

"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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# Your Help Needed to Protect our Water...

The Bush Administration is seeking to make a significant change to the Clean Water Act with regards to which waters should be protected. Please see the article on page 3 to find out how you can make your voice heard on this subject.

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

# This Month's Program: April 17, 2003 - 7pm Butterflies and Blooms: Serendipity by Linda and Buck Cooper

Long time birding educators Linda and Buck Cooper of Haines City are now butterfly aficionados. Recommended by our local butterfly experts Mary and Randy, the Coopers have gone around Florida photographing, collecting (road-killed only) and identifying butterflies. Among several possible talks they give, we chose this, their favorite talk, about lucky things that have happened in their butterfly-photographing adventures. Bring your butterfly questions and join us April 17 for a fascinating program.

Deborah Green, Vice President

### March Field Trip Report Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair

Eighteen members and guests enjoyed the Field Trip to Tosohatchee State Reserve on Saturday, March 22, 2003. The weather cooperated and the insects were not a problem, as we had feared. We saw a total of 49 species of birds including American White Pelican, Wood Stork, Swallow-tailed Kite, Chuck-will's widow, Eastern Bluebird, three (3) species of Vireos and five (5) species of Wood Warblers. The most notable sighting of the day was the two (2) adult Sandhill Cranes being closely followed by two (2) little "tan balls of fluff with legs" along Taylor

Creek Road on the way into the Reserve.

Seven (7) species of butterflies were observed: Giant, Zebra and Palamedes Swallowtail, Little Yellow, Phaon Crescent, Queen and Northern Cloudywing. Some of the wildflowers enjoyed were: Hedge Bindweed, Star Rush, Lyre-leaved Sage, Southern Fleabane, Tickseed, Sneezeweed, Thistle, and my favorite, Prairie Iris (Blue Flag). It should also be noted that 92, yes, 92, Leopard Frogs were counted!

All in all, it was a good day to be in the great outdoors with good birding friends.

# April Field Trip - Mead Gardens

On Saturday, April 19, 2003 will bird the ever-popular Mead Gardens in Winter Park. This is one of the nicest little parks in the Orlando area even if you are not a birder. We usually have good luck with the returning migrants in the trees and along the creek of the park. We will walk the paths and boardwalks for a mile or two at a very leisurely pace.

The entrance to Mead Gardens is located

at 1500 S. Denning Drive. Take Garden Avenue east from Hwy 17-92 two blocks directly into the park. We will meet in the parking lot at 7:30 a.m. and return there for our picnic lunch.

Bring binoculars, field guides, water, insect repellent and your lunch and join us for a delightful walk in the park. If you have any questions, call me at 407-834-2197.

# President's Message Loretta Satterthwaite, President

On April 22, 1970 "nearly 20 million people participated. It was the largest, cleanest, most peaceful demonstration in America's history. But don't call it a success. Because the problems are still with us. Pollution. Overpopulation. Slums. Racism. Wasted resources. Planned obsolescence." (Excerpted from Earth Day — The Beginning, A Guide for Survival. 1970. Compiled and edited by the National Staff of Environmental Action. OArno Press, Inc., New York, NY. Bantam Books, Inc., New Your, NY.) It seems that every year since that first Earth Day, the battle gets tougher and tougher. Am I just tired of the fight or are we constantly losing ground? In the 25th anniversary year in 1995, an antienvironmental agenda was hurtling through Congress that threatened the protection of clean air, clean water, wetlands and endangered species. What has changed since then?

We are still fighting anti-environmental legislation on those same points in both Congress and the Florida Legislature. In fact, this year marks the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Endangered Species Act; yet, as of March 26, 2003, Florida has 111 listings (57 animals, 54 plants) as either endangered or threatened. This does not include those listed as Species of Special Concern, but their numbers are so low that they are very close to being listed (under any other administration). What can you do? Contact your legislators - both national and state — and let them know that you are very concerned for the health of the planet, not because of the ongoing war, but because of our own actions against our environment. In the words of Chief Seattle, 1854: "You must teach your children that the ground

beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach the children what we have taught our children, that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

Earth Day is April 22nd. Commit to do at least one thing during April — write a letter to a congressman or a newspaper (see Action Item), help clean up a river or park, contribute to a worthy environmental organization, or spread the word to a neighbor or child that the Earth is a Spaceship in need of help — and make the planet a better place for your having been here. Thanks.

### Conservation News Peggy Cox, Chair

As was noted in last month's OASIS, Audubon of Florida's citizen advocacy center is a great way to comment on current issues and legislation, and also to receive periodic updates on important environmental issues. Go to www.audubonofflorida.org, and click on Advocacy Center to sign up. If you would like more frequent updates during this current Florida legislative session, send me, pegcox@att.net, your email address, and I will include you on our email update and alert system during the rest of this legislative session. I plan to send at least 1-2 updates per week on what is happening in the Legislature on important environmental issues and what ones need messages from

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

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http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org

the voters to their legislators. Remember, national issues, like the threat to Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from drilling and oil leases being proposed in Congress through the budget bill currently under debate, can be commented on through National Audubon Society's interactive website at www.captiolconnect.com. An excellent way to contact your Congressional Representatives and Senators.

#### FLORIDA LEGISLATURE IN SESSION!

Some of the most important legislation now being debated involves WATER--and its importance in all things environmental. House Bill 1005 by Rep. Troutman (R), and Senate Bill 2200 by Sen. Argenziano (R) are strongly opposed by all environmental groups. Both bills call for the repeal of Sec. 373.223, Florida Statutes, which allows a Water Management District or the FL-DEP by regulation, to reserve from use by permit (CUP and Surface Water Management) applicants, water in such locations and quantities, that in their judgment may be required for the protection of fish and wildlife, or public health and safety. This part of the statute is referred to as "water reservations" and has only been used once by SJRWMD on a large scale basis. The bills would also allow the sale by private water utilities of reuse water, essentially privatizing a public resource. Water reservation would continue to be allowed for Everglades restoration. However, without the ability of WMDs and the DEP to use water reservations to preserve spring flows, maintain healthy water levels

in rivers and estuaries, and keep natural water systems healthy; natural ecosystems and our water resources will always be last in line when water is being allocated for use. Both bills are making their way through committees with some success. Please contact your Representative or Senator and urge them to oppose HB1005 and SB2200.

Other legislation that needs to be opposed are SB2042 and SB1656, both by Sen. Rod Smith (D), Alachua County. These bills ask for the conveyance to the State of Florida from the US Forest Service of the lands under the Rodman Dam and Reservoir (SB1656) and the establishment of a State Reserve at the Rodman Reservoir effectively stopping the restoration of the Ocklawaha River (SB2042). The Restoration of the Ocklawaha River is a 30 year campaign that is, once again, being held up by special interests for political reasons. Elected officials at every level, from Gov. Bush on down, and every environmental organization support the restoration of the Ocklawaha. Please contact your Senator to oppose these bills and any companion bills in the House on this issue. You can contact your State Senators through the Senate website, www.flsenate.gov, or main phone #850-487-5000; and your Representatives through the House website: www.leg.state.fl.us, or www.myfloridahouse.com.

Good legislation that Audubon supports includes SB 568 by Sen. Constantine (R) on implementing the recommendations of the

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#### Conservation... cont'd

Wekiva Basin Task Force, titled the Wekiva Preserve and Parkway Bill. We also support companion SB 1956, by Sen. Constantine (R) and Sen. Webster (R); The Wekiva Springs Protection Act. Both bills offer increased protection and preservation to the Wekiva River Basin and Wekiva springshed in northwest Orange county and eastern Lake County.

Other good news, the Lake County Public Land Acquisition Study Committee, chaired by OAS Board member, Terry Godts, has finished their work and produced an excellent report with strong recommendations for the Lake County Commission on establishing a public land acquisition program for environmental and conservation lands. It will be presented to the Lake County Commission at their April 8th meeting, starting at 9am.

OAS has joined a petition opposing part of the recently approved UCF Master Plan to build housing on a portion of the NW quadrant. This area was previously designated a conservation area, called a living laboratory for scrub, and a gopher tortoise mitigation site. Gopher tortoises have been relocated to this site over the years and the

UCF Master plan does not recognize continued conservation of this site. The UCF Master Plan is under other legal challenges for being approved without going through the proper review by State Agencies required to approve these changes to the future expansion of the UCF campus, including environmental reviews.

The next meeting of the Conservation Committee will be Monday, April 14th, at the downtown Orlando Library, starting at 6:30pm. We will tentatively have a speaker to inform us on some of the current environmental legislative issues that are occurring. For more details, call or email Peggy Cox, at pegcox@att.net, 352-429-1042.

# Spring Migration Field Trip to Fort DeSoto

Last minute details and reminders:

- 1. If you haven't mailed your check to Teresa Williams, do so IMMEDIATELY!!!
- 2. Transportation to Eckerd College on your own, Friday, April 11, 2003.
- 3. Eckerd College, 4200 54th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711 Phone 727-865-7155; ask for James Frasier or Joan Karins.
- 4. We are staying at the Continuing Education Conference Center Lodge, just inside the entrance, on the left.
- 5. Breakfast will be served in the building just behind the Lodge at 7:00 am for \$5.00. This will be a lot easier than trying to go off campus to find a place and maybe not get back in time.
- 6. If you feel like it, scout Ft. DeSoto Park, which is about a mile west of the college entrance, so you can tell us where all the good birds are!
- 7. "See you around the campus!"
- 8. If you need a map, or have any questions, call me at 407-834-2197.

Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair

# .....Action Item - Urgent!.....Action Item - Urgent!.....Action Item - Urgent!.....

The Bush Administration, through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), announced two proposals that could roll back critical provisions of the Clean Water Act, long considered one of our nation's premiere environmental laws.

The Administration issued a "guidance" to the Corps and EPA staffs on how to determine which waterways receive protection under the Clean Water Act. Staff must now get permission from their respective agencies before extending Clean Water Act protections to isolated wetlands. The "guidance" came as a result of the 2001 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, which concluded that Clean Water Act protections do not extend to certain "isolated" ponds and wetlands. These small waterways play a critical role in human and natural health, and provide critical habitat for migratory birds. The guidance takes effect immediately, and basically gives a green light to developers to fill and/or drain isolated wetlands at will since the easiest path for field staff is to not claim jurisdiction over them.

The Administration seeks to make a significant change to the Clean Water Act with regards to which waters should be protected. In order for them to do so, they must: (1) publicly announce their proposed change, and (2) obtain the public's written support, in order to execute the change. Accordingly, they've opened up a comment period by which they will accept letters, faxes and emails from the general public. The comment period closes April 16, 2003; thus we have little time to weigh-in on the proposed change and urge the Administration to reinstate protections for all of America's waters!

It's imperative the EPA hears from as many people as possible regarding the need to protect all of America's waters; that's our best chance to ensure that they do so. Please send your comment in as soon as possible! Comments are due by April 16 and should be directed to:

Water Docket
Environmental Protection Agency
Mailcode 4101T
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460
Attention: Docket ID No. OW-2002-0050

(If you submit comments by mail, EPA requests that you send four copies of your letter or comments.)

# "Winged Migration" Coming to a Theater Near You!

"Winged Migration" is a film dedicated to birds and their displacements according to the seasons. For every one of us, these winged creatures are among the most fascinating, the most shrouded in mystery and poetry. The life of many of them is spent in long peregrinations between the place where they nest and the one where they live during the winter. Many change continents. Some fly around the earth in untiring turns. And this in spite of the risks which await them. In order to better face them, even the most solitary gather together in gigantic groups, one of the great shows of nature. "Winged Migration" relates the saga of these myriad of birds all along their migration routes.

Long one of France's most respected producers, Jacques Perrin has taken on his greatest challenge yet: exploring the mystery of birds in flight. Five teams of people (more than 450 people, including 17 pilots and 14 cinematographers) were necessary to follow a variety of bird migrations through forty countries and each of the seven continents. The film covers landscapes that range from the Eiffel Tower and Monument Valley to the remote reaches of the Arctic and the Amazon. All manner of man-made machines were employed, including planes, gliders, helicopters, and balloons, and numerous innovative techniques and ingeniously designed cameras were utilized to allow the filmmakers to fly alongside, above, below and in front of their subjects. The result is a film of staggering beauty that opens one's eyes to the ineffable wonders of the natural world.

For those of you who missed seeing this Academy Award nominated film at the Florida Film Festival this past month, it will be in theaters in limited release beginning April 18th. We hope you can avail yourselves of this opportunity to enjoy this most extraordinary film. Check your local theater listings for show dates and times.

#### Nature Contest Deadline Draws Near

You have plenty of time and many opportunities left to take and submit your nature slides for the 15th Annual Chertok Nature Photography Contest. Upcoming field trips to Ft. DeSoto and Mead Gardens in April, bird banding, bird survey, bird and butterfly ID classes, etc. are just a few great settings to take your lucky shots.

The theme this year is Florida's Native Plants and Animals. This 35-mm slide competition is open to all ages. The subject matter must be native to Florida. Here's a fun and possibly profitable way to learn about Florida's native plant and animal life. Prizes are \$125 for first place, \$75 for second place, and \$50 for third place. First through third place winners and those receiving honorable mention also receive ribbons.

Deadline for postmark or hand delivery of entries is May 15, 2003, with winners announced at OAS's annual potluck dinner and slide show of photo contest entries on June 19, 2003. A contest entry form with rules for the contest can be obtained by giving your name and address to Teresa (407-644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com) or by visiting the OAS web site at www.orangeaudubonfl.org. Good shooting and good luck!

# City of Apopka Land Annexations

To continue last month's story under Conservation News, Apopka did indeed annex the 941 acres recommended for state acquisition by the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force (WBATF). However, the story is not complete. The City also agreed to not entertain any land-use changes for that land for 60 days in order to give the state legislature time to act upon the WBATF recommendations; also more land in this area is slated to be annexed by the City. On Tuesday, March 25th, the Orange County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) decided to take legal action against the City of Apopka. While voting unanimously to bring suit against the City, the BCC also agreed to a 60-day abatement period to try to work out a 'compromise' with the City. The suit had to be filed in order to preserve the right to take action at a later date, if necessary. Perhaps you have been following these happenings in the Orlando Sentinel; if not, we will try to give you a brief summary as things proceed.

# Leu Gardens Plant Sale a Bloomin' Success

Rain couldn't dampen the fun or success we experienced as a first time participant of the Leu Gardens Plant Sale on March 22nd & 23rd. Business was brisk on Saturday, and OAS appreciates the outstanding help provided by these folks: Mary Keim and Randy Snyder (rain or shine set-up and tear-down specialists), Ayme Smith, Cheryl Corbett, Marge and Steve Holt, Claire Hilliker and Leesa Sward, with out-of-town friend Karyn Patno. Because rain cancelled our Sunday opportunities, Chris Gandy, Phyllis Gray, Launa Orr and L. D. Lambright didn't get to help, but there's no need to worry - we promise them many future opportunities. Thanks to all of you for making our participation possible. Next year will be even better! Teresa Williams, Treasurer



# Great Backyard Bird Count Results - 2003

Florida was the 3rd highest State in species reported at 236 species, and Orlando was the 7th highest city in the United States in species reported at 128! Good job, Orlando! The 10 most reported birds nationally were, in descending order; Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, Dark-eyed Junco, Blue Jay; American Goldfinch, Downy Woodpecker, House Finch, Tufted Titmouse, House Sparrow, and Black-capped Chickadee.



# 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: 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.

#### **Attention Birders!**

OAS board member Susan Moss has established an email group just for local birders. It provides birders with an easy way to contact each other with news of current "hot spots," unusual sightings, and birding trip reports. It's also a great way to meet other local birders and find birding buddies. If you'd like to sign up, please email Susan at <salticid@hotmail.com> with some basic information about yourself and your birding interests.

# "Friendly Yards for Birds and Butterflies"

This course will be presented at Harry P. Leu Gardens April 12, Saturday, 10am - noon. It will offer suggestions to entice these beautiful creatures into your yard. Instructors are Audubon and Florida Native Plant Society members Richard Poole and Neta Villalobos-Bell. Pre-registration is required. Contact HPLG at 407-246-3621.

# ENJOY AN AUDUBON CAMP IN THE ROCKIES THIS SUMMER!

SESSION I June 29 – July 5, 2003

TITLE: FIELD ORNITHOLOGY

THEME: ECOLOGY BEGINS WITH BIRDS

This field camp experience is intended for beginning and intermediate birders, educators and resource managers and stresses avian identification outdoors. The AVES method of bird identification, as it is called, was developed by Gene Wilhelm, former Vice President of Education, National Audubon Society, over decades of active birding. The concept is simple: remove oneself from the daily routine and responsibility of human endeavors, escape for a time to a milieu conducive to learning and immerse oneself in birding. The AVES method uses six keys in field identification: eye, ear, behavior, habitats, field marks and ecology during a period of intense but FUN AND EXCITING BIRDING with experts. The method works and the end result is a raising of consciousness of how birds interrelate and interconnect with the rest of nature in the dynamic ecological setting of Tensleep Nature Preserve. Experience daily field identification sessions watching birds with experts in diverse Tensleep Nature Preserve habitats ranging from high mountain meadows and Ponderosa pine stands to lush canyon forests and wetlands to dry sagebrush steppes. These hands-on activities are linked to presentations and discussions, giving participants a richer awareness, understanding and appreciation of birds and ecology in the beautiful Big Horn Basin ecosystem. Led by nationally known ornithologists, this program has been developed for both novice and intermediate birders, educators and resource managers alike.

#### SESSION II July 6 – July 12, 2003

TITLE: EARTH LITERACY

THEME: RESTORING CONNECTIONS: HUMANS WITHIN NATURE

Natural history and the local environment once provided the basic foundation from which the education discipline emerged. Restoring those connections is what environmental education today is about and what makes it so compelling for cross-curricula teaching in an outdoors setting. This weeklong experiential session is primarily intended for science and non-science educators who are either already incorporating environmental education into their lesson plans or would like to. Curious parents and guardians of elementary through high school age children also are welcome. Daily field trips in the beautiful and biodiverse Tensleep Nature Preserve, discussions, special presentation and projects, and many ideas and materials to take back home will guarantee a very special week.

#### PRICING:

Early Bird registration (payment must be received by April 30, 2003) = \$875

Late registration (payment must be received by June 15, 2003) = \$975

Space is limited so early registration is encouraged. For more information or registration forms, contact Audubon Wyoming at 307-235-3485.

#### OAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FIELD TRIPS	Dick Smith
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MEMBERSHIP	Claire Hilliker
NEWSLETTER	Claire Hilliker

#### Calendar of Events

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 11-13, 2003 - Fri-Sat-Sun

Big "O" Birding Festival, Lake Okeechobee, FL www.bigobirdingfestival.com

April 12, 2003 - Saturday

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

**April 17, 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 19, 2003 - Saturday**Beginner Birding Class; 8:00am-11:00am Orlando Wetlands Park, Christmas, FL Susan Moss 407-243-9213 salticid@hotmail.com

April 26, 2003 - Saturday

Welcome Back Songbirds Festival Merritt Island NWR, Merritt Island, FL 321-861-0667, http://merrittisland.fws.gov/

May 3, 2003 - Saturday

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

May 3-10-17-24, 2003 - Saturdays

Central Florida Butterfly Course; 2:30pm-5:30pm. Harry P. Leu Gardens 407-246-3621 Instructors: Randy Snyder & Mary Keim

May 15, 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

May 17-18, 2003 - Sat-Sun

Audubon Nature Festival, Hilton Head, SC Info: Virginia Culter 843-681-4461 www.hiltonheadaudubon.org/festival.htm

June 1, 2003 - Saturday

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

#### Birdathon 2003!

It's still not too late to donate to the annual Birdathon fund-raiser! The teams went out and counted as many species as possible on April 5th and the results will be reported at the April meeting. If you would still like to help with this fund-raising effort, please send your contribution to Birdathon Chairperson Sue Farnsworth at 419 Elkwood Court, Orlando, 32825.

Remember that your donation could be tax-deductible for you, and you are contributing to helping to educate and increase awareness of the environment right here in our local community.

Thank you to all who have already sent donations to the Birdathon, to all of you have pledged to a Birdathon participant, and to all of the volunteers who helped with the Birdathon count! Birdathon Chairperson, Sue Farnsworth

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