



*"The voice of Conservation in Central Florida"*

# OASIS



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

VOLUME 38

JANUARY 2003

NUMBER 5

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## A Note of Thanks

Many thanks to all who generously supported our fund raising efforts by bidding on a silent auction item, purchasing a T-shirt, contributing at the door or in the drawing, and/or contributing an auction item at the December meeting. Your support and dedication to this vital local chapter are sincerely appreciated. Here's to peace, happiness and a balanced budget in 2003!

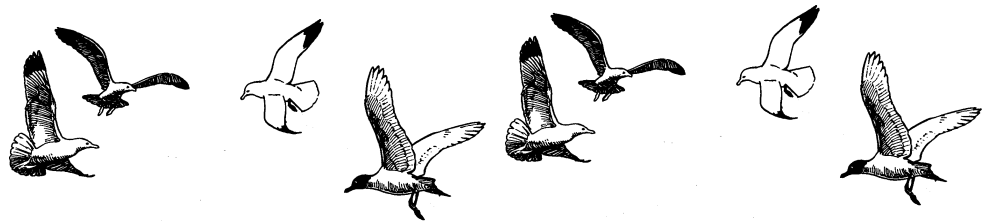
Teresa Williams, Treasurer

## This Month's Program: January 16, 2003 - 7pm A Parrot Without a Name by Dr. Don Stap

The small country of Peru, including the Andes and Amazonian rain forest, has 1700 known species of birds, twice as many as in all of North America. This diversity was spawned by unique geological forces and protected by inaccessibility. From 1830 to 1900, 230 new species of birds were discovered in Peru alone, but the number of species tapered off and came to a standstill around 1950. Then, in 1963 John O'Neill, a college student on a trip to Peru, discovered a new tanager species, shocking the ornithological community. On succeeding trips, O'Neill, now at Louisiana State University, discovered about a dozen more new species, more than any other person alive.

Our January speaker, Dr. Donald Stap is a University of Central Florida English professor and bird aficionado, who had tagged along with O'Neill and his biological crew on a 2 1/2 month expedition to the lowlands and forest-islands of Peru. From this experience, in 1990 Dr. Stap wrote *A Parrot Without a Name*. If you have time, read this fascinating book, and don't miss our January program where Dr. Stap will present slides of this expedition and tell about birdwatching on the forefront of science. Join us January 16 for a fascinating program.

Deborah Green, Vice President



## January Field Trip - Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

On Saturday, January 18, 2003 we will bird Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge in Brevard County. The always-popular Black Point Drive should provide us with some good viewing of waterfowl, waders and shorebirds. If time permits, we will go out to the beach to try our luck at Northern Gannets and gulls and terns.

Meet at the parking lot behind the Burger King at Colonial Drive (SR 50) and Alafaya Trail (SR 434) in time to get orga-

nized and leave at 7:30 am. We want to carpool as much as possible to hold down the congestion on Black Point Drive. Bring binoculars, field guides, drink and lunch. Spotting scopes will be especially helpful for this trip. Also, keep in mind; if the temperature is low, and the wind is high, Black Point can be very chilly!

If you have any questions, call Dick Smith at 407-834-2197.

*Orange Audubon Society meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month 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

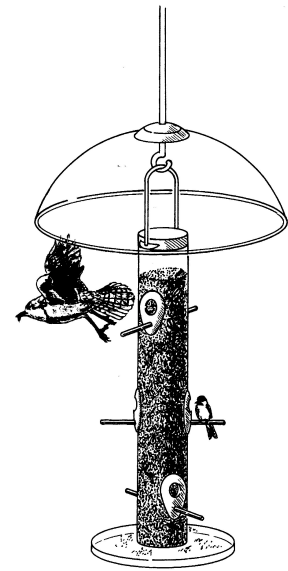
Happy 2003 everyone! I hope you had a peaceful and safe holiday season and that you took time to enjoy some of the wonderful remaining natural areas in Florida and elsewhere. Now it's time to get back to business and work to save and protect what's left of our planet.

Nationally, elections did not result in a favorable climate for the environment. The Bush Administration will continue to assail the U.S. with their anti-environmental positions. It is up to each of us to protect and preserve as much as we can of environmental quality and critical habitat. Do not be deceived by rhetoric that sounds good. Bush and his allies in Congress are unlikely to

move the environmental and conservation agenda in a positive way.

The same concerns face us on the local front and, although Orange Audubon has a great conservation committee working on trying to keep us alert to specific problems, we must each be watchful and do our parts to keep central Florida a good place to live. Stay alert and help keep us informed of what is happening locally.

We are counting on you, our members, to help us maintain reasonable habitats for the birds and other creatures (including humans). Make this one of your New Year's resolutions and thanks for your help.



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## Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

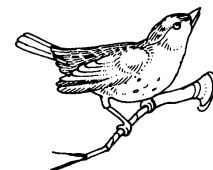
The Orange County Transportation Commission's Final Report was released December 18, 2002, just as this report was being written. It will be presented to the Orange County Commission on January 7, 2003, with public hearings on the report to be held several weeks later. Chairman Crotty has said he will not support any new roads crossing the Big Econ River into the rural areas of east Orange county. We have asked for his support of protection for the sensitive areas in the Econ River basin as this transportation network of roads and transit is developed. Light rail in the I-4 corridor, commuter rail, and future rail transit to the UCF/Research area, that OAS has supported, is part of the final report. Orange County added a Future Land Use Designation of

Preservation to recognize publicly and privately owned lands of significant environmental importance to their Comp Plan at the Dec. 17th Commission meeting. OAS worked with Orange County to add the privately owned lands of environmental organizations to be eligible for this designation with the organization's consent. This designation will limit the types of recreational or educational uses allowable, on all lands with this designation, to very-low impact, compatible activities such as hiking, bird watching, fishing, nature study, non-motorized boating, primitive camping, that utilize the natural amenities of a site.

OAS members attended a meeting with the Florida Dept. of Transportation/Aviation Division, regarding the proposed airport on the Long & Scott Farms property adjacent to the North Shore Restoration Area of Lake Apopka. St. Johns River Water Management officials and Audubon and others protested the approval of this airport, with the proposed air traffic pattern of the airport to be right over the proposed bird refuge at the NSRA. This is a major safety issue for pilots and birds! The North Shore Restoration Area is a designated IBA (Important Bird Area), with millions of public funds having been spent by State and Federal agencies in restoring this area, including the restoration of the historic bird areas on the North Shore. OAS also sent letters of opposition to the State agency and the FAA regarding the proposed airport. A decision will be made in the near future on this issue—we'll let you know the outcome.

And about IBA's--there is an excellent article in the December issue (2002) of Audubon magazine about the Important Bird Areas. National Audubon is the sole US conservation partner of Birdlife International in establishing Important Bird Areas. These IBA's are the basis for many National Audubon policies in protecting and preserving bird habitat and bird species. There are several designated IBA's in our area, including the North Shore Restoration Area of Lake Apopka, almost all National Wildlife Refuges, Forests, Parks; State Parks, other State and local properties, including, Seminole Ranch, Tosohatchee Preserve, Lower Wekiva Preserve, Moss Park, Split Oak Park, Hilochee Wildlife Management Area, Emerald Marsh, Sabal Point Sanctuary. More information on IBA's is available through the Audubon of Florida website: [www.audubonofflorida.org](http://www.audubonofflorida.org). I will be doing a brief profile of individual IBA's in future editions of the OASIS.

The next meeting of the OAS Conservation Committee is tentatively set for Monday, January 6, 2003, 6:30pm at the downtown Orlando Library. Please call Peggy Cox for confirmation, after Jan. 2, 2003, at 352-429-1042. Issues for our legislative delegations, bird surveys, the Transportation Commission report will be on the agenda.



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.

Orange Audubon Society  
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407-677-5374

The OASIS is published monthly from September through June and is sent free to all members of Orange Audubon Society.

<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

## Audubon Adventures Needs Sponsors!

OAS was able to sponsor an additional 25 Audubon Adventures kits in classrooms this month. We greatly appreciate OAS members who have generously agreed to help sponsor some of the kits, however we still need help in order to achieve our goal of making Audubon Adventures available to every third through fifth grade teacher who requests the kit for their classroom.

We desperately need sponsors to help secure the 27 additional requests OAS has for this year from local teachers. A donation of \$41.50 can bring Audubon Adventures into the classroom. This year's program offers an excellent opportunity for students to learn the value of four distinct ecological communities: desert, freshwater wetland, temperate deciduous forest and coastal. And, when the classroom receives the kit the teacher becomes a member of OAS and receives the monthly newsletter.

The teachers enrolled in December are: Christina Butts, Astatula Elementary; Mirna Echernendia, Alison Richtet and Donna Scheetz, Clermont Elementary; Marilyn Sewell, Alice Mangham, Stuart Young and Stephanie Thompson, Groveland Elementary; Dana Duke, Heather France, Nathalie McCraig, Julie Phillips and Lisa Scott, Lost Lake Elementary; Valarie Bronson, Susan Miller, Selena Copeland, Paula Pavone, Angelo Caponi, Kevin Adkisson, Jose Marine, Andrea Burkett and Ingrid Desjardins, Minneola Elementary; Rick Ellenburg, Camelot Elementary, Kristy Purinton, Cypress Park Elementary; and Diane Johnson, Riverdale Elementary.

If you would like to be a classroom sponsor for Audubon Adventures make your check out to OAS and mail it to P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. Please specify on your check for the Audubon Adventures program.

Mona Phipps, Education Co-Chair

## Spring Migration Field Trip to Fort DeSoto

Just a reminder. We will be having a special field trip to Ft. DeSoto, in St. Petersburg, on the weekend of April 12, 2003. (This is in addition to the regular monthly field trip for April which will be on Saturday, 4/19/2003 at Mead Gardens.) The plan is to drive over, at your convenience, the afternoon or evening of Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> and spend the night at Eckerd College in the Elderhostel. The rooms will cost us \$55.00 each, with accommodations for two (2) people per room.

The next morning we can then be at Ft. DeSoto bright and early to bird the entire day. Ft. DeSoto has always been a premier birding spot for returning migrants coming back across the Gulf of Mexico. It is also an



excellent location for gulls and terns.

We need to inform Eckerd College of the number of rooms that we want at about the time of the January meeting (1/16/2003), so you need to be thinking about this now. We will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting, or you can call me at 407-834-2197.

Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair.

## Educational Supplies Wanted!

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is frequently asked to provide educational nature programming to various groups, including school children. It would be great if we could have adequate educational equipment/supplies (for example, binoculars, microscopes, insect rearing cages, magnifying lenses, etc.) to maximize the learning experience for those participating in our programs. In addition, OAS is also contemplating partnering in the construction of an Audubon Nature Education Center some time in the future. These

types of equipment would also be useful there.

Therefore, if you have any of the items listed above, or others that you can think of that would be useful when introducing others to the wonders of Nature, and would be willing to donate them to the cause, please let me know (407-886-2925 or bob\_stamps@att.net).

Bob Stamps, Chair, North Shore Lake Apopka Nature Education Center Committee

## Fall Bird Banding Report

Bird banding at Wekiwa Springs State Park began the middle of September and will continue to late spring. Through the end of November we have had 143 visitors, about half of them school children. Ten volunteers are helping with the banding.

Thirty-five species have been banded from a total of 284 birds. Fifty of those birds have been recaptured. Data collected should give indications of weight fluctuations during the stay of these birds, site fidelity and return rate of birds.

If you would like to learn how to band birds and take data, extract birds from the nets, record data or just sit and watch and be sociable, call Bob Wheeler 407-869-0303 or Richard Poole 407-774-9501.

## In Case You Missed Last Month's Program...

The December 10th OAS program was given by Ricky Pires, founder and director of the Panther Refuge/Panther Posse program at the Florida Gulf Coast University in Naples. Ricky told us how there used to be around 3000 panthers in Florida, but in the 1800s panthers were slaughtered, as Europeans settled the state. There are only an estimated 70 or 80 of these endangered cats left, all confined to south Florida. With such a small gene pool, some genetic defects were being noticed, among them a heart murmur, cowlick and crook in the tail. Our panther is so closely related to the mountain lion and cougar as to be considered a subspecies, so eight Texas cougars were introduced into South Florida to improve the gene pool. This seems to have helped.

We all know that decline in panther numbers in recent times is a result of habitat loss. A panther needs about 200 square miles to roam. About 1/3 of the panthers are killed by other panthers as they encroach upon the other's territory. Even when injured panthers are successfully rehabilitated, where to release them is the problem. Panthers kill white-tailed deer or wild hogs, and one animal killed per week is sufficient food, unless they have kittens to feed. When feeding on raccoons, opossum, or marsh rabbits, they take more per week. Panthers are nocturnal and in fact, Ricky Pires, who gets out in the field frequently, has only seen a panther four times in over 10 years of work. Panthers rest in palmettos during the day. The kittens are spotted for camouflage, losing the spots

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## Officers & Board Members

President ..... Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925  
 1st Vice-President ..... Leesa Sward 407-677-5374  
 2nd Vice-President ..... Deborah Green 407-869-7762  
 Secretary ..... Terry Godts 321-436-4932  
 Treasurer ..... Teresa Williams 407-644-0796

Alex Alexander • Susan Clary • Peggy Cox • Susan Farnsworth  
 Louise Friderici • Marjorie Haverland-Holt • Milton Heiberg  
 Claire Hilliker • Susan Moss • Mona Phipps • Arthur Ranson  
 Dick Smith • Bob Stamps • Jim Thomas • Pete Vogt

### Committees/Chair

Birdathon ..... Susan Farnsworth  
 Chertok Nature Photo Contest ..... Teresa Williams  
 Conservation ..... Peggy Cox  
 Education ..... Deborah Green & Mona Phipps  
 Field Trips ..... Dick Smith  
 Finance ..... Milton Heiberg  
 Hospitality ..... Tom & Ruth Williams  
 Membership/Promotion ..... Claire Hilliker

### Last Month's Program...con't from p3

about the time they are weaned.

In the Panther Posse program, thirty-seven panthers are now are radio collared with their movements followed by telemetry. Collars are put on when the panther is about 2 years old, and each panther has its own unique frequency. Biologist Mark Lotz puts an antennae on his small plane and surveys from the air to detect their movements. Now six of the radio-collared panthers are being monitored by 4th grade classes in the Naples area. Ricky Pires welcomes participation by 4th grade students here also. Visit [www.floridapanther.org](http://www.floridapanther.org) or give her a call at 941-590-7028.

Deborah Green, Vice President for Programs

## Calendar of Events

### January 4, 2003 - Saturday

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

### January 13-14, 2003 - Mon-Tues

St. Johns River Summit  
 Prime Osborne Convention Center  
 Jacksonville, FL  
 904-630-2709

### January 16, 2003 - Thursday

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

### February 1, 2003 - Saturday

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

### February 14-17, 2003 - Fri-Mon

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

### February 20, 2003 - Thursday

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

### February 22, 2003 - Saturday

Orlando Wetlands Park Festival, Christmas, FL  
 Mark Sees 407-568-1706

### March 1, 2003 - Saturday

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

### March 20, 2003 - Thursday

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

### April 5-6, 2003 - Sat-Sun

Lake Eola Festival in the Park, Orlando, FL  
 Teresa Williams 407-644-0796

### April 5, 2003 - Saturday

OAS Birdathon, Central Florida  
 Sue Farnsworth 407-281-9178

### April 5, 2003 - Saturday

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

### April 12, 2003 - Saturday

Spring Migration Field Trip, Fort DeSoto, FL  
 Dick Smith 407-834-2197

## Plan Ahead - Ocklawaha River Boat Trip!

On Saturday, March 8, 2003, Orange Audubon Society will be taking another wonderful cruise on the Ocklawaha River. The trip is on the large pontoon boat of Capt. Erika and Capt. Tom's Custom Charters, leaving from the Eureka West Boat Ramp, off Hwy 316, near Ft. McCoy, in the Ocala National Forest.

The trip is approximately 4 1/2 hours long, leaving at 10:00am. Cost is \$18 per person, limit of 16 people. Drinks provided by OAS, bring your own lunch.

For more details and to reserve a space, call or email Peggy Cox at 352-429-1042 or [pegcox@att.net](mailto:pegcox@att.net) after January 6, 2003.

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