



"The voice of Conservation in Central Florida"

OASis



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

VOLUME 42

February 2007

NUMBER 6

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This Month's Program: February 15, 2007 - 7:00pm Fish and Mollusks of our Florida Springs by Jim Williams

Florida's springs are unique ecosystems with water of a constant temperature bubbling from our aquifer. Fish and mollusks inhabiting our springs form part of an elaborate food web. Introduced species have an impact, as do changes in water quality and quantity. Conservation of endangered fishes and mollusks has been the life's work of retired ichthyologist Jim Williams, this month's speaker. Dr. Williams, now a Research Associate at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, will share his knowledge of creatures we see while snorkeling in our springs and that are eaten by some of our favorite birds.

Bring all your questions and join us February 15 for an interesting and informative program.
Deborah Green, Vice President

Reminders...

- ... Hawk ID Class will be held **February 10th** (not February 17th as previously reported). See page 3 for details.
- ... Volunteers needed to help at Orlando Wetlands Park Festival February 24, 2007. See page 2 for details.
- ... OAS Birdathon 2007 will be on March 31. See page 3 for details.

February Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park

On Saturday, February 17th, OAS will visit Orlando Wetlands Park near Christmas. We will hike about three miles, mostly on dike roads through this artificial wetland constructed to treat reclaimed water. The wetlands attract wintering waterfowl as well as long-legged waders. For more information about this 1650 acre site please refer to www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/net/t_ParkRec.aspx?Park=341

Meet at 7:30am in the back parking lot of Burger King on S.R. 50 (Colonial Drive) just east of S.R. 434 (Alafaya Trail). Bring lunch, drink and birding gear. For more information about the trip, call us at 407-851-5416.

Mary Keim and Randy Snyder
Field Trip Committee

January Field Trip Report MARY KEIM, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

Twenty-eight OAS birders attended the trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge on January 20th. The group observed at least 84 bird species including Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Glossy Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Clapper Rail, Sora, American Avocet, Great Black-backed Gull, Forster's

Tern, Eastern Screech-Owl, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and Savannah Sparrow.

The most abundant butterfly for the day was Great Southern White. Other animals seen include Florida Redbelly Turtle, Florida Green Water Snake and a sunfish right before it was swallowed by an Anhinga.

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

The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise

by Michael Grunwald, The Washington Post

Join us on March 27th as author Michael Grunwald presents his recent book *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise*, in an event sponsored by Orange Audubon Society, Central Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, and the Florida Humanities Council. The Everglades was once reviled as a liquid wasteland, and Americans dreamed of draining it. Now it is revered as a national treasure, and Americans have launched the largest environmental project in history to try to save it. The Swamp is the stunning story of the destruction and possible resurrection of the Everglades, the saga of man's abuse of nature in southern Florida and his unprecedented efforts to make amends. Michael Grunwald, a prize-winning national reporter for The Washington Post, takes readers on a riveting journey from the Ice Ages to the present, illuminating the natural, social and political history of one of America's most beguiling but least understood patches of land.

The talk will be on March 27 at 7pm at Leu Gardens in the Camellia Room. Books will be available for sale and signing. Leu Gardens is located at 1920 N. Forest Ave, Orlando, phone: (407) 246-2620. The talk is free and open to the public. For further information, call 407-553-0028.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY:

Michael Grunwald is a reporter on the national staff of The Washington Post. He has won the George Polk Award for national reporting, the Worth Bingham Prize for investigative reporting, and the Society of Environmental Journalists award for in-depth reporting. He has covered everything from AIDS in Africa to Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; he wrote the Post's lead news story about the September 11 attacks.

In March 2006, Simon & Schuster published his first book, the critically acclaimed *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise*. Publishers Weekly called it "enthraling," the Palm Beach Post called it "magnificent," the Washington Post called it "a brilliant work of research and reportage," and the New York Times called Grunwald "a terrific writer."

Mike lives in Miami with his wife, Cristina Dominguez, and their Boston terrier, Shamu.

OAS Needs YOU for Orlando Wetlands Park Festival

Saturday, February 24th 2007 (9–3 pm) marks the official date and time for the 8th Annual Orlando Wetlands Park Festival, co-sponsored by the City of Orlando and Orange Audubon Society (OAS). Volunteers are needed from 8am–3:30pm to assist with a variety of activities that include: leading guided bus and walking tours, providing information at environmental education tables, selling t-shirts at our fundraising

tables, instructing children in making nature collages and other duties.

OAS informally "adopted" Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) several years ago and has proudly co-sponsored the festival ever since by providing expert-guides for bird watching and nature photo treks through the park as well as other nature activities. In addition, OAS volunteers also conduct bird and butterfly ID classes and lead birding field

trips as well as school field trips at OWP when needed throughout the year.

You are guaranteed time off to enjoy the activities, so bring your binoculars and help OAS make this event a success. For more details and to reserve your volunteer time slot, please contact Teresa: 407-644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com because OAS needs YOU to make this event a success! Thank you. Teresa Williams

Fort DeSoto Trip on April 13-14

The Fort DeSoto Park Field Trip is scheduled for April 13-14, 2007. This park in St. Petersburg offers a premier location for birding during spring migration, offering a large variety of species in their spring breeding plumage. For many of us, it gives opportunity to view northern breeding birds as well. Bird species counts have traditionally been impressive for a one day excursion. The park itself is a beautiful location on the gulf coast, with lots of wonderful natural habitats to visit and explore.

Arrangements have been made for us to stay at the Continuing Education Center at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Friday night, April 13th. This will allow us to get an early start for birding Saturday morning. You will need to provide your own transportation to St. Petersburg. The cost is \$80.00 per room, which can accommodate two persons.

Sign-up sheets will be available at the Audubon meetings on February 15th and March 15th. However, the early response was greater than anticipated, so there are only a few rooms still available. If you want to reserve a room at the college we encourage you to contact us as soon as possible. A waiting list will be maintained after the rooms are all reserved. If cancellation is necessary you will get a full refund until April 10th.

Anyone who has other accommodation in the area may join us at Ft. DeSoto on Saturday morning at 8:00am for a registration fee of \$10.00 per person.

For reservations or questions concerning the trip, please contact Ted or Gaye Smith at (407) 249-3969 or smith_ted_gaye@bellsouth.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 OAS is published monthly from September through June and is sent free to all members of Orange Audubon Society.

<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

Past President's Article JIM THOMAS

I moved to Orlando in the early 1960's after finishing graduate school, to teach biology at Orlando Junior College. Having grown up in Tampa, I was happy to find such a quiet and beautiful town. Citrus was still a major industry and surrounding areas like Altamonte Springs, Sanford and Kissimmee were still small villages.

I became president of Orange Audubon in the late 60's, a time when we were just beginning to see a major growth spurt because of Disney and other major developments being proposed in Central Florida. Florida Audubon as well as our chapter were still focused primarily on serious birding with little involvement in local environmental issues. It became obvious we had to change our direction and we did so in both organizations. Working with other newly formed environmental groups, we soon became a strong force in dealing with issues that had impacts on our environment.

We didn't win all the battles but we had many victories and I feel strongly the area would now be very different if we had not fought so hard. Where we have biological problems with political solutions, it is essential that we maintain a force of passionate people, educated about the issues, who are willing to contribute time and money to help in the constant struggle. I feel we have done a good job at this.

I congratulate OAS for the years of work (and fun) and sincerely hope we will be able to continue these efforts for years to come!

Jim Thomas

Start Getting Ready for Birdathon on March 31st!

Calling all Birders and Birding Teams!!! Remember to mark your calendars for Saturday, March 31st!!! Whether you decide to take off at the crack of dawn for a day of marathon birding or simply stroll your local birding sites before heading for a cappuccino, please get out and help us with our annual Birdathon fundraiser. A pledge sheet will be included in next month's newsletter. Don't forget to ask your neighbors, co-workers, and friends to sponsor your efforts! Remind them of all the candy, wrapping paper, and cookies you've purchased over the years if you must! It'll be a grand time so join us in helping raise much needed funds.

See you out in the field!

Claire Hilliker, Birdathon Chair

Fourth and Final Hawk ID Class of 2006-2007

The last Hawk ID Class will be taught by Bob Sanders at the Lake Apopka Restoration Area on Saturday, February 10, 2007. This class was listed in the OAS Brochure, and the January OASis, as February 17, 2007. This is incorrect. We apologize for the error and call your attention to the correct date - **Saturday, February 10, 2007**. We will meet at the Lust Road just off SR 437 between 8:00 and 8:30. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, water, snacks and your enthusiasm for hawks for an informative and enjoyable session. For more information, please contact Bob Sanders at 407-898-9798. Dick Smith

Beginner's Bird Watching Class

*Directions * Map * Parking Information *
Available at Meeting

If you are registered for Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Spring 2007 Beginner's Bird Watching Class that begins on March 3rd, you may pick up your map, directions, parking passes for class sessions at Rollins College and payment confirmation on February 15th, Harry P. Leu Gardens, when OAS presents its next program (see page 1). Information packets for those unable to attend the program will be mailed February 16th.

Please contact Tom Williams (407-332-5089) with questions about the class; or Teresa Williams (407-644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com) with registration questions.

2007 PHOTO CONTEST FEATURES TWO COMPETITION CATEGORIES AND PRE- SCREENING

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) has announced its 2007 (19th Annual) Kit & Sidney Chertok Open Nature Photography Contest featuring two categories titled: **Florida's Birds!** and **No Birds Allowed!** In keeping with contest objectives, subject matter in both categories must be native to Florida and cannot contain any significant trace of humans or human-made objects or artifacts.

Only digital images in *.jpg format (jpg, joint photographic experts group) and a file size of 1MB or less are acceptable. Files should be supplied on a CD readable by PC-based applications with your name and address printed on it. Images may not be excessively manipulated.

With two categories there are two prize packages worth \$1,050 in combined cash and other prizes! The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each category receive cash prizes of \$200, \$100 and \$50, respectively; plus in-store gift cards from Colonial Photo & Hobby, Orlando with values of \$100, \$50 and \$25, respectively. All winning entries receive ribbons and also vie for placement on the cover of OAS' next annual brochure and the opportunity to be featured in a store display at Colonial Photo & Hobby.

Deadline: May 17, 2007 (postmark date). Limit: 4 images per entrant at \$3 each age 17 or under; \$5 each for Audubon members from any chapter, including contestants who join OAS when submitting entries; and \$7 each for nonmembers.

Also new for 2007: as a courtesy and to enhance your knowledge of Florida's native species, the screening committee will pre-screen all entries received by April 19, 2007. Entrants will be notified shortly thereafter of images not meeting contest eligibility criteria and have the opportunity to replace those images at no additional charge. Replacements must be made in accordance with contest deadline and all other rules.

Official entry forms containing complete contest rules and regulations are available at all future OAS meetings; at Colonial Photo and Hobby, 634 N. Mills Avenue, Orlando, FL; or you may download and print the entry form (*.PDF file) from OAS' official website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org. Thank you for participating!

Teresa Williams, Contest Chair

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Pete Vogt (08)	407-855-4122

Calendar of Events

February 3, 2007 - Saturday

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

February 15, 2007 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.
OAS Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Dick Smith 407-257-7361

February 17, 2007 - Saturday

OAS Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park
Mary Keim 407-851-5416

February 10, 2007 - Saturday

Bird of Prey ID Class #4 - LARA
Bob Sanders 407-898-9798

February 10, 2007 - Saturday

Wekiva River Buffer Conservation Area Bird Survey
Lorne Malo 407-349-2536/407-659-4853(w)

February 16-19, 2007 - Fri-Mon

Great Backyard Bird Count
www.birdsource.org/gbbc

February 17, 2007 - Saturday

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

February 24, 2007 - Saturday

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

February 25, 2007 - Saturday

Rock Springs Run State Reserve Butterfly Survey.
Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

March 3, 2007 - Saturday

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

March 15, 2007 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.
OAS Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Dick Smith 407-257-7361

March 17, 2007 - Saturday

OAS Field Trip - Lyonia Preserve
Mary Keim 407-851-5416

March 17, 2007 - Saturday

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

March 30-April 1, 2007 - Fri-Sun

Big O Birding Festival, Moore Haven, FL
www.bigobirdingfestival.com

Don't Forget to Join In on the 2007 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) this coming February 16-19, 2007. 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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