



"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, p3
President's Message p2
Conservation News p2
Audubon Adventures p3
Volunteers Needed p3
Great Backyard Bird Count 2004 p4
Calendar of Events p4

This Month's Program: January 15, 2004 - 7:00pm Simple Gifts: Our Nation's Forests, by George Sibley

Filmmaker George Sibley, through his company Gale Force Films based in Daytona Beach, has developed a series of films on environmental subjects. For our January program, Sibley will present Simple Gifts, a plea to end commercial logging in the National Forests. Sibley points out that only 4% of our wood products come from our national forests, and these forests could much better serve our country if dedicated to protecting watersheds, protecting wildlife and providing recreational opportunities. Simple Gifts is now distributed nationally by the Sierra Club. Join us on January 15th for an interesting and informative program.

Deborah Green, Vice President

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 2004!

Teresa Williams, Treasurer

January Field Trip - Merritt Island NWR, Titusville

On Saturday, January 17, 2004, our monthly field trip will be to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge in Titusville. This is one of the very best locations for birding in the United States. We should see many species of waders, shorebirds and ducks with some of them being quite close. The trip will be primarily a driving tour and will be a good chance to view many species from the comfort of your vehicle.

We will bird until approximately noon and then enjoy a picnic lunch. Meet in the rear parking lot of the Burger King located

at Hwy 50 (Colonial Dr) and Alafaya Trail in east Orange County in time to sign up, get assigned to a vehicle for carpooling and leave at 7:30 AM. Please be on time. It is essential that we take the fewest number of vehicles as this a popular location.

Bring your binoculars, spotting scopes if you have one, field guides, lunch and your enthusiasm for birds and join us for a fun day. If you have any questions, contact Dick Smith 407-834-2197 (Home), 407-257-7361 (Cell) or dick.smith@zepamfg.com.

2nd & 3rd Hawk ID Field Trips

On Saturday, January 10, 2004 we will have the 2nd Birds of Prey ID Field Trip. The 3rd Field Trip will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2004. Both of these ID trips will be led by Bob Sanders, our resident expert on Raptors and will be held at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area. If you want to see hawks and eagles, and lots of them, this is the place!

DICK SMITH, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

Meet at the old Bass Sod Farm gate, which is located 1.1 miles west of U S 441 on Jones Ave. in Zellwood at 9:00AM. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, folding chairs, any refreshment that you desire and your enthusiasm for learning.

If you have any questions, contact Dick Smith 407-834-2197 (Home), 407-257-7361 (Cell) or dick.smith@zepamfg.com.

Orange Audubon Society meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of every month (Sept - June) 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

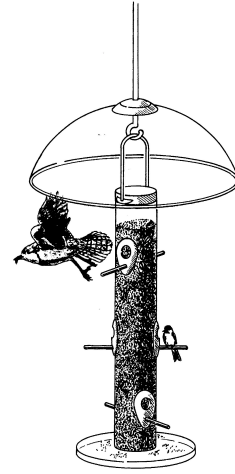
Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2004. Now is the time to make that New Year's resolution to make a difference and leave the world a bit better for your having been there. Orange Audubon Society would welcome your assistance toward that effort.

We had a wonderful crowd at the December meeting. What a pleasant surprise after worrying that the meeting date was too close to the holidays and there was no room at the inn (Leu) for switching to another date. Bill did his usual excellent, entertaining presentation and everyone had a nice break from the stress of the season.

Now, it's back to business. The legisla-

tive session will be starting soon and that will be a busy time for Auduboners and other conservation-minded individuals. (When isn't it a busy time for those of us involved with that type of activity?!)

We've had a volunteer for one of the open board positions and I'm sure the board will ratify the nomination at our next board meeting. We'll keep you informed on that; however, we still need someone to fill the secretary position through June. If you have any interest in helping in that way, please contact me (407/886-2925 or LNS-OAS@att.net).



Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

Not too much new this month - and the big issues that we are part of, like the Wekiva and the SR 429 extension have been prominently featured in the media. A brief recap:

Wekiva Coordinating Committee recommended just this week for legislative help for the State to purchase 4 parcels of land considered the most important in protecting the recharge and springshed. The Lake County Commission withdrew their support for the OOCEA to continue feasibility studies of extending the 429 into Lake County. This is was tied to support for the Wekiva Parkway and a connector road from it to the Sorrento-Plymouth area on SR46. About 2 years ago the Lake Commission withdrew from their interlocal agreement with OOCEA on this road, but subsequently entered into

a new agreement that they terminated on Tuesday, December 16, 2003.

The Orange County Comp Plan Land Use Amendment that would have changed the use on 33 acres in the Avalon area for the construction of a super WalMart was withdrawn from the County Commission Agenda. The Orange County Planning and Zoning commission had recommended denial of this petition and there had been much public opposition (including OAS) to the proposal. This was the one that would have required filling 16+acres of Class 1 wetlands, connected to the Big Econ river. There was proposed mitigation that was not comparable and the precedent that would have been set by this action would have serious implications for future requests.

In Lake County, a development order approved by the County September 23rd, that would have allowed higher density development in the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern near Clermont, has been appealed by the Department of Community Affairs. DCA has petitioned for an administrative hearing under Chap 120., and is asking for rescission of this development order. This development, a PUD rezoning (applicant Robert Shakar), has been officially opposed by OAS in the last year. It has changed considerably and the final proposal that was approved set a precedent for rezoning in the GSACSC under the County's approval that was not in compliance with the Comp Plan policies now in place. We are pleased about the DCA appeal, and local residents and others will be joining the appeal as intervenors.

The UCF master plan challenge hearings with DCA have finished, and a report should be coming out in January from DCA with recommendations. I know everyone received some of the emails reminding of the deadline on December 12th for public comment on the plan. We responded and I'm sure most of you sent in comments in support of preservation of the arboreteum and the NW conservation area.

OAS members Marge Holt and Nancy Prine were asked to serve on the new ad hoc GreenPlace land acquisition committee by Orange County EPD. Neither are serving as official representatives of OAS. I don't know exactly what criteria the county has used to select the members of the committee, but there are several environmental organizations represented through the people selected. This committee is supposed to come up with a criteria system for lands that can be purchased with the Greenplace funds. It is not the beginning of a permanent land acquisition program. It is my understanding that once the funds now available through the new \$20 million bond issue and partnerships with other agencies are gone - that's it. Hopefully we can influence this to try and become a permanently funded program - maybe starting smaller than they envision at this time. The next meeting is February 18th, 1pm I think, at the County Administration Bldg. As the meetings are open to the public, I will get the exact time and place to send out in January.

Happy Holidays and a safe and healthy start to the New Year to all of you.

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
P.O. Box 941142
Maitland, FL 32794-1142

President.....Loretta Satterthwaite (lms-oas@att.net)
407-886-2925
Address Change.....Mike Daley (mikeda@atlantic.net)
386-668-5021
Editor.....Claire Hilliker (hilliker@iag.net)
407-677-5374

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<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

Volunteers needed for February Events

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) did register for a display at the Dr. Kelly Day at Kelly Park in Apopka on February 21st because a couple of people contacted me and said they could help at the event. We can use another volunteer or two; this is an easy event to help with since it is open to the public from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and even with set up and tear down it's shorter than most of our events. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me (407/886-2925 or LNS-OAS@att.net).

The following week, February 28th, we need volunteers to help at the Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) Annual Festival. This is a much larger event with many activities in which OAS will be involved since we are a co-sponsor of the event. We will be selling our t-shirts, etc. at this event, therefore, we need several volunteers. We 'train on the job' for our fundraising portion of the event, so please join us for a fun-filled, hopefully profitable, event.

OAS has not yet committed to participating in the Horticultural Display area of the Central Florida Fair (Feb. 26 through Mar. 7) because of lack of volunteers to help at the event. This would be an informational display mostly since it conflicts with the OWP event that we co-sponsor on the first weekend (see above). However, if you are interested in helping, please contact me as soon as possible (see first paragraph for contact information); this could be a good event for recruiting new members for OAS.

Spring Migration Field Trip to Fort DeSoto

Once again, this year we will sponsor an overnight field trip to Ft. DeSoto Park in St. Petersburg. The field trip will be on Saturday, April 24, 2004. The plan is to provide your own transportation there the day before, Friday, and spend that night, April 23, at the Continuing Education Conference Center at Eckerd College. This allows us to get an early start on Saturday. The cost is \$70.00 per room, two people per room. Also, the college will be providing a complete breakfast for only \$5.00 per person.

As most of you know, this is one of the premier birding spots in the entire country during spring migration. For some of us, this is our only opportunity to see many of the northern breeding species, and to get to see them in full breeding plumage is a real treat. In 2003, this was undoubtedly one of our best field trips. We had a total of 82 species and, then, we missed quite a few. If you have



not been to Ft. DeSoto Park in the spring, you owe it to yourself to bird this magnificent location.

From the December thru March meetings, we will have a sign-up sheet available in the front lobby. Payment is due on April 1, 2003. Cancellation, with a full refund, is Monday, April 19, 2004.

If you have any questions, contact Dick Smith 407-834-2197 (Home) 407-257-7361 (Cell) or dick.smith@zepamfg.com.

Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair

1st "Return to Roost" Field Trip

This will be a new approach for Orange Audubon Society, an evening field trip.

On Saturday, January 24, 2004, we will travel to Orlando Wetlands Park, Christmas, in east Orange County to watch thousand of birds returning to roost for the night. After foraging all day along the St. Johns River, and other locations, waders and other birds swarm back to the OWP to spend the night. It can be a spectacular sight. With a beautiful sunset in the background, watching thousands of birds flying in from all directions to find a safe place to rest, can take your breath away. This is strictly a driving field trip. We have been given permission to take vehicle on the berms of OWP and our plan is to drive back to a predetermined location with our folding chairs, and wait for the birds to arrive. Bob Wheeler, who is intimately familiar with the Wetland Park and has led many other birding groups on similar types of trips, will be our field trip leader.

Meet in the rear parking lot of the Burger King at Hwy 50 (Colonial Dr.) and Alafaya Trail in east Orange County at 3:00PM. Bring binoculars, field guides, any refreshments that you desire, folding chairs and join us for a new kind of field trip. Remember that it can get quite chilly when the sun goes down in January- even in sunny Florida.

If you have any questions, contact Dick Smith 407-834-2197 (Home), 407-257-7361 (Cell) of dick.smith@zepamfg.com.

Dick Smith, Field Trip Chair

Connect children to nature in your community with AUDUBON ADVENTURES!

Do you know a student (grades 3-6) who might be interested in the environment, perhaps your child or grandchild?

AUDUBON ADVENTURES is an environmental education program for children in grades 3 to 6. Developed by professional environmental educators, AUDUBON ADVENTURES presents basic, scientifically accurate facts about birds, wildlife, and their habitats. It comes to you packaged as a Classroom Kit (serving 32 students) or Individual Kit (serving 1 student). The program is used by classroom teachers, after-school program coordinators, special education instructors, language arts teachers, and homeschoolers.

The goal of AUDUBON ADVENTURES is to develop in young people an appreciation, awareness, and understanding of the natural world -- birds, other wildlife, and all living things; the habitats, systems, and interplay of forces that affect living things; and the connections between people and nature.

Sponsor an AUDUBON ADVENTURES classroom! A check to Orange Audubon in the amount of \$41.50 will send a package of environmental lessons for the children, a teacher's guide, a poster, and other materials to the Orange County classroom of your choice. Note on your check that the (tax deductible) donation is for AUDUBON ADVENTURES and mail it to OAS at the address listed on page 2.

Thanks!

OAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

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VICE PRESIDENT (PROGRAMS)
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EDUCATION Deborah Green & Leesa Sward

FIELD TRIPS Dick Smith

FINANCE Milton Heiberg

HOSPITALITY Tom & Ruth Williams

MEMBERSHIP Mike Daley

NEWSLETTER Claire Hilliker

Calendar of Events

January 10, 2004 - Saturday
Field Trip - Birds of Prey ID @ LANSRA
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

January 15, 2004 - Thursday
General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.OAS
Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

January 17, 2004 - Saturday
Field Trip - Merritt Island NWR, Titusville FL
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

January 17-19, 2004 - Sat-Mon
Everglades BirdFest - Everglades Nat'l Park
Broward Audubon Society 954-776-5585
www.browardaudubon.org/birdfest

January 24, 2004 - Saturday
Return to Roost - Orlando Wetlands Park
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

February 13-16, 2004 - Fri-Mon
Great Backyard Bird Count
http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/

February 14, 2004 - Saturday
Field Trip - Birds of Prey ID @ LANSRA
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

February 21, 2004 - Saturday
Dr. Kelly Day, Kelly Park, Apopka FL
Loretta Satterthwaite 407-886-2925

February 28, 2004 - Saturday
Orlando Wetlands Park Festival; 9am-3pm.
Mark Sees 407-568-1706

April 2-4, 2004 - Fri-Sun
Big "O" Birding Festival; Lake Okeechobee FL
www.bigbirdingfestival.com

April 23-24, 2004 - Fri-Sat
Ft. DeSoto Field Trip; St. Petersburg FL
Dick Smith 407-834-2197
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

Have Fun with the 2004 Great Backyard Bird Count!

As in years past, 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 13-16, 2004. 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?



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Orange Audubon Society
P.O. Box 941142
Maitland, FL 32794-1142

