



"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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This Month's Program: March 17, 2005 - 7:00pm Specialty Birds, Endemics and Bird Conservation in the Bahamas by Earl Scales.

Much of the archipelago known as the Bahamas lies just across the Gulf Stream from Southeast Florida yet Bahamian avifauna remains largely unexplored by Florida's birders. Earl Scales and his wife, Ingrid are the owners of Wild Birds Unlimited of Gainesville, FL and of Turnstone Ecotours, a small birding and conservation oriented tour company offering programs in the Bahamian islands of Abaco and Andros. This special presentation will feature beautiful slide photography of the true endemics and specialty bird species of the Bahamas, anecdotal stories of life and birding in the Bahamas, and a discussion of natural resource conservation measures undertaken by local, federal, and international organizations.

Join us March 17 for a fascinating program.
Deborah Green, Vice President

Reminders...

... March meeting last chance to sign up for the Ft. DeSoto Field Trip. See p3 for details
 ... March Field Trip change!!! See article at right.
 ... OAS Birdathon 2005, April 16, 2005. Pledge Sheet may be found on p4.

March Field Trip - Lyonia Preserve, Deltona FL

******NOTE THE CHANGE!******

It's a change from our planned trip, but it's an exciting one! Due to event scheduling conflicts at Payne's Prairie State Park, we will not have a tour guide for Saturday March 19th. (We will tour the park on a future trip) But what an alternative! On the nineteenth, we will have a staff biologist guided encounter with the Scrub Jays at Lyonia Preserve in Deltona, Florida. Randy Sleister and Bonnie Cary have kindly set up time to lead us at 8am on Saturday morning. The Scrub Jay colony here is a special one and we should have a great time "visiting" with them. Bonnie is the staff biologist for the preserve, so she knows the birds well. We will spend any time after the Jays birding the remainder of this beautiful piece of Florida's "disappearing" scrub habitat. It abounds with

many other species as well.

We will meet at the McDonalds behind the Chevron on Highway 46 just east of I-4 at 7:10 and be ready to leave at 7:30 at the latest. We will caravan (or carpool) from here to the preserve. The rangers want to start the tour at 8am at the preserve. This is a hiking trip, though not a long or strenuous hike. Bring a picnic for the pavilion after the hike if you desire. We will return to McDonalds after lunch. Info before Saturday from Bob Ferguson 407-644-7850. Guidance on Saturday morning: Bob F. cell: 407-619-4484 Bob Wheeler cell 390-0333. Dick Smith cell: 407-257-7361.

****note: the sink hole still has the "quick route" from I-4 to the preserve closed. You will need to use the first Deltona exit instead. Directions provided Saturday morning.***

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

Let me take this opportunity to thank each of you who has responded to the appeal letter that was sent to you last month. It is gratifying to know that you do care and are willing to support the various programs that Orange Audubon Society (OAS) offers during the year. I know many of you have yet to respond, but thanks in advance for doing so.

As this issue is in the mail, several of your fellow members are busy Saturday and Sunday with fundraising and membership recruitment at the Harry P. Leu Gardens Annual Plant Sale. We hope you attended the plant sale and were able to get some good plants for your backyard wildlife habitat.

Let me remind you that the first weekend in April (Sat. 2nd & Sun. 3rd), we will be participating in the Lake Eola Fiesta in the Park. This is the last OASis before that

event and volunteers are needed, so contact me (407-886-2925 or LNS-OAS@att.net) or Teresa (407-644-0796) so that we may set up a schedule for that event. Remember, many hands make light work!!

Good news came out last week that Orange County has just agreed to purchase some of the acreage that needed to be preserved in the Wekiva Basin. However, remember also that our legislature is again in session and who knows what they will decide to do to or for our natural areas. There's so much more that needs to be protected and development is occurring so rapidly in Florida that we must be ever watchful and vocal.

I sincerely hope that you've been taking some time to enjoy some outdoor activities during these last months. The weather has

been ideal for birdwatching or hiking, as well as for taking photos of some aspect of natural Florida that you could enter into the 17th annual OAS Chertok Nature Photography Contest. [Entry forms are available at our meetings, our website (www.orangeaudubonfl.org), Colonial Photo and Hobby, or by calling Teresa at 407-644-0796.]

Continue watching your bird feeders and bird baths. We've been enjoying visits by Florida Scrub Jays at ours lately. It's not the first time we've seen them but, unfortunately, it is most likely another sign of encroachment into their habitats. Anyway, enjoy the migration season (don't forget our special Ft. DeSoto field trip) and keep your feeders and bird baths supplied. See you soon.

Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

Did you know that according to statistics of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission that in 2001, 3.2 million people participated in wildlife watching activities in Florida!

The proposed environmental resource management plan for southeast Orange County, now known as the Avalon South Economic Development and Environmental Resource Management Study is moving forward slowly, with an independent planning firm compiling the data and input from stakeholders on this area for the County Commission. Moving much faster are the developers of the ICP property with their DRI (Development of Regional Impact) plans, even though this study that includes all the

area their development will impact, will not be finished until September. These plans, including the extension of Avalon Blvd to the Beeline are moving ahead very quickly. The ICP DRI requires an amendment to the Orange County Comp Plan and they have moved quickly to put together the needed information for that process. The proposed Comp Plan amendment is scheduled to be heard at the Orange County Planning Agency meeting on March 16th. After their recommendation the amendment will be presented to the County Commission in April for a vote. This development and road extension will trigger more growth in southeast Orange county before an adequate assessment has been done what's necessary to protect the remaining natural resources in that area, and the pressing transportation needs including much needed mass transit. Environmentally, the Econ River and its tributaries will be affected, and the possibility of allowing urban growth on the east side of the Econ River will again become a possible focus. OAS will be commenting on this, asking for a slower time frame to allow the study to be completed.

The Orange County Commission voted to accept the GreenPlace committee's recommendation on the proposed Econ River Environmental Education Center. The recommendation was to locate the center on the edge of the Hal Scott Preserve, to keep the scale of the center similar to the Tibet-Butler Nature Center, and that the \$500,000 proposed for siting and design be put back in

the budget until the FY 2006 budget. At that time the plan and location will be reconsidered by the Commission from the proposed sites already evaluated by the GreenPlace committee. The Commission also approved a first land purchase for the Wekiva land acquisition plan.

Did you know that according to the US Department of Interior, Department of Commerce, and Fish & Wildlife Service that Wildlife viewing (includes birding and photography) had an impact of over \$1.5 Billion dollars per year in Florida!

Rally For the Ocklawaha River, held in Palatka on February 18-20th was a success. Environmentalists from all over the State came, enjoyed the natural places near the River, the River itself, and a great gathering of activists and musicians articulating the ways to complete the restoration of the Ocklawaha and take down the Rodman dam. More information can be found at: www.fladefenders.org.

Did you know that according to the sources listed above, nationally over the last 10 years fishing expenditures increased 14%, hunting 29% and wildlife watching 41%!

Write your Congressman and Senators about the environmental injustices in the US budget FY 2006. Everglades Restoration land acquisition funds are being shortchanged again, and National Audubon supports \$500 million in the budget to properly fund land acquisition as called for in the Restoration legislation. There are budget CUTS for

...cont'd on p3

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>

February Field Trip Report BOB FERGUSON, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

Once again, Orlando Wetlands Park really delivers!! Twenty-nine happy birders spent the morning of the nineteenth doing the "berm excursion" with the birds. A beautiful day gave us incredible encounters with 74 bird species as well as deer, otters, turtles, gators, and many homo sapiens. (There was also a cross-country run around the perimeter of the park while we were there) What a bird list! Nine raptors, including Sharp-shinned hawk and TWO CRESTED CARACARAS! It appears that the Caracaras may be expanding their breeding range this far north. This was a great "first" for many. Thanks in part to a northern Harrier scaring

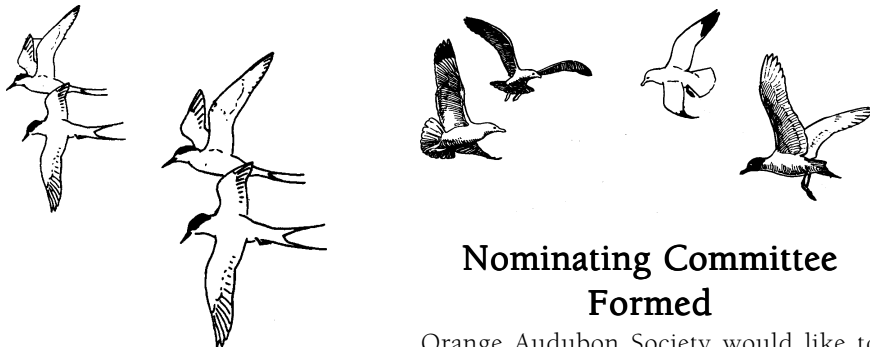
up the population; we also got great views of both American and Least Bitterns. Other highlights were juvenile Bald Eagles on the nest, a patient Limpkin that posed in a tree for our scopes, and even the elusive Purple Gallinule. We also enjoyed Mottled ducks, both King and Sora rails, Black crowned Night Heron, and Snipe. In the trees we found Orange-crowned and Black and White Warblers. We encourage you to get out and enjoy the park this spring while the Limpkins are still calling!! Thanks once again to Bob Sanders and Dick Smith for their skillful guidance. See you with the Scrub Jays in March!

Last Chance for Ft. DeSoto Field Trip!

If you want to go on the Ft. DeSoto Field Trip on April 8-9, 2005, you MUST call me, e-mail or sign up at the March 17 meeting. This is the absolute last chance to get on the list for a room at Eckerd College for the evening of Friday, April 8.

Each room is \$70.00 for one (1) or two (2) people. A complete breakfast will be served on Saturday morning for only an additional \$5.00 per person.

We will then proceed to Ft. DeSoto Park for some of the very best spring migration birding on the east coast of the U. S. If you enjoy seeing all of the colorful little song-bird migrants in full breeding plumage, you should try to get to Ft. DeSoto Park sometime in the months of March and April. It is one of the premier migrant traps anywhere! Dick Smith, Field Trip Leader



Nominating Committee Formed

Orange Audubon Society would like to thank Mike Daley (386-668-5021), Mary Keim (407-851-5416) and Dick Smith (407-257-7361) for agreeing to serve on this year's nominating committee. Board members are elected for a three-year term and each year in June five directors' terms expire. The committee is assigned the task of finding persons to fill vacancies on the board of directors. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving on the board of directors, please contact one of these three committee members. A tentative slate will be offered at the March meeting and the final slate, with nominations from the floor also accepted, will be announced just prior to the general election at the April meeting. The newly elected directors will begin their term immediately following the June 2005 meeting.

Conservation... from p2

FY2006 in funding rural conservation programs, EPA enforcement of regulations, and conservation science programs and grants. This budget includes drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for what scientists have predicted is less than 1 year's worth of oil. Carol Browner, Chair of the NAS Board of Directors, and former head of the US EPA, has called for protection of the Refuge in legislation and rejection of the drilling proposals. Let's back her up and let our representatives know we are opposed to drilling in ANWR and for increased fuel efficiency standards, conservation of energy and alternative energy research.

Great Backyard Bird Count Results

The 2005 Great Backyard Bird Count results compiled so far show Florida as the #3 state in the nation in species reported with 267 species. Texas and California were numbers 1 and 2 respectively. Orlando did well again this year, tying for 9th place with Scottsdale, Arizona for reporting the most species at 128. Towns in the metro area also reported a large number of species with Winter Park reporting 79, Apopka 69, and Clermont 55 species. Over all the Orlando area had a couple of unusual sightings including 2 Groove-billed Ani in Apopka, 1 Dickcissel, 1 Baltimore Oriole, and 1 Lincoln's Sparrow; all reported in Orlando.

Nationally there were 46,900 checklists submitted as of February 25th, and 592 species observed with the top 5 species reported being; Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, Dark-Eyed Junco, American Goldfinch, and Downy Woodpeckers. You can check out all the results online at www.birdsource.org, or the National Audubon or Cornell Ornithology Lab websites.

Orlando Wetlands Festival Successful

With major concerns about the weather, the decision was made to proceed with the plans for the Orlando Wetlands Park Annual Festival on February 26th. The day began with a little bit of a wind and some cloudy skies; the sun soon followed and eventually, the rain showers came. However, these were mild showers (compared to previous years at the festival) and the exhibitors and attendees soon were able to continue with their tours and fun-making.

Orange Audubon Society co-sponsors this annual event with the City of Orlando and it takes a lot of coordination and volunteer activity. This year's festival was successful because of the following OAS members who willingly contributed their efforts: Mary Keim, Randy Snyder, Bob Wheeler, Bill Partington, Lorne Malo, Pete Vogt, Betty Seegers, Peggy Cox, Leesa Sward, Claire Hilliker (who impressed all with her rock wall prowess), Milton Heiberg, Bob Stamps, Ayme Smith, Susan Clary, Chris Gandy, Dave Wilson, Teresa Williams, and Bill Tippit. Thanks to each of you. OAS couldn't have done it without you!

Loretta Satterthwaite, President

Audubon Academy — 2005

Would you like to learn some techniques that would allow you to feel comfortable volunteering to help Orange Audubon Society (OAS) in a leadership role? On March 18–20, at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, there will be a program that will try to accomplish that objective. It is sponsored by local Audubon chapters, Audubon of Florida and National Audubon Society. The weekend will consist of field trips, social events and practical workshops covering topics such as improving community outreach, developing educational and conservation programs, effective use of newsletters and websites, managing budgets and reports, and Eight Habits of Successful Chapter Presidents. Registration for the weekend workshop is \$25 and participants will be responsible for their own travel, meals and accommodations (some rooms available for \$65/night double occupancy at Eckerd College). For details of the workshop and a registration form, you may visit www.audubonofflorida.org, or contact Loretta (407-886-2925 or LNS-OAS@att.net).

Orange Audubon Society, who has contributed funds to help underwrite this workshop, has also budgeted some money to defray registration expenses for their members who would like to attend these workshops with the intent of then volunteering their services to OAS. The amount of reimbursement to any individual will depend on the number of OAS members who attend the academy and who subsequently submit their receipts for reimbursement. If OAS can also defray some of the other expenses, we'll do what we can up to the limit of our budgeted amounts. Feel free to contact Loretta with any questions you may have.

Public Discussion On Water Quality

March 10, 2005
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Lake-Sumter Community College
Magnolia Room, Everett A. Kelly Convocation Center
9501 US 441, Leesburg, FL

Join in a discussion on how to ensure clean and healthy waters in Lake Apopka, the Clermont Chain of Lakes, and the Harris Chain of Lakes.

Sponsored by the Upper Ocklawaha Basin Working Group,
a joint water quality effort of citizens, agencies, and organizations.

- Registration at 6:30 pm (no fee)
- Presentation and question and answer session from 7:00 –8:30 pm
- Poster session and displays from 6:30-9:00 pm

For more information, contact

Terry Pride
FL Department of Environmental Protection
850-245-8545 terry.pride@dep.state.fl.us

Or

Lance Lumbard
Lake County Water Authority
352-343-3777 lancel@lcwa.org

Preparations for June meeting under way

On the evening of June 16th following a scrumptious covered dish dinner, OAS will present its finale program of the season — the showing of the 2005 Chertok Nature Photography Contest (CNPC) entries, announcement of winners and awarding of prizes.

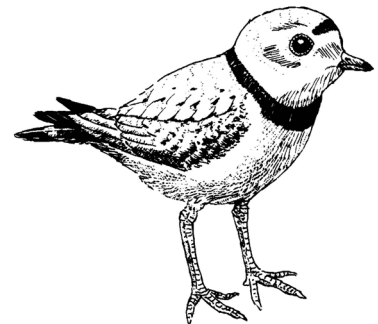
To double your pleasure and heighten the suspense of the evening, we invite you to participate in a silent auction to be conducted concurrent with the dinner program and other activities. Friendly competition is encouraged in bidding for 'Make It, Bake It & Grow It' auction items plus merchandise and other items donated by community businesses/friends to benefit the CNPC Endowment Fund.

If you have artistic, culinary or craft talents (or all three), here's your chance to show them off by donating a creation for the silent auction to benefit OAS. We'll also have a table(s) for small 'rummage' items, too! So let me know what's in your closet or what you'd like to make, bake or grow, etc. — and let me know by May 31st, please. Organizers need advance notice to determine table and layout needs, prepare bid sheets and organize volunteers.

To make a donation, please contact Teresa (mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or 407-644-0796) and provide these details: your name and phone number, description of item(s), retail or appraised value, starting bid amount (if desired) and the OAS fund you wish to benefit from the proceeds — i.e., the CNPC Endowment or general operating fund.

Your support will be sincerely appreciated. Acknowledgements for tax purposes are available upon request.

Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair



OAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VICE PRESIDENT (PROGRAMS)
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• Bob Stamps • Pete Vogt • John Winfree • Gordon Wol-
fram

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CHERTOK NPC Teresa Williams

CONSERVATION Peggy Cox

EDUCATION Kimberly Rougeux
& Leesa Sward

FIELD TRIPS Bob Ferguson

FINANCE Milton Heiberg

HOSPITALITY Tom Williams

MEMBERSHIP Mike Daley

NEWSLETTER Claire Hilliker

Calendar of Events

March 5, 2005 - Saturday

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

March 12, 2005 - Saturday

Pelican Island Wildlife Festival; 9am-4pm
Riverview Park, Sebastian FL
www.nbbd.com/npr/pips/2005fest/index.html

March 12, 2005 - Saturday

Lake Jessup Conservation Area Bird Survey.
Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

March 17, 2005 - 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

March 18- 20, 2005 - Fri-Sun

Suwannee River Valley Birding Festival
White Springs, FL info: 877-635-3655 or
www.floridabirdingfestival.com

March 19, 2005 - Saturday

OAS Field Trip - **Lyonia Preserve**
Bob Ferguson 407-644-7850
rfergusonhsd@earthlink.net

March 19, 2005 - Saturday

Mead Gardens Bird Survey; 8:00am-10:00am.
Dexter Richardson 407-760-8193
dex@dexwine.com

March 26, 2005 - Saturday

Hal Scott Regional Preserve & Park and Long
Branch Park Butterfly Survey.
Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

April 2, 2005 - Saturday

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

April 8-9, 2005 - Fri-Sat

Ft. DeSoto Field Trip; St. Petersburg FL
Dick Smith 407-257-7361
dick.smith@zepamfg.com

April 16, 2005 - Saturday

OAS Birdathon 2005
Claire Hilliker 407-677-5374
hilliker@iag.net

April 21, 2005 - 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

April 23, 2005 - Saturday

OAS Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park
Bob Ferguson 407-644-7850

Orange Audubon Society Recognizes an Outstanding Young Scientist

Congratulations goes out to **Lindsey Bishop** who was chosen to receive this year's OAS Special Award for the 2005 Dr. Nelson Ying Orange County Science Exposition that was held on February 21-24, 2005 at the Central Florida Fairgrounds. Lindsey's project, "LakeWatch - What's in our Water?" was selected as research that supports efforts to improve the quality of our air, water, and habitat critical to humans, birds, and other wildlife.

She received a prize consisting of a Certificate of Recognition, a year's membership to the Audubon Society, (National, Audubon of Florida, and Orange Audubon) as well as a cash prize of \$50. Congratulations to this promising young scientist for excellent research and presentation!

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