



Red-tailed Hawk and Falconer
Photo: Allison Miller

This Month's Program:

September 17, 2015 Rehabilitating Birds of Prey

by the **Avian Reconditioning Center**

Birds of prey (raptors) are vulnerable to accidents with powerlines, poisoning and other human and natural hazards. The Avian Reconditioning Center (ARC) works with raptors that have been inactive for an extended period of time while recovering from illness or injury.

This not-for-profit rehabilitation and education facility, located on 10 acres in Apopka, uses falconry techniques to evaluate a bird's chances for survival in the wild after recovering from an injury and to teach young birds to hunt.

For our September program, rehabbers from the ARC will share how this work is done. We have requested that among the birds ARC will bring are several less-commonly seen raptors.

Join us September 17 at 7:00 p.m. for a fascinating program, suitable for children and all ages. Location below.

Deborah Green, Programs Co-Chair

Green PLACE Photos

Orange County's Environmental Protection Division is teaming with Orange Audubon Society's Chertok Photo Contest. Photos taken at Orange County Green PLACE properties, such as Isle of Pine, and entered in the Chertok contest will be eligible to win bonus prizes. On the September 19th field trip, bring your camera!

Monthly Field Trip:

September 19, 2015 Isle of Pine Preserve

On Saturday, September 19 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, Orange Audubon Society will visit Isle of Pine Preserve in southeast Orange County near Moss Park.

This 464-acre Green PLACE (*Park Land Acquisition for Conservation and Environmental Protection*) property contains a variety of ecosystems such as pine flatwoods, basin swamp and basin marsh. The wide variety of species include Brown-headed Nuthatch (as in photo), Red-headed Woodpecker, Gopher Tortoise and Hooded Pitcherplant.



Brown-headed Nuthatch
Photo: Mary Keim

For park information, see: <http://www.orangecountyfl.net> and browse for Isle of Pine. Following the same search you can download a trail map.

Meet at 8 a.m. in the eastern parking lot of the preserve at 14032 Lacebark Pine Rd., Orlando 32832. Trip is about 3 miles, at a pace to observe plants and animals along the way and to take a few photos.

Free. No registration is required. No facilities. Bring plenty to drink, sun protection, insect protection, closed-toed shoes, birding gear and lunch (for after the hike).

Please join us. If you have questions about the trip, contact us at rsmhk@gmail.com.

*Mary Keim and Randy Snyder,
Field Trip Committee*

Orange Audubon Society programs are free and no reservations are necessary.

Programs are the 3rd Thursday of each month (September–June)
and all but June start at 7:00 p.m.
in the Camellia Room at

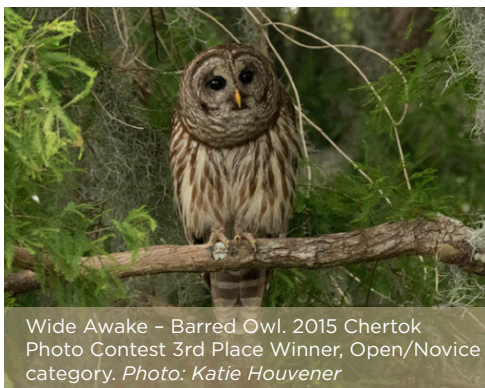
Harry P. Leu Gardens

1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando, FL 32803

For map and directions, visit:

www.leugardens.org/plan/directions/





Wide Awake – Barred Owl. 2015 Chertok Photo Contest 3rd Place Winner, Open/Novice category. Photo: Katie Houvener

Orange Audubon Society's 50th Year

Coming out of a great summer planning meeting, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is proud to embark on its 50th year. Since this is OAS' anniversary year, a little history seems appropriate.

Transformation of OAS from a birding club into "the Voice of Conservation in Central Florida" took effort.

Membership grew through the 1970s and has continued to grow, until we are the 3rd largest chapter in the Southeast, after Atlanta and Tropical Audubon. OAS remains one of the largest chapters in the country run entirely by volunteers.

I follow in the footsteps of some great Central Florida environmentalists, who served as officers. Here are the OAS presidents:

1965-67: Jim Tucker

1967-69: Gladys Poole

1969-71: Jim Thomas

1971-73: Richard Poole

1973-75: Russ Fisher

1975-76: Mary N. Gillis/Bruce Strickler

1976-78: Peg Harrison

1978-80: Fred Harden

1980-82: Greg Bretz

1982-84: Mary Keim

1984-86: Kathleen Munroe

1986-87: Allen Clark

1987-89: Loretta Satterthwaite

1989-91: Peggy Lantz

1991-92: Stephanie Johnson

1992-94: Linda Fishkind

1994-96: Bob Stamps

1996-98: Tom Williams

1998-2002: Peggy Cox

2002-06: Loretta Satterthwaite

2006-08: Dick Smith

2008-10: Bob Stamps

2010-11: Mike Godwin

2011-12: Mike Godwin/Cynthia Gray/
Deborah Green

2012-16: Deborah Green

As early as the 1971-1972 season, OAS was fund-raising to develop its own nature education center. A Nature Education Center Feasibility Committee is now narrowing down locations. We'll report on progress throughout the year.

Thanks for your support!

Deborah Green, President

Conservation Challenges

The Florida Environment had a tough summer. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission approved bear hunting despite the opposing comments of thousands of Floridians. A Department of Environmental Protection chief, who looks at our Parks as businesses, was approved by the Cabinet, in a hearing moved up a month apparently to avoid public comment. But using e-mail and Facebook, petitions asking the Cabinet not to confirm this individual were distributed. Supporters of our state parks produced enough petition signatures to influence two cabinet members, who brought up the public's objections to damaging commercial activities in the parks. We can have an influence when we work together.

Do these issues matter to you? Please join Orange Audubon Society's Conservation Committee and/or the Central Florida Conservation Network, members who will respond to requests to write letters. To sign up or for more information, contact me at rbaird4@att.net. Thank you!

Rick Baird, Conservation Chair



The purpose and dedication of Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is to promote public understanding of, and an interest in, wildlife and the environment that supports it.

OAS' education programs foster the recognition of the tangible and intangible values in the remaining natural areas of Florida and the world, and our responsibility for the conservation of the Earth's natural ecosystems and the services that they provide for the health of the planet.

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The OASis (Orange Audubon Society *Information Source*) newsletter is published monthly from September through June. The newsletter is posted on the OAS website, and a link is e-mailed to all OAS members.

Address Change or E-Delivery:
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JOIN OAS' [MEETUP](#) GROUP
LIKE OAS ON [FACEBOOK](#)

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National Audubon Conservation Strategies

National Audubon Society (NAS) is focusing on five conservation initiatives as part of the Conservation Element of its Strategic Plan. The five NAS conservation initiatives are:



- **Working Lands (Forests, Ag, Ranchlands)**
- **Saving Seas and Shores**
- **Bird-Friendly Communities**
- **Saving Important Bird Areas (IBAs)**
- **Healthy Climate**

“Leadership” chapters, as defined by NAS, are chapters that have ongoing programs in at least two of the five NAS conservation initiatives. We’ll be writing more about how Orange Audubon Society is working on these initiatives in the coming year. First a little about Saving Important Bird Areas and a profile of one of our area’s NAS Priority Bird Species.

Deborah Green, President

Important Bird Areas

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) is a global initiative of BirdLife International, implemented by Audubon and local partners in the United States.

Its purpose is to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity. There are over 2,700 IBAs covering almost 400 million acres of public and private lands in the United States.

Marianne Korosy was hired in 1999 as IBA Coordinator, and an Executive Committee of the state’s leading ornithologists was set up.

By 2002 nominated sites were prioritized. One hundred Florida IBAs were selected. See <http://netapp.audubon.org/IBA/State/US-FL>.

These include migration stopover areas as well as those important to breeding and overwintering birds.

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is working to protect the five IBAs in Central Florida, as well as birds that National Audubon has designated as Priority Birds.

IBAs in Central Florida

Lake Apopka Restoration Area

Orlando Wetlands Park

Tosohatchee State Reserve

Upper St. Johns River Basin

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway

OAS conducts bird surveys in these areas, leads field trips to these areas to introduce its members and the public to them and will speak up to protect them as needed.

September Species Highlight: Black-necked Stilt

The Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus Mexicanus*) is a beautiful, uniquely shaped shorebird and is listed as one of National Audubon Society’s priority species. It is delicate in appearance, with extremely long reddish pink legs.

It has a long, thin black bill, black upperparts and a white face with a white patch over its eye. The female has brown hues towards the center of her back. It is nicknamed the “Marsh Poodle”, as its call sounds much like a puppy or small dog barking, a sharp “kip-kip-kip-kip.”

The Black-necked Stilt is listed as a priority bird because of loss of habitat, but we know it to be rather adaptable. It has been found in artificial habitats, such as sewage ponds, water treatment plants and dikes. Grassy marshes, mudflats and shallow pools are their natural habitats.

These birds breed locally, as at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area (photo above with chick), up the east coast and in saline lakes out west. Both parents make a nest on bare ground near water with little vegetation. The female lays 3-5 buffy eggs, heavily blotched with brown and black, which are incubated by both parents.

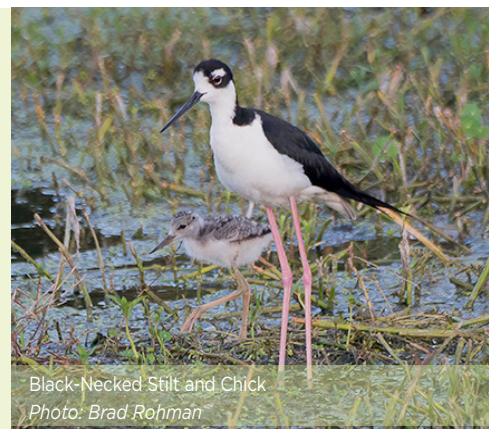
When it is extremely hot, the parents will go in the water and do some “belly soaking.” They wet their ventral feathers and come back to the nest and cool the eggs. This also helps to increase nest humidity. They can do this more than 100 times a day!!

When the downy young hatch and leave the nest, they are tended by both parents, but feed themselves. Their diet consists mostly of insects and crustaceans, but also occasionally seeds. When the threat of a predator is imminent, the parents will perform aerial displays and feign injury to distract from their young.

Black-necked Stilts winter in the southern United States to South America. Some of those that breed here may migrate farther south, but Black-necked Stilts were seen at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area during the last four Zellwood Christmas Bird Counts.

Enjoy sighting this interesting National Audubon Society Priority Species at Lake Apopka, Orlando Wetlands Park or our other IBAs.

Brook Rohman



Black-Necked Stilt and Chick
Photo: Brad Rohman

Lake Apopka North Shore Wildlife Drive Sightings

The St. Johns River Water Management District (District) opened the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Wildlife Drive in May, and local birders are thrilled. If you haven't visited yet, it is an 11-mile drive, open to the public Friday through Sunday plus on federal holidays, from sunrise to an hour before sunset. The unpaved, one-way road begins at Lust Road and empties onto Jones Road. Speed limit is 10 mph and vehicles share portions of the road with hikers and bicycle riders exploring the Lake Apopka Loop Trail. Allow at least an hour and a half to go through the drive.

With close-up views of the marshes, the Drive provides a chance to see diverse waders, other birds, alligators, raccoons, and bobcats, all from the comfort of one's car.

Some of the highlights seen May through July were Indigo Buntings and Blue Grosbeaks in the wooded area at the start of the Drive, Gray Kingbirds near the pumphouse, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Black-Necked Stilts, Least Bitterns, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Yellow-billed Cuckoos. There were also sightings of Shiny Cowbirds near the sod fields towards the end of the drive. The upcoming seasons of Fall and Winter can only be more exciting. There will be ducks, warblers and raptors returning to the area, including Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrels and Merlin.

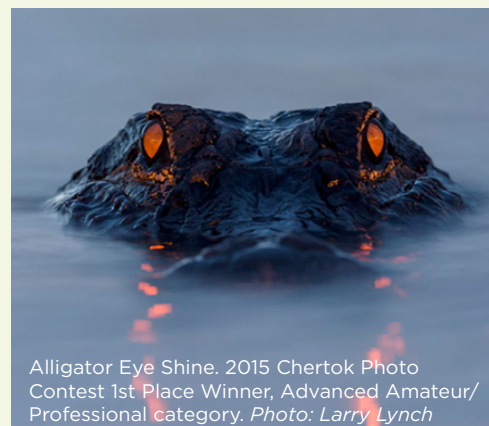
In fact, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is working toward adding a Birding Festival the day before the 4th annual Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival & Birdapalooza. OAS is also offering Birds of Prey classes in the area, taught by Bob Sanders, on Sundays December 6, 2015, January 3 and February 14, 2016.

The Lake Apopka North Shore is an Important Bird Area (p.3) and OAS is working to protect it by publicizing it and working to build Ecotourism. If you have not had a chance to visit this local treasure, treat yourself. Every pass through the drive provides something different.

Brook Rohman and Deborah Green, Education Committee Members

Exciting Events Coming Up: Reserve Early

“Return to the Roost” Ride at Orlando Wetlands Park: A “Hay Ride” (with no actual hay) is a wonderful way to see the far reaches of Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP). Even more exciting is a ride at sunset, in which you can watch wading birds “return to the roost.” As it darkens, alligator eyes shine. Flashlights may reveal ghostly Wilson’s Snipes flying up as we pass. Your eyes adjust to the darkening sky, and night sounds will fill your senses. It is a unique experience. This event on Saturday, November 14th, 4:30–6:30 p.m., is a fund-raiser for Orange Audubon Society. Cost is \$30 per person with 20 people maximum. OWP is located at 25155 Wheeler Rd, Christmas, FL 32709. Contact Teresa Williams at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796 to register. For additional information, please contact Danielle Ponsolle at (407) 658-4869.



Alligator Eye Shine. 2015 Chertok Photo Contest 1st Place Winner, Advanced Amateur/Professional category. Photo: Larry Lynch

Youth/Family Photography Workshop: Award-winning bird and nature photographer, Jack Rogers, will lead a Youth/Family Photography Workshop on November 14th from 7:00–11:00 a.m. at Orlando Wetlands Park. Children must be age 10–17 and accompanied by a registered parent or other authorized adult for the entire workshop, to allow one-on-one help. No photographic experience is necessary for parent/adult or child. The workshop is a unique opportunity for training prior to entry in the Youth Category of the 2016 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest. Cost per adult is \$20 (Audubon members) and \$35 (non-members). Cost per child is \$10 with a registered adult. Contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796 to register. For additional workshop information, please contact Jack at jrogers62@cfl.rr.com or (407) 341-7709.

Birdapalooza Birding Weekend: The Lake Apopka Wildlife Festival & Birdapalooza is now a weekend event! Just two weeks after the Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, this is a great opportunity for birders to add to their life lists and learn from knowledgeable leaders. On Friday, February 5th, enjoy field trips on the Lake Apopka North Shore. Trips will search for recently sighted rarities, and as many of the 360+ bird species documented on the property as possible. Orange Audubon Society is requesting a \$40 donation for the Friday field trips to support its nature education center fund. On Saturday, February 6th, enjoy the free Birdapalooza festival, now in its 4th year. Finally, find other unusual birds on your own on Sunday, February 7th, following sightings provided by the festival. Tell your family and friends. More details in next month's OASis.

Youth Field Trip September 12, 2015

Youth field trips allow children to observe and enjoy the natural world on easy hiking trails.

The first trip of the season is on September 12, 2015 at Mead Botanical Garden, 1500 S. Denning Drive, Winter Park. The walk starts at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Cost is free and loaner binoculars are available. No reservations are required. Please contact leader Brook Rohman at brookrohman@gmail.com or (407) 921-8008 if you have questions.



2-hour 'Workday' at Genius Drive Nature Preserve September 27, 2015

The Genius Drive Nature Preserve in Winter Park was the subject of an ecological restoration that began about 2003.

OAS has partnered with Rollins College and the Preserve's owner, the Elizabeth Morse Genius Foundation, since 2006 by conducting 'workdays' to help maintain restored areas.

The next workday is Sunday, Sept. 27th, 9-11 a.m. Gardening, a/k/a weeding and mulching, is needed.

To help, contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.

National Audubon's Updated Website

Have you seen National Audubon Society's updated website, www.audubon.org? Informative, colorful, and easy-to-navigate, it allows you to "Take Action" on issues of interest.

Photographer's Green PLACE Nature Walk September 26, 2015

Orange County Environmental Protection Division is holding nature walks to spotlight Orange County Green PLACE properties. These walks are led by a professional photographer, and photos that participants take and enter in Orange Audubon Society's Chertok photo contest are eligible for bonus prizes. Winning photos may also be included in Orange County's 2017 nature calendar.

The first walk is at Pine Lily Preserve in east Orange County on September 26, 2015, celebrating National Public Lands Day.

The second Green PLACE Walk will be to Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve, Christmas on October 10, 2015, and the final Walk will be on March 12, 2016 to Isle of Pine, a chance to revisit the site of the September field trip. All walks are free. For further information or to RSVP, please email Carrie. Mohanna@ocfl.net.

Limited Edition Field Trip Orlando Wetlands Park September 26, 2015

The amazing Orlando Wetlands Park near Christmas, FL, is the destination on September 26, 2015 for the first Limited Edition field trip of Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) new season.

Limited Edition field trips are led by popular birding guide Bob Sanders and limited to 15 people. With fall migrants passing through, wintering species returning, plus resident wetland birds, this field trip should be a great birding experience.

Cost is \$10 per person for members and \$15 per person for non-members. Reservations are required and will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis the week prior to the trip. For trip questions or reservations, call Bob Sanders at (407) 459-5617.

OAS' next Limited Edition field trip will be to Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area in Osceola County on Sunday, October 18, 2015.



Audubon Adventures

Audubon Adventures is an excellent nature education resource for grades 3-6, after-school programs, and other groups that comes packaged as a Classroom Kit (serving 32 students with teacher materials, four times a year). Developed by environmental educators and National Audubon Society staff, contents include hands-on activities and scientifically accurate information about birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Students look forward to using the fun activities.

Audubon chapters defray the cost of these kits (about \$43 with shipping for a classroom set). Last year Orange Audubon Society provided 65 classrooms with *Audubon Adventures*. We hope to repeat this. Can you help? Along with the financial support that we hope you will send in response to OAS' Letter Appeal, you can indicate you would like to sponsor one or more classrooms with *Audubon Adventures*. Thank you!

Dominique Shimizu, Education Committee Chair

Beginners' Bird Watching Class **October 3, 10, 17, 2015**

Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Bob Sanders will teach a Beginners' Bird Watching Class this fall. It includes an "outdoor" classroom session and mini-field trip on October 3rd at Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) and 2 field sessions on October 10th and 17th at OWP and Lake Jesup, respectively. All sessions are 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Goals of the course are to increase knowledge and awareness of North American bird species; teach basic birding principles and bird ID techniques—including bird habitat and anatomy; provide binocular basics (OAS has "loaner" binoculars for use during the class) and tips on using field guides and checklists; and discuss birding ethics. If you miss a fall session, you may take a make-up session during the spring 2016 class.



Tricolored Heron at Orlando Wetlands Park.
 Photo: Susan Kirby

The class is limited to 20 students and registration is required. Total cost for all three sessions is \$30 for Audubon members, \$45 for non-members and \$10 for children through age 12 with a registered adult.

Non-members can join when registering and pay \$50, which includes class registration (member price \$30) plus introductory 3-way annual membership in Orange, National and Florida Audubon Societies (\$20 rate). New memberships are paid directly to OAS, as instructed when you register. Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. For questions about the class, contact Bob at (407) 459-5617.

Fall Bird Walks at Mead Botanical Garden

To celebrate fall migration, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is hosting bird walks at Mead Botanical Garden 1500 S. Denning Drive, Winter Park on Saturdays, October 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2015.

To entice people to experience the pleasures of birding and become aware of this great location in Winter Park, the walks are free and open to the public with no registration needed. Each walk will be led by an experienced birding leader.

The walks start at 8:00 a.m. and will last 2 to 3 hours. The pace will be slow with lots of stopping to look at birds and will cover as much of the park as possible. Loaner binoculars will be available. If you need to borrow a pair, please arrive a little early to sign them out and to be shown how to use them for the most enjoyable experience.

For information, contact OAS-Mead Liaison Larry Martin at (407) 647-583 or lmartin5@msn.com

Wings and Wildflowers Festival **October 2-4, 2015**

The fourth Annual Wings and Wildflowers Festival will be held October 2-4, 2015 at Venetian Gardens in Leesburg.

Keynote speakers include Gallus Quigley, a past Orange Audubon Society (OAS) board member and well-known birder, who is Cornell eBird regional coordinator for Lake and Sumter counties; James Currie, a South African birder now living in West Palm Beach, who hosts *Nikon's Birding Adventures* on NBC Sports; and Dr. Ken Meyer, of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute, who studies Swallow-tailed Kites.

For information about the festival, see www.wingsandwildflowers.com. Kathy Rigling, who will be there representing Cornell Labs' Bird Sleuth Program and OAS, can be contacted at riglingk@aol.com or (407) 488-9559.

Backyard Biodiversity Day **October 24, 2015**

For the 3rd year, Orange Audubon Society is teaming up with the Florida Native Plant Society and Mead Botanical Garden, Inc. to sponsor Backyard Biodiversity Day at Mead Botanical Garden (MBG) in Winter Park. The event will be October 24th from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



This free event will host a native plant sale, the proceeds of which will benefit MBG in restoring its upland habitat. Come early to buy the best selection of native plants to attract birds, butterflies and other pollinators to your landscape. Walks, talks, vendors, music, and food trucks make this a fun event. More details in the next *OASis*.

Butterfly Identification Workshop **October 25, 2015**

Orange Audubon Society is offering a fall Central Florida Butterfly Identification Workshop on Sunday, October 25th, from 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

The 8-hour workshop, with a short lunch break, includes slide presentations, field observation and identification of butterflies at Orlando Wetlands Park on Wheeler Road in Christmas, FL and nearby Seminole Ranch Conservation Area.

Cost is \$25 for Audubon members; \$40 for non-members; and \$10 for children 12 or younger with a registered adult. The workshop is limited to 16 students.

For required reservations, contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796. For questions about workshop content, contact instructors Randy Snyder and Mary Keim at rssmhk@gmail.com or (407) 851-5416.

2015 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest Results

In its 2015 (27th Annual) Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) sponsored Youth, Open/Novice and Advanced Amateur/Professional competition categories with the theme Florida Native Nature.

Winners were announced on June 18th at Harry P. Leu Gardens, Orlando, where about 175 members and guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction and a presentation of all eligible contest entries.

YOUTH CATEGORY WINNERS

1ST AND 2ND PLACE

- Arwen Paredes**, Coconut Creek
- *Leaving the Nest — Osprey*
 - *Buttonbush**

3RD PLACE

- Troy Whitehead**, Maitland
- *Stuck Inside*

HONORABLE MENTIONS

- Avery Chan**, Oviedo
- *Just Flying By — Prince Baskettail Dragonfly*

- Katelyn Murphy**, Ocoee
- *Take Off — Blue Dasher Dragonfly*

- Arwen Paredes**, Coconut Creek
- *Hanging Out— Osprey*
 - *Baby Gators*

- Mason Theurer**
- *Least Bittern*



Osprey Bathing. 2015 Chertok Photo Contest 2nd Place Winner, Advanced Amateur/Professional category. Photo: Larry Lynch

OPEN/NOVICE CATEGORY WINNERS

1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD PLACE

- Katie Houvener**, Clermont
- *Struggle for Survival — Great Blue Heron with Florida Green Water Snake**
 - *Family Outing — Sandhill Cranes with Colt*
 - *Wide Awake —Barred Owl*

HONORABLE MENTIONS

- Myrna Barba**, Winter Garden
- *Hitching a Ride — American Alligators*
- Michele Flacco**, Ocoee
- *Don't Blink — Brown Pelican*
- Terry Godbey**, Orlando
- *Friendly Scrub-Jay*
- Lauri Griffin**, Merritt Island
- *Following Mom — Sandhill Crane & Chicks*
- Jennifer Krigsner**, Orlando
- *Eastern Amberwing Dragonfly on Broad Scale Yellow-eyed Grass.*

ADVANCED AMATEUR/PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY WINNER

1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD PLACE

- Larry Lynch**, St Petersburg
- *Alligator Eye Shine*
 - *Osprey Bathing*
 - *Sandhill Crane with Her New Family**

HONORABLE MENTIONS

- Alan T. Dart**, Orlando
- *A Face Only a Mother Could Love**
- Myrna Erler-Bradshaw**, Bushnell
- *Foggy Morning Sunrise*
- Robert Kimbrell**, Ft. Myers
- *Canopy —Reddish Egret*
- Ruth Pannunzio**, West Palm Beach
- *Baby Bobcat Stand*
- Paul Rebmann**, Ormond Beach
- *Golden Silk Orb Weaver.*

Images marked with an asterisk (*) are on the 2015-2016 OAS brochure.

All winning images are on OAS' website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org where 2016 contest information will soon be available.

OAS sincerely appreciates all photographers who entered the 2015 contest and looks forward to your participation in 2016.

Teresa Williams,
Chertok Photo Contest Chair

Audubon Assembly 2015

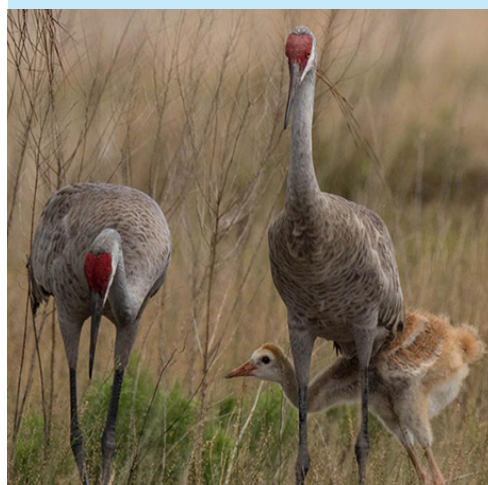
October 23-24, 2015 in Maitland — "Parks: The Heart of Natural Florida"

Audubon Florida's signature conservation event, Audubon Assembly, brings together representatives of Audubon Florida's 44 chapters and 35,000 members with conservation leaders, scientists, educators and policy makers. This year's gathering will be held at the Orlando Sheraton North in Maitland and you are invited! Audubon Assembly offers the opportunity to participate in forming Audubon's 2015 conservation priorities, to join exciting field trips, and to learn new conservation skills. The theme for this year's event is "Parks: The Heart of Natural Florida."

Many Orange Audubon Society board members will be there, and we encourage other members to attend, since Assembly is local this year. For more information, please visit: <http://fl.audubon.org/audubon-assembly-2015-parks-heart-natural-florida>

2015 Cox Conserves Heroes: Post Your Vote by September 14, 2015

Orlando's 2015 Cox Conserves Heroes finalists have been narrowed to three individuals and the final winner will be determined by votes by the public. Watch videos on the three finalists and vote online before September 14 at www.wftv.com/cox-conserves.



Family Outing - Sandhill Cranes with Colt. 2015 Chertok Photo Contest 2nd Place Winner, Open/Novice category. Photo: Katie Houvener

Wekiva Basin Banding Station Welcomes You

Bird banding helps to accumulate information on bird biology, populations, life history and migration patterns. Birds are captured in fine mesh nets, called 'mist nets,' that are positioned throughout the property. Banders check the nets often and captured birds are gingerly extracted and placed in soft cloth bags for stress-free transportation.

Back at the banding table, information is collected about each bird. The species, age, sex (if possible), weight, and any fat presence are all recorded. Additional measurements are taken if the species is difficult to determine. This Northern Cardinal male is being weighed by bander Becki Smith. Note that the Cardinal has a stick in its beak, as its strong seed-eating beak can give a fingernail-splitting bite. The carefully-sized numbered aluminum band placed on its leg has no more impact than a wristwatch to us, and the birds are quickly released back into the wild. The birds may be caught again, either in the same or a different banding station along their migration route. Data is sent to the Bird Banding Laboratory at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland and to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Orange Audubon Society is lucky to have a local banding station, where all are welcome to visit. The Wekiva Basin Banding Station is an all-volunteer banding group currently located at Lake Lotus Park in Altamonte Springs. Andrew Boyle is the licensed Master Bander in charge, having studied under long-term bird banders Richard Poole and Christine Brown, who still participate. The volunteer banders give banding demonstrations during the Orlando Wetlands Park Festival and Birdapalooza. Children love seeing the birds up close.

The banding station at Lake Lotus runs from the beginning of August until the end of May, when migrants have left the state and the local birds continue to raise their broods. Peak season is usually October to November. Nets are opened every available Sunday morning around 30 minutes before sunrise, as this is when the birds begin waking and moving through the area. Nets are kept up about 4 hours, set up in approximately 6 acres of mixed habitat on the opposite side of the main park.

As Andrew points out, one never knows what species of birds will be captured from week to week. Lake Lotus is located just West of I-4 on Maitland Boulevard (SR-414). For detailed directions and more information on the station, see <http://wekivaband.blogspot.com/>. The banders would appreciate notice if you plan on coming out, in case plans change for any reason. Andrew can be contacted at andybgator@yahoo.com or (407) 480-6475.



Bander Becki Smith with Northern Cardinal
Photo: Andrew Boyle

Deborah Green with Andrew Boyle

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Youth Field Trip: Mead Botanical Garden

September 12, 2015

Contact Brook at (407) 921-8008

September Program: Rehabilitating Birds of Prey – Avian Reconditioning Center

September 17, 2015

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

September Field Trip: Isle of Pine Preserve

September 19, 2015

Contact Mary at rssmhk@gmail.com

Limited Edition Field Trip to Orlando Wetlands Park

September 26, 2015. Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Photographer's Green PLACE Nature Walk: Pine Lily Preserve

September 26, 2015

Contact Carrie.Mohanna@ocfl.net

Genius Drive Workday

September 27, 2015. Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

Beginners' Bird Watching Class:

Orlando Wetlands Park and Lake Jesup

October 3, 10, & 17, 2015

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Mead Botanical Garden Bird Walks

October 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2015

Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

Photographer's Green PLACE Nature Walk: Savage/Christmas Creek Preserve

October 10, 2015

Contact Carrie Mohanna at Carrie.Mohanna@ocfl.net

Limited Edition Field Trip to Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area

October 18, 2015. Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Audubon Assembly, Maitland

October 23-24, 2015. Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Backyard Biodiversity Day, Mead Botanical Garden

October 24, 2015

Contact Mary at rssmhk@gmail.com

Oakland Heritage Festival

October 24, 2015.

Contact Taylor Clark at

tclark@oaklandnaturepreserve.org.

Butterfly Identification Workshop

October 25, 2015

Contact Randy at rssmhk@gmail.com