



Milton Heiberg with his favorite, the Florida Scrub-Jay. Photo: Fred Hunter

This Month's Program

May 18, 2017

The Florida Scrub-Jay and Our Water by Milton Heiberg

The Florida Scrub-Jay is Florida's most charismatic bird. It occurs only in Florida and survives only in scrub oak habitats—which also happen to be in sandy recharge areas that replenish our aquifer—Florida's source of drinking water. However, both the scrub-jay and our drinking water are in trouble. Most of these high dry areas have already been grabbed and used for homes and other development.

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) board member Milton Heiberg is a professional photographer and instructor of nature photography, who has written seven books and numerous articles on photography. The most recent is *The Essentials of Nature Photography*, Tern Book Company. Milton is the founder of the Photo Committee at the New York City Audubon Society, and taught nature photography courses there from 1980 until he moved to Orlando in 1998.

He now teaches nature photography at the Crealdé School of Art, Winter Park, and is Central Florida's photo instructor at Digital Photo Academy—Panasonic/Lumix's national school of photography, at Leu Gardens, at the Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, and for OAS. Milton also serves as OAS' webmaster.

Milton will use his extraordinary photography to show us the link between the beautiful Florida Scrub-Jay bird and the future of our water supply. Join us May 18th for a fascinating program. See box below for location.

Deborah Green

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/



Monthly Field Trip: May 20, 2017 Lyonia Preserve, Deltona

The easiest place in Central Florida to see the rare and beautiful Florida Scrub-Jay is a 400-acre preserve in the sprawling city of Deltona. Volusia County's largest city is situated on the Deland Ridge, one of Florida's series of north-south sand ridges that support only the drought-resistant sand pine scrub plant community.

The Lyonia Preserve opened to the public in 1994. The Deltona Regional Library is at one corner. The adjacent Environmental Center has exhibits focused on the scrub and water.



Rusty staggerbush, showing distinctive rusty foliage and early spring bell-shaped flowers. Photo: Mary Keim

The preserve is named for rusty staggerbush, *Lyonia ferruginea*, a shrub in the blueberry family typical of the sand pine scrub habitat. Fetterbush, *Lyonia lucida*, and Piedmont staggerbush, *Lyonia mariana*, also grow there. Volusia County environmental staff has managed the property for scrub-jays by prescribed burning and other habitat restoration methods.

In addition to Florida Scrub-Jays, we should see Eastern Towhees, Brown Thrashers, White-eyed Vireos, and other species adapted to this harsh environment, called Florida's desert.

Meet at 8:30 a.m. by the preserve entrance, adjacent to the parking lot of the Deltona Regional Library, 2150 Eustace Ave., Deltona, FL 32725. Call me in advance at (407) 647-5834 if you have any questions. Hope you join us!

Larry Martin, Field Trips Chair



Conservation Efforts

The 60-day Florida legislative session ends on May 5th. Please join the Audubon Advocate Action Network at [this link](#) for any last calls to action.

Fertilizer Ordinance

By July Orange County must revise its 2009 Fertilizer Ordinance to comply with the Springs and Aquifer Protection Act of 2016. Seminole County passed an ordinance with a summer fertilizer application ban (for fertilizer containing nitrogen and phosphorus). Lake County officials have indicated that they would pass a similar ordinance if Orange County would. Being uniform would help in the educational process, as pointed out by Audubon Florida.

At the April 26th Orange County Environmental Protection Commission meeting, representatives from Orange Audubon Society, Sierra Club and other groups requested a summer fertilizer ban. Representatives from the landscape industry urged commissioners not to end the application exemptions for professionals and those that took an on-line test. Commissioners voted to send proposed revisions to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) leaving existing exemptions in place. The next BCC hearing on these ordinance revisions is June 6th. We encourage anyone interested to save this date and join us and to communicate with your commissioner before then. For more information, email me at mjonesenvironment@att.net.

Mike Jones, Conservation Committee

Conserve Water in this Drought

April has been a devastatingly dry month. The first four months of 2017 will be the driest in a century, according to the National Weather Service and the *Orlando Sentinel*. Only April 1896, October 2010, and December 1944 were as rainless.

What can we do about it? One thing is that we can give up on our irrigated fertilized lawns. Let this be



Red-shouldered Hawk and Hatchlings - STA-2, Flamingo Quest II. Photo: Kathy Rigling

a good opportunity to rethink your landscape and add some water-wise and native plants. After establishing them, such plants correctly chosen for the location will need little water and will support birds and other wildlife. Drought-proof your yard and support National Audubon's Bird Friendly Communities Initiative at the same time.

EPA WaterSense

The President's Budget for FY18 lists 50 programs at the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that should be eliminated, including valuable programs such as Energy Star. The less well-known WaterSense program, established in 2006, labels fixtures that use 20% less than the federal standards and that work as well as or better than standard models. Because the EPA's WaterSense program has never been Congressionally authorized, it does not have its own budget line item and has always been funded only at the discretion of the EPA Administrator.



The WaterSense program provides significant economic value to water utilities and their customers and is valuable to the plumbing manufacturing community, creating jobs. It has saved an estimated 1.5 trillion gallons of water.

The average family spends \$1,100 per year in water costs, but can save \$350 from retrofitting with WaterSense labeled fixtures and ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances. There are more than 16,000 available models of WaterSense labeled products for bathrooms, commercial kitchens and irrigation systems. *Deborah Green*



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.

Orange Audubon Society
P.O. Box 941142
Maitland, FL 32794-1142
www.orangeaudubonfl.org

President:
Rick Baird
rbaird4@att.net
(407) 277-3357

OASis Editor:
Deborah Green
sabalpress@mac.com
(407) 637-2525

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

Address Change or E-Delivery:
Mike Daley
miked129e@gmail.com
(407) 417-7818

JOIN OAS' [MEETUP](#) GROUP
LIKE OAS ON [FACEBOOK](#)

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, 1-800-435-7352, WITHIN THE STATE. FROM OUTSIDE OF FLORIDA CALL 1-850-410-3800. VISIT www.800helpfla.com FOR HELP. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION NO. CH2330

In case you missed it ...

Freshwater Turtles of Central Florida by Wayne Osborne

Wayne Osborne, a Deltona area teacher, biologist, and senior scientist with the Turtle Survival Alliance - North American Freshwater Turtle Research Group (TSA-NAFTRG), presented a fascinating program to Orange Audubon Society on April 21st. Wayne has volunteered with this research group for nearly 6 years.

To guide conservation efforts of any organism, population data is essential, and population trends may take years to become clear. Turtle populations reflect changes in quantity of their food, such as macro-invertebrates and fish, plus quantity and type of aquatic vegetation. Other threats to turtle populations include exploitation for food and the pet trade.

Some of the freshwater turtles found in Central Florida are the Florida Softshell Turtle, *Apalone ferox*, Eastern Snapping Turtle, *Chelydra serpentina*, Loggerhead Musk Turtle, *Sternotherus minor minor*, Eastern Musk Turtle, *Sternotherus odoratus*, Peninsula Cooter, *Pseudemys peninsularis*, Florida Redbelly Cooter, *Pseudemys nelsoni*, and the Yellow-bellied Slider, *Trachemys scripta scripta* (more often found in North Florida).

The introduced Red-eared Slider, *Trachemys scripta elegans*, originated from the area around the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico. As a child, perhaps you, too, had a pet turtle in a plastic moat container with a little plastic palm tree. As the most popular pet turtle in the United States, the Red-eared Slider has been widely released and frequently shows up in the wild. This species has interbred with the Yellow-bellied Slider, altering the native species gene pool and is currently illegal to possess within the state of Florida.

Turtle surveys began at Wekiwa Springs State Park in 1999 to assess the continued impact of development surrounding the park. Eric Munscher and his professor, Dr. Hague, searched for turtles by snorkeling, then collected, tagged and released specimens to be recaptured the next year. Veterinarians specializing in turtles and other reptiles have helped to refine the tagging methods specific to each turtle group, with no known injuries or deaths as a result of this process. Researchers are learning how long turtles live (numerous cooter species marked in 2000 and 2002 were recaptured in 2016) and how quickly they grow (a Florida Softshell, originally marked in 2010 with a carapace length of 137 mm was recaptured in 2016 with a carapace length of 454 mm).

The audience was most amazed when Wayne mentioned how far some species travel within waterways. A tagged Suwannee River Cooter was found in Peacock Springs, and the researchers' first reaction was "Oh, other researchers are using the same tagging methods!" What a surprise to learn that one of their turtles, tagged in Manatee Springs, had moved that far. In our area last year, four Florida Redbelly Cooters and one Peninsula Cooter, previously marked in 2009 and 2010 respectively at Wekiwa Springs, were captured 9 river miles away at Rock Springs Run.

Freshwater turtles spend considerable time under water but must come up for air. The females lay eggs on land, digging a hole to bury them. They have no maternal instinct. After egg-laying, they return to the water. Most female Florida softshells reproduce every year, laying up to 7 clutches per year, which is important since predation by raccoons and other animals is high. The bigger the female the more eggs she lays, with large females laying over 50 eggs per year. The fierce-looking snapper bites and lets go, but the softshell has one of the worst bites of any of our turtles. It will not let go!

Wayne explained that if a turtle is crossing a road, it is probably a male looking for new territory, or a female looking for a place to lay eggs. A female Florida Softshell may crawl a mile from water to find an egg-laying site. When you move a turtle (or Gopher Tortoise) off a road, it needs to go in the same direction. Wayne told us how some people at Canaveral National Seashore mistakenly put Gopher Tortoises in the water, possibly (unwittingly) causing them to drown. Clearly more presentations like this are needed!

I was hoping to glean some easy tips to distinguish the Peninsula Cooter and Florida Redbelly Cooter, both species of the genus *Pseudemys* that are common in our rivers, lakes and canals. The Peninsula Cooter's carapace is more flanged and the Florida Redbelly Cooter's carapace is redder, but Wayne revealed that they occur in the same habitats and can actually interbreed. The only sure way to distinguish them is to examine the jaw. The Florida Redbelly Cooter's jaw has cusps, something you would only see if you captured it.

TSA-NAFTRG combines professional, student, and public passion for turtles into long-term conservation and research efforts. And turtles are a window onto the health of our aquatic systems. Turtle lovers, consider supporting the [Turtle Survival Alliance](#).

Deborah Green



Peninsula Cooter (*Pseudemys peninsularis*) Florida Redbelly Cooter (*Pseudemys nelsoni*) Photos: Mary Keim

Birdathon 2017 Report

Thanks to all the birders who participated in the Orange Audubon Society (OAS) Birdathon this year!

Participants birded from the Gulf Coast, up to Daytona Beach, down to Viera Wetlands, throughout the Central Florida birding hot spots, and in their backyards.

Those sending in their lists were Lynn Marie Folts, Deborah Green and David Marano, Paul Hueber, Mary Keim and Randy Snyder, Susan and Charlie Kirby, Larry Martin, with Bob Sicolo, Ellen Rocco, Barbara and Larry Taylor, Lori Mathis, Gallus Quigley, Brook and Brad Rohman, Kathy Rigling, Frank Salmon, Bob Sanders and Gail Spratley, Rebecca Smith and Sue Farnsworth, and Joyce and Bill Stefancic.

Total species seen were 175, which is higher than OAS' Birdathon count has been for many years. Winners in the species count were Joyce and Bill Stefancic with 86 species, birding the Fort DeSoto area; Brook and Brad Rohman with 82 species, birding Orlando Wetlands Park, Tosohatchee, Brumley Road, Lake Mills Park, and backyard in Winter Park; Deborah Green and David Marano with 65 species, birding Lake Harney and St. Johns Marshes, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, and Daytona Beach; and Lynn Marie Folts with 60 species, birding the Lake Apopka North Shore.

Some notable species were both the Virginia Rail and King Rail, the Black-whiskered Vireo, Piping Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Red Knot, Long-billed Dowitcher, Sandwich Tern, American Oystercatcher, Prothonotary Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, and Gray Kingbird.

OAS will still accept funds for this Birdathon (with or without pledge sheets) mailed to Orange Audubon Society, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. Thanks for your participation in this fun OAS fund-raiser.

Kathy Rigling, Birdathon Coordinator



Courtship at Fort DeSoto Park: Laughing Gulls and Sandwich Terns. Photo: Joyce Stefancic

Spring Bird Walks at Mead Botanical Garden

Central Florida has a number of excellent birders who spend as much time as they can "birding." Past Orange Audubon Society president Dick Smith's idea of connecting experts with beginners at a birding hot spot has turned into one of OAS' best educational programs.

Mead Botanical Garden, the 47.6-acre park owned by the City of Winter Park, is a superb migrant trap where birds stop for food and rest on their way north in spring or south in fall. The wetlands, open water, and upland area with oaks and tall pines support these migrants as well as resident birds. Unfortunately, this year's drought has affected bird populations.

Some birds sighted by most of the participants were Prairie Warbler, American Redstart, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and Cedar Waxwings. The baby Barred Owls as always were a hit.

Thanks to the experts who led and shared their knowledge, among them Lori Mathis, Ellen Rocco, Bob Sanders, Bob Sicolo, Scott Simmons, Renee Thomas, and John Thomton. Bruce Anderson and Marcus Sharpe assisted through development of the bird list.

Migration walks are planned again for September and October. But any time of year, check out the resident birds at this interesting and accessible park.

Larry Martin, Field Trips Chair



Split Oak field trip April 29th. Photo: Dave Wegman

Split Oak Hike

On April 29th, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) and Friends of Split Oak Forest led a hike to Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area to introduce more people to this interesting property off Narcoosee Road. Thirty people joined us. Northern Bobwhite, Wild Turkey, Eastern Towhee, and Eastern Bluebird were a few of the birds seen. Another hike will be part of "Animalversary" on May 13th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Back to Nature, 10525 Clapp-Simms Duda Rd., Orlando, FL 32832. That hike will be at 11 a.m.

OAS and other concerned groups continue to monitor as the Osceola County Expressway Authority evaluates alternative corridors for an eastern extension that could go through Split Oak. Please contact me at sabalpress@mac.com to become part of the coalition, particularly if you live in the Lake Nona area or enjoy visiting Split Oak Forest.

Deborah Green

Fort DeSoto Park Trip

On April 23rd, Bob Sanders led Orange Audubon Society's Limited Edition Field Trip to Fort DeSoto Park in Pinellas County. Although it was unusually dry and windy, the group of 13 birders saw Black Skimmers, Least, Royal and Sandwich terns, Laughing Gulls, Wilson's Plover, Marbled Godwit, Magnificent Frigatebird and a few migrant songbirds.

Bob Sanders

Flamingo Quest II Report

On April 22th, 44 members of Orange Audubon Society (OAS) and neighboring chapters drove south of Lake Okeechobee in search of American Flamingos that had been seen each spring for the past 10 years.

Audubon Society of the Everglades manages visits to the area for the South Florida Water Management District and runs trips from mid-March through April, the period when flamingos have usually been seen there.

For the second year, our group struck out! No elusive flamingos.

Everyone was a good sport about it, and our skilled and attentive birding guide David Simpson helped us see many other birds on Saturday and Sunday.

In the shallow impoundment where flamingos had been seen in past years, we saw Black-necked Stilts, Black Skimmers, Caspian Terns, Double-crested Cormorants, Black-bellied Plovers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and many others.

The highlight was one Gull-billed Tern that posed on a stick! We also caught glimpses of a Gray-headed Swamphen, and on the way out enjoyed views of a Red-shouldered Hawk with nestlings.

Leaving STA-2 we visited a pond with a collection of exotic waterfowl. A White-faced Whistling-Duck (native to sub-Saharan Africa and much of South America) was particularly noisy.

It rained Saturday night, and only 22 of our participants continued to Matheson Hammock, where we saw Common Hill Myna and several species of wild parakeet, as well as White-crowned Pigeons and some songbirds.

Continuing on to Crandon Park and Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, we saw Blackpoll Warblers and Cape May Warblers, which had overwintered in the Caribbean, pushed north by the storm. We saw a Great White Heron, Magnificent Frigatebirds and others.

The day after we were there, at the same sites, other birders found our target Western Spindalis, Bananaquit, Thick-billed Vireo, Bahama Mockingbird and Fork-tailed Flycatcher!

Birding is all about timing and involves some luck. *Deborah Green*



Clockwise from top, A few Orange Audubon Society participants in the Flamingo Quest II with guide David Simpson. Photo: Beveley Sinclair; Gull-billed Tern on post with Black Skimmers, Caspian Terns and Black-bellied Plovers at STA-2. Photo: Sonia Durrance; Gray Kingbirds - Dinner for two? Photo: Kathy Rigling; Common Hill Myna. Photo: Sherri Brown

A Wildlife-friendly Yard: Tarflower Chapter Program May 2, 2017

Andrea England, a Central Florida resident and Tarflower Chapter Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS) member, won the Florida Association of Native Nurseries (FANN) Central Florida region award at the recent tradeshow in Bradenton. Her landscape includes a pollinator meadow featuring 16 varieties of native wildflowers and 6 types of grasses as well as flowering vines, understory trees and a light canopy of longleaf pines. Plants are larval hosts for more than 20 butterflies and moths. FNPS Tarflower Chapter's May 2nd meeting (7 p.m. Leu Gardens) will allow Andrea to share her design. Take this opportunity to get inspired. *Tarflower Chapter*

Water for Florida's Future

Water is used to create energy and a lot of energy is used to move water. Saving one helps save the other! Audubon Florida's new Water for Florida's Future program, funded by Duke Energy, needs outreach volunteers to help deliver conservation messages. These water messengers will receive training and deliver programs in their communities to broaden involvement of individuals, businesses and families taking action to save water and energy. Saving water helps save birds and important habitats and ecosystems in Florida. Reducing energy use creates more sustainable communities. Saving water and energy also saves everyone money. For information on how to get involved, email watermessenger@audubon.org.

Jay Watch Training May 13, 2017

Jay Watch volunteers contribute to research (citizen science) and preservation of the threatened Florida Scrub-Jay. The friendly and charismatic scrub-jay is dependent on Florida's shrinking scrub habitat.

The closest Jay Watch sites are Lyonia Preserve (site of our May field trip), Blue Spring State Park, North Peninsula State Park (all in Volusia County), and two water management district properties, Lake Monroe Conservation Area in Volusia County and Buck Lake Conservation Area in Brevard County.

Jay Watch will conduct a statewide survey from June 15 to July 15, 2017. To become a Jay Watch volunteer, you must take a free half day training session in which you will learn standardized survey methods. The closest Jay Watch training workshop is at the Lyonia Preserve on Providence Blvd. & Eustace Ave. in Deltona on Saturday morning May 13th.

If you cannot attend that morning, there are other sessions around the state. See [this link](#) for more information or contact Audubon Florida's Jacqui Sulek at jsulek@audubon.org.



Bob Wheeler at Lyonia Preserve, March 2005
Photo: Andrew Boyle

Bob Wheeler (1922-2017)

Our friend Robert H. "Bob" Wheeler passed away on April 15, 2017. This long-time member of Orange Audubon Society earned the nickname "Birdman Bob" among friends and family. He actively helped with the Wekiva Basin Bird Banding Station, led "birding tours," was a speaker at functions and in schools teaching others, and traveled the world adding to his "personal sighting list."

Bob's son and daughter have asked that you please consider a gift in Bob's name to the Orange Audubon Society at P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL, 32794. Family and friends are invited to gather for a "Celebration of Life" for Bob on May 20th at 2:00pm at the Oasis at Conway Gardens Church, 1900 Conway Gardens Rd., Orlando, FL. Please RSVP to crafcomrno@gmail.com.



Orphaned baby Screech Owls.
Photo courtesy Audubon Center for Birds of Prey

Baby Owl Shower at Center for Birds of Prey May 13, 2017

Each spring Audubon Florida's Center for Birds of Prey holds its annual Baby Owl Shower. It takes place on the Saturday before Mother's Day to raise funds to offset the increased costs during baby season. Non-releasable baby raptors those with physical or mental (imprinting) injuries that would prevent survival in the wild should be available to view. Admission is "free" that day when you bring an item from the wish list of supplies needed to care for these young raptors. See list at [this link](#). Contact the Center at (407) 644-0190 if you have questions.

Orange Audubon Society participates at this event selling nature-inspired merchandise and offering a kids' art activity.

We especially need help with the kids' art activity. Baby owls attract lots of baby people (and grown people, too!). The event starts at 10 a.m., but set up help is needed at 9:00 a.m. The event ends and tear-down begins at 2:00 p.m. To help with the Baby Owl Shower, please contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.

Teresa Williams

Orange Audubon Society Elections

In April, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) held its official annual meeting to elect officers and/or members of its board of directors.

Two board members who contributed a lot are leaving the board - Phyllis Hall, Conservation Chair, and Susan Kirby, Nominating Chair, Publicity Co-chair and EPCOT coordinator. Along with Susan we lose Charlie Kirby, who chaired the Hospitality Committee. Thanks very much to these individuals for all you've done.

Officers' terms are for 2016-2018 and Dena Wild, a current director with 2016-2019 term, has accepted the nomination for Second Vice President/Programs Chair.

Elected for a 2015-2018 term is Killian Hiltz (returning board member); and for a 2017-2020 term: Larry Martin (returning), with two new additions Mike Broussard and Mike Jones. Mike Jones is a retired attorney, and Mike Broussard is a soon to be retired attorney. Both are interested in conservation issues, and we are delighted to have them on our board.

Three board seats are still available: one for a 2016-2019 and two for 2017-2020 terms.

OAS has great need of help with conservation and education and will soon need help from people skilled in fund-raising as we move closer to a capital campaign for an OAS nature education center. We have many committees, which you can join without being a board member.

We can fill board vacancies at any time, but ideal would be to fill these vacancies before our summer board meeting, which is usually in late July.

If you wish to increase your involvement or have questions, please contact me at skirby1964@gmail.com or (407) 440-3448. Your time would be a most valuable asset to Orange Audubon Society. Thank you very much.

Susan Kirby, Nominating Committee Chair, with Deborah Green

Membership Matters

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is the third largest chapter in the Southeast. As a member of OAS, you are also a member of Audubon Florida and National Audubon Society (NAS). It is a “three-way membership.”

In this three-way membership arrangement, if a person or household joins Audubon through a local chapter, NAS returns the initial dues to the local chapter as a “chapter-generated” incentive for recruiting the new member.

In the three-way membership arrangement, NAS sends renewal notices, and renewals payments must be made to NAS by mail or on-line. OAS is entitled to only a ‘baseline dues share’ of renewals paid to NAS, which, for the past 15+ years has been a flat amount of \$2,244.50 annually. This amount does not vary with the number of OAS members nor the renewal amount paid (be it \$20 or \$200).

Although NAS does not require email or even a phone when you join, OAS has been collecting members’ email addresses for our electronic communications. We will continue reaching out to collect emails for everyone, and do send about 10 newsletters to members who do not have computer access.

How do you know your renewal date? When OAS sent print newsletters up until about 3 years ago, the mailing labels included the expiration date. But now OAS only sends the letter appeal and brochure in September as a print mailing (which has saved our chapter about \$5000 per year, our volunteers countless hours in labeling and mailing, and resources). Beyond putting the date on the labels, the OAS membership committee has never sent renewal information.

In March, I started the process of looking up membership expiration dates using the February 2017 roster from NAS (the most recent one then available) and sent email notification to those not on the roster plus some postcards to those not on our email list.

Some members I contacted have been able to show a recent renewal or new membership, which was not yet reflected in the roster from NAS I was using. Others have learned that their membership had indeed lapsed.

There are still others who were not members although they had been added to the email list. If you are opening our emails regularly and reading our newsletter, we encourage you to actually join our chapter.

Takeaways:

1. Audubon membership is three-way: as an OAS member, you are also a member of NAS and Audubon Florida. Member benefits include NAS’ bimonthly *Audubon* magazine, Audubon Florida’s *Audubon Florida Naturalist* tri-annual magazine and OAS’ September - June monthly *OASis* newsletter. If you are not receiving the NAS and state publications, call NAS’ membership office.
2. If your membership expired more than 6 months ago, please consider rejoining through OAS directly so that NAS will return your “new member” dues to OAS as a chapter recruitment incentive to keep more funds here in the local community. For current renewals, please pay NAS.
3. If you wish to donate to your local chapter, please do so directly on OAS’ website using the DONATE button on the top right or send a check to P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794. Be aware that like OAS, NAS and Audubon Florida are non-profits that must do their own fund-raising. Donations made to NAS and state Audubon organizations do not benefit OAS, your local chapter.

For questions on your expiration date, contact OAS membership database chair Mike Daley at miked531@bellsouth.net or me at sabalpress@mac.com or (407) 637-2525. If you have any other questions on this process, contact OAS treasurer Teresa Williams at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com. Thanks for being part of OAS!

Deborah Green, Membership Chair

eBird

Whether you are an experienced birder or just starting out watching birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s eBird project offers great opportunities to find local birds, explore new birding hot spots and contribute valuable data to scientists.

If you have never explored eBird a great way to start would be to check out the website at <http://ebird.org>.

eBird is a real-time online checklist that was launched in 2002 as a joint project of Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society. As of May 2015, 9.5 million bird observations have been reported worldwide.

This data is used by researchers to study trends in bird populations and has been used to inform global conservation efforts. For example, in June 2016 using data compiled from eBird checklists, NASA and USGS was instrumental in the preservation of thousands of acres of shorebird habitat in California.

Even if you are a beginning birder, your checklists are valuable. You can submit checklists from anywhere and any amount of time. eBird also welcomes input of historical data if you have kept past records.

The easiest way to submit data is to use the mobile eBird. To do so you need to go online and create a free account. The mobile eBird works with your phone’s GPS to accurately find your location when you are birding. Only birds that you can identify by sight or sound should be listed.

Once you start listing, eBird will keep a life list and year list for you. Your data will not only help scientists study bird populations and seasonal movements, but it can also help other birders to find their target birds. On the eBird website you can sign up for rare bird alerts and alerts for birds in your county you have not yet seen. Each bird listed will include a link to the checklist it was listed on including its location. The eBird website can also be very useful when you are traveling and you want to find out what birds to expect in local hotspots.

Kathy Rigling

Silent Auction Help Needed

On June 15, 2017 Orange Audubon Society (OAS) presents its final program of the season, an exclusive showing of entries in the Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest. We will announce winners and present awards. Tasty finger foods and a silent auction make the event even more fun, but also frenetic!

OAS' legendary Silent Auction is a great fund-raiser for our chapter and a chance for you to snap up some great donated items, from artwork to coffee to native plants. But we can use lots of help! Please volunteer to help setting up or cleaning afterwards.

Now is also the time to solicit silent auction items for this major fundraiser. Will you ask a frequented restaurant, outdoor shop, fitness trainer, etc. to donate? Or donate a personal creation that is artistic, culinary or crafty.

To make a Silent Auction donation, please contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com and provide details: *your name and phone number, description of item(s), retail or appraised value, starting bid amount (if desired)*. Proceeds from this program will benefit a future OAS nature center and/or related project. Your support will be sincerely appreciated and acknowledgements for tax purposes are available upon request. Thank you!



Burrowing Owllet Yawn. Second Place, 2014. Chertok Photo Contest, Advanced Category. Photo: Jess Yarnell

Limited Edition Field Trip: May 27, 2017 Three Lakes WMA, Osceola County

The last Limited Edition of the 2016-2017 season will be to Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and nearby Joe Overstreet Road. Species we may encounter include: Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Crested Caracara, White-tailed Kite, Snail Kite, Sandhill Cranes, waders, waterfowl and assorted passerines.

Bring drinks, snacks, lunch and sunscreen. There are no nearby stores. There is a \$6.00 per vehicle fee to enter Three Lakes WMA. This trip is limited to 15 people and costs \$10 per person for members and \$15 per person for non-members. Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis the week prior to the trip. Call Bob Sanders at (407) 459-5617.

Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, 2nd Anniversary

On April 30th, to commemorate the 2nd anniversary of the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive (LAWD), Orange Audubon Society (OAS) volunteers were along the drive with binoculars, bird books, and spotting scopes to help beginners enjoy some of the area's most interesting birds. OAS greatly appreciates LAWD.



One of the stations at the LAWD 2nd Anniversary event. Photo: Bob Stamps

Ride Around Lake Apopka



Friends of Lake Apopka (FOLA) hosted its inaugural 40-mile bike ride around Lake Apopka on April 2nd to raise awareness of progress made in restoring the lake; spotlight the West Orange and Apopka Loop trails; and make people aware of the need to connect these two trails. Approximately 60 riders circumnavigated the lake and had a great time! Many reported that this was their first time on the Lake Apopka Loop Trail, but they will be back.

MAY/JUNE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Baby Owl Shower, Center for Birds of Prey, Maitland

May 13, 2017

Contact auduboncbop@audubon.org

Jay Watch Training, Lyonia Preserve, Deltona

May 13, 2017

Contact Jacqui at jsulek@audubon.org

Monthly Program, The Florida Scrub-Jay and Our Water - Milton Heiberg

May 18, 2017

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Monthly Field Trip, Lyonia Preserve, Deltona

May 20, 2017

Contact Larry at (407) 647-5834

Limited Edition Field Trip to Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, Osceola County

May 27, 2017

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Chertok Awards Program and Silent Auction

June 15, 2017

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796