



Clockwise left to right, Florida Scrub-Jay in flight. Photo: Joyce Stefancic. Sunning – Florida Scrub-Jay. 2018 Chertok Photo Contest, Youth Category, Honorable Mention Winner, Photo: Jake Turner. Sentinel scrub-jays. Photo courtesy Karl Miller.



Breaking New Ground with Florida Scrub-Jays: Reassessing Population Trends and Translocation Methodology

February 19, 2026

Florida's only endemic bird species is the charismatic Florida Scrub-Jay, a species in trouble. This species is dependent on a limited habitat, the well-burned Florida scrub with plenty of oaks of the right age to produce plenty of acorns.

Dr. Karl Miller is a Research Scientist at FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and a Courtesy Associate Professor in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Florida. He has 30 years of experience designing and implementing research and monitoring projects for Florida's birds and has published more than 65 peer-reviewed papers on avian research and conservation topics. Dr. Miller has worked with Florida Scrub-Jays since 2000. He serves on federal and state recovery teams and conducts experimental translocations.

Come hear an overview of current research projects that provide new insights into the current status of our scrub-jay. Join us at Leu Gardens on February 19th at 7 p.m. for a fascinating program.

Alan Shapiro, Programs Chair

Invasive Plant Workshop

February 13, 2026

Orange Audubon Society is working to create a nature center and to restore habitat at the Apopka Birding Park, which is the old nursery site to the right of the entrance to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. We have a lot of invasive plants to control before successful re-seeding with native grasses and wildflowers.

Can you identify *Praxelis*, *Sida*, Primrose willow, *Asparagus* fern, *Syngonium*, Balsam apple, *Lantana*, Hairy indigo, Chinaberry, Paper mulberry and Castor bean? And our worst problems: Cogon grass and Natal grass? Can you distinguish Bermuda, Guinea grass and Bahia? If you want to learn more, join Orange Audubon and the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) for a workshop February 13th, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The first hour will be indoors at the University of Florida Mid Florida Research and Education Center (MREC) across from Magnolia Park. Then we will drive 2 miles up the road to the Apopka Birding Park, at the entrance to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive to do walk around identification until about noon. Our instructors are Dana Sussmann, Florida Forest Service, and Ron Chicone, Natural Resources Program Coordinator for Seminole County. Both are active in the local CISMA group. The workshop is free but our classroom has limited space so we will ask that you register. If you have any questions in advance, email Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org or call 407-637-2525.

Happy Birthday, Orange Audubon!

Let's Move Forward on Nature Center

On January 17, 1966, our chapter filed its Articles of Incorporation. 2026, our 60th year, could be the year we finally build a nature center and create a home of our own! Can you help? See p. 2.



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/



Let's Do This!

\$600K in 60 Days

Orange Audubon Society is celebrating its 60th birthday as a local chapter of Audubon in Central Florida. Let's

make 2026 the year we finally establish a place "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity."

Orange Audubon's goal is to build and operate a nature center on a 69.5-acre old nursery site next to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, now called the Apopka Birding Park, for which our chapter has a long-term lease. The award-winning design for renovation of the existing cement-block building, by Little Diversified Architectural Services, is already permitted by the City of Apopka and will be a place to demonstrate work toward sustainability. Upland habitat is disappearing locally as development proceeds, and at the Apopka Birding Park we are restoring upland habitat, with walking trails and nature immersion amenities for the community.

Can you help raise \$600K in 60 days (by April 15th), so we can start construction? Orange Audubon is very fortunate that a past Secretary of our chapter, an Apopka High School graduate and a keen conservationist and birder donated \$108,000 before the end of 2025 and has pledged another \$108,000 in 2026, as part of our \$600K challenge, if we can match it. Each company, organization or individual that wants to be a part of Orange Audubon's big project, **please donate \$60, \$600, \$6,000 or \$60,000, according to your means.**

Other amounts are also welcome, and [there are naming rights for parts of the building](#). Donations are tax-deductible, to the extent permitted by law and can include required minimum distributions from IRAs and Donor Advised Funds, since Orange Audubon Society, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3).

With your permission, we will recognize your donation in our newsletter, on a beautiful donor tree in the building and in other ways.

Be a part of an amazing grassroots effort to create a place to share how to live with and sustain nature. Donations can be made by credit card [on our](#)

[website through the Nature Center tab](#)

or by checks written to Orange Audubon Society and mailed to our P.O. Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142

Again this is a 2-month intensive effort to pull in enough money to start construction on our nature center, **\$600K in 60 days in honor of our 60th birthday**. We hope you will be a part of this project. Potential donors can contact me for a conversation and tour at info@orangeaudubonfl.org or 407-637-2525. Thank you!

Deborah Green, Orange Audubon President

Workdays

Apopka Birding Park workdays are scheduled from 9 to noon on the last Saturday of the month and are a great way to see what is going on. The January 24th workday involved some planting, watering and mulching, under instruction of Orange Audubon 2nd Vice President Alan Shapiro, who owned a large native plant nursery for many years. The landscape just past our first yellow gate was funded by a grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation. Next workdays are February 28 and March 28th. Join us!



January 24, 2026 workday at the Apopka Birding Park. Photos: Deborah Green.



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.

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

President and *OASis* Editor:
Deborah Green
info@orangeaudubonfl.org
(407) 637-2525

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.

Orange Audubon Society, Inc. is a Florida not-for-profit organization, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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February Conservation News

The Florida Forever program, our state's land acquisition program, is running on fumes from a funding perspective. Audubon Florida (AF) is focused on making sure this program is top of mind for funding appropriations during the 2026 legislative session. AF policy staff is working on a game plan for strategic, targeted advocacy to certain Florida legislators who have influential roles in appropriations and have land in their districts that are high priority on the Florida Forever acquisition list. When these key decisionmakers are identified is some are in our area, we will ask for your help. This may include emails, phone calls, or meetings with your district delegates, as well as authoring Letters to the Editor/Op-Eds for your local media. Here is an Action Alert still open: <https://audubon.stagecoachdigital.com/web-view/1702677>. Please be sure you are on AF's Audubon Advocate email list.

Our friends at the Florida Native Plant Society, along with Audubon Florida policy staff, have brought to our attention recent activity in the current Legislative session that we need to share. These are the same very concerning bills that we wrote about last month, and will be updating about through the current legislative session. Charles Lee has notified all the Audubon chapters that very soon, Audubon Florida will be asking for us to contact key legislators about these bills. A groundswell of opposition to these bad bills will help.

The End to Local Growth Management?

These bills threaten to end the last remaining vestiges of your local government's authority to manage growth and development, and with it your ability to have any influence over the future character, livability and environmental health of your community. If you are outraged by the evident absence of any real control over development in Florida – you haven't seen anything yet! The three bills summarized below may, collectively, be the knock-out punch that effectively ends meaningful growth management in Florida:

Senate Bill 354 (by McClain) and House Bill 229 (by Melo) entitled Blue Ribbon Projects.

Talk about a misnomer! These bills would allow anyone who controls a contiguous land area of at least 10,000 acres (more than 15 square miles) to bypass all comprehensive planning, zoning and land use regulations if they agree to reserve 60 percent of the land area for environmental protection, agriculture, recreation and/or utilities development. The entire "reserve area" could be agriculture. Undevelopable wetlands would also count as environmental protection. Development

rights would be vested for at least 50 years, allowing creation of entire new cities without ANY control by elected officials or input from residents. If this sounds like a bill that developers who have already consolidated ownerships larger than 10,000 acres wrote, that's because it is.

SB 686 (by McClain) and HB 691 (by Botana) entitled Agricultural Enclaves

Owners of parcels less than 1,280 acres that have been in agricultural use for at least five years, and that adjoin developed parcels along at least 75 percent of the property line, can apply to the local government to be certified as an Agricultural Enclave. If the certification is approved, the property owner can develop single-family residential housing equivalent to that allowed on adjacent parcels and the local government cannot enact or enforce regulations that are more burdensome than for other comparable uses or densities. For a parcel less than 700 acres in size, only 50 percent of the parcel boundary must be subject to planned development to be certified as an Agricultural Enclave. If any boundary area adjoins an urban service area, the service area is automatically extended to encompass the Enclave. In effect, an Agricultural Enclave is granted development rights equivalent those on adjoining parcels already approved for development without any local government oversight or public comment.

SB 718 (by McClain) entitled Water Management:

This legislation would prohibit local governments from adopting any ordinances, regulations or policies related to water quality or quantity, pollution prevention, or wetlands protection and preempt such authority to the state. Meaning local governments could no longer choose to be more protective of their water resources and wetlands than the state. It would also repeal requirements for the water management districts to conduct land management reviews on lands conservation lands they own and manage.

The cumulative impact of these bills would be an expansion of urban sprawl, accelerated loss of agricultural land and wetlands to development, more degradation of water quality, and loss of habitat for native plants and wildlife. We have an opportunity to stop these bills before they advance all the way to a floor vote in either the Senate or House of Representatives.

Phone or email your state senator and tell him or her that you object specifically to Senate Bills 354 (Blue Ribbon Projects), 686 (Agricultural Enclaves) and 718 (Water Management). Do the same to your state representative regarding House Bills 229 (Blue Ribbon Projects) and 691 (Agricultural Enclaves).

Let them know you object to the legislature's continuing preemption of local government authority to manage growth and development, and to be more protective on their natural resources than the state.

The legislature's erosion of growth management, and the sprawl it is inducing in Florida's rural areas, is in direct conflict with their stated objective to support agriculture and maintain our base of agricultural lands. Sprawl = Loss of Agriculture!

The contact information for your legislators can be found at <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find> and <https://www.flhouse.gov/FindYourRepresentative>. A quick phone call or email at this early stage of the legislative session may help stop these bad bills before they gain any traction. Be sure to identify yourself as a constituent!

Shiloh Again?

Something else to watch is plans of Space X encroaching on Canaveral National Seashore and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

[Here is a Florida Phoenix article on this threat.](#)

Thank you for your engagement to try to save our state's environment.

Rick Baird and the Orange Audubon Conservation Committee



Duck Rotisserie, Bald Eagle, Lake Tohopekaliga.
2025 Chertok Florida Native Photo Contest, Third Place Winner, Youth Category. Photo: Lauren Chin



Red-tailed Hawk. Photo: Joe Mileyka

Count Backyard Birds

The next Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is February 13-16, 2026. The GBBC was the first community (citizen) science project to collect online data on birds and to display results in near real-time. In 2025, GBBC participants turned in over 387,000 eBird checklists reporting 8,000 species of birds. This creates an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. If you are not already on eBird, create a free eBird account (<https://ebird.org/home>) to enter your checklists. If you already have an eBird (or another Cornell Lab project) account, use your normal login name and password.

Counting instructions are at <https://www.birdcount.org/tools/counting-instructions/>. Join the fun and contribute to this great citizen science project! You may find a new bird in your "backyard."

Mary Keim, GBBC Participant

Birds of Prey Identification Trip

February 8, 2026

Popular trip leader and raptor expert Bob Sanders likes to do two raptor trips for Orange Audubon each winter, to be able to see different species. Bob co-founded the Chimney Rock Hawk Watch in Martinsville, New Jersey before moving to Central Florida.

On Sunday, February 8, 2026, he will teach his second Birds of Prey Identification Class of the season, on the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Price is \$15 (Audubon members) or \$25 (non-members). To reserve your spot, visit the field trips [page of our website](#) and if questions, email riglingkathy@gmail.com. Bob can be reached at (407) 459-5617.

How to Sign Up for Field Trips

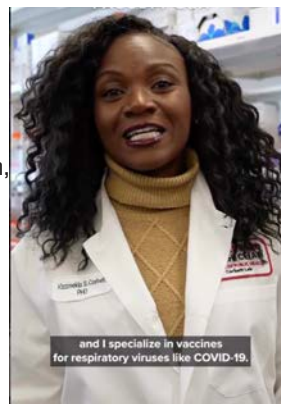
Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/orangeaudubon/events> Once there click

Black History Month

Kizzmekia Corbett, Vaccine Developer

For Black History Month, in the past we have featured deceased biologists, but why not profile a leading biologist today? Kizzmekia Corbett is the US National Institute of Health's lead scientist for coronavirus vaccine research and was part of the team that worked with biotech firm Moderna to develop one of the mRNA vaccines shown to be 90% effective against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. With a doctorate in microbiology and immunology, Corbett's research focuses on understanding vaccine immune responses in order to design vaccines for members of the coronavirus family. Besides research, Corbett is playing an important role in science outreach, combating vaccine hesitancy and debunking misinformation, especially within the Black community, through virtual events and her Twitter account, @KizzyPhD. As a result of her scientific contributions and efforts to communicate it to the public, she was featured in Time Magazine's 2021 "Time100" list of emerging leaders who are shaping the future.

Since 2021, she has been assistant professor of immunology and infectious diseases at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Shutzer Assistant Professor at the Harvard Radcliffe Institute. A great role model and contributor to public health. <https://www.advancedsciencenews.com/women-in-stem-you-should-know/>



Rick Baird and David Slongwhite at Orange Audubon's display at Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival. Photo: Mary Van Egmond

Volunteering and Out Reach Events – WE NEED YOU!

Now more than ever we could use some of our members to help us with upcoming and on-going activities. If you haven't volunteered with OAS before maybe now is the time to get out there. The opportunities are low stress and our current volunteers are fulfilled by their service

Upcoming Outreach Events

- April 8 – Valencia Earth Day (East Campus) – 10 am – 2 pm
- April 11-12 – Spring Fever in the Garden, Winter Garden - various shifts during the day on Saturday and Sunday
- April 25 – Lake Eola Earth Day – various shifts between 10 am and 6 pm
- April 25 – 26 Apopka Art and Foliage Festival – various shifts during the day on Saturday and Sunday

Other Volunteer Opportunities

- We are really wanting to expand our group of Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive ambassadors. This is a 2 ½ hour shift on the beautiful Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive Entrance on Saturday or Sunday. Volunteers are assigned in pairs.
- Helping our Education Coordinator with school events
- Assisting with clean-up, planting, etc for our future Orange Audubon Nature Center at the Apopka Birding Park
- Hospitality at our monthly in-person programs at Leu Gardens, 3rd Thursdays, 6 pm

IF YOU CAN HELP WITH ANY OF THESE OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES PLEASE EMAIL: volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org

Thank you to the volunteers who helped with outreach at our first ever Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival event in January: Rick Baird, Brenda and Bob Elmquist, Deborah Green, Lauren Poore, David Slongwhite and Alan Shapiro.

*Mary Van Egmond,
Volunteer Coordinator*

Education Program Update

This past month Orange Audubon's education team has been busy! At Wolf Lake Middle School, Alan Shapiro assisted with the planning and installation of a native plant garden in the school courtyard. The 6th-8th grade Agriculture classes got hands on experience with preparing the ground and planting over 30 native plant species in the center of their school, for the whole school to enjoy. Even as we were planting, small flocks of Pine Warblers and Palm Warblers visited the area. The teacher placed some bird feeders that we had donated earlier within this new garden.



Wolf Lake Middle School agriscience students, above, receiving instruction from Alan Shapiro and, below, working on the new landscape. Photos: Kathy Rigling.

School visits this month included the bird beak adaptations activity for all the 3rd grade classes at Sand Lake Elementary and a 1st grade habitat program at Zellwood Elementary. Also, at Zellwood this month

during our monthly after school birding club, we were excited to observe a Painted Bunting in their improved habitat project from last year! Orange Audubon has been able to offer schools native planting grants, with our funding from our IDEAL grant.

Rounding out the month was a nature observation hike with the Sandhill Homeschool Collective, in which we walked Lust Road at the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. The students were intrigued by the marsh rabbits, the many wading birds and were thrilled to see an American Bittern fly over the road!

Susan Thome-Barrett and I completed two different intro to birding classes at REI in Winter Park, and I taught the Wetland Birds module for the Florida Master Naturalist program at Oakland Nature Preserve. A big thank you to our volunteers this month; Jennifer Barber and Ann Mixson at Zellwood Elementary, Susan Thome-Barrett at REI and Alan Shapiro at Wolf Lake Middle.

Orange Audubon still has availability to conduct schoolyard bird surveys and other standards-based educational programs. Interested educators should email me at education@orangeaudubonfl.org.

Our monthly free educational webinars will continue February 11th from 7:00-7:30 pm with a program about Participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count. The link to sign up: <http://eepurl.com/imGskM>.

Kathy Rigling, Education Coordinator



Screech Owlets, 2025 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest, Honorable Mention, Advanced Category. Photo: Dan Jones



Lyonia Preserve field trip with Young Birders Club several years ago. Florida Scrub-Jays at Lyonia. Photos: Kathy Rigling

Orange Audubon Young Birders

We have 2 upcoming free field trips for 8-17-year-old youth who are interested in learning more about birds. Both are now open for registration on our website. Loaner binoculars will be available.

The first one is a trip to Brownie Wise Park in Osceola County on February 15th from 7:30-11:30 a.m. The exact location will be provided upon registration. The leaders will be Brennan and Ethan Landreville, Glenn Blaser and Haden Klingner

Brownie Wise Park is an excellent location for its many habitats within a relatively small area. Woods at the entrance road transition to open marsh. The presence of many neighborhoods in the surrounding areas funnels migrating songbirds into the available park habitat. We will meet at the parking lot on the peninsula, then bird both the marsh as well as the entrance road. We hope to see a wide variety, including warblers, other overwintering passerines, like sparrows, vireos, wrens, and cedar waxwings, plus egrets, herons, and other wading birds.

The second trip is a joint trip with the Lyonia Environmental Center and West Volusia Audubon on March 1st. We will be visiting Lyonia Preserve from 9:00 AM- 11:00 AM. The leaders will be Alex DeBear and Kathy Rigling of Orange Audubon with Eli Shaperow of West Volusia Audubon

Kathy Rigling, Education Coordinator



Cooper's Hawk, Photo: Mary Keim

See Our Winter Ducks Before They Fly North

This month we feature the Gadwall, as we remind you to get out to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive or Orlando Wetlands before our winter ducks leave. This dabbling duck breeds in wetlands of the central plains of the United States and Canada, called the Prairie Pothole Region. Gadwalls winter in the central and southern United States and throughout Mexico.

Look for an otherwise very plain dabbling duck, larger than many of our other winter ducks, about the size of a Mallard. It has a black rear end, a white wing-patch and intricately patterned plumage.

In migration and in winter, they feed in fresh and salt water marshes and various types of ponds and waterways. Gadwall eat mostly submerged aquatic vegetation, tipping forward to graze. They rarely dive. In an unusual habit, Gadwall sometimes steal food from American Coots and other ducks as they surface.

Females resemble female Mallards, although with a thinner, darker bill. They have a thin orange edge to their dark bills, called "lipstick" by Bob Sanders

As ways to learn more about our local waterfowl, here are two suggestions: Watch the [Waterfowl video prepared by our Bird Chats team several years ago](#) on our YouTube channel.

And sign up for one of the waterfowl trips at the NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL lead by Chris Newton, who is waterfowl aficionado and our local expert. The 2026 festival will be December 3-7, 2026 and registration will open by October.

Yes, we have a few resident ducks like Wood Ducks, Mottled Ducks and Black-bellied and Fulvous Whistling-Ducks that are fun to see, but the majority of our ducks are just here in the winter. So don't delay.

Deborah Green



Above, male Gadwall; Below, female Gadwall, Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. Photos: Joseph Mileyka

Intermediate Bird Identification March 21 and 28, 2026

Many people have told us they are ready for an Intermediate Bird Identification Class, and Orange Audubon has the perfect person to teach it! Bob Sanders taught Beginners Bird Identification for years and is full of identification tips and natural history information.

The class is two-part. The sessions are on March 21st and 28th, both at Orlando Wetlands from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Cost for the two-part class is \$50 for Audubon members and \$65 for nonmembers, limited to 12 participants. Registration is on our website: <https://orangeaudubonfl.org/field-trips/signup/>. Email any questions to riglingkathy@gmail.com.

Green PLACE Nature & Photography Hike March 29, 2026

Orange Audubon Society is offering a FREE guided Nature & Photography Hike on Sunday, March 29, 2026 to Lake Lucie Conservation Area, Sorrento, west Orange County. Naturalists from the Orange County Green PLACE program, along with Orange Audubon's Lee Ann Posavad, wildlife photographer, and Alex DeBear, naturalist and photographer, will co-lead this hike. It is ideal for youth and families. This continues a long-standing partnership between Orange Audubon and Orange County Green PLACE program in promotion of these important preserves. This is 166 acres in the northwest corner of Orange County. To register, call 407-836-1522 or email greenplace@ocfl.net.





Rodent Lunch, 2022 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest, Youth Category, Honorable Mention Winner. Photo: Lauren Chin

2026 Chertok Photo Contest Deadline, April 16, 2026

Have you been out photographing nature? If not, it's still not too late! The deadline for Orange Audubon Society's 38th annual photo contest is April 16, 2026.

The Kit and Sidney Chertok Florida Native Nature Photography Contest was created to promote interest and concern for preserving the native fauna and flora of Florida and to enhance enjoyment of Florida's natural wonders through photography.

There are three divisions: Novice, Advanced and Youth (open to photographers 17 years of age or younger, as of the entry deadline).

To be eligible, subject matter must be native to Florida, images must not contain human components and must have been taken while complying with North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) ethical field practices. NANPA was incorporated in 1994, following a meeting of over 100 nature photographers at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in New York. Roger Tory Peterson—the famous ornithologist, artist, and nature photographer—convened the group to discuss the future of nature photography. In contrast to photo clubs, NANPA focuses on environmental issues and became a critical advocate for the rights of nature photographers on issues from intellectual property to public land.

Examples of [following NANPA ethical standards](#) are: Learn patterns of animal behavior, so as not to interfere with animal life cycles. Do not distress wildlife or their habitat. Respect the routine needs of animals.

2026 entry forms, [available soon on our website](#), will follow last year's. If you have questions, contact me at (407) 718-1977 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com.

Teresa Williams, Chertok Committee Chair

Family Photography Field Trip, March 1, 2026

Orange Audubon is very fortunate to have the Chin family offering this Family Photography Field Trip on March 1st.

Wei-Shen Chin is an Orlando-based wildlife photographer. He began his career as a photo-journalist in Cleveland, OH, shooting for UPI/Reuters and covering the Indians, Browns and Cavaliers. During COVID, he turned his attention to wildlife photography and developed a love for capturing birds-in-flight, one of the most technically challenging aspects of wildlife photography.

His work has been featured in many publications and websites including Orange Audubon, Florida State Parks and Oakland Heritage Center.

Wei-Shen is most proud of his three children, Lauren, Nicole, and Matthew, who have also become award-winning photographers.

At Orlando Wetlands, the group will meet at the picnic area behind the bathrooms for introduction and equipment check at 9 a.m. From 9:30am to 11:00 am, we will practice photography on the Cypress Boardwalk.

Nesting wading birds, including Roseate Spoonbills, as well as Limpkins, terns, winter ducks and possibly raptors are at this site.

Youth under 16 must be accompanied by a parent. Including both youth and adults, the trip will be limited to 20 participants.

Price is \$5 for youth and \$5 for adults accompanying a youth under 16 years of age. To sign up for this photo field trip, go to Orange Audubon's field trips sign up page and check member (for this field trip price for Youth and Adults is the same). Here is the link: <https://orangeaudubonfl.org/field-trip-signup/>. Click yes or no as to whether you are a member and scroll down to see the event.



2025 Youth Photo Workshop at Orlando Wetlands, taught by Wei-Shen Chin, Matthew Chin and Lauren Chin. Photo: Mary Keim

Buscando Pajaros at Orlando Wetlands, March 7, 2026

For the 5th year, Orange Audubon Society is hosting a tram ride at Orlando Wetlands, led by Gilberto Sanchez in his native Spanish. Gilberto is a skilled photographer and Orlando Wetlands volunteer. The trip will be Saturday, March 7th, from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

It is free but limited to 25 people, with registration on the Orange Audubon website [at this link](#). Click yes or no as to whether you are a member and scroll down to see the event. If you have any questions, contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org or 407-637-2525.

En español:

Disfrute de un paseo en trailer por los pantanos de Orlando Wetlands Park, en un evento gratuito patrocinado por la Orange Audubon Society. Los observadores de aves de habla hispana compartirán información sobre la increíble vida de las aves en el Parque de la Ciudad de Orlando.

Fecha y Hora: sábado, 7 de Marzo de 9 a 11:30 am.

Dirección: Orlando Wetlands, 25155 Wheeler Rd., Christmas, FL 32709. Traiga sus binoculares. Algunos de préstamo están disponibles. Los participantes están limitados a 25. RSVP a info@orangeaudubonfl.org. Para información, 407-637-2525.



2022 Buscando Pajaros trip at Orlando Wetlands Park. Photo: Shalimar Rodriguez

FEBRUARY/MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bird Chats with OAS via Zoom

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

[Link to register](#)

Bird Banding by Jim McGinity

February 5, 2026

Alaska by Joe Hammond, Raven Birding Apparel

February 12, 2026

Birding in Great Britain by David Campbell

February 26, 2026

Wildfire Smoke and Birds by Olivia Sanderfoot

March 5, 2026

TBA

March 12, 2026

Birds & Culture in Southern Portugal by João Jara

March 26, 2026

Beginners' Bird Watching Class

February 7, 14 and 21, 2026

Contact Kathy at (407) 488-9559

Birds of Prey ID class with Bob Sanders

February 8, 2026

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Wekiwa Springs State Park Bird Survey, Apopka

February 15, 2026

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Young Birders Field Trip

February 15, 2026

Contact Kathy at (407) 488-9559

February Program: Breaking New Ground with Florida Scrub-Jays by Karl Miller

February 19, 2026

Contact Alan at alangrandiflora@gmail.com

February Field Trip: Orlando Wetlands, Christmas

February 22, 2026

Register: <https://orangeaudubonfl.org/activities/field-trips/>

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

North Shore Bird Survey

February 24, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Apopka Birding Park Bird Survey

February 28, 2026

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Apopka Birding Park Workday

February 28, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Limited Edition Field Trip: Merritt Island Hotspots

February 28, 2026

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

Youth Photo Workshop with the Chin Family

March 1, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Buscando Pajaros

March 7, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org



Caught, Great Blue Heron with American Alligator, 2025 Chertok Florida Native Nature Photo Contest, 3rd Place Winner, Advanced Category. Photo: Lee Ann Posavad

March Program: Butterflies and Native Plants: Making the Connection by Linda Cooper

March 19, 2026

Contact Alan at alangrandiflora@gmail.com

Apopka Birding Park Bird Survey

March 28, 2026

Contact Alexander at alexdebear@icloud.com

Apopka Birding Park Workday

March 28, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Green PLACE Photo Workshop, Lake Lucie Conservation Area

March 29, 2026

Contact Green PLACE at 407-836-1522

Oakland Nature Preserve Bird Survey, Oakland

March 29, 2026

Contact Kathy at riglingkathy@gmail.com

North Shore Bird Survey

March 31, 2026

Contact Deborah at info@orangeaudubonfl.org

Update Your Membership

The new year is a great time to join or renew your 3-way membership in Orange Audubon, Audubon Florida and National Audubon Society.

Please pay directly to Orange Audubon, and we transmit the funds to National.

If you want to include an additional donation, which goes to Orange Audubon, you can.

The base rate is \$20 (\$15 for students). Go to Orange Audubon's website and click the [Join/Renew link](#).

If you need your expiration date or have any membership questions, email membership@orangeaudubonfl.org.