



Clockwise, left to right: *Black-necked Stilt Rousts a Minnow*. 2025 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest. Honorable Mention, Advanced Category. Photo: Daryl Roston. *Hi, Neighbor—American Flamingo and Roseate Spoonbill*, Merritt Island NWR. 2025 Chertok Photo Contest, Honorable Mention, Advanced Category. Photo: Bobby Van Mierop. *Spring Cleaning—Burrowing Owl*. 2025 Chertok Photo Contest, First Place, Advanced Category. Photo: Allison Richards. Below, right: Teresa Williams, Chertok Contest Chair, after putting up Chertok prints at the Magnolia Park EcoEducation Center. Photo: Deborah Green



37th Annual Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest Awards Program June 19, 2025

Orange Audubon Society will again celebrate the end of its program year with an exclusive showing of eligible entries in the 2025 Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest.

Join us to see images of Florida's amazing native flora, fauna and natural areas captured beautifully by nature-loving shutterbugs who entered this year's contest. As we show images photographed throughout Florida, from the Panhandle to the Everglades and Florida Keys, members of the audience will pick their favorites and suspense will mount.

Finally, winners of the Youth, Novice and Advanced Amateur/Professional categories will be announced, and prizes worth a combined \$1,350 in cash, gift cards and ribbons will be awarded.

The event is open to the public. All are encouraged and welcome to attend and bring friends and family as we celebrate the 37th year of this photo contest and Orange Audubon's 59th year as your local Audubon chapter.

We hope you will join us on June 19th at Leu Gardens (address below). Doors open at 6 p.m., for socializing. Program starts at 7 p.m.

Teresa Williams, Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest Chair

ORANGE AUDUBON SOCIETY programs are free. No reservations necessary.



Programs are the 3rd Thursday of each month
(September–June) at 7:00 p.m. and all but December
are at **Harry P. Leu Gardens in the Camellia Room**
at 1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando, FL 32803

For map and directions, visit:
www.leugardens.org/plan/directions/

Orange Audubon's Online Auction Opens June 13th!

From private birding experiences with experts to landscape consultation to gift certificates for restaurants and attractions, there is something for everyone in the 2025 Orange Audubon Society Online Auction. All proceeds will benefit the Orange Audubon Nature Center at the Apopka Birding Park (see page 5).

Although the Online Auction won't open for bidding until Friday, June 13th at noon, you will soon be able to survey what is available. As new items are donated, they will be added to the easy-to-use BiddingOwl platform that has been used for the past two years.

Register on the BiddingOwl website at [this link](#) or use your previous year's log in, select items and submit your bids. Check back closer to the time to see the items. The auction closes on June 23rd at 7:00 p.m. Nab some great items and help Orange Audubon's fundraising! Thank you!

Linda Gaunt, Online Auction Chair

Help Us Plan For Next Year

Your hardworking all-volunteer Orange Audubon board and part-time education Coordinator Kathy Rigling take a break from programming in July and August. At our summer board meeting July 13th we will plan our next program year and ready our annual brochure to mail to members in early September. We would like your input as we plan next season's activities. We have devised a 10-question survey focused on outreach and programs. Please fill it out at [this link](#). Thank you!



Osprey with a Fresh Catch, 2025 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest. 2nd Place, Youth Category. Photo: Lauren Chin

Conservation Wins and Work to Do

Land Swap Stopped and Parks Bill Passed

In the past month there have been three major issues potentially impacting conservation lands in our community. Thanks to all of you, those issues have been resolved in favor of the environment, at least for now. First, the proposed swap of 600 acres in the Guana River Wildlife Management Preserve, for 3,066 acres of land across 4 counties, mostly in the Florida panhandle. These were upland areas that are unconnected and of questionable value to desired wildlife corridors. This may sound like a lot of new land added to FDEP's land banks, but not really the quality needed for sustainable wildlife habitat. Thanks to some 50,000 emails and phone calls to your state legislators and FDEP staff. The developer has withdrawn that request.

Second, Tuscana, a 244 acre mixed use, Planned Urban Development (PUD) in the middle of the Shingle Creek floodplain in Orange County has been in the works for several years. On Tuesday May 20, 2025, the Orange County Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to deny the developers application. This means the developer can come back in 9 months to try again. All of Orange County departments, from Public Works to Planning and Environmental Protection Division (EPD) denied the project based on their own particular regulations. At the public hearing on May 20th, the EPD reported that they had received over 1,000 objections and 15 members of public spoke in opposition to the project. The Commissioners heard the concerns and voted against the proposal. Finally, EPD is engaged in special designation studies for the St. Johns River and the Shingle Creek Basin. Shingle Creek is the headwaters to the Florida Everglades, and it begins here in Orange County near West Colonial Drive (Highway 50). In 2017, during Hurricane Ian there was severe flooding in Orlo Vista and in Osceola County. There was a public meeting on Shingle Creek, held by EPD, where residents were encouraged to show their priorities for protection in the basin. These concerns will be combined to produce rules and regulations to protect Shingle Creek habitat. A similar meeting for the St. Johns River will be held in June in the Bithlo community. See [this link](#) for information.

Florida Forever Funding Support Needed

Annual funding for Florida Forever ensures that the state can purchase important natural lands from willing sellers to add to our state

parks, forests, and wildlife management areas. The Florida Legislature has not yet passed a state budget for the fiscal year that starts in July! There is a huge gap between the \$100 million proposed for Florida Forever by the Florida Senate and Governor DeSantis and the \$0 proposed by the Florida House of Representatives.

Audubon Florida's Action Alert makes it easy to write to ask our Florida House representatives to make Florida Forever a priority in the FY 2025-2026 House Budget. Please advocate for Florida Forever funding [at this link](#).

What Will Happen to the Endangered Species Act

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service proposed a new rule that could limit the scope of federal Endangered Species Act protections. Orange Audubon and other chapters signed on to a letter from National Audubon, and we encouraged sending comments on changes to the Endangered Species Act before the May 19th comment deadline. We won't know the outcome of the proposed changes in this landmark federal law, but loss of habitat is the biggest element in the decline in populations of species and the most important thing to protect.

Lake County Voices Needed

In the absence of an active chapter in Lake County and considering Lake County's relationship to the Wekiva River System and Lake Apopka, Audubon Florida has encouraged Orange Audubon to participate in upcoming meetings about the comprehensive land use plan in Lake County. We can really use help to have a presence. Do you live in Lake County? See [this link](#) and let us know if you can participate. Please email info@orangeaudubonfl.org to keep us posted. Thank you!

Orange Audubon Conservation Committee



Hunter Clad in Slate—Snail Kite, 2025 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest, Youth Category, Honorable Mention Winner. Photo: Ethan Landreville



Orange Audubon Society (OAS) mission: To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

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The OASis (Orange Audubon Society information source) newsletter is published monthly, September–June, and posted on the OAS website. A link announcing new issues is e-mailed to subscribers.

Never miss out on OAS happenings. Add or update your email address by contacting newsletter@orangeaudubonfl.org.

For other membership information, contact: membership@orangeaudubonfl.org

JOIN OAS' [MEETUP](#) GROUP

LIKE OAS' [FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

OAS welcomes those who wish to volunteer and become more involved in our efforts. Email volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org.

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Education Coordinator Update

With the 2024-25 school year now over for Orange Audubon's educational programs, we are pleased to report that we visited 31 schools and 177 individual classrooms this year, reaching 5,134 students, in addition to 1,110 adults.

We led our signature schoolyard bird surveys for 72 different classes, from first grade through twelfth grade. The KOWA binoculars that we purchased through National Audubon grants have been game changers.

Children (and teachers) absolutely love the surveys, the Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count. The spin-off has been improvement of schoolyard bird habitat, which we have also helped with through grants.



Eccleston Elementary School student enjoying his first look through a spotting scope. Photo: Kathy Rigling

We conducted 10 afterschool programs, tabled family programs at eight different schools including science nights, STEM nights and Earth Day events and 2 adult library programs. Our monthly educational webinars on Zoom had 704 views on our [YouTube channel](#).

A big thank you to those who volunteered to assist for these programs: Jaliza Almeida, Terrie Leibler, Kai Sterk, Randy McCall and Susan Thome-Barrett. If you are interested in becoming involved as a volunteer in next year's educational programs, please email education@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Our programs will be available on a limited basis over the summer. Please email education@orangeaudubonfl.org to request a program or to get more information.

Kathy Rigling, Education Coordinator

Golden-winged Warbler: An Increasingly Rare Species

Birdwatchers were thrilled to discover a Golden-winged Warbler hopping about at Mead Botanical Garden in April. "It was there for just one day," said Kathy Rigling, OAS Education Coordinator. "Haden Klinger, a young birder, spotted it during an OAS bird walk." A silvery gray bird with golden flashes on the head and wings, these warblers breed in wet, shrubby tangles of the upper midwest and the Appalachians and they winter in open woodlands and shaded coffee plantations. These boldly marked birds carefully inspect foliage with their sharp bills and probe into rolled up leaves to find hidden prey such as caterpillars, moths, and other insects and spiders.

Golden-winged Warblers often hybridize with Blue-winged Warblers, producing many distinctive forms and contributing to the rapid decline of the Golden-winged species.

They have experienced one of the steepest population declines of any migratory songbirds in the past 45 years and now have one of the smallest populations of any songbird not on the endangered list. The North American Breeding Survey documented an overall decline of 68 percent of the species between 1966 and 2014, primarily because of habitat loss, hybridization, and competition with Blue-winged Warblers. Ninety-five percent of the breeding population of Golden-winged Warblers is found in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Manitoba and the other five percent in the Appalachians. Minnesota now has the highest remaining density of Golden-winged Warblers, with about half the global population.



Golden-winged Warbler eating a caterpillar at a spring migration stopover, Fort DeSoto Park. Photo: Steve Shaluta

How to find this increasingly rare species? Visit a shrubby, open area where there are known breeding birds. Mating Golden-winged Warblers are vocal and active and respond well to "pishing." Since Minnesota is the stronghold of the remaining Golden-winged Warblers, consider a birding tour to the state. I saw several of the species in breeding plumage during a June 2016 birding tour of Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, northwest of Minneapolis. This area hosts a tamarack bog, a nutrient-poor wetland usually found in boreal forests with tamarack trees, sphagnum moss, and acidic peatland. Look for Golden-winged Warblers at woodlots and other migrant traps that draw a large number of other migratory birds. Mead Botanical Garden, with Howell Creek, Alice's Pond, diverse habitats, and uplands with tall pines and oak trees, is a migrant trap for songbirds. Check it out! You will likely find other beautiful species and meet new friends who love seeing and learning about birds. There is much to enjoy in Florida's avian wonderland.

Linda Carpenter

North Shore Bird Survey, June 24, 2025

The St. Johns River Water Management District's 20,000-acre Lake Apopka is rich in bird life. Orange Audubon requested a revival of North Shore Bird Surveys to document changes in species composition as the property has been restored from farm fields to native vegetation, with more natural water flows. In the April survey, our first, we recorded 87 species. In the May survey, we recorded 81 species. Highlights in May included Mississippi Kite, Orchard Orioles, Bobolink, many Least Bitterns, Caspian Terns, Limpkins, 7 duck species and 6 shorebird species.

A specific transect methodology is followed, and eBird is used to record data. Meeting time is 6:30 a.m., and the surveys will extend from 7 am to noon. Routes are assigned on a lottery system, following arrival at the McDonald Canal Boat Ramp, 24600 CR 448A, Mount Dora (Astatula), FL 32757. Surveys are the 4th Tuesday of each month, continuing July 22nd, August 26th, September 23rd, October 28th, November 25th and December 23rd. Registration with waiver must be filled out for the season [using this link](#) and then each month email info@orangeaudubonfl.org or dexterdevon68@gmail.com, if you can participate.

If surveys are beyond your interest and availability, the [NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL](#), December 11-15, 2025, provides guided opportunities to explore this same territory.

Chris Newton, Survey Coordinator, Ben Gugliotti, District Land Manager

Moses Williams First Black Ornithologist, Artist

Early ornithologists, before formal degrees, were those who procured specimens for early collections, working with those collections and performing independent studies.

Matthew Halley, Assistant Curator of Birds at Delaware Museum of Nature and Science and Research Associate at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, presented on Moses Williams at the 104th meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society.

He credits Williams as being the first black ornithologist. Williams, who was born into slavery in the household of Charles Wilson Peale, a painter, military officer, scientist and naturalist, grew up alongside the Peale children. He joined Peale's children in preparing specimens and later worked in Peale's Museum, which was eventually named the Philadelphia Museum.

Halley also writes that in Peale's diary entries, Peale notes that Moses came with him on a collecting expedition to Cape May where he hoped to add shorebirds to his collection by taking "5 guns and plenty of ammo," a typical method of collection before photography.

Moses Williams is probably more well known for being a master silhouette artist. Prior to photography, the tracing and cutting of paper silhouettes was the only way to preserve an image of a loved one. Growing up in the artistic environment of the Peale residence, Williams learned the skill along with Peale children. After obtaining his freedom in 1802 at the age of 27, he set up shop in Peale's Museum. In his first year he produced 8,000 silhouettes for 8 cents each, according to JSTOR Daily.



Williams's silhouettes were featured in 2018 in *Black Out: Silhouettes Then and Now* at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC. The exhibition examined the artistic influence of silhouettes, with work dating back to the eighteenth century.

References: <https://matthewhalley.wordpress.com/> and <https://daily.jstor.org/the-former-slave-who-became-a-master-silhouette-artist/>

Susan Thome-Barrett



Summer Tanager male with a wasp. Photo: Dan Backhaus

June Challenge (Bird Count)

Back in 2004, Alachua Audubon originated this friendly competition, meant to bring people out during historically the most difficult month for birding.

The June Challenge begins on June 1st and extends through the month. Each birder picks a county, any county in the state, and tries to compile the biggest list of species for that area during the month.

All native birds are countable and follow the American Birding Association (ABA) [checklist](#). For example, if your local population of an exotic species is recognized as established by the ABA, then any member of that population is an ABA-countable bird.

For instance, a bird belonging to an established population of Monk Parakeets would be ABA-countable. An escaped Monk Parakeet or a Mute Swan at Lake Eola would not be. List your ABA countable species first, and then your non-native non-ABA birds.

An important twist for the June Challenge is that you must see the bird, not just hear it.

For a complete set of rules and instructions please visit: <https://floridabirdingtrail.com/june-challenge/>

Orange Audubon is offering a trophy to the OAS adult and youth (under 18) members who see the most ABA birds between June 1st and 30th in one Florida county.

In order to qualify please submit your list to <https://floridabirdingtrail.com/june-challenge/> by midnight July 7th.

Also email me your ABA countable/noncountable total and the county that you birded in by July 7th. Send to riglingkathy@gmail.com.

We will hold a June Challenge Celebration and bird walk on July 19th at Trimble Park.

Kathy Rigling

Thanks to the OASis Contributors

Orange Audubon Society (OAS) would like to thank the following writers whose contributions have greatly enhanced the OASis this year: Linda Carpenter, Alex DeBear, Linda Gaunt, Mary Keim, Kathy Rigling, Alan Shapiro, Susan Thome-Barrett, and Teresa Williams.

Exquisite wildlife photos have enhanced the text. For use of these, OAS thanks: AIA Orlando Chapter, Rick Baird, Dan Backhaus, Faruk Baghdad, Madeline Barber, Jennifer Bennett, Wayne Bennett, Glenn Blaser, Shari Blissett-Clark, Michael Brothers, Leesa Brown, Mac Camacho, Wei-Shen Chin, Alex DeBear, Nicola Dronoff-Guthrie, The Florida Channel, Luis Gles, Deborah Green, Steven Greene, Milton Heiberg, Holbrook Travel, Jack Horton, Mary Keim, Melinda Klinger, Ashley Konon, Terrie Leibler, Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, Kyle Moon, Joseph Mileyka, Brian Miller, Sam Mitcham, Pamela Owens, National Audubon, Matthew Plante, Lee Ann Posavad, Kathy Rigling, Jack Rogers, Delsy Rodriguez, David Rosado, Larry Rosen, Robert Sena, Steve Shaluta, Alan Shapiro, Elizabeth Stakenborg, Bob Stamps, Joyce Stefancic, Gary Steinberg, Susan Thome-Barrett, The Urban Birder, Max Weakley, Wekiva Wild and Scenic River System and many Chertok photo contest winners.

For careful and timely editing, we are most grateful to Mary Keim, Kathy Rigling, and Susan Thome-Barrett.

We will enjoy our two months off and then be asking for articles and use of your photos again for September. Deadlines are always middle of the month before. If you want to send an article or article idea, send to info@orangeaudubonfl.org. Have a great summer!

Orange Audubon Society on YouTube

Orange Audubon's weekly Bird Chats will go on hiatus in July and August but over 200 of the guest speaker recordings — about birds and conservation — are posted on our YouTube Channel for review. Put Orange Audubon Society in the YouTube search field or [use this link](#).

See p.8 for the listing of June Bird Chats.

To register to receive the link to watch Bird Chats on Zoom and be able to ask questions, [use this link](#):

Progress on the Orange Audubon Nature Center

In March 2024, Orange Audubon Society (OAS) secured its long-term lease from the City of Apopka for the 69.5-acre Apopka Birding Park at the entrance to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. The site was a greenhouse flowers nursery, purchased by the St. Johns River Water Management District in 1999 as part of the Lake Apopka restoration but later put on a surplus list because it is upland and not needed for the restoration. It was deeded in 2018 to the City of Apopka for a nature center in conjunction with our chapter.

What does OAS hope to accomplish through the arduous task of raising funds and creating a nature center? For much of our 59-year history as a chapter of National Audubon in Central Florida, we have worked toward a nature center of our own to better fulfill our vision of “connecting people with nature.” Why is this particular site so important and perfect for us? See next page.

Visiting this site since 2016, when Bob Sanders first brought it to the attention of the OAS board, we were intrigued by the green concrete block building. The nurseryman had rented the space out to local farmers to repair their trucks in it (it was called the Truck Shop). The building is well-situated by the Lust Road Canal and was deemed sturdy by the City of Apopka’s building inspector. The ecological thing is to renovate, which saves a tremendous amount of energy to create the new materials and transport them, as well as energy to dispose of the waste.

We chose an architect, Philip Donovan of Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, Orlando and Charlotte, who understood this ecological view and was enthusiastic about renovating this Truck Shop. He and his team completed designs to transform it into a beautiful nature and environmental education center. Along with energy efficient design, the building will have solar panels and a 200-gallon cistern. Collected rainwater will be filtered and used for toilet flushing. Designs are already permitted through the City of Apopka and recently were honored with the “Award of Merit,” among 18 entries in the Unbuilt Category, at the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Orlando Chapter, awards banquet.

Prior to our being able to start construction, we need companies, foundations and individuals to donate, so we not only have funds to build the building, but also operating funds. All parts of the building have naming rights, [as in this flyer](#). See more next pages.



Clockwise left to right, the Truck Shop from the south in 2017; Orange Audubon's Apopka Birding Park Working Group members touring the site in 2017; Architect's rendering of the bird observatory annex which will display murals by Delia Miller, have bird-safe glass, binoculars for visitors, and look out onto a native landscape with water feature designed by local native plant pioneer David Drylie; facing north, the main building space with moveable partition for the classroom and moveable exhibits to transform it into meeting space for larger groups. Donor tree is to the right rear, leading into the annex. The Little Diversified Architectural Consulting team that has worked on our project with the AIA design award; rendering of the front of the building looking South, showing the bird observatory annex to the left. Photos: Milton Heiberg and AIA Orlando Chapter. Renderings: Little Diversified Architectural Consulting.

Progress on the Apopka Birding Park

Why is this site so important? It is adjacent to the increasingly popular Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, which hosts over 150,000 visitors a year. It is an upland site, which has become increasingly rare in Central Florida and the Apopka area, as every old citrus grove and woods has been cleared for apartments and homes. Upland habitats, with native grasses and other vegetation, support breeding, migratory and overwintering birds, gopher tortoises and other wildlife. The site provides habitat for overwintering Painted Buntings and sparrows, and the Blue Grosbeak has nested near our building several years. Orange Audubon board member Alex DeBear is coordinating monthly bird surveys, with 60 species each time being typical (see next page). A year-long survey by Bob Sanders and friends back in 2017-18 tallied 108 species.

Our goal is to plant natives appropriate to the site and restore upland habitat. Prior to planting, we are working on removal of invasive plants. See next page for information about our workdays. Orange Audubon and City of Apopka secured Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) funding to treat invasive cogon grass this season, and we have reapplied for additional funding. We have secured a Viva Florida native plant grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation, which will pay for the native plant landscape outside the observatory annex. And our Audubon in Action grant from National Audubon supports the restoration and efforts to bring in underrepresented groups. A Forest Stewardship Plan has been prepared by our local Florida Forest Service forester along with FWC, soon to be posted on our website. This plan will guide our habitat restoration efforts, which will include restoring upland habitats, including longleaf pine sandhill, for wildlife. *Continued p. 7.*



First row, Signs and map of 69.5 acre Apopka Birding Park (ABP), Photos: Jack Horton; Second row, native grasses, Photo: Joyce Stefancic; first ABP bird survey in August 2024, Photo: Deborah Green; Clay-colored Sparrow, Photo: Delsy Rodriguez; Third row, Painted Bunting, Photo: Joe Mileyka; Blue Grosbeak, Photo: Ben Powell; native grasses, Photo: Joyce Stefancic

Nature Center, *Continued*

Do you work for a company that might want its name on part of a beautiful building at the entrance to the extremely popular Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, a site visited by both locals and people from around the country and world?

Or do you have other ideas or contacts that could help Orange Audubon in our fundraising toward our nature center? Share our [naming rights](#) flyer and contact us at info@orangeaudubonfl.org to make an appointment for us to show detailed plans and talk more.

For an all-volunteer organization, with just one part-time employee, Education Coordinator Kathy Rigling, Orange Audubon accomplishes a tremendous amount. Many of our activities are now described on our updated nonprofit profile on the [Central Florida Foundation website \(link here\)](#).

Your Contributions Really Help

Orange Audubon's nature center effort comes from our chapter, and we are profoundly grateful to those making monetary contributions.

Generous donations in May were received from Jeanne Polarolo; Friends of Lake Apopka; Richard Reed; the Apopka Woman's Club; Daniel Evans in memory of George A. "Pete" Vogt, Jr; Cindy Cardile in memory of Betty Brown (Vicky Wise) from Heritage Hills friends; Joe Dunn; Ronald Blair; Julie Wilson and Spencer & Ann Bennett Dang.

Donations to OAS are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. [You can donate online at this link](#) or mail checks to Orange Audubon Society, P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794.

Monthly donations

Many of our members are Sustainer members of National Audubon, with online monthly donations. Orange Audubon now has the ability to receive monthly donations on our website and these [donations](#) can be used toward our nature center and educational efforts.

For those with IRAs who are over 73 years of age, making qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) directly to non-profits, including Orange Audubon, may count towards your required minimum distribution, providing a significant tax benefit. QCDs can already be made for the 2025 tax year.

Donations coming in early will help us as we choose our contractor and decide when we can move forward with construction. Thank you!

Workdays Continue

At Orange Audubon Society's second workday at the Apopka Birding Park (ABP) on May 31st, we got a lot done! Thanks to Madeline Barber, Jennifer Barber, Ronald Blair, Lance Hart, Marian Lichtler, David Marano, Ann Mixson, Helen Nadon, Alan Shapiro, Hannah Summersill and Steve Turner for your hard work! We plan two other Saturday workdays, one on June 14th and another on June 28th, following the ABP bird survey. Email volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org to participate.



First and second rows, Volunteers cleaning up the Apopka Birding Park Truck Shop building area. Third, volunteers viewing the beautiful oak hammock, where invasive asparagus fern and *Syngonium* need to be removed. Fourth, Volunteers after a job well done. Photos: Deborah Green and Madeline Barber

Apopka Birding Park Bird Survey, June 28, 2025

As Orange Audubon works on the former nursery site, now called the Apopka Birding Park — that we are transforming to native vegetation and bird habitat— volunteers are documenting an anticipated increase in bird species. During our monthly Apopka Birding Park bird surveys, trails are being carved out. Dates are the last Saturday of the month, starting at 7:30 a.m.. Email Alex at alexdebear@icloud.com to join us.

Looking For Volunteers

Do you have time and a passion for volunteering? Orange Audubon is looking to expand its existing base of Orange Audubon member volunteers. Here are volunteer opportunities:

- Meal, Hospitality, and Logistics support for our Signature Events: Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest Awards Program (June 19th) and NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL (December 11-15)
- Helping our Education Coordinator with school events
- Hospitality at our monthly in-person programs at Leu Gardens, 3rd Thursdays, 6pm
- Joining the elite group of Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive Ambassadors to welcome visitors to the Drive
- Assisting with clean-up, planting, etc. for our future Orange Audubon Nature Center at the Apopka Birding Park

The [Get Involved](#) tab on our website has a survey to let us know of your interests. Or just email volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org. Thank you!

Mary Van Egmond

Update Your Membership

June is a great time to renew your 3-way membership in Orange Audubon Society (OAS), Audubon Florida and National Audubon Society.

Please pay directly to OAS, and we transmit the funds to National. The base membership rate is \$20 (\$15 for students).

If you want to include an additional donation, which goes to OAS, you can. Go to OAS' website and click the [Join/Renew link](#).

If you need your expiration date, email membership@orangeaudubonfl.org. Thank you!

JUNE/JULY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bird Chats with OAS via Zoom

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Birds of Vieques, Puerto Rico by Daphne Gemmill

June 5, 2025

My Digiscoping Big Year by Jeff Bouton

June 12, 2025

Update on the Apopka Birding Park

June 26, 2025

June Challenge Kick Off Trip

June 1, 2025

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Wekiwa Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

June 7, 2025

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Oakland Nature Center Bird Survey, Oakland

June 8, 2025

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Apopka Birding Park Workday

June 14, 2025 (also June 28, 2025)

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

37th Annual Chertok Photo Contest Awards Program by Teresa Williams

June 19, 2025

Contact Alan at alangrandiflora@gmail.com

North Shore Bird Survey

June 24, 2025

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Wekiwa Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

July 5, 2025

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

June Challenge Celebration and Bird Walk at Trimble Park

July 20, 2025

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

North Shore Bird Survey

July 22, 2025

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org



PANAMA



Panama | Birding Central Panama and the Darién Lowlands

with *Orange Audubon*

February 18-28, 2026

Trip includes a donation to Orange Audubon

Program Highlights

- Discover two of Panama City's stunning natural areas, the Metropolitan Natural Park and the Panama Bay Mudflats, for encounters with fascinating wildlife, especially shorebirds.
- Venture into the Darién Province's many birding hotspots, including the San Francisco Reserve, Chucunaque River, El Salto Road, and the Yaviza wetland, to see some of the country's hundreds of bird species like the Crimson-bellied Woodpecker, Black Oropendola, Red-throated Caracara, and Harpy Eagle.
- Meet members of the Indigenous Wounaan community and learn about their traditions, culture, and botanical culture.
- Hike the world-famous Pipeline Road, where target species include Black Hawk Eagle, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Masked Tityra, the coveted Blue Cotinga, and hundreds of others.
- Explore Soberania National Park, one of the country's most accessible tropical rainforests and home to an impressive list of 525 bird species.
- Visit a sloth rescue center, meet animal ambassadors and learn about wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and release during canal expansion.

Land Cost- \$3495

For more information contact:

Alan Shapiro 352-317-0089

Alangrandiflora@gmail.com

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