



# OASis



Orange Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National and Florida Audubon Societies

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Issue No. 5

## **Field Trip - January 21, 2012 Three Lakes WMA/Joe Overstreet Rd**

Orange Audubon Society will explore Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area and nearby Joe Overstreet Road in January. This exceedingly beautiful Osceola County area is a well-known birding hot spot. Bird species we may encounter include: Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Crested Caracara, White-tailed Kite, Snail Kite, Sandhill Cranes, waders, waterfowl and assorted passerines. Also, the nesting density of Bald Eagles in this area is one of the highest in the state.

Since this area is rather remote, participants are encouraged to bring drinks and snacks—there are no stores!

We will meet to carpool at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the now-closed Albertson's at the corner of S. Orange Avenue and Michigan Street (a Publix and an Office Depot are also in this shopping center). For more information contact Bob Sanders (407-454-0542).

## **Limited Edition Field Trip—Sunday, Jan. 22nd**

The Orange Audubon Society (OAS)-nominated Florida Special Place—Rock Springs Run State Reserve—will be the destination for OAS' January Limited Edition field trip. Limited Edition field trips are limited to 15 people per trip (on a first-come, first served basis) and cost \$10/OAS member and \$15/non-OAS member. There will be a \$3 entry fee at the Reserve entrance. Be aware there may be hunting going on in some parts of the Reserve. For meeting place details and to make your reservation for this trip, please contact Gallus Quigley at 407-242-7833 or [gallusq@cfl.rr.com](mailto:gallusq@cfl.rr.com).

## **This Month's Program: Jan. 19th @ 7 p.m. Endangered Snail Kites by Zach Welch**

The Snail Kite is a raptor found within the U.S. only in Florida, although it is found throughout tropical America. Once called the Everglades Kite it eats a specialized diet of apple snails in South Florida's once vast wetlands. The Snail Kite is one of those species that has been least able to adapt to human impacts. As South Florida's marshes and sloughs are diked, drained and destroyed, this endangered species finds its preferred habitat rapidly disappearing. Zach Welch surveys Snail Kite populations for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and will fill us on how kites are faring and what we can do to help.

Join us January 19th at Leu Gardens for what will be a fascinating program. Orange Audubon Society programs are free and no reservations are necessary.  
*Deborah Green, President*

## **OAS Fundraising Boat Trip on Saturday, April 7, 2012. See page 2 for more details.**

Orange Audubon Society meetings & programs are free & no reservations are necessary. Programs are held the 3rd Thursday of every month (September - June) usually at 7 p.m. in the Camellia Room at:  
Harry P. Leu Gardens  
1920 North Forest Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32803-1537.  
For directions call: 407-246-2620

## OAS Co-sponsors 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Orlando Wetlands Festival

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Orlando Wetlands Festival will be held on February 18, 2012, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Ft. Christmas Park (1300 N. Ft. Christmas Rd.). While parking and vendors will be at Ft. Christmas Park, tour buses and shuttles will take visitors to nearby Orlando Wetlands Park. The City of Orlando, Orange County Parks and Recreation and Orange Audubon Society sponsor the event. OAS members lead nature and photography hikes as well as nature bus tours through Orlando Wetlands Park. OAS will also be selling nature-oriented merchandise including t-shirts, tote bags, and books (bring cash or checks).

OAS needs volunteers! No experience is necessary. To assist with bird watching hikes or nature bus tours, please contact Randy (407-851-5416 or [rsnyder11@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rsnyder11@cfl.rr.com)). To volunteer for AM or PM shifts at the kids' art table and/or to sell merchandise, please contact Loretta (407-886-2925 or [lns-oas@att.net](mailto:lns-oas@att.net)) or Teresa (407-644-0796 or [mwilliams@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwilliams@cfl.rr.com)).

### Special OAS Fundraising Field Trip: A Boat Ride Through Old Florida Saturday, April 7, 2012

Spend a leisurely afternoon touring the backwaters of the St. Johns River and help OAS at the same time. Captain Gary Randlett, a knowledgeable naturalist, will guide us through parts of Florida that civilization forgot—but you never will. The prolific wildlife along the way calls this home just as they did before the European settlers arrived.



This is an Orange Audubon Society (OAS) fundraising field trip. We need to know that at least 30 people will sign up for this trip before we reserve the boat. The cost is \$25/person. Please contact Danielle Ponsolle at [dponsolle@cfl.rr.com](mailto:dponsolle@cfl.rr.com) to make your reservation. Wheelchair-friendly, handicap accessible.



### OAS' BIRDS OF PREY IDENTIFICATION CLASS Lake Apopka Restoration Area February 5, 2012

Orange Audubon Society's Birds of Prey ID classes are designed to further the appreciation of raptors and to enhance a birder's ability to identify them. The final class of this program year will be held on Sunday, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area, Lust Road entrance. Class will be from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Gallus Quigley, former OAS field trip leader, will be the instructor. We would appreciate a \$5 contribution by OAS members (\$10/non-OAS members) and you need not pre-register for the class. For questions or further details, contact Gallus at 407-242-7833 or [gallusq@cfl.rr.com](mailto:gallusq@cfl.rr.com).

The Orange Audubon Society (OAS) promotes the understanding of and an interest in wildlife and the environment, recognition of the intangible values in the remaining natural beauty of Florida and the World and the responsibility for the conservation of these remaining resources.

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[www.orangeaudubonfl.org](http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org)

The **OASis** is published monthly from September through June and is sent free to all members of Orange Audubon Society.

## First Annual Lake Apopka Restoration Summit Bodes Ill for Birds

This meeting did not bode well for a comprehensive restoration of Lake Apopka. Although the Lake Apopka area is one of Florida's Special Places, an Important Bird Area, and one of the foremost birding spots in Florida, the talks and discussions at the summit focused mainly on water phosphorus (P) levels and sport fishing. Why? The regulatory agencies are duty bound to lower the P concentrations in the lake. Sport fishermen are active and lobby hard, and single-mindedly, for their cause. However, bird and nature watchers are not very active politically, at least where Lake Apopka is concerned. Few bird advocates attended the meeting even though it was widely advertised through the *OASis*, Audubon of Florida news blog and other sources (yes, meetings during the day on workdays are a problem for those of us with jobs).

Regrettably, most of the people at this event did not see the big picture and are mainly looking out for their own self-interests; therefore, a holistic long-term approach to restoring Florida's second largest lake may not occur. In fact, one proposal is to breach the dike that separates the lake and the North Shore Restoration Area (NSRA), thereby inundating much of the wetlands—where the majority of bird activity currently occurs—under about six feet of water.

Remember, over 350 species have been seen at Lake Apopka and during the 1998 Apopka-Zellwood Christmas bird count (CBC), 174 species of birds were identified, the highest species total for an inland count in the 100-year history of the annual CBC. Many of the elected officials and agency representatives do not seem to know and/or comprehend the value, both biological and economic, of this bird diversity. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, three times as many people in Florida (residents and nonresidents) participate in wildlife viewing than in freshwater fishing. Further, their data suggests that total expenditures by wildlife watchers exceed that of freshwater anglers.

A comprehensive restoration should include fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, nature viewing and other recreational activities. Lake Apopka should become a comprehensive ecotourism magnet to get people outdoors and engaged with Nature. For more information about the Lake Apopka Restoration Summit, please go to <http://floridaswater.com/lakeapopka/pdfs/>. Also, please try to attend the upcoming important public meeting—Future of the Restoration of Lake Apopka—on Wednesday, January 11th, 7:00 p.m., at Oakland Town Meeting Hall, 220 N Tubb St, Oakland FL 34760.

*Bob Stamps*

## Subject Matters in 2012 Photo Contest

The theme for the Youth, Amateur and Advanced categories of Orange Audubon Society's 2012 (24<sup>th</sup> Annual) Kit & Sidney Chertok Florida Nature Photography Contest is *Florida Native Nature*. Non-native species need not say "cheese" because the subject native (to Florida) and must not include species, humans or human artifacts.

The theme is broad—you may enter images of any of Florida's amazing native animals, plants, landscapes and habitats. This competition tests not only your skill behind the camera's lens, but also your knowledge of Florida's native species.

A species is considered native to Florida if its natural range included Florida at the time of European contact established itself in this state unaided

or if the species arrived and by man. The OAS website contains links to many resources that may assist you with plant and animal identification. To further assist you, OAS will again pre-screen all entries that are received early (by April 19, 2012) and notify early participants of any ineligible images, which can be replaced at no additional fee subject to the final deadline and other contest rules.

With a final deadline of May 17, 2012 (received by date); and OAS' jam-packed 2011 – 2012 schedule of Regular, Limited Edition, Birds of Prey and Special Field Trips (see annual brochure), you have ample time and abundant natural locales in which to encounter and photograph the real Florida.

Official entry forms (Open & Youth) containing complete contest rules are available online: [www.orangeaudubonfl.org](http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org); at Colonial Photo & Hobby, 634 N Mills Avenue, Orlando, FL; at OAS meetings; or by request to 407-644-0796 or [mwilliams@cfl.rr.com](mailto:mwilliams@cfl.rr.com).

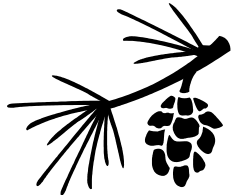
*Teresa Williams, Chair*



## Nature Journaling Field Trip - March 10, 2012

Nature journaling is a way to become more aware of the sights, sounds and impressions of the natural world. It is a way to begin a lifelong record of personal observations and impressions. In this workshop geared toward children ages 7-12 we'll hike at Orlando Wetlands Park in Christmas, FL and there will be activities incorporated into the walk that will make us have to stop, look and quietly listen. Notebooks, preferably unlined (artist spiral bound sketch pads will work fine), and pencils, or waterproof pens are required. Pack snacks, lunch and water. Bring a camera and binoculars if available, and wear closed shoes.

Parents are encouraged to enjoy walking, hiking or biking the many trails at the Wetlands Park while their children attend the workshop. Cost for the workshop is \$12 for children of members, \$20 for non-members' children. Meeting place is at the Orlando Wetlands Park Nature Center at 8:00 a.m. Trip leaders are Certified Florida Master Naturalists Cynthia and Robert Amoruso. For reservations or more information contact Robert Amoruso at 407-808-7417 or [ramoruso-oas@att.net](mailto:ramoruso-oas@att.net). You can also download an informational brochure at [www.wildscapeimages.biz/storage/natureOAS.pdf](http://www.wildscapeimages.biz/storage/natureOAS.pdf).



## First Annual Old Florida Outdoor Festival

The inaugural Old Florida Outdoor Festival will be held Feb. 10–12 and Orange Audubon Society (OAS) has a superb opportunity to get in on the ground floor of this hoped-to-be-annual event showcasing Lake Apopka and many other opportunities to enjoy nature in the Central Florida area. OAS has been asked to help lead bus wildlife tours through the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area to get people outdoors and enjoying nature. Bus tours (approx. 1½ hrs. long) will be conducted on Saturday, Feb. 11 and Sunday Feb. 12, hourly from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Tours depart from the University of Florida campus on the east shore of Lake Apopka. Shuttles will be available from the main event location after 10:00 a.m. Plans are to have Audubon volunteers and/or Nikon representatives with spotting scopes at various locations along the tour route.

The main festival event will be held at the Northwest Recreation Center in Apopka (see [www.oldfloridaoutdoorfestival.com](http://www.oldfloridaoutdoorfestival.com) for more information) and will include vendors under tent canopies and lots of instructional workshops featuring birding, kayaking, fishing, hunting, etc. Orange Audubon will have a presence there all three days with our outreach materials and, at least on Saturday and Sunday, OAS will be fundraising with our nature-oriented merchandise (adult and youth t-shirts, tote bags, signs, nestboxes, etc.).

Please consider volunteering some time in order to make this a successful event for OAS. Contact Loretta and Bob ([LNS-OAS@att.net](mailto:LNS-OAS@att.net) or 407-886-2925) for more information and to volunteer as an organizer, bus tour leader, spotting scope volunteer, outreach person, merchandise handler or a helping hand in some other capacity. Since this is the first year for this event, final details have yet to be worked out; what other ideas can you suggest as an opportunity for OAS to undertake at this event? We'd love to hear them, and have you help.

## November Limited Edition Field Trip Report

Nine birders enjoyed gorgeous weather and 50 species of birds during Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> Limited Edition Field Trip to Smyrna Dunes Park, New Smyrna Beach. Highlights included: Common Loon, Northern Gannets, a Magnificent Frigatebird, Reddish Egrets, a Spotted Sandpiper and 2 Purple Sandpipers. You may wish to join OAS' January 22<sup>nd</sup> Limited Edition Field Trip to Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Sorrento (see article on first page for details).

## Orange Audubon Society Florida Master Naturalist Program Scholarship Winners

The Scholarship Committee of Orange Audubon Society (OAS) is pleased to announce that Reinhard Geisler and Jutta Geisler have been selected as the winners of OAS's two scholarships for ½ of the \$225 tuition to attend a Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) Core Module class. FMNP is an adult education program developed by the University of Florida. The mission of the program is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Florida's natural world. For more information about FMNP see <http://www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu/about/>.

Both Reinhard and Jutta Geisler are OAS members as well as active members of the Friends of the Orlando Wetlands (FOW), a citizen support group for Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP). They both volunteer at the OWP education center hosted by FOW. Reinhard is a birder and bird photographer who has developed an excellent slide presentation that runs at the OWP education center while Jutta has developed and maintains FOW's very educational website: <http://www.orlandowetlands.org/>. Regarding FMNP, our scholarship winners, Reinhard and Jutta, have completed the Freshwater Wetlands Module and plan to take the Uplands Habitat Module in 2012.

For others that are interested in this scholarship opportunity, the committee hopes to be able to offer these OAS scholarships for FMNP courses again this year.

*Mary Keim, OAS Scholarship Committee*

### Wildlife Surveys

- Savage Christmas Creek Preserve, Pine Lily Preserve, Long Branch Preserve and Hal Scott Regional Preserve and Park (north portion) butterfly survey. For more information contact Randy Snyder or Mary Keim at 407-851-5416 or [rsnyder11@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rsnyder11@cfl.rr.com).
- Lake Apopka, North Shore Restoration Area bird surveys. Contact Pam Bowen at 386-329-4870 or [Pbowen@sjrwmd.com](mailto:Pbowen@sjrwmd.com) or Jim Peterson at 352-735-1267 or [JPeterson@sjrwmd.com](mailto:JPeterson@sjrwmd.com).
- Emerald Marsh Conservation Area bird surveys. Contact John Stenberg at 386-329-4822 or [jstenberg@sjrwmd.com](mailto:jstenberg@sjrwmd.com).
- Ferndale Preserve quarterly bird surveys. Contact Gallus Quigley, Jr. at 352-516-8512 or [gquigley@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:gquigley@lakecountyfl.gov) or [gallusq@cfl.rr.com](mailto:gallusq@cfl.rr.com).

### OAS' BIRDS OF PREY ID CLASS REPORT

Orange Audubon Society's December Birds of Prey ID class was a great success. Nearly 50 people attended and saw 77 species, not all of which were Birds of Prey, but they were exciting to see nevertheless. Raptors identified included: Red-tailed Hawk, several of which were "Pale Morphs", Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Osprey, American Kestrel, and Sharp-shinned Hawk. Some of the non-raptors identified were Horned Grebe, Snow Goose (White Morph), Song Sparrow, Green-winged Teal and Gadwall. The final ID class of this program year will be held on Sunday, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration Area, Lust Road entrance (see article on page 3 for details).

*Happy New Year from all of us at the Orange Audubon Society!  
We look forward to seeing you soon at an OAS meeting or field trip  
and afield.*

**Orange Audubon Society  
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Dominique Shimizu (13) 407-287-4078

Randy Snyder (14) 407-851-5416

Bob Stamps (12) 407-886-2925

**Calendar of Events**

**OAS EVENTS**

**February Field Trip - Orlando Wetlands Park Festival, Christmas, FL on Feb. 18, 2012, 407-851-5416. See article on Page 2.**

**Limited Edition Field Trip on Feb. 25, 2012, Shiloh Marsh Road (north end of MINWR). For trip reservations call Bob Sanders at 407-454-0542.**

**OAS' Beginner's Bird Identification - March 17, 24 & 31, 2012. Cost is \$30 for OAS members, \$45 for non-members and \$10 for 12 & under with registered adult. For trip information call Bob Sanders at 407-454-0542. For trip reservations call Teresa Williams at 407-644-0796.**

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

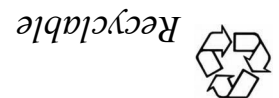
**Old Florida Festival, Apopka, FL on Feb 10-12, 2012, 407-886-2925**

**Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb 17-20, 2012 ([www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)).**

**Audubon Academy 2012, Clewiston, FL on March 16-18, 2012 [jsulek@audubon.org](mailto:jsulek@audubon.org)**

**OAS Fundraising Boat Tour, April 7, 2012, [dponsolle@cfl.rr.com](mailto:dponsolle@cfl.rr.com)**

**OAS Birdathon, April 29, 2012, 407-886-2925**



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