

## Nature Center Update

Busy with our activities at the start of the season, we will do a better update on nature center progress in October. See [this video in our Bird Chat series](#) for general background on the project if you are unfamiliar with it.

For an all-volunteer organization, with just one part-time employee, Education Coordinator Kathy Rigling, Orange Audubon accomplishes a tremendous amount. Our activities are now described in our first Annual Report, to be posted on our website under About Us.

### Your Contributions Really Help

Orange Audubon is profoundly grateful to those making monetary contributions toward the nature center. One hundred thirty-four (134) people or foundations donated over \$100 since the signing of our long-term lease from the City of Apopka for the Apopka Birding Park in March 2024.

Although we still need large donations in order to have enough money to start construction, we think this number of donors shows tremendous community support. Our donors follow our activities, know we are a capable organization and that this nature center site is perfect. It is located at the entrance to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive which receives heavy traffic and is an upland site for wildlife which is disappearing in the area.

Donations to Orange Audubon 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

If you are a Sustainer member of National Audubon, making monthly donations, you can now make monthly online donations to Orange Audubon through [our website](#) and designate them to benefit our nature center project and educational efforts.

For those with IRAs who are 70½ years of age or older, making qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) directly to certain nonprofits like Orange Audubon, may count towards your required minimum distribution to provide a significant tax benefit. QCDs for 2025 can be made throughout the tax year.

Donations received early will help as we choose a contractor and determine the construction start date. Thank you!

*Deborah Green, President, with  
Sue Weidner, Treasurer and  
Teresa Williams, Past Treasurer*

## Workdays Continue

At Orange Audubon Society's third workday at the Apopka Birding Park (ABP) on June 28th, we had over 30 participants, mostly recruited by Observatorio Ambiental Hispano, Renacer Foundation and Nuestra Cultura Outdoors. Efforts were invasive Plant Removal in the oak hammock and continued demolition of the inside of the building. Wood salvaged was used to make bird boxes and benches. We plan to continue Saturday workdays on the last Saturday of the month, following the ABP bird survey. Email [volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org) to participate.



Top, Volunteers cleaning up the Apopka Birding Park Truck Shop. Middle, volunteers at the 2025 Labeling Party on August 29th. Bottom, the Orange Audubon board at its summer planning meeting. Photos: Deborah Green

## Update Your Membership

September is a great time to renew your 3-way membership in Orange Audubon Society, Audubon Florida and National Audubon Society. Please pay directly to Orange Audubon, 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 Orange Audubon, you can. Just click the [Join/Renew link](#) on our website. If you need your expiration date, email [membership@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:membership@orangeaudubonfl.org). Thank you!

## Apopka Birding Park Bird Surveys, Last Saturdays

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 Alexander at [alexdebear@icloud.com](mailto:alexdebear@icloud.com) to join.

## 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 the NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL (December 11-15) and Chertok Nature Photography Contest Awards Program (June 18th)
- 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](mailto:volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org). Thank you!

*Mary Van Egmond*

## Labeling Thank You

At Orange Audubon Society's Labeling Party on August 29th, many hands made light work. We thank Rick Baird, Glenn Blaser, Mo Cortese, Mike Daley, Deborah Green, Mary Hoag, Marian Lichtler, Ann Mixson, Noreen Nickerson, Karen Picciano, Kathy Rigling, Charlie Ross, Alan Shapiro, Louis Stern, Steve Turner, Mary Van Egmond, Louise Vivona-Miller, Ryan Wendt and Teresa Williams. Thanks all!





## What's New at the Apopka Birding Park

Orange Audubon Society is working to raise enough money to start construction on the Orange Audubon Nature Center at Apopka Birding Park.

If you are not familiar with our project to create a Birding Park out of a greenhouse nursery, adjacent to the popular Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, and to renovate an old Truck Shop into a LEED certified nature center, here is the [link to my Bird Chat presentation on it](#).

Our first Annual Report also profiles the project, [link here](#). We will be starting our second financial audit in October.

### So what have we been able to do?

With small grants, plenty of ingenuity and advice from people in our community familiar with habitat restoration, Orange Audubon has begun the long road to convert a greenhouse nursery back to native habitat, a “rewilding” process.

An obstacle is lack of water, but our landlord, the City of Apopka, will be installing water and sewer hopefully before the new year.

A second obstacle is widespread presence of cogongrass, a highly invasive weed pest, but we are working with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the City to schedule twice yearly herbicide treatments.

Our final obstacle to rewilding is the presence of the concrete pads that were the bases of the old greenhouses that burned down circa 1999.

The St. Johns River Water Management District will be removing the concrete pads to use the concrete for rip-rap along the lake and other construction projects.

That will occur this winter and will cause considerable disturbance but finally allow us to do major restoration activities.

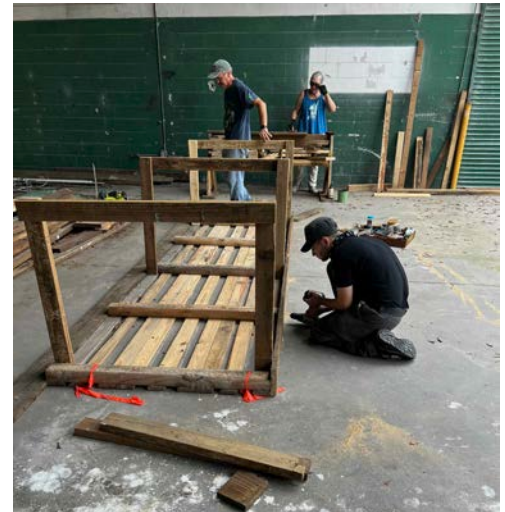


Top left, first visit to site by our architectural firm, May 2024, Stages of the demolition and materials reuse. Photos: Deborah Green

### Demolition of the inside of the building and reusing the wood

Monthly workdays on the last Saturday of the month and muscle from other volunteers have allowed board member Alan Shapiro to demolish wooden structures inside our concrete block Truck Shop. With the wood then available for projects, other volunteers have removed the nails, and Alan and new volunteer Steve Turner have cut pieces for bird boxes. Bird boxes of various sizes have been assembled and installed near the building.

Alan has also constructed Leopold Benches, special benches that allow one to sit looking backwards from the normal direction, perfect for observing with binoculars or camera. Named after famed ecologist Aldo Leopold, this design is perfect for our site, and five of these have been positioned around the property already.



### Plantings

We have secured a Viva Florida grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation for the native landscape adjacent to the building. Since that cannot be planted until the building is complete, we secured a smaller grant for an additional native landscape near our entrance gate.

We will be preparing to do a planting tentatively November 1st. Our many photographers will enjoy the pollinators in this native landscape.

On the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive two years ago, Alan planted a native landscape behind the Ambassador Welcome Shelter. That garden was recently awarded an Award of Honor by the Florida Native Plant Society.

*To be continued next month*



## Progress at the Apopka Birding Park

Orange Audubon Society is working to raise enough money to start construction on the Orange Audubon Nature Center at Apopka Birding Park.

The 69.5 acre old nursery site, adjacent to the popular Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, was deeded to the City of Apopka by the St. Johns River Water Management District in conjunction with our chapter in 2018. Our long term lease to develop the property was signed in March 2024.

Details on our plans to renovate the old Truck Shop into a LEED certified nature center are in [my Bird Chat presentation](#).

Our first Annual Report also profiles the project, [link here](#).

We are nearly half way through a \$4.5 million Capital Campaign. We will be starting our second financial audit this month.

### What have we been able to accomplish?

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An obstacle is lack of water, but our landlord, the City of Apopka, will be installing water and sewer hopefully before the new year.

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Our final obstacle is the presence of the concrete pads that were the bases of the old greenhouses that burned down circa 1999. The St. Johns River Water Management District will be removing the concrete pads to use the concrete for rip-rap along the lake and other construction projects.

That will occur this winter and will cause considerable disturbance but finally allow us to do major restoration activities. Stay tuned, and if you want to help financially or otherwise, email [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).



## Upcoming Plantings

Orange Audubon has secured a Viva Florida grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation for the native landscape adjacent to the building. A key feature of the building is the 10,000 square foot bird-watching annex (shown below) with places to sit and watch the birds (and bird-safe glass).



Annex to Orange Audubon Nature Center at Apopka Birding Park. Rendering: *Little Diversified Architectural Services*

The bird-friendly native plant landscape outside the windows was designed by landscape architect David Drylie, a pioneer in promotion of native landscaping with his nursery Green Images in Christmas starting in 1988. The landscape includes a large water feature. A berm and hedge will provide a natural barrier so that visitors will not be able to enter, so it remains quiet for attracting birds.

Inside the annex will be tables with binoculars and bird identification materials. The walls of the annex will be graced by murals on bird migration by our favorite local muralist.



## Interim Plantings

The landscape visible from the annex cannot be planted until building construction is complete, to avoid damage to the plantings. However, the Florida Wildflower Foundation was kind enough to grant us funding for a separate landscape just inside the yellow gate to our property.

At the October 28th workday, we worked on site preparation and hope to plant at the workdays on November 15th and 29th. Email [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org) if you would like to contribute or participate. Thank you.

## What We Need to Build the Building

Since our members and friends received our letter appeal with our annual brochure in early September, response from our community has been stellar. Thank you so very much to all who have donated and so generously. You will be hearing from us with notes of appreciation in the coming days.

As we [explain in our Annual Report](#), raising enough money to hire a center director/executive director goes along with our Capital Campaign for the building.

## November Match!

For the month of November, generous donors have put up a \$10,000 match. Can you contribute to make sure we secure this amount? Last June was our first time offering a match, and we handily made it with 33 donors in two weeks. It would be incredible to do even better this time.

If anyone has any questions about how Orange Audubon is shepherding your donations, we have a new treasurer, Sue Weidner, who is a Certified Public Accountant that works for Seminole County. She inherits Teresa Williams' long-time careful accounting and has moved our accounts to Quickbooks and established internal controls. Restricted and unrestricted assets are carefully tracked.

We bank at Seacoast Bank and most of our investments are in CDs. We are starting our second financial audit. Our first, along with the Annual Report and IRS 990 form, [can be found at this link](#).

For more on how to donate, see page 7. And thank you so much!



Orange Audubon Treasurer Sue Weidner participating in November 1st workday, removing nails from reclaimed wood being used to make bird boxes and Leopold Benches. Apopka Birding Park Working Group member Alex DeBear sitting in a Leopold Bench, recently made by Alan Shapiro. Photos: Deborah Green

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*Deborah Green, Apopka Birding Park Working Group Chair*



Nucor reps and our architect and committee members view the Truck Shop that will be renovated into our nature center, September 2025. Photo: Deborah Green

### Nucor To Donate Product

**NUCOR®**

The Apopka Birding Park Working Group is excited to have secured the first national company with local representation to support our nature center. Nucor Corporation, North America's largest steel manufacturer and recycler, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, is pledging to donate some important building components.

Nucor Rebar Fabrication is located on Jones Road near the exit to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. The Zellwood plant is a rebar fabrication plant, but Nucor has a wide range of steel products used in just about every aspect of construction. Diane Melesio, Project Manager Lead, is a wildlife photographer and cyclist on the North Shore, as well as a member of Orange Audubon, so she understands the value of our project and its projected high visitation.

Nucor Vulcraft, a steel products group of Nucor Corporation, is a leading producer of steel bar joists, joist girders, steel deck and steel core products. The product donation will be for the metal roof deck and roof joists.

According to our architect, Philip Donovan of Little Diversified Architectural Services, this donation really moves our plans forward. Aside from the glazing (the installation of glass in windows, doors, and other parts of a building), the steel deck and roof joists are the most expensive construction materials for our building. Thank you, Nucor. If you are associated with a company that would like to support our nature center and rewilding project, please email [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org). [There are naming rights for parts of the building](#). We would love to show you our site and designs.



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](mailto:newsletter@orangeaudubonfl.org).

For other membership information, contact: [membership@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:membership@orangeaudubonfl.org)

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LIKE OAS' [FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

OAS welcomes those who wish to volunteer and become more involved in our efforts. Email [volunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto: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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## Community Effort on the Entry Landscape

To promote use of native plants and specifically plants for birds and pollinators, Orange Audubon is providing examples of the native plants through demonstration gardens.

Board member Alan Shapiro has taken the lead in securing funding from the Florida Wildflower Foundation (FWF). FWF originally granted funding for the garden that will be viewed from the bird observatory annex in our nature center. However, until construction is complete, that landscape is delayed.

So FWF granted us funding for a new landscape along the entry road. Planting was done over several workdays, starting with site preparation in late October and then planting on November 22nd and 29th.

Four volunteers from the Bloom and Grow Garden Club of Winter Garden, along with some of our regular Apopka Birding Park volunteers planted half of the plants. On November 29th, middle school students recruited by the Biophilia Institute joined our regular volunteers to complete the planting, watering and mulching.

Along with shrubs and a few trees, many species of flowering herbaceous plants and native grasses were planted. For the full list, see our website at [this link \(scroll down to the Plants for Birds section\)](#).

For water, the St. Johns River Water Management District lent us a water tank, but with such a large garden it needs to be refilled frequently. The City of Apopka will be supplying our water service, along with a sewer line for the new building, soon.

About 30 bald cypress trees have also been planted. With the removal of the concrete pads and spraying of the dense invasive plants, we move closer to being able to restore more native habitat. Contact us at [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org) if you can help.

*Deborah Green, Committee Chair*



Top, November 22nd workday planting of Florida Wildflower Foundation funded landscape, volunteers included Dr. Louis Stern; Dr. Becky Lynch and other Bloom and Grow Garden Club volunteers know how to plant!; Deborah Green and Andy Ray, construction engineering professor at Valencia College, had been co-chairs of the Valencia Sustainability Committee. Andy's students poured the concrete, and he and volunteers installed this sturdy bench. November 29th workday, our regular Orange Audubon volunteers were joined by Eco-volunteers from the Biophilia Institute. Alan Shapiro instructed on planting. Bottom left, Alan and Lance Hart refill the District's water tank with water from home.

*Photos: Bob Elmquist, Deborah Green and Sarah Powell*

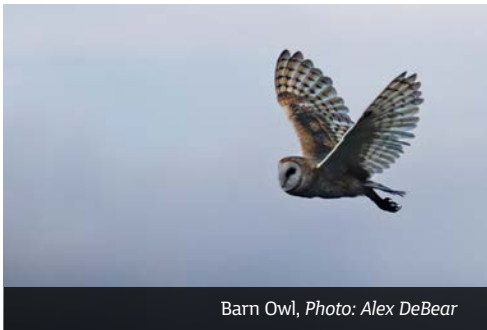


## Biggest Year Yet Field Trip

January 3, 2026

Start your year of birding off right with a field trip to one of Central Florida's best birding locations! We're going to see how many species we can find from 7:00 AM-12:30 PM on the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. Last year we found 85 species — we are going to try to beat that record!

Our leaders are experienced local birders Haden Klinger, Jimena Aguirre and Kathy Rigling of Orange Audubon Society. Reservations are required. Fee is \$15 Audubon members, \$20 non members. Limit is 12 people. Register on our website: <https://orangeaudubonfl.org/activities/field-trips/>. Contact Kathy at [riglingkathy@gmail.com](mailto:riglingkathy@gmail.com) if you have any questions



Barn Owl, Photo: Alex DeBear

## Apopka Birding Park Surveys

We are wrapping up an excellent year of bird surveys. Shortly after Orange Audubon secured our long-term lease on this old nursery site owned by the City of Apopka, we wanted to reinstate the bird surveys done in years past. The survey area covers more and more of this 70 acre parcel as more land area becomes accessible to birders.

Thanks to our volunteers, we've observed over 130 species in a little over a year of monthly surveys! Highlights include a Bell's Vireo, a Brewer's Sparrow (the third instance of this species in Florida's recorded history), the ever elusive Barn Owl, Eastern Screech-owl, Grasshopper Sparrow, and 20 species of warblers.

We also catalog the biodiversity of plants, insects, and mammals that frequent the property. The goal is to document an overall increase in biodiversity as Orange Audubon's restoration effort moves forward.

Surveys are the last Saturday morning of every month, shortly after sunrise. The next bird survey will be on December 27, 2025, followed by January 31st, 2026 at 7:00am. [To register use this link.](#)

Alexander DeBear

## Education Program Update

In November, I visited Zellwood Elementary, Sunset Park Elementary, Sand Lake Elementary, Southwood Elementary, Camelot Elementary, Ocoee Elementary and Glenridge Middle.

You have heard us report about doing a 2024 Christmas Bird Count at Zellwood Elementary and schoolyard bird surveys there and at other schools. Our Best Large Chapter Education Program award from Audubon Florida at Audubon Assembly was for these surveys, which are active learning activities for students and introduce them to community (citizen) science.

These surveys were made possible in part through National Audubon grants for purchase of binoculars. An extension of the bird surveys is recognition of good bird habitat and efforts to improve schoolyard bird habitat. Using funding from our IDEAL grant, Orange Audubon has set up a program where teachers can apply for mini-grants of up to \$150 to purchase native plants to enhance schoolyard bird and pollinator habitat.

Volunteers assisted me to facilitate a native plant installation at Glenridge Middle School. Alan Shapiro, our board member who had owned a large native plant nursery in Gainesville, selected a wide array of native plants from Green Isle Gardens plant nursery and taught the 6th-8th grade agriculture students the correct way to install the plants.

I facilitated multiple bird counts from 2nd grade to 5th grade. The students were having so much fun that they didn't want to stop counting when their allotted time was over. They were excited to see Palm Warblers, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Bluebirds, Bald Eagles and huge flocks of Fish Crows among other species. A few very sharp eyed students spotted Black and White Warblers, Yellow-throated Warblers and even a Ruby-crowned Kinglet with its crown flared!

I did a virtual visit to Timber Lakes Elementary for their Teach-In Career Day program. I also did two homeschool programs, one for the Sandhill Homeschool Collective and one for the Three-fold Homeschool group. One of the 3 year olds, who really wanted to see a Cardinal, walked down the trail calling "here Cardinal," over and over and then one showed up!

My monthly teacher webinar was about



Zellwood Elementary after school Birding Club. Photo Kathy Rigling.

using Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch in the classroom.

We did a program at REI on introduction to Birding. Lastly, I did a bird walk for the Rollins College Environmental Club at Mead Botanical Garden. The students were interested to learn about migration and the importance of urban parks for stopovers by migrant birds.

Altogether we reached 605 students from preschool to college age and 70 adults. A big thank you to the volunteers who assisted. Alan Shapiro, Susan Thome-Barrett, who helped with the presentation at REI, Randy McCall, who assisted with bird counts at Sandlake Elementary, Sunset Park Elementary and Ocoee Elementary, and Ann Mixson, who assisted with the Zellwood Elementary Birding Club.

New volunteers are always welcome. Please reach out to me for more information.

Orange Audubon still has availability to conduct on campus bird counts and other standards-based educational programs.

We also offer a limited number of free class subscriptions of the engaging *Audubon Adventures* print publication for OCPS 3rd-5th grade classrooms. *Audubon Adventures* is a high interest magazine that not only supports standards-correlated science content but also aids literacy education with both print and digital resources.

Our monthly free educational webinars continue on December 10th from 7:00-7:30 pm with a program about Counting Birds for Science. The link to sign up is <http://eepurl.com/imGskM>.

Please email [education@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:education@orangeaudubonfl.org) to sign up for classroom or after school visits, or to request a class subscription to *Audubon Adventures* magazine.

Kathy Rigling, Education Coordinator

## Progress at the Apopka Birding Park

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familiar with our project, [see last month's OASis](#). Details on our plans to renovate an old Truck Shop into a LEED certified nature center are also in [my Bird Chat presentation](#) and Orange Audubon's first Annual Report, [link here](#).

We are nearly half way through a 4.5 million dollar Capital Campaign. Please understand that our fundraising is not just to build the nature center. Orange Audubon, second largest chapter in Florida, may be the largest chapter nationwide **run entirely by volunteers**. With opening of the nature center, we need a paid center director, and the funding source needs to be sustainable. The nature center will have the potential for some income: We can provide rental space for other environmental groups and garden clubs, we will have a small gift shop and workshops can bring in some income. But this is likely not to be self-sustaining. It is important that Orange Audubon moves forward with care.

We know we have a fabulous project with great marketing potential for companies seeking naming rights on parts of our beautiful building. In company-wide meetings of our architectural firm, Little Diversified Architectural Services, both in Charlotte and Orlando, out of approximately 400 projects, reportedly our little building is the one most often mentioned. Thanks to the location near the popular Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive and the great design of the building, it will be a project with which any company can be proud to be associated. Nucor Corporation, North America's largest steel manufacturer and recycler, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, has pledged to donate some important building components (see last month's issue). We are beginning discussions with a bird-safe



Nucor reps and our architect and committee members view the Truck Shop that will be renovated into our nature center, September 2025. Photo: Deborah Green

glass manufacturer.

We thank Steve Hudak of the *Orlando Sentinel* for [profiling our project in mid December](#). That article stimulated a husband to seek naming rights to honor his wife who grew up in Apopka. And we thank the *Apopka Voice* for pro-bono advertising of our project.

Companies that want to be associated with the project can download our [Naming Rights flyer](#), and we ask that they call us to set up a site visit.

The individual donations from our community members have been amazing (see p.4), but this is the time to solidify some corporate partnerships. If anyone in our community can help, please let me know at [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).

### What have we been able to accomplish?

With small grants and donations from our community, plenty of ingenuity and advice from people familiar with habitat restoration, Orange Audubon has begun the long road to convert a greenhouse nursery back to native habitat, a "rewilding" process.

A grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation funded an entry native landscape, spearheaded by board member Alan Shapiro.

Our landlord, the City of Apopka, will be installing water and sewer soon. We are working on treatment of cogongrass, a highly invasive weed pest, and other invasives through herbicide treatments before investing in native plant seeds and seedlings. The concrete pads that were the bases of the old greenhouses that burned down circa 1999 will be removed starting as early as mid January. All that will finally allow us to do major restoration activities. Much help is needed. Please email [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org) if you can help.

*Deborah Green, Apopka Birding Park Working Group Chair*



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## Tree Planting For Birds and the Planet

Planting trees is a powerful strategy against climate change because trees absorb massive amounts of atmospheric carbon dioxide through photosynthesis, storing it as biomass and releasing oxygen, effectively acting as natural carbon sinks and cooling the planet. Planting trees also moderates local temperatures and reduces the amount of energy needed for homes. Trees clean our air and water, provide habitat for wildlife, connect communities, and support our health and well-being.

With our Apopka Birding Park, Orange Audubon finally has a chance work on reforestation. Peter Berry is a new friend who is on a mission to plant cypress trees wherever he can. He and volunteers have planted over 40 cypress trees so far at our park.

We have trees to plant at the monthly workday, now scheduled for January 24th, 9 am to 12 pm, at the Apopka Birding Park. Join us! [Registration link.](#)



Peter Berry planting cypress Photo: Alan Shapiro

## Conservation Committee Report

Welcome to 2026. Conservation issues will continue to be a challenge this year. The Central Florida Audubon Regional Conservation Committee (RCC) will meet on January 18, April 19th, July 19th and October 18th at 4pm on Zoom. To participate, contact Marsha Cox at [marsha.sevasnsb@gmail.com](mailto:marsha.sevasnsb@gmail.com).

The 2026 Florida Legislative session is set to begin January 13, 2026 and run through March. Last month we gave an overview of bills to watch out for in the upcoming session. [Check it out \(p.3\).](#)

[Please sign up at this link](#) to get regular updates from Audubon Florida on what



Male Snail Kite, Lake Tohopekaliga. 2025 Chertok Florida Native Photo Contest, Honorable Mention Winner, Advanced Category. Photo: Dan Jones

## Orange Audubon Thanks Our Donors

Orange Audubon is proud of the wide support from members of our birding and conservation community. And with our attempts to make progress on the Apopka Birding Park that we document each month in the *OASis* and this year's fall letter appeal, our fiscal year 2025-26 has started well, in numbers and amounts of our member's donations. Thanks to all who are supporting our efforts to build and operate a nature center.

From July 2025 through December 2025, Orange Audubon gratefully received donations from the following individuals (listed are those that we were able to secure permission to list before press time, in alphabetical order): Terry Aycrigg, Arthur Barksdale, Rodney Beaubien, Matthew Blanz, Frank Canty, John and Patricia Cloran, Marguerite Cornwell, Marilyn Frazier, Ryan Garrison, Kathryn Graves, Deborah Green, Walter Hellinger, James and Mary Helmers, Mary Hudgins, Sheilla Johnson, Nancy Jones, Sam Kendall, Wayne Kennedy, Kathleen Leser, Larry Martin, Rick and Linda Maxson, George and Janna McGowan, Susan and Hugh Morris, David and Darbee Percival, Teresa Piper in memory of Peggy Lantz, Eugene & Jeanne Polarolo, Leslie and Michael Poole, Traies Roe, Marilyn and Larry Roofner, Pam Schrimsher and Grant Basham, Florence and Robert Sena, Alan Shapiro, Dorothea Skowron in memory of Richard Skowron, Richard Sloane, John Soucy, Bob Stamps and Loretta Satterthwaite, D Steven Stanford, Joyce and Bill Stefancic, Elizabeth Stewart, Jeffrey Switzer, Michael Valente, Mary Van Egmond, Shirley Waggoner, Jeffrey and Kathleen Werrmann, Kathleen Wynegar, Shari Yudenfreund-Sujka and Stan Sujka, and Sandra Zajac.

is happening, relative to bird habitat and conservation in this year's session

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) reports that 52 bears were "collected" in the hunt that just ended. Thank you to those that purchased one of the permits and did not use them and thank you to those that made your concerns about the hunt known to our legislators and FWC

Commissioners.

On another note: Our neighboring Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society is no more, and we have welcomed its members to join us. If you live in that area, [follow this link](#) to engage in Lake County conservation issues.

Thanks for being ready to speak up.

*Rick Baird, Conservation Committee Chair*





## 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](mailto: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.



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## Let's Do This!

Orange Audubon is in an intensive fundraising period, to see if we can start construction on our nature center this

summer. We hope to 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."

**How much money is needed?** Our entire capital campaign goal has been \$4.5 million, which includes \$2 million for our nature center and \$2.5 million for a board-designated endowment to sustainably use just the interest for salaries and operations. To date, except for a part-time salary to our Education Coordinator, all of the award-winning accomplishments of Orange Audubon have been made by volunteers. We need a paid Center Director once the building opens and to increase our Education Coordinator to full time soon after.

As you can read in [our audited Fiscal Year 2024-25 financials](#) and [our 990 tax return](#), our assets are now \$2.1 million. In honor of our 60th anniversary as a chapter, we've made an ambitious goal of raising \$600K in 60 days, for which \$108,000 is already committed as a match.



Can you help us raise \$600K in 60 days (by April 15th), so we can start construction? 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.**

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With your permission, we will recognize your donation in our newsletter (next issue), 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 274, Apopka, FL 32704.

Note that this is our new Apopka P.O. Box, but we are still maintaining our Maitland address and you can use it. We are moving west with our nature center in Apopka. The new P.O. Box is to try to avoid the ongoing confusion of Orange Audubon with Audubon Florida because of the local Audubon Center for Birds of Prey. Also, with the closing of Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, we are hoping to pull in more of their members, who may care about the Lake Apopka North Shore.

Potential donors can contact me for more information and to set up a tour of the Apopka Birding Park by emailing [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org) or calling me at 407-637-2525. Thank you!

*Deborah Green, Orange Audubon President*



Holly Hobart volunteering at 2026 Eco Fair in Lake County. Photo: Deborah Green

## March 2026 Progress Report

Those who read our newsletter know all about the purpose of our nature center and habitat restoration, on the 69.5-acre old nursery site next to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, now called the Apopka Birding Park, owned by the City of Apopka and for which Orange Audubon has a long-term lease. Upland habitat is disappearing locally as development proceeds, and at the Apopka Birding Park we are restoring

*continued p.3*



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### March 2026 Progress Report, continued from p. 2

habitat, with walking trails and nature immersion amenities for the community. Here is what we have done in the past few months, while fundraising prior to starting construction:

- Using a grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation and spearheaded by Alan Shapiro, who retired as owner of a large native plant nursery, our volunteers planted a native bird-friendly landscape after our yellow entry gate.



Rose Kinane of the Florida Wildflower Foundation with Alan Shapiro during inspection of the entry landscape. Photo: Deborah Green.

- We have settled in to a schedule of workdays on the last Saturday of the month, 9 to 12. Next is March 28th.
- We have mowed some trails. People are regularly walking around the property looking for upland birds, like sparrows and buntings. The sign is posted that no dogs are allowed and no bicycling. We had to eliminate bicycle access because the roads have blind turns, and bicycles can be a hazard to pedestrians.
- Through one of our NORTH SHORE BIRDING FESTIVAL leaders, John Groskopf who is an eBird reviewer, we secured the property as its own eBird hotspot.
- Because many people walk into the Birding Park through the pedestrian gate, thinking it connects to the Drive, we put up a sign "No Lake Access, Upland Habitat Restoration in Progress." [FastSigns Apopka](#) was kind enough to print and install both that sign and the sign about our project now visible from the Wildlife Drive.
- Alan led partial demolition on the interior of the building, so it is more presentable, and assisted by other



Leopold Benches, named after ecologist Aldo Leopold, are appearing throughout the Apopka Birding Park, courtesy Alan Shapiro. Photo: Iowa Outdoors



February 28, 2026 workday at the Apopka Birding Park. Photos: Jim Cunningham.

volunteers, he has been making benches with demolition wood.

- Although the money to build and operate the nature center isn't yet in place, Orange Audubon has began the process of selecting our building contractor. A request for proposal that we had worked on months ago was sent to three contracting firms that our architect had worked with on similar projects and an additional contractor that had asked to bid. Two of these firms met with us at the building and will move forward to apply. Target selection date is in April.



Interested building contractors visiting the site with our architect Philip Donovan, February 2026. Photos: Deborah Green.

### February Conservation News

The Florida Forever program, our state's land acquisition program, is running on fumes funding-wise. Audubon Florida is focused on making sure this program is top of mind for funding appropriations during the 2026 legislative session.

There are also a good number of bad bills going through the legislature and Audubon Florida is working hard to get ameliorating amendments added. [Please be sure you are on AF's Audubon Advocate email list and respond to calls](#) for action. We appreciate the skilled advocacy work of Audubon Florida during the legislative session.

Here are the links for contact information for your [State Senator](#) and [State House Representative](#).

Orange Audubon will participate in the land management review of the Beardall Tosohatchee Wildlife Management Area on March 4, 2026

*Rick Baird and the Orange Audubon Conservation Committee*





## Progressing Toward Construction

Thank you so very much to the nearly 100 donors who contributed so far in

2026 towards Orange Audubon's nature center efforts on a 69.5 acre old nursery site adjacent to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. As you know, we are working to restore upland habitat, with walking trails and nature immersion amenities for the community, and to build a learning place about sustainability.

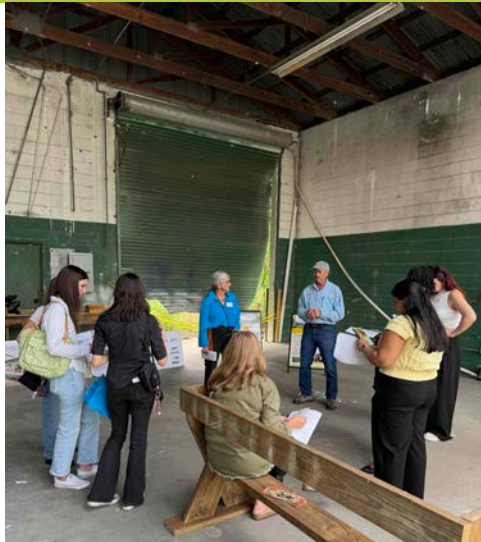
### Update on the \$600K in 60 day campaign

Over \$80,000 has come in since we started our 60 day campaign in February (with another \$13,000 before we announced the campaign in January). This is a long way from our \$600K goal, but is still some of the best fundraising that Orange Audubon has done to date. For example, last year in the 6 months from July through December, donations were just over \$81,000.

Please donate if you haven't already. Here is recent progress by our all-volunteer team:

#### The building

- The hiring of our building contractor will be this month. Two local contractors who have previously worked with our architect, Philip Donovan of Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, are competing. Both have experience with small projects and LEED certification.
- Construction costs have risen since we first secured our architect's design and price estimate two years ago. We hope the costs can be adjusted downward through in-kind product donations. Our contractor can better negotiate these donations, such as the steel roof deck and roof joists that Nucor Corporation has generously pledged. Our pitch to companies is that we serve a large community, have a great publicity machine and our nature center will be a highly-visited community amenity, plus that [there are naming rights](#).
- The Central Florida Foundation and University of Central Florida Center for Public and Nonprofit Management students with their professor and mentor made a site visit in March and seemed interested in helping us fund our exhibits.
- We continue looking for corporate



Central Florida Foundation and UCF Center for Public and Nonprofit Management professor and students visiting the old Truck Shop building we will be turning into a nature and events center. Photo: Rick Baird

donors that could benefit from being a part of this project. The adjacent Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive continues to grow in visitation while development adjacent to the site increases, so visibility of a sponsorship increases every day.

#### Restoration

- Our project—restoring upland habitat at the edge of the 20,000 acre Lake Apopka North Shore, next to increasing housing and industrial development—is an inspiring one and has attracted some amazing retirees with exactly the experience needed to accomplish habitat restoration. Our newest recruit, Lance Hart, retired from the St. Johns River Water Management District in wetland permitting and knows both the ecological and regulatory environment. Along with Steve Turner, who retired from NOAA Fisheries and who had volunteered at Archbold Biological Station, Lance has mapped our cogon grass infestation through a laborious ground truthing process. These and other volunteers also mapped gopher tortoise burrows and staked the



Alan Shapiro and Steve Turner trimming cogon grass around gopher tortoise burrow. Photo: Lance Hart



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burrows to protect them.

- As part of our long-term effort to control the invasive cogon grass and plant natives, much of the property was mowed in mid March. We thank Ameriscapes Landscape Management, recruited by Alan Shapiro from his nursery industry contacts, for doing this job, following instructions of our volunteers. Mowing encourages the cogon grass to grow, preferably over a foot tall, so it can absorb herbicide during a late spring treatment. Orange Audubon and the City will again be applying for funding assistance through a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Upland Plant Management grant.
- Thirteen gopher tortoise burrows were found months ago. The new survey found more but only a few were verified as active — during the winter the tortoises become inactive and vegetation around the burrow grows. Gopher tortoises also use multiple burrows. Using an abundance of caution, all possible burrows were staked off.
- Using the maps created by our skilled volunteers, our Apopka Birding Park Working Group will be developing a conceptual site plan, specifying what habitats we want to try to recreate in the different sections of the property.
- Meanwhile, the entry landscape, funded by the Florida Wildflower Foundation and by the Bloom and Grow Garden Club of Winter Garden, is growing in well. Led by Alan Shapiro, we are mulching with oak leaves and pine straw brought by our members and are hand watering using a 200-gallon water tank loaned and kindly filled by the St. Johns River Water Management District. Next step is creating labels for the plants. The many Leopold benches make the entry landscape a comfortable place to watch birds, and Alan has installed bird feeders. Donations of bird seed and additional feeders are welcome.
- Dr. Peter Berry, president of the nonprofit Green Trees Once More, has helped us establish nearly 100 cypress trees at the Apopka Birding Park over the past year. Although it is an upland site, the terrain slopes toward the surrounding canals and there are wet depressions. Cypress trees will add important nesting and roosting habitat for birds as they grow in.
- Apopka Birding Park workdays are the last Saturdays of the month, 9 am to 12 pm. Next is April 25th. If you have never



Blue Grosbeak on Sugarberry. Photo: Joe Mileyka.  
Eastern Bluebird using bird box at the Apopka Birding Park. Photo: Jack Horton. Dr. Peter Berry planting cypress trees. Photo: Alan Shapiro

participated, [sign up at this link](#). Companies wanting a volunteer day can arrange to come out on a weekday and do various projects, perhaps making bird boxes. Contact us at [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).

## Getting the Word Out

Working to acknowledge and steward our donors, we notice that almost all of you who donated in 2025 and so far in 2026 are Orange Audubon members and on our mailing list. That shows tremendous support from our own community — again, thank you all so much — but we need to expand our breadth of support.

[FastSigns Apopka](#) was kind enough to print and install a sign about our project that is now visible from the Wildlife Drive. The Drive

received 264,000 visitors in 2025, and if some of the regulars, big fans of the Drive, would donate, that would really help.

Channel 6 reporter Paul Giorgio [did a nice story on our efforts](#).

The owner of Propagate Social House and Hall's on Fifth, two restaurants in downtown Apopka, will be hosting a fundraising party for us on **May 16th on the Propagate deck**. The owner was at the Apopka City Commission meeting in October 2024 when our architect presented the design plans to the commissioners and has been interested in our project since then. More on the party to come, but please mark your calendars!

*Deborah Green*

## Gratitude

Thank you to our generous donors who contributed from January through March: Lynne Bachrach, Rick Baird, Brownwood Birders, Sandy Bove, Nancy Bower Bowling, Doris Brookens, Linda Carpenter, Jessica Casey, Joyce Cassidy, Tarflower Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society, in memory of Peggy Lantz, Darren Chastain, Linda Cooper, Bruce Doerle, Friends of Lake Apopka/Joseph Dunn, Dianna Flynt, Ryan Garrison, Paul Gray, Deborah Green, Judy Haft, Mark & Roxanne Jager, Carl & Sharon Kieper, Barbara Kotick, Bruce Matasick, Linda & Richard Maxson, Susan & Hugh Morris, Susan Myers, Elizabeth Nelson, Terry Piper in memory of Peggy Lantz, Cheryl & Malcolm Railey, Lisa Roberts in memory of Gene & Betty Roberts, Barbara Roberts, Joyce Romano in honor of Susan Ledlow, Gilberto Sanchez, Foliage Sertoma, Kathy Sessions, Jessica Sibley, Dorothea Skowron in memory of Richard Skowron, Louis Stern, Jeffrey Switzer, Tracie Theune, Neta Villalobos Bell and Kathleen Wynegar plus others whom we couldn't reach to secure permission to list. We thank you all!!

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## We Raised Over \$120,000

See how you can help!



### Getting Closer

Thank you so very much to the 150 donors who have contributed so far in 2026 towards Orange Audubon's

nature center on the 69.5 acre old nursery site adjacent to the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive. As you know, we are working to restore upland habitat with walking trails and nature immersion amenities for the community, and to create a learning place about nature, wellness and sustainability.

#### Update on the \$600K in 60 day campaign

An amazing \$120,000 was donated so far in 2026, which should bring in our pledged \$108,000 match. This is a long way from \$600K in 60 days but is still some of the best fundraising that Orange Audubon has done to date.

How close are we to being able to start construction? While trying to reel in the last \$400K, we are taking some baby steps.

#### The building

We have selected our building contractor! We will be using R.B.Marks Construction of Winter Springs, that just celebrated 20 years. Our architect Philip Donovan of Little Diversified Architectural Consulting had worked with R.B. Marks on a complicated project, the renovation of the Plaza Live Theatre in the Milk District and looks forward to working with them on this project.

Construction costs have risen since we first secured our architect's design and price estimate two years ago. R.B. Marks was instructed, after meeting with us, to go through the estimate and try to find ways for us to save, while still installing state of the art equipment so we can achieve LEED Gold status. Having our contractor on-board will help us negotiate in-kind donations, such as the steel roof deck and roof joists that Nucor Corporation has generously pledged. Our pitch to companies is that we serve a large community, have a great publicity machine and our nature center will be a highly-visited community amenity, plus that [there are naming rights](#).

We continue looking for corporate donors



Orange Audubon's newly selected building contractor R.B. Marks visited in March with subs to see the project and help develop its quote. *Photo: Deborah Green*

that could benefit from being a part of this project. The adjacent Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive continues to grow in visitation while development adjacent to the site increases, so visibility of a significant donation increases every day.

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[Emailvolunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:Emailvolunteer@orangeaudubonfl.org).

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A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, 1-800-435-7352, WITHIN THE STATE. VISIT [WWW.FDACS.GOV](http://WWW.FDACS.GOV) FOR HELP. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION NO. CH2330



*Continued from p. 2.* Orange Audubon and our landlord, the City of Apopka, have applied for funding assistance through a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Upland Plant Management grant.

Using the maps created by our skilled volunteers, our Apopka Birding Park Working Group will be developing a conceptual site plan, specifying what habitats we want to try to recreate in the different sections of the property.

The long-awaited removal of the concrete pads (bases of old greenhouses), by a contractor with the St. Johns River Water Management District, has begun. It will extend through July on Mondays through Thursdays, and the Apopka Birding Park must be closed during those days. It will be open again on the weekends.

The entry landscape, funded by the Florida Wildflower Foundation and by the Bloom and Grow Garden Club of Winter Garden, is growing in well. Led by Alan Shapiro, we are hand watering using a 200-gallon water tank loaned and kindly filled by the St. Johns River Water Management District. Next step is creating labels for the plants.

The many Leopold benches make the entry landscape a comfortable place to watch birds, and Alan has put up bird feeders. Donations of bird seed and additional feeders are welcome. Dr. Peter Berry, president of the nonprofit Green Trees Once More, has helped us establish nearly 100 cypress trees over the past year.

**Apopka Birding Park workdays are the last Saturdays of the month, 9 am to 12 pm. Next is May 30th. If you have never participated, [sign up at this link](#).**

Companies wanting a volunteer day can arrange to come out on a weekday and do various projects, perhaps making bird boxes. Contact us at [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).

As you know, we are an all-volunteer chapter, with the exception of Kathy Rigling's Education Coordinator position which is part-time. We will need a paid Center Director and need that position's funding to be sustainable. We have recently joined the Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) and will be seeking mentorship from other nature centers



around the country as we proceed. We will be creating a plan outlining possible income we can expect in the future versus operating expenses. If any of our members would like to help, please email [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).



Concrete pads being removed, late April 2026, Photo: Deborah Green. Lance Hart marking which pads to save, Photo: Jack Horton.

## Getting the Word Out

Working to acknowledge and steward our donors, we notice that almost all of you who donated in 2025 and so far in 2026 are Orange Audubon members and on our mailing list. That shows tremendous support from our own community — again, thank you all so much — but we need to expand our breadth of support.

The Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive received 264,000 visitors in 2025, and if some of the regulars, big fans of the Drive, would donate, that would really help. We need more coverage like the Channel 6 [story on our efforts](#).



The owner of Propagate Social House and Hall's on Fifth, restaurants in downtown Apopka, will be hosting a fundraising party for us on **May 16th on the Propagate deck**. The owner was at the Apopka City Commission meeting in October 2024 when our architect presented the design plans to the commissioners and has been interested in our project since then.

[Sign up for this fun event at this link.](#)

We are still collecting items for the raffle that is part of the fundraising of this event. Contact me if you have anything that might fit at [info@orangeaudubonfl.org](mailto:info@orangeaudubonfl.org).

Hope to see you!

*Deborah Green*

## Gratitude

Thank you to our generous donors who contributed from January through April: James Adamski, Jan Addison, Lynne Bachrach, Carol Bailey-White, Richard Baird, Liz Bartell, Sandra Bauerschmidt, Glenn Blaser, Sandy Bove, Nancy Bower Bowling, Doris Brookens, Linda Carpenter, Jessica Casey, Joyce Cassidy, Christopher D Chastain, Rachel Comstock in memory of Dr. Susan Crafts, Linda Cooper, Lorraine Cowl, Bruce Doerle, Joseph Dunn for Friends of Lake Apopka, Paula Durlach, Yanga Fernandez, Dianna Flynt, Joy Fox, Ryan Garrison, Linda Gaunt, Pam Schrimsher & Grant Basham, Paul Gray, Deborah Green, Judy Haft, Jim and Mary Helmers, Mark & Roxanne Jager, J Daniel Jones, George Kacperski, Cynthia Kay, Carl and Sharon Kieper, Barbara Kotick, Elda Larche, Nancy Leclair, Jurgen Lorenzen, Bruce Matasick, Linda & Richard Maxson, Andrew Mears, Brent Mobley, Eric Moore, Susan and Hugh Morris, Susan Myers, Elizabeth Nelson, Vickie Parrish, Karen Picciano, Teresa Piper in memory of Peggy Lantz, Eugene and Jeanne Polarolo, Cheryl and Malcolm Railey, Richard Reed, Barbara Roberts, Lisa Roberts in memory of Gene and Betty Roberts, Joyce Romano in honor of Susan Ledlow, Gilberto Sanchez, Robert & Flo Sena, Kathy Sessions, Alan Shapiro, Jessica Sibley Dorothea Skowron in memory of Richard Skowron, Richard Sloane, Joyce & Bill Stefancic, Louis Stern, Jeffrey Switzer, Jennifer Taylor in memory of Mom, Dad and Granny, Tracie Theune, Susan Thome-Barrett, Mary Van Egmond, Neta Villalobos-Bell, Eloise West, Charlotte White, Kathleen Wynegar, Robert Zinkil, Randy and Michelle Zwirn, Brownwood Birders, Foliage Garden Club of Apopka, Tarflower Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka, plus others whom we couldn't reach to secure permission to list. We thank you all!!

Donations to Orange Audubon Society are tax-deductible, to the extent permitted by law and can include required minimum distributions from IRAs, as well as Donor Advised Funds, since Orange Audubon Society, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3).

Donations can be made by credit card [on our website Nature Center tab](#) or by check to Orange Audubon Society, mailed to P.O. Box 274, Apopka, FL 32704. Be a part of this amazing grassroots effort to create this special place.