for the governor’s vetos on bad legislation. If you have not already, please [sign up for the Audubon Advocate at this link](#) and act. Thank you!

Get More Involved in Orange Audubon Society

Orange Audubon Society’s (OAS) annual election of board members will be held before the April 18, 2024 program at Leu Gardens. I chair the nominating committee with committee members Mary Soule (msoule43@aol.com) and Bob Sena (robs32812@yahoo.com).

To serve on the board, you must be an OAS member, have an interest in wildlife and the environment that supports it, and be able to attend monthly one-hour board meetings either at Leu Gardens or on Zoom on the third Thursday of each month (except July and August). Board members are expected to attend an all-day summer planning meeting, usually in late July.

Prior to or concurrent with applying for the board, please join one of OAS’ committees or volunteer efforts. Most help is needed with conservation, education, and outreach. Other committees are Birdathon, brochure, Chertok photo contest, climate, equity, diversity and inclusiveness, field trips, finance, hospitality, membership, nature center, nominating, newsletter, plants for birds, publicity, sanctuaries, auction, speakers’ bureau, website and wildlife surveys.

The OAS board application collects information about your interests and skills to align them with OAS’ needs. If you wish to give back to your community through the conservation and nature education initiatives of OAS, please contact me at rbaird4@att.net.

*Rick Baird,
Nominating Committee Chair*



Busted—Pied-billed Grebe, 2023 Chertok Photo Contest, Honorable Mention Winner, Novice Category. Photo: Heather Earl

2024 Chertok Contest Deadline is April 18, 2024

Orange Audubon Society’s (OAS) Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest promotes interest and concern for preserving the native fauna and flora of Florida. The deadline for the 36th annual contest is Thursday, April 18th (postmarked by or submitted electronically by midnight).

Subject matter must be native to Florida, images must not contain human components and must have been taken following North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) ethical field practices.

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



Majestic American White Pelican, 2023 Chertok Photo Contest, Honorable Mention Winner, Youth Category. Photo: Ethan Landreville

You can enter up to five images. Entry fees for the Novice and Advanced Categories are \$10 per image for non-Audubon members, \$5 per image for Audubon members. For the Youth category, entry fees are \$4 per image for non-Audubon members and \$2 per image for Audubon members. Details, including prizes, will soon be posted on the OAS website [Chertok page](#). If any questions, email me at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.

Teresa Williams, Photo Contest Chair

Northwest FL Panhandle Birding April 10-14, 2024

Orange Audubon Society’s four-day trip to see migratory and breeding songbirds and shorebirds in the Florida Panhandle will be April 10-14, 2024.

Following a great itinerary developed over the past several years, plans are to stay at the Tall Timbers Field Station, visit St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, St. George Island State Park, Wakulla Springs and other locations.



From Spring 2023 OAS Panhandle Trip: Top, American Oystercatchers; Middle, Hooded Warbler, both at St. George Island State Park, Eastern Kingbird at Tall Timbers. Photos: Brian Miller

On last year’s trip, the group saw over 130 bird species.

The cost is \$300 for members; \$350 for non-members, and includes local expert guides, a Wakulla Springs boat tour and some picnic meals.

Additional photos of last year’s trip are in the [June OASis](#), p. 8. Register at this [link](#). For lodging and details, contact Teresa Williams at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.



City Nature Challenge, April 26 – April 29, 2024

Bioblitzes are biological survey events that attempt to record all the species within a designated area. Most bioblitzes are on preserved land to document success of land management practices. But how much of the United States is preserved land? In his book, *Bringing Nature Home*, Dr. Doug Tallamy estimates only 5% of the U.S. is in parks and preserves, 41% is in agriculture, while 54% is urban/suburban. Converting the 54% to better habitat is the impetus to plant natives in our own landscapes and create the “Homegrown National Park” (p. 5).

In the meantime, and optimistically to document success of the Homegrown National Park effort, scientists need data on animal and plant populations in urban areas.

The City Nature Challenge (CNC) is an international effort for people to find and document plants and wildlife *in cities*. It’s a bioblitz but with a twist. Cities or counties are in a friendly competition with each other to see which can make the most observations of nature, which can find the most species, and which can engage the most people.

The Los Angeles’ Natural History Museum and San Francisco’s California Academy of Sciences dreamed up the CNC in 2016 as a fun way to hold an event around urban biodiversity capitalizing on their cities’ friendly rivalry. In 2017, the CNC went national, and in 2018, the CNC became an international event with [thousands of participants and observations](#).



Alex DeBear with butterfly, perfect to record for City Nature Challenge. Photo courtesy Alex DeBear

iNaturalist

An essential part of the success of the CNC as a community science effort is an easy-to-use mobile app called [iNaturalist](#). First created in 2008 as a Master’s project by three students at the University of California, Berkeley, iNaturalist has grown into a nonprofit social network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists. It maps and shares observations of biodiversity across the globe. iNaturalist capitalizes on the amazing technology available

on mobile phones, both Apple and Android, with GPS tracking to make locations of observations easy, their great cameras and recording ability. With iNaturalist on your phone, you hit the Observe tab, and then Camera, to take a photo that then can be sent directly to the database. In iNaturalist other users assist in identifying organisms from photographs. Here’s a [good reference on how to use it](#).

<p>Find Wildlife</p> <p>It can be any WILD plant, animal, or any other evidence of life found in your city.</p>	<p>Take a Picture or Record a Sound</p> <p>Take a picture or record the sound of what you find. Be sure to note the location of the critter or plant.</p>	<p>Share</p> <p>Share your observations through iNaturalist or your city’s chosen platform. If it’s planted or taken care of by people it is not WILD. Mark it captive/cultivated!</p>

Orange County’s City Nature Challenge

For the past three years, [The Nature Conservancy Sustainable Cities Program](#) has led the City Nature Challenge effort in Orange County with partnership of Orange Audubon Society. The Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society is partnering also this year in publicizing this fun opportunity to contribute to scientific knowledge, along with Orange County, City of Orlando and others. We could use many more participants!

First, download the [iNaturalist](#) app on your mobile phone from wherever you download apps, and start practicing making observations. To join our 2024 project and be ready for the April 26-29 CNC, [follow this link](#). To see how Orange County did in 2023 on observations, species and observers, follow [this link](#). We hope you participate, even a little bit! Get ready! Thanks.

Deborah Green

**Plants for Birds:
Creating a Homegrown
National Park**

In his 2020 book, *Nature's Best Hope*, University of Delaware entomology professor and best-selling author Doug Tallamy proposes that we create a "Homegrown National Park" through our home landscapes. Our country has lost the habitat that birds need, and bird populations have declined by 2.9 billion in the U.S and Canada over the past 50 years. Our preserves are clearly not enough to sustain biodiversity.

In specifying how we create wildlife habitat in our own yards, Tallamy explains how *you need native plants to support native insects, particularly caterpillars, that birds feed on and feed to their young.* The best trees to support caterpillars and bird life was a major theme of Tallamy's best-selling 2007 book *Bringing Nature Home*.

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) February 18, 2021 talk by Dr. Tallamy, co-sponsored by Seminole Audubon Society along with the Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, is available [on YouTube](#) and has 13K views!

Bird- and Butterfly-Friendly Plants for Central Florida

Tallamy's call to action is not only to create native habitat in your own yard but to educate others on it and to convince your neighbors to join in. Since we aired his presentation in 2021, Tallamy has been joined by a publicist who has built up the [Homegrown National Park](#) effort. If we plant natives, we are encouraged to "get on the map."



Wild Black Cherry in fruit. Photo: Mary Keim

by OAS member and native plant gardener Mary Keim with her husband Randy Snyder and others. From that resource, our most highly recommended native trees that promote bird life are:

Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) – trees in the genus *Prunus* are top choices for attracting fruit- and insect-eating birds; host for Eastern Tiger Swallowtail.

Cabbage Palm (*Sabal palmetto*) – Florida's State Tree; nectar for pollinators; fruit for birds; host for Monk Skippers.

Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) – fruit and dense shelter for wildlife.

Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*) – oaks are top choices to support caterpillars and thus insect-eating birds; acorns

Sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*) – This tree supports caterpillars for birds and the dry, sweet fruits are just the right size for small birds to eat.

Declines in Backyard Birds Linked to Use of Nonnative Plants

Especially during the breeding season, insect- and even seed- and nectar-eating birds depend on caterpillars—which are high in protein and calories—to feed their young. But many gardeners apply pest control to kill caterpillars on their plants. And most nonnative plants sold at nurseries are selected to resist feeding by caterpillars, often with inedible shiny, waxy leaves.

A study by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the University of Delaware, funded by the National Science Foundation, directly linked the decline of a common bird species to reduced insect prey

from the use of nonnative plants in landscaping. The study showed that the Carolina Chickadee raises fewer or no young in landscapes dominated by nonnative plants. Chickadee populations can be sustained only if native plants make up more than 70 percent of plant biomass.

The study's lead author, a former grad student of Tallamy's Desiree Narango, explained "By using native plants, we can provide food for not only our common North American species, but we're also providing vital stopover habitat and resources for migratory birds during their perilous journeys."

Where to Buy Native Plants

The Florida Association of Native Nurseries lists nurseries and specific plants and has plenty of additional information: <https://www.fann.org/>

The Leu Gardens Plant Sale will be March 9th and 10th, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Look for the Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) to buy from our good friends at Tarflower. Volunteers are experienced native plant gardeners and can help in your choices. The Cuplet Fern Chapter of the FNPS also has plant sales on [March 9th](#) and April 6th.

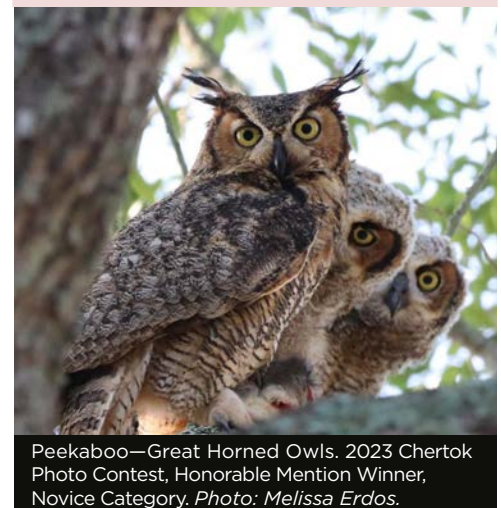
And when you are at the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, check out the native landscape behind the welcome shelter. This garden was spearheaded by OAS board member Alan Shapiro. Let him know if you can help at alangrandiflora@gmail.com.

Natives are beautiful and support birds. *Deborah Green*



Carolina Chickadee at Sawgrass Island Preserve. Photo: Steve Shaluta.

Here is [OAS' list of plants](#) to make our Central Florida yards more bird- and butterfly-friendly, developed



Peekaboo—Great Horned Owls. 2023 Chertok Photo Contest, Honorable Mention Winner, Novice Category. Photo: Melissa Erdos.



American Flamingos, Pinellas County after Hurricane Idalia. Photo: Alex DeBear

Endangered Species Act 50th Anniversary

The American Flamingo

Sometimes the federal Endangered Species Act cannot be invoked because the species is so rare that there is even question if it is native to Florida or escaped from a zoo or private aviculture collection.

Orange Audubon Society's February 8th Bird Chat by Steven Whitfield was one of our most exciting Bird Chats to date, and Whitfield addressed this question with a great story.

In 2015, when he worked at Zoo Miami, three flamingos showed up at the Naval Air Station in Key West. To avoid collisions, they were purposely chased off the property, but one remained.

Nicknamed "Conchy," it had to be rehabbed, and then when time to release it came, a big question came up from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Were American Flamingos native to Florida? If not, Conchy would not be allowed to be released.

Whitfield did some historical research and found that indeed flamingos had been seen in Florida by early explorers. He learned that they were hunted heavily, which may have been why they were not seen for almost a hundred years. With FWC accepting this research, Conchy was released.

For the rest of the story and more about the flamingos that were flung throughout the East by Hurricane Idalia this September, [view Whitfield's interesting video](#).

Spring Migration Walks

Join Orange Audubon at Mead Botanical Garden on April 6th, 13th, 20th or 27th to bird this migration hotspot. Walks start at 8 a.m. and are free. Contact riglingkathy@gmail.com.

Wilson's Warbler: Uncommon Beauty in Rapid Decline

Rare in Florida, this tiny golden-yellow warbler with a black cap, green back, and black eye has been charming birdwatchers at Mead Botanical Garden since the spring of 2023. More surprising, there have been at least two—a drabber female (or immature male) and a bold, striking male dashing about in clear view in cypress trees and bamboo near the creek.

Named after the Scottish-American naturalist Alexander Wilson, who described the Wilson's Warbler in 1811 as "a green black-capt flycatcher," the species will be renamed this year according to the American Ornithological Society. In November, the Society announced that birds will no longer be named after people, and this year will begin renaming about 80 species found in Canada and the U.S.



Wilson's Warbler at Mead Botanical Garden. Photo: Delsy Rodriguez.

One of the smallest and most recognizable species, Wilson's Warblers breed in the mountains and boreal forests of Canada but pass through every state in the lower 48 during migration. They concentrate on forests and scrubby areas near streams to fatten up by foraging in the understory to find larval insects, spiders, beetles, and caterpillars, or they fly out to grab flies, bees, and other insects in the air. Females build nests on the ground, tucking their constructs into small depressions at the base of a tree, shrub, or log. Using large leaves to start, they add moss or bark, grass and hair to make a cup about four inches wide. It takes about five days to complete, and nestlings appear in 10 to 13 days. Females incubate eggs and brood nestlings and males help feed the young.

Wilson's Warbler populations declined by 60 percent between 1966 and 2019 according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Primary threats include habitat loss on their breeding grounds, migratory pathways and in areas where they overwinter. In addition to a devastating loss of habitat, the species is threatened by brood parasitism of Brown-headed Cowbirds that lay their eggs in the nests of Wilson's Warblers. The warblers then raise the large cowbird chicks at the expense of their own.

How to find these birds? Attract them to your yard by planting native trees and shrubs. Or search the cypress trees and bamboo near the creek at Mead Botanical Garden for a bright yellow warbler with a long tail and striking black cap (male). The female resembles other yellow warblers, and the immature male has a vague black cap. Check it out! Spring migration is imminent. If you don't see this fascinating species in March, join an OAS bird walk at Mead in April; other bird lovers will help you find this beauty!

Linda Carpenter

Wildside Nature Tours Trip, Warblers and More in Ohio May 13-18, 2024

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) May trip with Wildside Nature Tours will provide excellent up-close opportunities for birders and photographers! It will be the peak of spring migration at Magee Marsh, on the south shore of Lake Erie, called "the Warbler Capital of the World" .

A peek at the beautiful birds we will see on this trip was in OAS' January 25th [Bird Chat on Wood Warblers of Ohio by Tammy Martin](#).

Gabriel Lugo, who led our fun Puerto Rico trip three years ago, will lead. Cost is \$2,200 for lodging and guiding; flight and meals additional. [Visit Wildside's link for details and to register](#), and please also email info@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Education Coordinator Update

Many schools are now inviting Orange Audubon Society (OAS) to collaborate in conducting bird field studies/bird counts on their campus. This month I conducted bird counts at Zellwood Elementary with 5 classes of second and third grade students, 90 students participating. At Rock Springs Elementary, we had 9 classrooms of first, third and fifth grade students, 156 students participating. At Ocoee Elementary, over two days, we had 99 students from six third grade classes participating.

OAS has 22 new KOWA binoculars, half purchased through a collaborative grant from National Audubon and half through a vote of our board. These are very easy for most of the grade schoolers to be able to focus quickly. The children were so excited to be outdoors participating in community science. It was difficult to get them to stop when their class has to go inside.

We saw lots of Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers feeding on the ground, flocks of American Robins flying overhead, and the students learned the difference between Turkey Vultures and Black Vultures.



Eccleston Elementary Afterschool Birding Club member. Photo: Kathy Rigling

We saw a juvenile and adult Bald Eagle at Zellwood chasing each other, Eastern Bluebirds at Rock Springs hunting from the fence. At Ocoee Elementary, we had a Pileated Woodpecker feeding in a close by tree and a very low flyover of a Brown Pelican. The children could not believe how big it was!

Afterschool visits for birding clubs continued at Zellwood Elementary, Rock Springs Elementary and Eustis Elementary. At Eccleston Elementary, the students proudly shared their research on their focus bird and enjoyed using their binoculars and our spotting scope to look at a Loggerhead Shrike and European Starlings.

Young Birders Club

OAS' chapter of the Florida Young Birders Club had a wonderful field trip to Lighthouse Point Park at Ponce Inlet on February 24th. Led by Volusia County birder Sherri Brown with OAS' Lorri Lilja and Kathy Rigling, the participants learned about gulls, terns and shorebirds found on the beach and inlet area.



Above, Young Birders with parents at Ponce Inlet. Photo: Kathy Rigling. Below, Green Sea Turtle in the inlet. Photo: Eric Moore

The weather was glorious, the winds calm and birds were abundant. Highlights were the rare Purple Sandpiper on the jetty feeding with a flock of Ruddy Turnstones, a Great Black-backed Gull standing head and shoulders above Royal Terns, Laughing Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, Red Knots, and Black Skimmers. On the inlet side, the students saw Red-breasted Mergansers feeding, White Pelicans, a Reddish Egret, many Sanderlings and a Green Sea Turtle

The next Young Birders field trip will be April 28th to the Wekiva Basin Bird Banding station at Lake Lotus Park in Altamonte Springs. For more information, contact me at riglingkathy@gmail.com.

Kathy Rigling, Education Coordinator

Conservation Leadership Initiative

Orange Audubon Society's 2023-24 Audubon Conservation Leadership Initiative (CLI) students share their backgrounds:

Bella Naples: I am a Sophomore at Rollins College, and my CLI mentor is Susan Thome-Barrett. My major is Environmental Studies, with minor in French and Studio Art. At Rollins, I am involved with the on-campus environmental club where I create presentations about sustainable current events, including about mercury in fish, plastics in the ocean, and even the concept of veganism! I am passionate about so many environmental topics and am so grateful that CLI is allowing me to explore that.

Sophia Watson: I am a sophomore at Rollins College, and my CLI mentor is Kathy Ringling. I am majoring in psychology and minoring in environmental studies. I am part of EcoRollins, an environmental club, and Reconnect Rollins, that teaches the importance of face-to-face conversation and bringing our campus together. I am interested in where psychology and environmental studies intersect and hope to be an eco-therapist. I would like to research how the environment affects mental health.

Kaitlyn Ackermann: I am a junior at the University of Central Florida, and my CLI mentor is Linda Gaunt. My major is Biology with a track in Zoology/Pre-Veterinary Medicine, however I definitely believe I am going to stick to the Zoology route. I have participated in on and off campus activities related to my major including the VetUp! Champions internship and being the Animal Awareness Director of Volunteer UCF, where I organized and hosted student-led volunteer assignments. Currently, I am assisting with research related to lung parasites and fungal diseases in pygmy rattlesnakes. I have a passion for reptiles and mammals (specifically big cats, elephants, and bears!). CLI has done wonders showing me what a career in my field may really be like, and I am very excited to continue on this pursuit of knowledge!

See the photo of these young environmentalists on p. 8.



The Pink Cape, 2023 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest, Honorable Mention Winner, Advanced Category. Photo: Wei-Shen Chin



2023-24 Audubon CLI students are: L to R: Kaitlyn Ackerman, UCF; Bella Naples (seated), and Sophia Watson, both of Rollins College. See their bios on p. 7. Photo: Susan Thome-Barrett

MARCH/APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bird Chats with OAS via Zoom

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

- Pelagic Birding off the Florida East Coast by Michael Brothers

March 7, 2024

- Rehabbing with Raptor Feathers by Dianna Flynt

March 14, 2024

- American Oystercatchers by Janell Brush

March 28, 2024

- Eight Years of Yucatan Birding by Cherie Pittillo

April 4, 2024

- Costa Rica Birding by Pieter Wiestra, Aratinga Tours

April 11, 2024

- Birds and Wildlife of West Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands by Marianne Korosy

April 25, 2024

Buscando Pajaros, Orlando Wetlands, Christmas

March 9, 2024

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Limited Edition Field Trip to Pine Meadows, Eustis

March 9, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Monthly Field Trip to Marl Bed Flats, Sanford

March 16, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Wekiwa Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

March 17, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

March Program: The Comeback of Lake Apopka by Erich Marzolf (in-person)

March 21, 2024

Contact Alan at alangrandiflora@gmail.com

Intermediate Bird Identification Two-Part Class

March 23 and 30, 2024

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Spring Migration Walks, Mead Botanical Garden

April 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Oakland Nature Preserve Survey, Oakland

April 7, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Wekiwa Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

April 14, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Getting To Know Our Fabulous Raptors by Daisy Fiore

April 18, 2024

Contact Alan at alangrandiflora@gmail.com

Chertok Photo Contest Deadline

April 18, 2024

Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com

Central Florida Earth Day at Lake Eola

April 20, 2024

Contact Rick at rbaird@att.net

Rock Springs Run State Park Bird Survey, Sorrento

April 24, 2024

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Apopka Art and Foliage Festival

April 27 and 28, 2024

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

City Nature Challenge

April 26-29, 2024

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org