



This Month's Program:

May 17, 2018

Bird Feathers by Bruce Anderson

Renowned bird expert Bruce Anderson will present on May 17, 2018 on the topic of bird feathers. As a student in biological sciences at the University of Central Florida, Bruce contributed to and curated the bird skin collection. This gave him extensive first hand knowledge of and interest in feathers. Many of his birding trips around the world are to see different species of birds-of-paradise, birds with extravagant feathers. Since inception, Bruce has led bird surveys at Genius Drive Nature Preserve, inhabited by two species of peafowl.



Turkey feather. Photo: Mary Keim

The co-author of *The Birdlife of Florida*, a reference guide of Florida's avifauna, Bruce has been studying birds for the past 60 years. Bruce is past president of Florida Ornithological Society and past regional editor of the American Birding Association's journal, *North American Birds*. He reviews all rare bird forms for Florida Christmas Bird Counts and is author of many articles.

Bruce has presented for Orange Audubon Society many times and each presentation has been greatly appreciated by attendees. Prepare your questions on feathers — all the things you always wondered — and join us May 17th for a fascinating program. Location details are below.

Dena Wild, Programs Chair

Get Ready for the Feather Talk

Feather terminology can be overwhelming if you haven't studied ornithology. Before Bruce Anderson's May 17th talk, take some time to familiarize yourself with a few basics, for example, the feathers named *primaries* and *secondaries*. The Black Vulture (left) has light primaries, whereas the Turkey Vulture (right) has light primaries and secondaries.



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/



Bioblitz at Split Oak Forest, May 4–6, 2018

The Split Oak Forest Bioblitz will be held at Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area, off Narcoossee Road, on May 4–6, 2018. Bioblitz volunteers record everything they see over a specific period to document the diversity of plant and animal life at a location.

The 48-hour period starts at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 4th and ends at 7 p.m. on Sunday, May 6th. Participants are needed for several hour periods during this 48 hours. Every organism seen is recorded, if possible with a picture. University of Central Florida Zoology student Danny Goodding of the Friends of Split Oak Forest, who is organizer of the event, has secured permission for several vehicles to enter so walking can be minimized.



Bar-winged Skimmer at Split Oak Forest, July 2011. Photo: Mary Keim

Small teams of birders are being formed. If you would like to join a birding team, contact Deborah at sabalpress@mac.com or (407) 637-2525. Mary Keim and Randy Snyder will be documenting butterflies and dragonflies. If you can help, RSVP at [this link](#).

May Field Trip

Instead of a May field trip, Orange Audubon Society is holding a weekend birding trip to the South Carolina area, May 18–20, 2018. We'll report next month.



Conservation Update Comments Needed on SR-408 Extension

The Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) will soon make an important decision about whether to go forward with the extension of SR-408 eastward to the SR-50/SR-520 interchange. Thanks to those who attended and turned in comments at the public meeting on April 26th in Bithlo. Comments can still be sent to ConceptStudies@CFXway.com. We encourage you to stress that the road should follow the SR 50 corridor and not deviate south, threatening an important conservation easement, acquired from the Dietrich family by the St. Johns River Water Management District. See related Kevin Spear *Orlando Sentinel* [article here](#). Also online are articles including interviews with Mr. Dietrich. Three years ago, DOT was fine with building the road in the SR 50 right of way, in cooperation with CFX's predecessor, Orlando Orange County Expressway Authority. But CFX and DOT got into a tussle over toll collections in Central Florida — DOT wanted to collect more toll money—toward the agencies are now split over this road. CFX will make its decision at its board meeting on Thursday, May 10, 2018 at CFX headquarters, 4974 ORL Tower Road, Orlando. For further information, contact Conservation Chair Mike Jones at conservation@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Settlement May Help Florida Buy Electric Buses: Take survey by May 11th

The market for electric cars is building slowly. As a second car for short local trips, an electric car makes sense because you can install your own home charging station. There are now over 300 charging stations in the Orlando area, but being sure you can find a charging station during longer trips is a challenge.

Electric buses are another matter. Coming back to a central station to refuel, buses work perfectly with electric charging. Diesel, the fuel of choice for older buses, is increasingly seen as a health hazard. Diesel-powered vehicles and equipment account for nearly half of all nitrogen oxides and more than two-thirds of all particulate matter emissions from US transportation sources. Nitrogen oxides contribute to the formation of ground level ozone, which irritates the respiratory system, causing coughing, choking, and reduced lung capacity (Union of Concerned Scientists). Replacing old diesel fleets with electric buses is an important effort.



Electric buses emit virtually no air pollutants or greenhouse gases. (The power plants where their electricity is generated might still generate those pollutants, but even if it is powered by coal plants, an electric bus averages far less pollution per-mile than a diesel bus.) [Cities around the world](#) are converting to electric buses, driven by growing concerns over urban air quality, carbon emissions and potential operational cost savings.

What can we do to help Central Florida transportation agencies and schools roll out a fleet of electric buses? Taking a survey by May 11th may facilitate bringing a subsidy to Florida that can help. Electric buses still cost more upfront than equivalent diesel buses. An analysis of battery cost curves indicates that unsubsidized "cost parity" can be reached around 2030. If demand increases, battery prices could come down even faster, bringing electric buses to upfront cost parity by the mid-2020s.

The settlement

Volkswagen was caught rigging its dirty diesel cars to make customers think they were clean. The automaker now will pay Florida \$166 million to clean up its air. Our friends at Sierra Club, Central Florida Group, point out that instead of using Volkswagen's money for clean transportation like electric vehicles, the State of Florida could pump it straight back into dirty diesel... unless we tell them to do better. Through this survey, that is due by May 11th, we can tell the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to use the money to pay for electric vehicle charging station infrastructure and particularly for zero-emission electric school and transit buses.



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's 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.

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JOIN OAS' [MEETUP](#) GROUP
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Please take 5 minutes today to take the FDEP Survey [using this link](#). Before taking the survey, please read [what Sierra Club's electric bus advocates suggest so that you might answer this advocacy survey](#) most effectively. Thanks for supporting this important effort.

Deborah Green

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge — Speak Up

Time is running out for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. [Read about it and act.](#)

Homeowners' Orange County Solar Co-ops Grow

Orange County homeowners are invited to join with their neighbors to access affordable solar photovoltaics (PV) for their homes. When homeowners join a co-op, they learn if their homes are suitable for solar PV and receive information on solar equipment, solar financing, and how this co-op helps them to bundle their buying power to receive a competitive price. There is no fee to join and no obligation to sign the contract presented by the solar installer who will be chosen by co-op members.

Do you live west of Interstate 4 in Orange County? Then plan to attend a "Solar Information Meeting" on Thursday, May 3rd, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hiawassee Branch Library, 7391 W. Colonial. The solar co-op for those who live East of Interstate 4 closed on April 23 with 241 homeowners joining.

To sign up for workshops and to receive the e-newsletter, follow [this link](#).

Chertok Display Coming to Colonial Photo & Hobby

Images from the 2017 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest have been selected by contest co-sponsor, Colonial Photo & Hobby (CPH). Big prints of these selections will soon be featured in store displays. Stay tuned for announcement of CPH's selections.

**Jay Watch
May 12, 2018 and other dates**

Audubon Jay Watch volunteers contribute to citizen science research and preservation of the threatened Florida Scrub-Jay. Jay Watch will conduct a statewide survey from June 15 to July 15, 2018. The closest Jay Watch sites include Lyonia Preserve, Blue Spring State Park, North Peninsula State Park, and Lake Monroe Conservation Area (all in Volusia County), and Buck Lake Conservation Area in Brevard County.

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 session to Central Florida is May 12th at the Lyonia Preserve, Deltona. If you can't attend on that date, there are other sessions around Florida. For information, [visit this link](#) and contact Audubon Florida's Jacqui Sulek at jsulek@audubon.org. We hope you get involved with Jay Watch!



Florida Scrub-Jay. Photo: Milton Heiberg

Silent Auction Help Needed

On June 21, 2018 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. 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. Will you ask a frequented restaurant, outdoor shop, fitness trainer, etc. to donate? Consider re-gifting desirable (just not by you) presents. 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. 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!

Teresa Williams, Treasurer

**Baby Owl Shower
May 12, 2018**

Audubon Florida's Center for Birds of Prey holds its annual Baby Owl Shower the Saturday before Mother's Day to raise funds to offset increased costs during baby season.



Barred Owl Babies. Photo: Center for Birds of Prey Staff

Admission is "free" that day with an item from the wish list of supplies for caring for these young raptors. See the wish list at [this link](#). Baby raptors whose injuries are such that they are not able to be released will be on view.

Orange Audubon Society will be there selling nature-inspired merchandise and offering a kids' art activity.

We need help with both because baby owls attract lots of baby people (grown people, too!). The event starts at 10 a.m., but set up help is needed at 9 a.m.

Tear-down begins at 2 p.m. To help, please contact Teresa at mwilliams@cfl.rr.com or (407) 644-0796.

2018 Board Elections

The Orange Audubon Society (OAS) annual election for officers (2018-2020 term) and board members (various terms) was April 19th. Deborah Green, who served OAS as president from 2011-2016, was again elected president. Deborah earned her Ph.D. in entomology, taught environmental science at Valencia College since the late 1980s and retired as their founding director of sustainability four years ago. Deborah hopes to lead the chapter to secure a site for its long-planned nature and environmental education center and document birding ecotourism to reinforce the value of conserving the Lake Apopka North Shore.

Kathy Rigling was elected 1st vice president. Kathy is an Apopka science teacher who directs nature study at the Wekiva Youth Camp each summer. She is an avid birder and eBirder.

Past president Rick Baird was elected 2nd vice president, which includes chairing programs. Rick is a limnologist who worked most of his career for Orange County Environmental Protection Division and now works for Osceola County.

Mary Keim was re-elected as OAS secretary. Mary is a retired biology professor from Seminole State College, a talented photographer and, along with her husband Randy, a skilled naturalist. She first joined the OAS board in the 1980s.

Teresa Williams was re-elected as treasurer, a position in which she has meticulously served OAS for 20+ years. Teresa is a CPA who has worked extensively in the nonprofit tax area, currently as the tax manager for Rollins College.

Renewing board members are Melissa Gonzalez (2018-2019), Dena Wild (2018-2020), Linda Carpenter and Brent Mobley (both 2018-2021).

Continuing board members are Gabbie Buendia, Milton Heiberg and Jackie Masterski (2016-2019); and Mike Broussard, Linda Gaunt, Mike Jones, and Larry Martin (2017-2020).

OAS appreciates that non-board members Laurel Roberts and Mike Daley serve as hospitality chair and member data specialist, respectively; and Bob Stamps, Loretta Satterthwaite, and Susan and Charlie Kirby continue to assist with many OAS projects.

Limited Edition Field Trip, Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, May 26, 2018

For its last Limited Edition Field Trip of the program year, Orange Audubon Society will explore Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and nearby Joe Overstreet Road on May 26th. This exceedingly beautiful Osceola County area is a well known birding hot spot. Species



Common Nighthawk at Three Lakes. Photo: Kathy Rigling

we may encounter include Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Crested Caracara, Snail Kite, Sandhill Cranes, waders, waterfowl and assorted passerines. White-tailed Kite has been seen in the past. The nesting density of Bald Eagles in this area is one of the highest in the state.

Since this area is rather remote, participants are encouraged to bring drinks, snacks, lunch and sunscreen; there are no stores. Also, restroom facilities are limited. There is a fee of \$6.00 per vehicle to enter Three Lakes WMA.

This trip is limited to 15 people and costs \$10 per person for Audubon 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.

There are four open positions on OAS' 20-member board. OAS' summer board meeting will be held July 22, 2018. OAS can accept additional applications before that date. If you have time and an interest in increasing your involvement with OAS, please contact me at lgaunt246@gmail.com or (941) 704- 1189 for an application. Thank you.

Linda Gaunt, Nominating Committee Chair



Rose-breasted Grosbeak eating mulberries, Fort De Soto Park. Photo: Kathy Rigling

Fort De Soto Delights

Orange Audubon Society's Limited Edition Field Trip to Ft. De Soto was a great day! Sixteen birders saw 70+ species. The 10 species of warbler included Hooded, Prothonotary and Kentucky. Warbling Vireo was another nice songbird migrating through. Other highlights were American Oystercatchers, Red Knots, Black Skimmers, Royal and Sandwich Terns.

Bob Sanders

Birdathon Results

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) held its annual Birdathon fundraiser on Saturday, April 7th. Nine teams of birders searched throughout Central Florida, trying to find as many bird species as possible. The grand total for 2018 was 140 species.

The top birding team was Bob Sanders and Gail Spratley with a total of 86 species found in locations from Winter Park to Titusville, including Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Some of the highlights of birds seen on Birdathon day were Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Gannet, Baltimore Oriole, Worm-eating Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow and Stilt Sandpiper.

On the fundraising side of Birdathon, Marilyn Abend reeled in the most pledges. Thanks, Marilyn! If anyone has pledges still outstanding, please send to OAS, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142.

We'll be planning to find a way to make this fun fund-raising event even better next year. If you have ideas, contact me at riglingk@aol.com.

Kathy Rigling, Birdathon Chair

In Case You Missed the Program...

Orange County Green PLACE Program

Orange County's Green PLACE (Park Land Acquisition for Conservation and Environmental Protection) program contributes to conservation of wildlife habitat, as well as providing recreational opportunities. Beth Jackson, Environmental Program Supervisor for the Orange County Environmental Protection Division, told us about properties purchased by Orange County since the 1990s, including Split Oak Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area, Isle of Pine Preserve, Charles H. Bronson State Forest, Eagles Roost, Hal Scott Preserve, Johns Lake Conservation Area, Long Branch, Pine Lily Preserve, Sandhill Preserve, and Savage Christmas Creek Preserve. She also shared information on some new properties soon to be open to the public. The website, which includes a downloadable Green PLACE brochure, is at [this link](#).

Deborah Green

Get Ready for the Feather Talk

A useful thing to do is to review the terminology for breeding plumage (also called *alternate plumage*) and non-breeding plumage (*basic plumage*).

And practice using the feather names.

For example, your field guide description for this Great Crested Flycatcher may say "note contrasting blackish and white tertials."



The tertials are the three innermost secondaries, and on a folded wing these broad feathers rest on top of the other secondaries.

It's a little complicated, so a little study in advance will help. See you May 17th.

Deborah Green and Mary Keim

Discoveries on the Corkscrew Swamp Boardwalk



Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Photo: Melissa Gonzalez

My time as an intern so far at Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary has been incredible. Having Corkscrew's boardwalk in my backyard is a piece of luck that I am taking full advantage of by 'walking the walk' every evening after work. At this time of the year we have a lot of lab work to be done, thus our time in the field is limited. So every day I am at work I look forward to my precious walks before sunset.

What makes these evening walks through the swamp so eventful and special to me is that you never know what you will find when you are on the boardwalk. When I go out it is usually after boardwalk check (to make sure all the visitors are out), so I am out there alone. In the silence I find that I have some incredible moments

with the wildlife of the swamp. During my walks I find that there are some reoccurring events each evening, like the first hoots of the Barred Owl echoing through the silent boardwalk, a reminder that night is coming.

Another experience that can be counted on with certainty is a random, but consistent (and loud) peck, peck, pecking. I follow the pecks to a tree, and look for the culprit, which is always a woodpecker. The Red-bellied Woodpeckers become quite chatty at this time of day, and their chatter dominates that section of the boardwalk. Pileated Woodpeckers also fill the otherwise quiet air with their loud calls and hard pecking. I catch myself laughing every time I see them because they are so goofy. My favorite woodpecker has been the Downy Woodpecker who is so quiet that I almost walk by it. The first time I found a Downy I spent 30 minutes watching it do its thing, and taking photos and videos using my cell phone through a pair of binoculars -- a new skill acquired from necessity since I do not have a professional camera.

Recently a sanctuary volunteer reported seeing a young panther by the observation deck, which is now one of my routine stops every evening, just in case I will get lucky enough to see one.

Upon reaching the "lettuce lakes" I am bound to see some gems like a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that has been seen regularly just past South Lettuce Lake. It gave quite the show one evening as I walked towards the North Lettuce Lakes and sensed that something had become spooked under the boardwalk just below my feet. Suddenly a Yellow-crowned Fright-Heron flew up, landing on the fallen cypress tree to my right, only five feet away. It curiously stared and I did likewise, snapping photos all the while. When the heron saw that I meant no harm, it flew to the ground to continue its foraging.

There has also been a Little Blue Heron foraging by the boardwalk, and after seeing it multiple days in a row so close to the boardwalk, I have been able to study its foraging tactics. I noticed that when Little Blue Herons stalk their prey, they start moving their neck side to side really quickly. Apparently Little Blue Herons sway their necks when they focus on prey because it improves depth perception, and keeps their muscles moving so that they can have a quick reaction when striking their prey.

During the last three months of my internship, I look forward to finding many more gems while out on the boardwalk for my after-work ritual.

Melissa Gonzalez, Education Chair

Apopka Returns to Central Florida

Swallow-tailed Kites suddenly show up in our area in March and disappear again in August. Where do they go?

This was a mystery until the Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) in Gainesville began tracking the kites. Dr. Ken Meyer, after briefly working for the National Park Service, founded ARCI in 1997 out of concern that Swallow-tailed Kites had no federal listing status. Prior to the early 1900s these kites had nested in at least 21 states, but are now found in only 7.

ARCI was first able to tag a Swallow-tailed Kite in 1996 with the smallest satellite transmitters at that time. Dr. Meyer and associates learned the amazing fact that these kites fly all the way to the Pantanal region of South America during the northern winter.

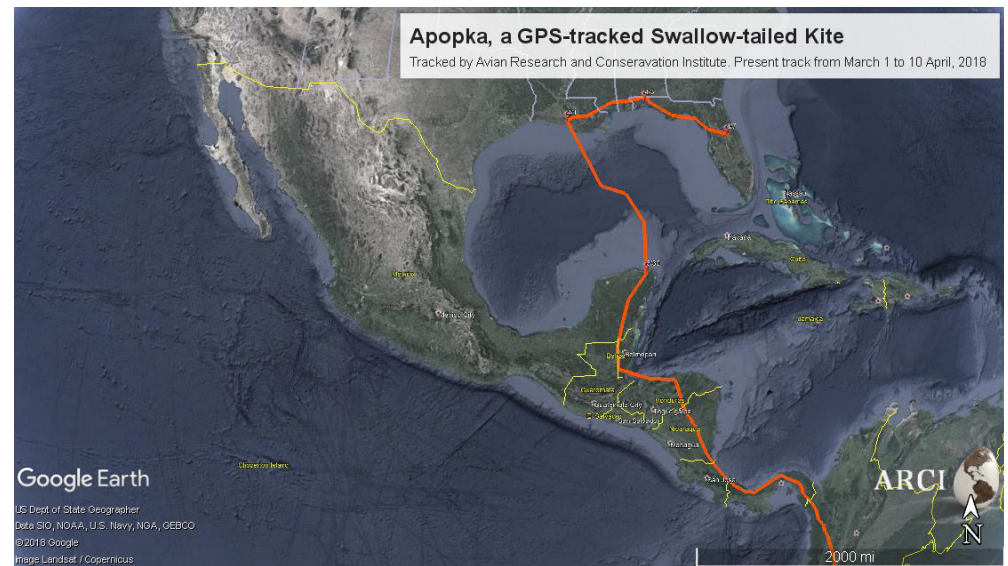
By 2005, ARCI had combined remote-sensing technology with direct VHF radio tracking in South America. Researchers were able to monitor annual flights over gulf and Caribbean waters, Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, eastern Central America, and around the Amazon Basin to wintering sites in southern Brazil and nearby Bolivia.

In 2011, ARCI began deploying the smallest ever GPS-equipped satellite transmitters, with funding from USFWS. These transmitters provide location information for several years.

Affixing the Transmitters

Affixing a transmitter is a challenging proposition for a raptor that is on the wing most of the day and nests and roosts high in a tree. However, ARCI has honed a technique over 25 years, with no injuries to the kites. Researchers bring out a Great Horned Owl from one of the raptor rehabilitation centers near a previously located Swallow-tailed Kite nest. The kite charges the owl to protect its nest, and flies into a mist net, which allows the researchers to carefully capture it, affix the transmitters and release it back to its nest.

This summer a revolutionary new method presented itself. A woman brought a kite to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey (CBOP) in Maitland on July 13th. She had found the bird standing in the road in Altamonte Springs, caught up in the vortex of a



passing vehicle. It had suffered from some internal injuries and minor abrasions but no fractures. CBOP treated the kite for 9 days at which time the bird was ready for a 100 foot flight cage; however CBOP's flight cage was filled with rehabbed eagles. The Avian Reconditioning Center (ARC) in Apopka was able to make room in their 100' flight cage for this kite plus another young kite that CBOP had treated (rescued July 1st). Both kites just needed a little flight conditioning before release. There was also a third kite ready for release at ARC.

Premigratory Feeding

Part of this amazing story is that, before making the arduous flight to South America, Swallow-tailed Kites gather in an area full of dragonflies, anoles, and other prey, and fatten up. This past summer many of us had the good fortune to see a pre-migratory feeding congregation on the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive.

Carol McCorkle, ARC director, contacted ARCI and asked if they might want to put a cell-phone/GPS transmitter on one of CBOP's kites prior to release. ARCI had just received a few of these amazing devices from the manufacturer but hadn't raised enough funds to pay to deploy them.

The researchers knew that time was running out to release the three kites in time to migrate with the other kites to South America. So Paula Ashby of ARC began making calls and within 48 hours, she was able to raise the necessary financial support from local groups and individuals to make the GPS-tagging possible.

One of the kites was affixed with a transmitter and released July 29th, along with the two other rehabilitated kites. He was dubbed "Apopka," since the release site was the Lake Apopka North Shore. All three kites took to the sky and drifted east out of sight beyond the trees. GPS tracking indicated that Apopka took time to put on fat and gather strength before he migrated across the Gulf of Mexico on his way to south-central South America for the South American summer.

Through tracking, researchers know that by early February, Apopka was on his way north through western Brazil. By the end of the month he crossed through Peru and then into Colombia. He reached the foothills of the Andes by March 15th, crossed these imposing mountains in 2 days, and settled onto the Pacific coastal plain by March 17th.

As in the map above, Apopka had a tailwind from the Yucatan Peninsula that pushed him straight north and then west of New Orleans.

Safely back on land, he returned to Florida shortly after, in early April, flying directly to Altamonte Springs.

This is the first time ARCI, or anyone has ever tracked a *rehabilitated* Swallow-tailed Kite through its entire migration to Brazil and back to Florida!

ARCI's [blog series](#) and [Facebook page](#) have updates on all of the tracked kites. [ARCI](#) is a bird research non-profit with a mission to conserve many imperiled species. Their science-based conservation work is fascinating and worth supporting. And now we have a personal interest in a kite named Apopka.

Deborah Green



Barn Swallow and Bobolink site on the Drive. Photo: Deborah Green. Male Bobolinks. Photo: Liz Kearley

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 renewal 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 phone contact information 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, plus resources). Beyond putting the date on the labels, the OAS membership committee never sent renewal information.

A year ago, I started the process of looking up membership expiration dates using the most recent roster from NAS 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 has expired more than 6 months, 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 normal 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

Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive Anniversary

To commemorate the 3rd anniversary of the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive (LAWD), on April 29th Orange Audubon Society (OAS) volunteers were at four stations along the drive with binoculars, bird books, and spotting scopes to help beginners enjoy some of the area’s most interesting birds. Many visitors reported that it was their first visit.

The twenty-two volunteers included: Bob Sanders and Gail Spratley, Gallus Quigley and Rebecca Smith, Susan Kirby and Charlie Kirby, Kathy Rigling, Larry Martin and Marah Green, Chad and Marlo Hill, Marilyn Abend/ Flo Sena and Robert Sena, Mary and Bob Wexler, Michelle Nardone with daughters Myra and Jaden, Bob Stamps and Loretta Satterthwaite. Thanks to all. Deborah Green

Check Out This Avian Summer Specialty!

By the time I arrived at Mead Garden, the tanagers had flown from the mulberry tree. I was hoping to add at least one of the species to my April 2018 list. No such luck. Many other birders, however, saw the Summer Tanager and Scarlet Tanager last month. Both are medium-sized American songbirds now classified as belonging to the cardinal family.

While the Scarlet Tanager has black wings, the male Summer Tanager is solid strawberry red and could be confused with the Northern Cardinals we see all year long in Central Florida. It is about the same size, has a slight crest and a large, pale bill. The male Cardinal, in contrast, has a black mask, large crest, and red bill. The female Summer Tanager is buffy-to-orange-yellow overall.

Fairly common during the summer, these tanagers migrate as far as the middle of South America each winter then return to Florida in late March, nest and hatch young in May. Like most birds that migrate long distances, the Summer Tanager gains large fat deposits to fuel its long flight, according to the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#). In one study, tanagers arriving in Panama had enough fat to fly an estimated additional 550 miles. The oldest Summer Tanager on record was a male at least seven years, 11 months old when he was recaptured and rereleased during banding.

A bee and wasp specialist, the Summer Tanager catches insects in flight and kills them by beating them against a branch. Before eating a bee, the clever tanager rubs it on a branch to remove the stinger. Summer Tanagers also eat larvae: they get rid of the adults and then tear open the nest to get the grubs. And they like fruit, which explains their attraction for the mulberry tree.



Summer Tanagers, male above, female below. Photos: Mary Keim

Although brilliant red, male Summer Tanagers can be difficult to see in the tops of leafy green trees; the yellowish females even more so. Finding them requires some patience because they move slowly through the treetops, often remaining hidden. At times, they dart out to catch flying insects in mid-air. The best way to detect them may be to listen for their robin-like musical song and distinctive, muttering pit-ti-tuck call note. Search for them in open woodlands, particularly oaks and other deciduous trees, where they can be found in the mid-canopy and above.

Perhaps in June or July — long after the mulberries have been devoured — with luck and patience, I will find a remarkable Summer Tanager!!

Linda Carpenter

Mead Botanical Garden Spring Walks

Orange Audubon Society's free April bird walks were again a success. About thirty people each date participated in the April 7th, 21st, and 29th walks; about 40 in the April 14th walk.

Mead Botanical Garden is one of the best public places to see migratory songbirds in Central Florida. It has food (insects and berries) and shelter for bird stop-overs, with a variety of habitats that includes open water, wetlands, and an upland area with oaks and tall pines. Over 160 species have been documented, including 23 species of warblers, many in colorful breeding plumage by April.

Black-throated Blue, Blackpoll, and Cape May warblers, along with American Redstarts were abundant in the final week, and may still be there in early May.

Larry Martin, Field Trips Chair



Mead Bird Walk participants sighting a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, April 28, 2018. Photo: Deborah Green

MAY/JUNE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bioblitz at Split Oak Forest

May 4-6, 2018

Contact Deborah at (407) 637-2525

Baby Owl Shower, Audubon Center for Birds of Prey

May 12, 2018

Contact Center for Birds of Prey at (407) 644-0190

South Carolina Magical Birding Trip

May 18-20, 2018

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796

Monthly Program, Bird Feathers by Bruce Anderson

May 17, 2018

Contact Dena at 4shosha@gmail.com

Limited Edition Field Trip, Three Lakes WMA

May 26, 2018

Contact Bob at (407) 459-5617

Chertok Nature Photography Contest Awards Program and Silent Auction

June 21, 2018

Contact Teresa at (407) 644-0796