



"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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In this Issue...

This Month's Program p1
 Field Trips p1
 President's Message p2
 Conservation News p2
 Evolution, Ivorybills and Extinction p3
 Last Month's Program p3
 Spring Migration Field Trip p3
 Bird and Butterfly Courses p4
 Audubon Adventures p5
 Nestbox Monitoring p5
 A Disaster Waiting to Happen p5
 Ocklawaha River Boat Trip p6
 Calendar of Events p6

Reminder...

OWP Festival Cancellation

Orlando Wetlands Park Festival, due to be held on Saturday February 22, 2003 has had to be cancelled this year due to on-going construction projects being completed at the site. For those who had planned to attend this event, consider joining us for the OAS February Field Trip to be held at OWP on the same day. See adjoining article for details.

Orange Audubon Society meetings are held the 3rd 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

This Month's Program: February 20, 2003 - 7pm History of Audubon and What's New at Orlando Wetlands Park by Mark Sees.

Our own former OAS Vice President, Mark Sees, is Wetlands Biologist for the City of Orlando and resource manager at Orlando Wetlands Park. As part of environmental education efforts, Mark has developed a presentation on the fascinating history of the Audubon Society. He will fill us also on What's New at Orlando Wetlands Park, one of our premiere local birding spots and a unique water treatment system. Mark is an excellent photographer and great speaker. Join us February 20 for a fascinating program.

Deborah Green, Vice President

January Field Trip Report DICK SMITH, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

On one of the coldest days of the year, eight (8) hardy souls ventured out into the weather on one of the best field trips we have had this year. While you were snuggled all warm in your beds, the "real" birders went to Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge and saw a record number of birds for a monthly OAS field trip-92! Yes, we saw **92 species** for the



entire trip! Northern Gannet, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, 6 duck species, 8 birds of prey species, 13 shorebird species and 4 warbler species were just some of the birds that we encountered.

The sky was blue with light cirrus clouds overhead, and although it was a bit chilly to begin with, it later warmed up very nicely. All in all, it was a great day to be in the great outdoors with good birding friends.

February Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park

Normally, we do not have a field trip in February because we want to encourage every one to attend, and take part in, the Orlando Wetlands Festival. This year, Mark Sees, Park Manager, has had to cancel the Festival, and so, we will have a February field trip at, surprise, the Orlando Wetlands Park.

Mark has graciously given us permission to drive motor vehicles on the berms. This means we will be able to go all the way to the back of the property, and that some of those who could not do a great deal of hik-

ing, will be able to go.

It should be a great trip! This is one of the best birding locations in Florida.

We will meet at the Burger King at E. Colonial Dr. (SR 50) and Alafaya Trail in time to sign in, get organized into car pools, and leave at 7:30 AM. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, water, and your lunch. We will bird until about noon and then have a picnic at the pavilion. If you have any questions, call me at 407-834-2197.

President's Message LORETTA SATTERTHWAITE, PRESIDENT

Hello again. Well, things are warming up – and I actually mean, activity-wise (who knows what the temperature will do!!). Several things will be happening soon and Orange Audubon encourages you to participate in some of these exciting activities.

Susan Moss, our newest board member filling the spot left vacant when Jeremy Taylor took a position in the Ft. Lauderdale area, is presenting a 3-hr “Beginners’ Bird ID Class”. Tom Williams will again teach a more extensive “Beginners’ Bird ID Course” on 4 upcoming Saturday’s. In addition, Randy Snyder and Mary Keim will be presenting their ever-popular butterfly ID course in May. Sign up early if you are interested in one of these classes.

Our annual birdathon — experts, beginners and even non-birders are needed for teams — will be held on April 5th and a special field trip to Ft. DeSoto on April 12th should be very exciting with plenty of mi-

grating birds to keep us busy.

OAS will be fund-raising and member-recruiting at the annual Leu Gardens Plant Sale on March 22 & 23 and will do the same at Lake Eola on April 5 & 6. We always need volunteers to help us with these activities. And remember, always carry a spare OAS brochure with you and ‘recruit’ wherever you go.

In the midst of all this activity, the Florida Legislature will be back in session and we will face the ever-daunting task of keeping an eye on what is happening in Tallahassee (not to mention Washington D.C.) while trying to stay on top of conservation issues in Central Florida. Once again, there can not be too many people keeping their eyes and ears open and relaying information to OAS or writing letters to their legislators or to the newspapers. Keep a watchful eye out for our requests that you participate in these activities.

At the February 20th OAS board meeting, starting at 5:30 just before the general meeting and open to all OAS members, we will announce the nominating committee whose charge will be to find a slate of 5 directors to step onto the board in July. Directors serve a 3-year term (each year 5 of our 15 non-officer board members rotate off). This offers you two opportunities: 1) volunteering to serve on the nominating committee and/or 2) serving on the OAS Board of Directors. Please contact me (407-886-2925; LNS-OAS@att.net) to volunteer for either of these activities.

These are just a few of the activities that beckon us. We always have requests for informative talks at schools (all ages), participation at Earth Day events or other happenings; we are willing to ‘teach’ you what to do at these, and we simply can’t do it all ourselves. So please consider helping when you hear of a need. Thanks in advance for your help.

Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

At the January 18th meeting of the Audubon of Florida St. Johns Regional Conservation Committee, we learned about the new Water Initiative that Audubon of Florida is organizing to protect and preserve Florida's important natural water resources. Be a Florida Water Advocate, and join Orange Audubon and Audubon of Florida in a campaign to reform Florida's Water Laws. Audubon has 2 major goals for water policy:

1. Florida's 5 Water Management Districts and the Department of Environmental Protection must put the environment first

in water policy, permit and budget decisions, and

2. Rivers, lakes, wetlands and coastal estuaries must be managed for their capacity to sustain abundant wildlife.

Audubon's water policy lists the following basic principles by which any water policy should be measured: Water is a PUBLIC resource; and Water resources must be managed for the benefit of natural systems as well as public needs.

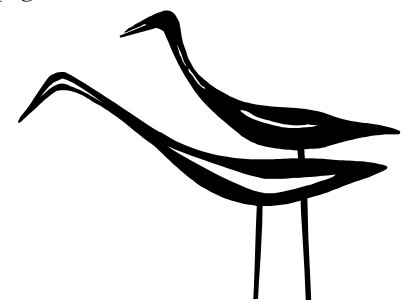
Some of the water issues that will be proposed and debated in the upcoming State Legislature and the US Congress include: Privatization of water rights by reserving water for agricultural and economic development; Rolling back Clean Water Act regulations on dumping polluted water into public waterways and estuaries; Lessening the protections on endangered species and their natural habitats necessary for their survival; and in Florida raiding Florida Forever funds and other environmental trust funds that help purchase valuable natural water resources for protection and preservation.

Learn about your water management district governing Board and the decisions that they make under law. The St. Johns River Water Management District website is a very informative site: www.sjrwmd.com. Ask your water utility about their water conservation plan and what you can do to encourage conservation in your area. Call, write, and visit

your legislators to express your concern about water policies and Audubon's major goals for water policy. Visit Audubon of Florida's informative website to learn more about Florida Water Advocacy at www.audubonofflorida.org.

Due to a last minute scheduling conflict, the "Blueways and Greenways" presentation by Roger VanGhent of St. Johns Audubon Society has been canceled for February 10th, and rescheduled for March 10th (Monday) at Leu Gardens, starting at 6:30pm. I hope you can attend this informative program on the new date of March 10th, in the Rose Room at Leu Gardens.

The regular meeting of the Orange Audubon Conservation Committee will take place on February 10th, tentatively set for the downtown Orlando Public Library, starting at 6:30pm. Committee members will get a detailed notice at a later date. All are welcome. For additional information, please contact Peggy Cox at (253) 429-1042 or at pegcox@att.net.



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

<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

Evolution, Ivorybills & Extinction

A presentation by Mary Scott

On April 1, 1999, a turkey hunter in the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area of Louisiana saw a pair of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers and then reported this sighting to local ornithologists. In the years since there have been extensive searches of the area that have not produced incontrovertible proof that this species, long thought extinct, still exists. There have, however, been tantalizing glimpses. Although the much-publicized search in 2002 was disappointing, there are still reasons to keep hope alive.

Mary Scott participated in searches for the ivorybill in the Pearl River and other river-bottom swamp habitats in Louisiana in 2000 and 2001, and plans to search the White River area of Arkansas in the fall of 2002. Her presentation will focus on the causes of extinction (rarity, specialization, loss of habitat, ecological isolation, hunting and collecting) as they relate to the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and will feature stories of her firsthand experiences searching for the bird.

Mary is the birder, photographer, and webmaster of BirdingAmerica.com. Since the summer of 1999 she has traveled to more than 185 birding hotspots in North America and has created photo-essays about the places and the birds she has seen. She is also the webmaster for several Florida chapters of the National Audubon Society.

This presentation, sponsored by Seminole Audubon, will be at 2:00 PM Sunday Feb 9th at the North Branch of the Seminole County Library located at 150 N. Palmetto Avenue in Sanford (North Palmetto is 1 block west of Fort Mellon Park). Call the library at (407) 322-2182 for directions.



Fort DeSoto Field Trip Update!

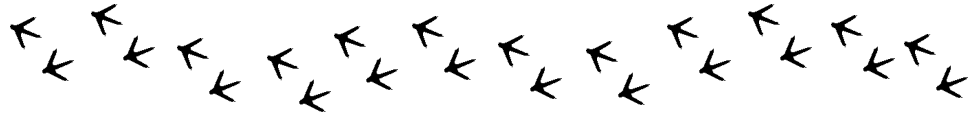
Just a reminder. We will be having a special field trip to Ft. DeSoto, in St. Petersburg, on the weekend of April 12, 2003. (This is in addition to the regular monthly field trip for April which will be on Saturday, 4/19/2003 at Mead Gardens.) The plan is to drive over, at your convenience, the afternoon or evening of Friday, April 11th 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.

!!! NEW INFORMATION !!!

This just in! We have been informed that if OAS pays for the rooms, we can save on the 11% tax- 7% sales and 4% camping. Therefore, we will be setting up a plan whereby you will send your money in advance; this is contrary to what has been said at the monthly meetings. Watch your OASis for details.

We will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting, or you can call me at 407-834-2197. We will take reservations until there are no rooms left. It is unknown how long this will be. We do know that Martin County Audubon plans to be there that weekend also, so don't delay. Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair.



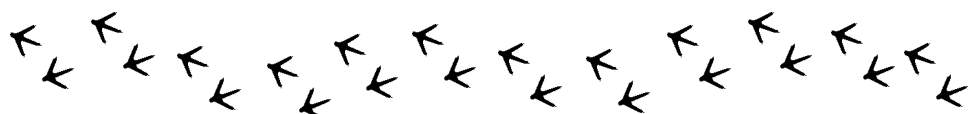
In Case You Missed Last Month's Program...



Donald Stap is a professor of English at the University of Central Florida who loves birds and writing. He has been able to combine these interests in a series of articles for Audubon magazine and in a wonderful book 'A Parrot Without a Name'. The book, published in 1991 by Alfred A. Knopf publishers, is about his 2-month adventure to an isolated mountain range in Peru.

Dr. Stap was in Peru as a writer covering a Louisiana State University biological expedition. The expedition was led by Professor John O'Neill, who has described more birds than anyone else alive. Also along on that mission was the late Ted Parker, referred to by Roger Tory Peterson and others the most gifted ornithologist of his generation. Parker and Al Gentry, a talented and dedicated tropical botanist, died in a tragic plane crash in Ecuador in August 1993 as they were surveying possible boundaries for a new forest reserve in Ecuador as members of Conservation International's Rapid Assessment Program (RAP).

Some things I learned from Dr. Stap's fascinating talk were that there are 30,000 square miles of lowland rainforest in Peru, an area 5 times the size of Florida. The mountain range where the expedition went is cut off by 75 miles or more of lowland rain forest. There is no way in except by river. The first river they traverse, the Rio Ucali, is the size of the Mississippi. The smaller rivers narrow, so that portage of their dugout canoes is necessary. I learned that one acre of tropical rain forest can contain 865 species of trees. Almost one fifth of the world's bird species occur in Peru. The Trans-Amazonian highway approaches this untouched area but about 80 miles of lowland forest separates it. See you next month?
Deborah Green, OAS VP for Programs.



Beginner Birding Class

This 3 hour class will focus on the basics of buying and using binoculars/field guides and identifying birds by sight, sound, and behavior.

Location: Orlando Wetlands Park

Dates: February 8, March 8, or April 19

Time: 8 – 11 am

Cost: \$12 for Audubon members
\$15 for non-members

(or FREE as a bonus for joining Audubon at the introductory rate of \$20)

Class size is limited, and pre-registration is required. For more information and/or to register, contact Susan Moss, 407-243-9213, salticid@hotmail.com

Central Florida Butterfly Course

Harry P. Leu Gardens (HPLG) in Orlando is offering a 4-session course on the identification of Central Florida butterflies and their caterpillars. The course will be held on Saturdays, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 2003 from 2:30 – 5:00 pm. Each day will include a slide presentation and a garden walk. Instructors are long time OAS members Randy Snyder and Mary Keim. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Orange Audubon Society.

Pre-registration is required. Contact HPLG (407-246-3621) for registration information.



Interested in joining "The Flock"?

OAS board member Susan Moss would like to establish an email group just for local birders. It would provide birders with an easy way to contact each other with news of current "hot spots," unusual sightings, and birding trip reports. It would also be a great way to meet other local birders and find birding buddies. If you'd like to be a part of this email group, which will be called "The Flock," please email Susan at <salticid@hotmail.com> with some basic information about yourself and your birding interests.

Bird Counters Needed!

We can all learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Now that winter has gripped much of the continent, what are our birds doing? Bird populations are dynamic and they are constantly in flux. Audubon, in conjunction with the Cornell Lab or Ornithology (CLO), wants to take a snapshot of North American bird populations and YOU can help them during the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) on February 14-17, 2003. Everyone's contribution is important. It doesn't matter whether you identify, count, and report the 5 species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge.

All you need is basic knowledge of bird identification and access to the Internet at home, a friend's house, local library, school, or anywhere you can get access to the web. Count the birds in your backyard, local park, or other natural area on one or all four count days. Then simply go to the GBBC web site (www.birdsource.org/gbbc) and enter your data. That's all there is to it!

You can do it at your leisure so it can be a fun family activity that even the kids can participate in. And the more people who participate in this project, the more data will be able to be collected to help researchers help our feathered friends, so join us won't you?

Beginner's Bird Identification Course

Orange Audubon Society will conduct a Beginners Bird Identification Course to be held 9:00 am to noon on four Saturdays; March 22, 29 and April 5, 12, 2003. The first two classes will be held in a classroom to be designated. The two remaining classes will be held in the field - one at Mead Gardens and one at Orlando Wetlands Park. OAS member Tom Williams will be the instructor. There is a registration fee of \$25.00 and class size will be limited to 15 students. Please fill out the registration form below and make payment to Orange Audubon Society. Indicate on the check "Bird I.D. Course" and mail to Tom Williams, 111 Foxridge Run, Longwood, FL 32750. Please bring binoculars and your bird field guide to the first class. If you do not have a field guide, the first class will discuss available field guides. For additional information, contact Tom Williams at (407) 332-5089.

APPLICATION FOR BEGINNERS BIRD IDENTIFICATION COURSE

Orange Audubon Society

March 22 & 29, April 5 & 12, 2003

9:00am - noon

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

____ A check for \$25.00 made payable to Orange Audubon Society and marked "Bird ID Course" is enclosed.
Complete form and mail to Tom Williams, 111 Foxridge Run, Longwood, FL 32750

A Disaster Waiting to Happen

Several Orange Audubon Society members have been following (and fighting) the approval of an airport near the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area (LANSRA). The request that a small landing strip that is currently on this location (Long & Scott Farms) be changed from a north-south landing strip to an east-west one was brought to our attention last summer. At the same time that the direction is changed, the owners want to make the runway longer, which would enable larger planes to use the airport.

There are already two small airports in this same vicinity. In fact, because of the proximity of one of the airports, if the change in direction of the runway were approved, the only take-off and landing pattern that would be allowed is one that goes to the south of the runway, putting it directly over the state-owned, St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)-managed LANSRA. SJRWMD staff and volunteers (many of whom are OAS members) do a LANSRA bird count the first Saturday of every month and report that they are seeing more birds — including large waterfowl and wading birds — than in previous years and this pattern is expected to continue.

This area, already designated as an Important Birding Area, is slated to be returned to marsh lands, which will attract thousands more birds than are presently reported there. This information was used in writing and at the public hearing regarding the wisdom of placing pilots and wildlife in jeopardy since it is a well known fact that when birds and planes collide, disasters happen.

The latest development in the approval stage was through Florida's Department of Transportation who pronounced that it would be safe to have the runway oriented in this new direction. Approval was granted on January 10, 2003. Orange Audubon has approached Audubon of Florida for help in determining if there is anything more that can be done regarding this particular situation. We will keep you informed.



Audubon Adventures Still Needs Sponsors!

OAS has sponsored several Audubon Adventures kits in classrooms so far this school year. OAS strongly supports the education of our natural resources and is committed to the goal of making Audubon Adventures available to every third through fifth grade teacher who requests the kit for their classroom. We need your help! We desperately need sponsors to help secure the additional requests OAS has for this year. A donation of \$41.50 can go along ways towards promoting an understanding of the fragile balance of world's ecosystems by giving teachers the tools they need to educate their students.

The program this year features four distinct ecological communities: desert, freshwater wetland, temperate deciduous forest and coastal. When the classroom receives the kit the teacher becomes a member of OAS and receives the monthly newsletter.

If you or someone you know would like sponsor a classroom for Audubon Adventures, please make out a check to Orange Audubon Society and mail it to P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. Please specify Audubon Adventures program on your check. Mona Phipps, Education Co-Chair

Nestbox Monitoring

For over thirty years nest boxes have been monitored at Holiday Highlands, forty-three acres owned by Florida Audubon, located north of Zellwood on Round Lake Road. For the past three years Screech Owls found in the boxes have been banded. Besides Screech Owls we usually see Tufted Titmice and Great Crested Flycatchers. If you have never seen a Flying Squirrel, this is your chance. We will begin checking the boxes this month. If you would like to join us, call Richard Poole, 407-774-9501.



Wanted: Director, Oakland Nature Preserve

The Oakland Nature Preserve, located West of Orlando in Oakland, Florida, is accepting applications for a Director. The duties will encompass Administration, Fund Raising, Volunteer Coordination, and Environmental Education. The preferred applicant must be energetic, enthusiastic, well organized, and capable of multi tasking. Experience in organizational management, teaching skills and some knowledge of the ecology of Central Florida required. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience will be offered through the Town of Oakland. Please mail resume to P.O. Box 98, Oakland, FL 34760. Interviews anticipated in February 2003, position to be filled by April 1, 2003.

DISCOUNT FOR EARLY RESERVATION by 3/31

Secluded North Carolina Blue Ridge Mt. vacation house, 50 acres, waterfalls

Heavily wooded mountaintop, 3,000 ft. elev., stream, waterfalls, close to canoeing, 40 min. SW of Asheville, 30 min. to Blue Ridge Scenic Parkway, Pisgah National Forest fishing, hiking & wilderness. 1,500 sq. ft home, modern kitchen, cathedral ceiling, wood stove. No smoking, no pets. Limit 6 people. Photos available. April-June \$380/wk. July-Nov \$420/wk.

(321) 951-1741

morganmt@earthlink.net



**Open
April-Nov.**



ENJOY SPRING IN THE LAND OF WATERFALLS!

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VICE PRESIDENT (PROGRAMS)

Deborah Green 407-869-7762

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EDUCATION Deborah Green & Mona Phipps

FIELD TRIPS Dick Smith

FINANCE Milton Heiberg

HOSPITALITY Tom & Ruth Williams

MEMBERSHIP Claire Hilliker

NEWSLETTER Claire Hilliker

Calendar of Events

February 1, 2003 - Saturday

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

February 10, 2003 - Monday

Conservation Committee Meeting
Downtown Orlando Library, 6:30pm
Peggy Cox (352) 429-1042

February 11 and 25, 2003 - Tuesdays

Orange County Commission Public Hearings on the Chairman's Transportation Commission Report.(Time uncertain-probably 9:00am)
Peggy Cox (352) 429-1042

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

March 1, 2003 - Saturday

LANSRA 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

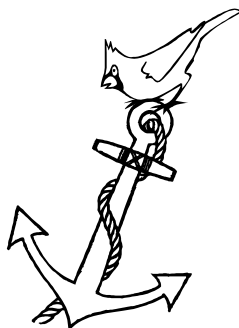
LANSRA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870
pbowen@sjrwmd.com

April 12, 2003 - Saturday

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

February 26, 2003 - Wednesday

Friends of Lake Apopka (FOLA) Annual Meeting
Tanner Hall, Winter Garden, 7:00pm
Peggy Cox (352) 429-1042



Ocklawaha River Boat Trip Sold Out!

The Ocklawaha River Boat trip scheduled for Saturday, March 8th is sold out. There is a short waiting list, so if you have reserved space on this trip and are unable to go, please call me as soon as possible so your space can go to a party on the waiting list. The cost of \$18 per person needs to be sent to Orange Audubon by February 20th. You can mail your checks to OAS, PO Box 941142, Maitland, FL. 32794; or Peggy Cox, 9410 Oak Island Lane, Clermont 34711.

The trip will leave from the Eureka West Boat Ramp off CR 316 in the Ocala National

Forest near the town of Ft. McCoy. To get there take US Hwy 441 north from Orlando to State Hwy 19, (between Mt. Dora and Tavares) go north to Salt Springs and turn left on CR 316, follow to the Eureka Bridge and boat ramp is on the west side to your right (About a 2hr. drive from Orlando). The boats will leave at 10am and return about 2:30pm. For those wishing to car-pool, meet at the Mt. Dora Publix Parking lot, on US Hwy 441, at 8am. Questions call Peggy Cox, 352-429-1042.

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