



"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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Good to have you back and we hope you had a terrific summer!

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

This Month's Program: September 20, 2007 - 7:00pm Swallow-tailed Kites & Short-tailed Hawks: Conserving Two Rare Raptors, by Ken Meyer

The gorgeous Swallow-tailed Kites arrive here in spring to breed and leave for South America in late summer. Swallow-tailed Kites once nested throughout the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys, but almost all breeding sites are now in Florida. Virtually all of what is known about these raptors comes from the research of Dr. Ken Meyer, co-founder, Executive Director, and Research Ecologist at the non-profit Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) in Gainesville. Dr. Meyer is also studying the even rarer Short-tailed Hawks. In our September program, he will fill us in on current knowledge of biology of these two raptors and possibly ask for our help in locating nests next season.

Please join us September 20 for a fascinating program.
Deborah Green, Vice President

September Field Trip - Turkey Creek Sanctuary, Palm Bay

On Saturday, September 22nd, OAS will visit Turkey Creek Sanctuary in Palm Bay. This 73 acre park is named for Turkey Creek that flows into Indian River. Over 20 species of warblers have been reported at the park. Thirteen were listed in a September posting on "FloridaBirds-L" site. We will hike about two to three miles through sand pine scrub as well as on boardwalks through hydric hammock. For more information on the property, see the Friends of Turkey Creek web site at: <http://www.foturkeycreek.org/id7.html>

Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Publix at the intersection of Narcoosee Road and Moss Park Road (SE of Orlando). Bring

money for toll roads, drink, sun protection, insect protection, birding gear, and lunch (for after the hike). Please join us. For more information, contact us at 407-851-5416.

Mary Keim and Randy Snyder
Field Trip Committee



Presidential Ramblings DICK SMITH, PRESIDENT

Enclosed in this OASis edition is the new brochure for the 2007-2008 season. Claire Hilliker has done a beautiful job, again! This is one of the nicest looking brochures that we have had in many years - the colors are just gorgeous and the new layout is very well organized. If you agree with me, why not tell Claire thank you, the next time you see her.

We now have so many activities that we decided to try the four panel design. You now have just about every activity that your chapter has, or is involved with, all organized together, in one place. You can now organize your whole year with the help of your handy-

dandy OAS brochure. Are you planning on taking any Bird ID, Butterfly ID or Birds of Prey ID classes this year? Mark it down now, so you don't forget.

One of the new activities this year is the Limited Edition Field Trips which will be lead by Bob Sanders. With the exception of the Lake Apopka Restoration Area field trip, which is always free and open to the public, these Field Trips will be limited to ten (10) individuals, and there will be a modest charge of \$10.00 per person. It is our intention to have these trips be more of an instructional nature.

By the way, Bob Sanders has been invited

to participate in the World Series of Birding in May, 2008, as a member of the Duke Farms Foundation Team sponsored by Pentax Imagining. This team took 3rd place in 2007. I guess they are trying to improve their performance level.

Deborah Green has arranged an outstanding line-up of programs for you again this year. I hope you can attend the meetings, and we can get to know all of you. Remember, this is your Audubon Chapter. So, please join us at any, and all, of the upcoming meetings, activities and field trips.

Conservation News PEGGY COX, CHAIR

Good news, all local Governments have committed funding to the Commuter Rail project that will run from Debary to Kissimmee. The project is supposed to be running by 2009. With the need to decrease greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible, taking cars off the road, particularly in peak travel times should benefit our air quality and the release of these harmful gases by a considerable amount. Locally, Mayor Crotty is holding the first Orange County Climate Change Summit on September 25th. More details on it are under the heading of Community Conservation Events.

The Legislative session of last spring unfortunately produced a serious bill that promises to affect Central Florida's fragile environment in the future. Despite heavy lobbying by conservation interests, Gov. Crist signed the omnibus Transportation bill, HB 985. This bill will give even greater autonomy to the Turnpike Enterprise Authority and various Expressway Authorities, including the Orange

County Orlando Expressway Authority (OOCEA). They will have expanded funding opportunities through the now legal ability to form partnerships with private, for-profit corporations in building and running toll roads. The Turnpike Enterprise got their bonding cap doubled to 9 billion dollars and so we expect to see the "Heartland Turnpikes" plans begin to take shape. These proposed roads are to cross the State from near Sarasota to the East Coast running just north of Sebring - bringing the prospects of urban development to large areas of rural Florida, and to run south to north from near Ft. Myers to Lakeland and I-4. These roads will threaten wildlife habitat and will eventually promote the same sprawling, inefficient development that now plagues most of the rest of Florida.

In another surprise move, Gov. Crist, vetoed the only Energy bill passed by the Legislature saying they could do better. Most environmentalists were pleased that the conservative Legislators had done as well as they did. The bill was a good start to alternate energy sources and better energy conservation. The Gov. followed that by the State Climate Change

Summit in Miami in July where he signed several Executive Orders that will make the State's buildings and vehicles more energy efficient and begin to work towards meeting Greenhouse Gas Emission reduction targets over the next decade.

Under a separate heading you will find a listing of several conservation events for concerned citizens to participate in the ongoing discussions concerning the environmental future for Orange County and Central Florida. Unfortunately, most of these events are scheduled on weekdays and as in the case of the Orange County Climate Change Summit, at a difficult location for most people to get to. Seems to be the case most of the time, as the attendees to these events tend to be government employees or those consultants, attorneys, etc. with a vested interest in the continuation of unfettered growth patterns of the past decade. That's why I urge you to attend if you can, even for part of the program. More voices and the presence of those with knowledge and concern for our fragile environment and the growing threats from climate change are needed.

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>

Orange Audubon Conservation Priorities

Orange Audubon has made several ecosystems and policies priorities for conservation.

Acquisition of Public Conservation Lands is a leading priority and we continue to work towards a way for Orange County to have a permanent public land acquisition program.

Orange's GreenPlace Program has a limited amount of funding that is subject to the budget cycle, and is now being considered for elimination because of Legislative mandated cuts in property taxes at local government levels. We are considering the options still available to us, including a 2008 ballot referendum for a small ad valorem tax for 10 or 20 years to fund bonds to purchase environmentally sensitive lands. If you're interested in helping with this effort, please contact me: pegcox@att.net, 352-429-1042.

We continue to work in several ecosystems to promote their protection and preservation. These include the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area (LARA). LARA is an historic stop for thousands of migratory birds and year round habitat for million of wading birds.

.....Continued on p3

2007 Photo Contest Results And the Winners Are ...

Winners of Orange Audubon Society's 19th Annual Kit and Sidney Chertok Open Nature Photography Contest were announced on the evening of June 21st at Harry P. Leu Gardens, Orlando, where members and guests met to enjoy dinner, a silent auction and a program featuring over 300 eligible entries.

Images from this digital photography competition brought scenes from *the real Florida* to life for an audience of almost 140 people including special guests Robert Bowden, who served as the photographer judge and co-owner Mike Rausch and associate Nicki Buck from the contest's co-sponsor Colonial Photo & Hobby. Wildlife and wild places from the Panhandle to the tip of the Florida Keys were depicted beautifully by over 100 competing photographers.

And the winners are ... in the category *Florida's Birds!*: 1st place, *Purple Gallinule* by Jake Paredes, Boca Raton; 2nd place, *Roseate Spoonbill* by Diane Brannon, Leesburg, member Oklawaha Valley Audubon; 3rd place, *Great Horned Owl / Don't Mess with My Chicks* by Paul Rebmann, Ormond Beach, member Halifax River Audubon. Honorable mentions were awarded to: *Burrowing Owl at Sunrise* by Rebecca Jackrel, San Francisco; *Eagles Mating* by Candy Perkinson, Orlando; *Least Bittern on the Hunt* by Jack Rogers, Oviedo, member Orange Audubon; *My, What Big Feet You Have!* by Jamie (Jay) Paredes, Coconut Creek; and *Pileated Woodpecker* by Kathleen Fosselman, Boynton Beach, member Audubon Society of the Everglades.

And the winners are ... in the category *No Birds Allowed!*: 1st place, *Ocean Spray* by Bruce Brough, Orange Park; 2nd place, *Gator Tail Sandwich* by Paul Hennessy, Orlando, member Orange Audubon; 3rd place, *Predator and Prey* by Jaime (Jay) Paredes, Coconut Creek. Honorable mentions were awarded to: *Double Trouble* by Peg Urban, Leesburg, member Oklawaha Valley Audubon; *Dragonfly* by Raida Woll Gomez, Orlando, member Orange Audubon; *Dragonfly in Flight* by Paul Williams, Hudson; *St. Lucie Sunrise* by Wesley Brown, Orlando; and *Zebra Swallowtails* by Randy Snyder, Orlando, member Orange Audubon.

In addition to ribbons awarded to all winners, \$1,050 in cash and other prizes went to the 1st through 3rd place winners and both 1st place images now grace the covers of OAS' 2007–2008 membership brochure. Winning images automatically vie for selection by contest co-sponsor Colonial Photo & Hobby for an additional honor: to be enlarged and featured in an exclusive front window display (spring 2008) in their vintage Mills Avenue, Orlando location.

OAS appreciates the photographers who competed in 2007 — your entries made for a high quality competition and a delightful, greatly anticipated awards ceremony. Neither would have been possible without you. We look forward to your continued participation. To view winning images and stay up-to-date on 2008 contest information, visit the OAS website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org, read upcoming issues of the OASis or contact me (mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or 407-644-0796). Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair

OAS Offers Beginning Bird Watching Classes In Time for Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 Migrations

Priorities.....from p2

The St. Johns River Water Management District owns this land and has been restoring it for over a decade. OAS has several field trips there a year. Check out the website for more information (www.sjrwmd.com/programs/acq_restoration?s_water/laapopka/).

OAS supports preservation and protection of the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern, the heart of our Floridan aquifer that covers south Lake, northern Polk, parts of Sumter and Hernando counties (www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/education/greenswamp/greenswamp.html).

OAS has a long history of commitment to protection of both the Wekiva River ecosystem and the Econlockhatchee River in east Orange County. Information on both systems can be found through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection website.

OAS voted last year to endorse the Florida Hometown Democracy Amendment. Information at www.floridahometowndemocracy.com.

All important conservation issues, state-wide and regionally, can be viewed at Audubon of Florida's Conservation Network website, check it out: <http://audubonaction.org/florida/home.html>.

To help you master the rewarding and fast-growing "sport" of bird watching, OAS brings back its popular Beginner's Bird Watching Class (BBWC) with instruction by Tom Williams. Classes will coincide with peak fall 2007 and spring 2008 migration periods and be offered first to individuals who were "wait-listed" last spring and to OAS members who respond to this news-letter article; the general public will be notified later this month. Fall 2007 course includes 2 classroom sessions October 27th and November 3rd, 9 AM–noon, Rollins College; and 2 field sessions on November 11th and 18th, time TBA, Mead Garden and Orlando Wetlands Park, respectively. Spring 2008 course format is identical with class and field sessions March 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd.

Williams, a past president of OAS and retired education curator for the Central Florida Zoo, began the "sport" of birding in 1970 and has been sharpening his skills ever since. Through previous educational classes for OAS, Harry P. Leu Gardens and Interlachen Country Club youth camps, this well known naturalist has helped novice and experienced birders alike sharpen their skills.

Fees for Audubon members (\$25) and non-members (\$40) are payable by check or money order to Orange Audubon Society and include handout materials and parking at Rollins College. Non-members who join the Audubon Society when they register get a super sweet deal! Pay \$45, which includes BBWC registration (member price \$25) and an introductory membership for annual 3-way membership in Orange Audubon and National Audubon Societies and Audubon of Florida (promotional rate \$20).

Space is limited. Contact Teresa Williams to reserve your spot (407-644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com); then mail one check payable to Orange Audubon Society along with your name, address, phone and e-mail information (and, if joining OAS, your new member application form) to: OAS/Attn: BBWC, PO Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. For additional class information, call Tom Williams (407-332-5089). For a membership application or to learn more about Orange Audubon Society visit our official website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org. Hurry, you know what they say about the early bird!

**ORANGE AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Calendar of Events

September 4, 2007 - Saturday
LARA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870/pbowen@sjrwmd.com

September 15, 2007 - Saturday
Mead Gardens Bird Survey; 8:00am-10:00am.
Dexter Richardson 407-760-8193
dex@dexwine.com

September 15, 2007 - Saturday
Wekiva River Buffers Conservation Area Bird Survey
Lorne Malo 407-349-2536/407-659-4853(w)

September 15, 2007 - Saturday
Limited Edition Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park
Bob Sanders 407-766-5490

September 20, 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

September 22, 2007 - Saturday
OAS Field Trip - Turkey Creek Sanctuary
Mary Keim & Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

September 29, 2007 - Saturday
Seminole Ranch (North) Butterfly Survey.
Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

October 1, 2007 - Saturday
LARA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870/pbowen@sjrwmd.com

October 13, 2007 - Saturday
Bird of Prey ID Class #1 - LARA
Bob Sanders 407-766-5490

October 18, 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

October 20, 2007 - Saturday
OAS Field Trip - Colt Creek State Park
Mary Keim & Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

October 20, 2007 - Saturday
Mead Gardens Bird Survey; 8:00am-10:00am.
Dexter Richardson 407-760-8193
dex@dexwine.com

Community Conservation Events

Orange County Climate Change Summit – “Orange To Green” –Tuesday, September 25th at the Orange County Convention Center, 7:30am to 4:00 pm. The Keynote Speaker will be Roger Ballentine of Green Strategies, Inc. Mr. Ballentine is a former member of the Clinton Administration on Energy and Climate Change and an advisor to the Kerry/Edwards campaign in 2004 on Energy and Environmental policy. The full agenda has not yet been posted. More information and registration (free) is on the Orange County Government website: www.ocfl.net.

National Public Lands Day-Orange County – will be Saturday, September 29th, 8:30am-Noon, as a workday at the Orange County publicly owned NRC parcel off E. Hwy 50 in Christmas, Florida. Volunteers are needed to help remove exotics, clear trails, etc. For more information and to register contact Orange County’s Environmental Protection Department, Beth Jackson, at 407-836-1400, or the Orange County Website: www.ocfl.net.

The Metropolitan Center for Regional Studies at UCF is presenting a 3 part forum entitled “Land, Water, Power: Florida’s Threatened Resources” over the next several months. The first forum will be held, Thursday, September 20th, 8:30am to Noon at Leu Gardens, entitled “Shifting Demands: Trends in Land and Living”. Featured speaker is Anthony Flint formerly a journalist with the Boston Globe, serving as City Hall Bureau Chief, and columnist on urban design and public spaces, now with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, a Massachusetts think tank. Panelists for the forum include: Jane Healy, Editor Orlando Sentinel; Jim Harrison, Director of Growth Management Orange County; Hal Kantor, Land Use Attorney; Jim Sellen, MSCW, Inc., Planning Consultants; Phil Laurien, Director East Central Florida Regional Planning Council; and Pete Jacques, PhD, UCF. More information and to RSVP email: metro@mail.ucf.edu or phone: 407-823-0935.

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