



"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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Please Collect Your Birdathon Pledges

The Orange Audubon Society (OAS) Birdathon will be held on Saturday, January 9th. The teams will compete to try to see the most bird species during that 24-hr period. They will then report their findings to Gallus Quigley and Loretta Satterthwaite, event co-chairs, so that a final list of the total species seen can be compiled. We expect to have those numbers early the following week. So that you may collect your contributions from those who pledged a certain amount per species, you should contact Loretta (LNS-OAS@att.net; 407/886-2925).

Remember, it's not too late to ask for contributions after the Birdathon has been conducted and if each of you reading this newsletter gets two (2) contributors to give 5 or 10 cents/species (goal = 200 species), that would bring an additional \$10 or \$20 to Orange Audubon. Please bring your collected contributions (and please include contributors' names and addresses) to the OAS meeting at Leu Gardens on January 21st or mail them to: OAS Birdathon, PO Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142.

Thank you in advance for helping to make this year's birdathon a big success!

Loretta Satterthwaite and Gallus Quigley

This Month's Program:

January 21, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Feathered Frenzy: Shorebirds and Ducks at Merritt Island NWR by Tom Dunkerton

Shorebirds that have bred in the High Arctic or Prairie Pothole Region need a winter refuge. Ducks that have bred far to the north and west also seek snow-free and food-rich winter territory. Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (MINWR) is a major stop-over point and wintering grounds for hundreds of bird species. Birder Tom Dunkerton, who lives in Titusville, has birded and taken photographs on the refuge year round for many years. Working for Nikon binoculars and scopes, he has explored digiscoping techniques. In our January program, Tom will show us some of the diversity of birds we can see right now at the refuge and include identification tips for these challenging species.

Join us January 21st, for a fascinating program. Orange Audubon Society programs are free and no reservations are necessary.

Deborah Green, Program Chair

Orange Audubon Society meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of every month (Sept. - June) at 7 pm in the Camellia Room at:
Harry P. Leu Garden,
1920 North Forest Avenue
Orlando, FL 32803-1537.
For directions call: 407-246-2620

Tuesday February 2, 2010, 7PM

This is in addition to the normally scheduled February program

Fallouts, Hot Spots and Changing Seasons; Special Migration Talk by Paul Lehman

Visiting Florida as a presenter and trip leader at the Space Coast Birding Festival, Paul Lehman will give a special talk to Orange Audubon and the Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. We are truly lucky, as Paul Lehman is one of our country's most knowledgeable and traveled birders, with expertise in weather and regional geography of North America.

He served as editor of Birding magazine for nine years and was chief editor for the American Birding Association/Lane Bird Finding Guide series, which includes Bill Pranty's A Birder's Guide to Florida. Editors of all of the major field guides, including Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds (East), the National Geographic Society' guides, and Sibley field guides, have used him as consultant on bird ranges. He recently compiled the American Birding Association's A Birder's Guide to Metropolitan Areas profiling best places to find birds city-by-city throughout North America.

Honing his birding skills during college days in California, Paul Lehman was known for his efforts to find new vagrant traps (vagrant birds are generally defined as off course or wandering). He was reknown in California for his efforts to understand the effect of weather on tomorrow's potential vagrants. Later he spent years as part of the Cape May birding community and more recently has become a guide for WINGS, one of the most highly regarded U.S. bird tour companies. With WINGS he now spends considerable time leading tours and studying migrants and vagrants in Alaska.

As Paul points out, birders need to know not only where are the best places to look for migrants and at what times particular species are most likely to occur, but they also need to have a basic understanding of the workings of the weather and how it impacts bird migration—on a daily, weekly, and seasonal basis. You can read more about his fallout observations at www.birdcapemay.org/forecast_primer.shtml

Join Orange Audubon and the Tarflower Chapter on Tuesday, February 2 for this exciting program. Free and with no reservations necessary, the program will be held in the Camellia Room of Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Avenue, Orlando (Directions 407-246-2620). Bring your questions!

Panhandle — St. Marks NWR and Wakulla State Park - Field Trip

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is coordinating an 'overnight' field trip to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge/Wakulla State Park in the panhandle. It's scheduled for Feb. 26–28, 2010. We've planned a guided birdwalk/drive on Sat. Feb. 27th at St. Marks from 9 am–1 pm. There are more than 300 species of birds at the refuge.

It is possible to have a walk on Saturday afternoon or even on Sunday if participants are interested. Also, there is the possibility of a paddling trip if interest warrants one.

The cost for this field trip is \$10/person, payable to OAS when you reserve your spot (sign up and pay at the meeting, contact Loretta Leda at lorettalynn@mac.com or 321/438-0838 and mail your check to OAS, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142, or contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or 407/644-0796).

OAS has a block of rooms reserved at the Wakulla State Park Lodge for Fri. and Sat. nights and you should make your own reservations with them [850/926-0700], for one or both nights. Registrations must be made before Feb. 6th to receive the 'blocked' room rate.

Loretta Lynn is also willing to help coordinate room sharing and/or carpooling for the weekend, so let her know if you are willing to share, or need, either.

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>

January Field Trip

Orange Audubon Society's January Field Trip will be to the Ocala National Forest Paisley Bike Trail on **Saturday, January 23rd**. We'll hike a section of the trail in hopes of finding Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, Brown-Headed Nuthatch, and other pinewoods species. Expect to hike at least 2.0 miles. Meet at the Winn-Dixie on SR 19 in Eustis at 7:30 am. Group will carpool and leave at 7:45 am. Those in that area may also meet at the trail head on Paisley Road off CR 445 by 8:00 am. Bring fluids, binoculars and a lunch, if you wish.

Gallus Quigley, Field Trip Chair

The Internet Age

Are you, like many others, tuned in to your computer for just about everything? Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is contemplating more use of electronic communication — the *OASis* is already on our website (www.orangeaudubonfl.org), though we still mail it to our entire membership. We are not

committed, yet, to switching entirely to an e-newsletter, but it makes environmental sense to save the trees and ink, so we're leaning toward that goal. So, when you send in your renewal to National Audubon Society, please include your email address. We will build our database from theirs. If you wish to send your email address directly to OAS, please send it to our membership database chair (miked531@bellsouth.net).

Besides moving toward an *e-OASis*, if you would like to be part of an **e-tree** for conservation and activity alerts, please send an email notifying us of your inclination and it will be distributed to the appropriate board member for making contact with you when needed. Send your email to LNS-OAS@att.net; please use 'OAS e-tree' as your subject and tell us what type of alerts — conservation, education, etc. — you wish to receive from OAS.

In keeping with the aforementioned goals, as you sign in at our monthly meetings, please include your email address, as well as your phone number. Thanks.

Loretta Satterthwaite, Membership Chair

Orange Audubon Society's 2010 Chertok Nature Photography Contest 2010 Photo Contest Categories

The two broad categories of competition in Orange Audubon Society's 2010 Chertok Nature Photography Contest encourage your creativity as you observe and photograph Florida, capturing its wildlife acting/interacting within natural environments. Themes are: ***Actions and Interactions*** and ***Close Encounters***.

Images depicting action and interaction *could* include a seascape with foamy waves crashing upon the shore; Blue Jays mobbing an errant hawk; a Northern Parula feeding its perceived (Brown-headed Cowbird?) fledgling; a Red Admiral ensnared by the spider's web ... or would the latter be a *close encounter*? You decide; you will be/were there.

The *Close Encounters* category is not just for macro photography and may include images depicting close-ups, close calls, etc: an Eastern Diamondback charming its would-be prey; a Great Blue Heron escaping a gator's lunging attack; Zebra Swallowtail butterflies mating; near-mature Osprey chicks crowding their nest; etc.

Remember that subject matter in this competition can not contain any discernable non-native (to Florida) flora or fauna or human elements (humans, human artifacts or structures, etc). Entry forms are now available at Colonial Photo & Hobby (Orlando); and will soon be available on OAS' website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org. If you have questions or need an entry form e-mailed to you, contact mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. Light, cameras, *action!*

Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair

Limited Edition Field Trips

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) first Limited Edition (LE) Field Trip in January will be to the St. Johns River Water Management District's (SJRWMD) Lake Apopka Restoration Area (LARA) on Sunday, January 17th. Limited Edition field trips are a fundraiser for OAS so there is a \$10 fee/member (\$15/non-member). This will be a carpool trip. Meet at the parking lot at the end of CR 448A by 8:00 am. We'll be guided through by SJRWMD staff; last year we had Yellow-Headed Blackbird as a highlight. Bring fluids, binoculars and scopes, if you have them and lunch since we'll likely be out past noon. (There is No Limit on participants for this trip.)

The second January LE field trip (limited to 15 participants; \$10/OAS member and \$15 /non-OAS member) will be on Sunday, January 24th to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (MINWR). Pre-registration is required since the group will be limited to 15 participants; contact Gallus (407/242-7833; gallusq@cfl.rr.com) to register . Meeting place will be designated for carpooling when you register. Group will meet to carpool at 7:00 am and leave the Orlando area at 7:15 am. Please pack a lunch since we'll be out past noon; this trip will likely end around 3:00 or 4:00 pm. Again, bring fluids and binoculars/scopes.

Gallus Quigley, Field Trip Chair

For 2010 Champion Biodiversity

2010 has been designated the International Year of Biodiversity so here is one New Year's resolution we can all make and keep — "I will work to help maintain biodiversity in my yard, my community, my state, my country and the world".

Why is biodiversity important? Biodiversity is important for numerous reasons, many of which will directly affect the quality of life for you or someone you know. For instance, about 25% of prescriptions are filled with drugs whose active ingredients are extracted or derived from plants. Examples include the antibiotic erythromycin derived from tropical fungi and vinblastine and vincristine, derived from rosy periwinkle, for treating Hodgkins' disease and leukemia, respectively. Medicines are also derived from animals. For example, contortrostatin, derived from copperhead venom, is being used to treat breast cancer. Just think, all the plant- and animal-derived drugs used worldwide come from less than about 200 organisms, yet hundreds of thousands of species exist on Earth. As species become extinct, we lose potential treatments and cures.

What can you do to preserve biodiversity? In your yard, plant a variety of plants, especially those that do not require pesticides to thrive and are native to the area. Visit <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu> and <http://www.afnn.org> for ideas. In your community, work to have natural areas preserved and/or restored. In Florida, tell your state house and senate representatives to fund Florida Forever, the state's premier land conservation program that helps protect our beaches, lakes, natural areas and wildlife habitat for future generations (see <http://www.supportfloridaforever.org> for more information). In the United States, support legislation protecting endangered species. Check out <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/wildlife.html#Species> to see the hundreds of species already listed in the U.S. Help with plant and wildlife surveys that document the status and trends of local populations potentially in jeopardy. Check the OASis for wildlife survey and other opportunities, e.g., Eagle Watch, Christmas Bird Counts, bird surveys, etc. Internationally, visit the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources red list website (<http://www.iucnredlist.org>) to become aware of the detrimental effects of habitat loss/climate change on biodiversity. Work to slow habitat loss and climate change.

Best wishes for a healthy and harmonious 2010. Thanks for your resolve to help protect our plants and animals throughout the year.

Bob Stamps

Anyone Have a Match?

by Richard Poole & Christine Brown

If not, you might think of the Matchstick Plant (*Phyla nodiflora*), a.k.a. fogfruit or frogfruit. The flowers, as you might guess, resemble a matchstick—small, purple and white at the top of a stalk. It is a perennial that spreads by runners and reaches six inches in height. Matchstick will bloom the entire year unless damaged by freezing temperatures, even if that happens a few warm days and new growth will have the plants blooming again. They grow best in full sun, but will tolerate some shade. Once established, forget about watering them. And save your fertilizer and poisons, Matchstick will do just fine without them.

The flowers provide nectar for butterflies and the leaves provide food for the larva of Phaon Crescent, Buckeye, and White Peacock butterflies. Many butterflies and bees visit the Matchstick flowers in our yard, but no caterpillars have been seen yet.

While providing food for the insects is a plus, the big advantage is its use as groundcover. Do you have a bare patch in your yard? If the grass just doesn't like it there, try matchstick. Have a large area that's hard to mow, or areas you don't want to mow? Try matchstick. Most of our plants are in places unmowed and untrod. Some are mingling with the grass, they get along just fine. Some are along a path and spread into the path, no problem for the plant, just walk on it. Well, maybe one problem, the butterflies won't like it. Chances are there will be no flowers in the path and no flowers after mowing the lawn, but that's okay, the flowers will soon reappear after mowing. The edges along hard paving are easy to trim, too.

Plants are easy to propagate. As they spread along the ground, roots grow from the nodes. Cut the plant behind the roots, move to the desired area, keep the ground moist for a couple of weeks, then sit back and watch the butterflies and bees. You can also sit back and watch your neighbors cutting, watering and spreading poison on their Matchstickless lawns.

Workday at Genius Drive Nature Preserve

OAS is planning a workday at Genius DNP on Sunday, February 7, 9:30-11:30 am. The usual fun gardening activities of weeding and mulching in the cedar grove are planned; so bring appropriate gardening tools, gloves, water and any gear needed to protect from the elements if needed. Contact Teresa: mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or 407-644-0796.

2010 Florida Forever Calendars

A limited number of Florida Forever 2010 Conservation Photography calendars will be for sale (\$14.08 plus tax) at the January meeting, thanks to a donation made by Kevin Barry. The calendar features images of twelve noted wildlife photographers, including Clyde Butcher and OAS' own Kevin Barry, a regular participant in the Chertok Nature Photography Contest.

Great Backyard Bird Count Feb. 12–15, 2010

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in the 13th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, Friday, February 12, through Monday, February 15, 2010. Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience to count birds in their own backyards, local parks or wildlife refuges.

Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from novice bird watchers to experts. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org.

Each checklist submitted by these "citizen scientists" helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how the birds are doing—and how to protect them.

**Orange Audubon Society
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Calendar of Events

Jan. 17, 2010 - Sunday

Limited Edition field trip \$10/ members \$15/non-mem.
Lake Apopka Restoration Area
Gallus Quigley, 407/242-7833

Jan. 21, 2010 - Thursday

Monthly membership program
Leu Garden, 7 p.m.

Jan. 23, 2010 - Saturday

OAS field trip to Ocala
National Forest, Paisley
Woods Bike Trail. Gallus
Quigley, 407/242-7833

Jan. 23, 2010 - Saturday

Wekiwa Springs State Park
Butterfly Survey, contact
Randy Snyder 407/851-5416

Jan. 24, 2010 - Sunday

Ltd. Edition field trip to Merritt
Island NWR, Limit 15 ppl. \$10
members/\$15 non-mem.
Gallus Quigley, 407/242-7833

Feb. 2, 2010 - Tuesday, 7 pm

Special program by Paul
Lehman, see pg. 2 for details

Feb. 7, 2010 - Sunday

Genius Drive Work Day, 9:30
am - 11:30 am

Feb. 18, 2010 - Thursday

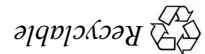
Monthly membership program
7 pm, Leu Gardens

Feb. 26—28, 2010 - Field

Trip St. Marks NWR,
overnight, see page 2 for
details, Loretta Lynn,
321/438-0838

Volunteers Wanted for the 2010 Orlando Wetlands Park Season

Orlando Wetlands Park is asking for additional volunteers. The park will be open from February 1st through November 14th. Volunteers are needed (at least one Saturday or Sunday a month) to perform a variety of activities such as hosting the Nature Education Center, leading wildlife hikes/ tours and talking with visitors. For more information and to volunteer, contact Bob Rope (407-568-1706 or Robert.Rope@CityOfOrlando.net).



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