



"The voice of Conservation in Central Florida"

OASis



*Orange Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society and Audubon of Florida*

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This Month's Program: March 20, 2008 - 7:00pm From Black Gold to the Black Oystercatcher: Challenges and Opportunities in Alaska by Taldi Walter

Called "America's Serengeti" for its tremendous biological productivity and diversity, the coastal plain of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most intact and untouched ecosystems in America. Although federally protected since 1960, the debate over drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge rages on. Many other natural treasures of Alaska, set aside decades ago for the benefit of the American people, are also threatened, including the Tongass National Forest, Chugach National Forest, and National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. For our March program, National Audubon's Alaska Field Coordinator Taldi Walter will provide a glimpse at these magnificent places. She will inform us about specific threats and conservation efforts we can support.

Deborah Green, Vice President

March Field Trip - Rock Springs Run State Reserve

On Saturday, March 22nd, OAS will visit Rock Springs Run State Reserve near Sorrento. This property, on the west side of the Wekiva River, provides important habitat for the threatened Florida Black Bear. We will hike about three miles through oak hammock and sandhill communities. For more information about this 14,000 acre park see: www.floridastateparks.org/rockspringsrun/default.cfm

Meet at 7:30 am in the Publix parking lot on SR 46 about 0.5 mi west of I-4. Bring \$2.00 per vehicle park admission fee, drink, lunch (for after our hike), sun protection, insect protection and birding gear. If you have questions about our trip, call us at 407-851-5416.

Mary Keim and Randy Snyder
Field Trip Committee

February Field Trip Report MARY KEIM, FIELD TRIP CHAIR

Ten OAS birders enjoyed a visit to Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge on March 1st. The group observed at least 54 bird species including American Bittern, Pied-billed Grebe, Glossy Ibis, Blue-winged Teal, Black Vulture (hopping down the road), Sandhill Crane (nesting), Sora (12), Forster's Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Savannah Sparrow. Other vertebrates included Green Anole and American Alligator.

Lily, Vetch, Canada Toadflax, Lyre-leaf Sage, Southern Fleabane, Purple Thistle, and Seaside Goldenrod. The Red Maples had showy red samara. Butterflies included Palamedes Swallowtail, Phaon Crescent, Red Admiral, White Peacock, and Long-tailed Skipper. For those that have not been to Lake Woodruff, many of the wildlife species are accustomed to human visitors and are relatively easy to approach. It was a beautiful day to be outside.

Wildflowers in bloom included String

Orange Audubon Society meetings are free to the public and held on the 3rd Thursday of every month (Sept - June) at 7:00pm in the Camellia Room at

*Harry P. Leu Gardens
1920 North Forest Avenue
Orlando, FL 32803-1537*

For directions, call 407-246-2620

Education Update GAYE SMITH, EDUCATION CHAIR

Seventeen teachers have now joined the Audubon Adventures program, with teachers at Conway Middle School and Moss Park Elementary being the latest additions. Orange Audubon brochures continue to be distributed to elementary and middle public schools. With the 25 pack of brochures is a letter of invitation to interested science teachers to participate in Audubon Adventures and a listing of current field trip offerings that are available to interested students and teachers. In the coming month, these packets will be given to some of the private and parochial schools in the area.

We have recently networked the Audubon Adventure teachers so that we can email each one to advise of opportunities and resources for environmental and wildlife education that have come to our attention. The first communication was on the Orlando Wetlands Festival. Since the event had to be cancelled because of bad weather, a subsequent notice will be sent to encourage teachers to promote and recommend the park to their classes because of education facilities the park offers as well as field experience for a rich variety of wildlife. As additional resources come to our attention the information will be sent on. The purpose is to expand our education program to include increasing avenues of exposure to environmental awareness for students in Orange County.

Limited Edition Field Trip

The next Limited Edition Field Trip is scheduled for March 15th. The destination is the Shilo Marsh area of Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Shilo Marsh Road begins near the north end of the refuge and winds for about 16 miles along the east shore of the Indian River. Expect good numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, and interesting raptors. This field trip will last longer than most. Participants should expect to devote most of their day to this outing. Field trip is limited to ten (10) people and there is a \$10.00 fee. Reservations are required and will be taken beginning March 8th. For more information contact: Bob Sanders 407-766-5490.

SAVE THE DATE!!

Audubon Center for Birds of Prey invites you to the Annual Baby Owl Shower

Saturday, May 10, 2008 [10:00am-2:00pm]

Join us for a day of educational opportunities and activities to celebrate Mother's day and spring! Admission to the Center that day is free with a "baby gift" that is used in caring for these young raptors. More details to come. Please contact the Center for additional information 407-644-0190.

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

<http://www.orangeaudubonfl.org>

Bird of Prey ID Class Report

On February 9th ten enthusiastic birders attended the final Bird of Prey ID Class for this season at the Lake Apopka Restoration Area. Including the vultures, nine species of raptors were observed. Although nothing unusual or rare was seen, the extraordinary number of Red-tailed Hawks (50+) afforded the class many opportunities to examine the variety of plumage differences including: immatures and adults; lightly and heavily marked birds; and an adult Krider's type. Good numbers of Northern Harriers, Red-shouldered Hawks, and American Kestrels were also seen plus an active eagle's nest. Other highlights: Am. White Pelican, Black-crowned Night Heron, and Western Kingbird.

I would like to thank Orange Audubon for the opportunity to lead these classes, all members and guests who attended, and, our host, the St. Johns River Water Management District. It was a pleasure. Let's do it again next year!

Bob Sanders

Too Wet for Wetlands Festival!!

Who would have believed it? Certainly not those who came out early to set up for the 9th annual Orlando Wetlands Park (OWP) Festival, co-sponsored since its inception by Orange Audubon Society (OAS). Officially scheduled to start at 9:00am on Saturday, February 23rd, a few festival participants were able to participate in some early activities — sunrise photo hike and a nature hike or two — but most vendors and exhibitors stood around waiting for the inevitable cancellation of the event. That word came shortly after 8:00am. Orange Audubon organizers then tried to reach our volunteers before they made the long drive (at least for some) to OWP in Christmas, FL. After contacting as many volunteers as possible, and having several more turned away as they were attempting to turn north off of SR 50, a few of us were treated to an impromptu birding/nature hike — led by our very own field trip committee. We observed nearly 50 species of birds, including Purple Gallinule, Purple Martin, Bald Eagle, Savannah Sparrow, Anhinga, Belted Kingfisher, and Green Heron, as well as a few butterflies, including Dainty Sulphur, White Peacock, and Cloudless Sulphur. It was a fun hike. Our thanks to Mary & Randy.

Additional thanks to the people who responded to my request for help with our merchandise sales and the conservation/education/kids' art tables. We hope since we couldn't contact all of you, that you at least had an enjoyable drive early on Saturday morning. Thanks to Cyndi Kay, Gaye Smith, Chris Gandy, Michele Greco, Ayme Smith, Danielle Ponsolle, Claire Hilliker, Leesa Sward, Richard Poole, Christine Brown and Teresa Williams for responding to the volunteer-request article in last month's OASis. Without your responses, we couldn't have planned to participate in this annual event.

Unfortunately, because of cancellation of the festival — one of our primary fundraisers — we may need to add some other event to our schedule to make up the revenue shortfall. Please keep your eyes open for further requests for assistance as we attempt to participate in some 'replacement' activity (besides the already scheduled Center for Birds of Prey's Baby Owl Shower, Saturday, May 10th and the probable Magnolia Park Bluegrass Festival, Saturday, April 26th) in order to meet our budgetary requirements. We truly appreciate your help.

Loretta Satterthwaite

Butterfly Identification Course

Orange Audubon Society is sponsoring a field course on Butterfly Identification. The 7.5-hour course (3 sessions of 2½ hours each) is being offered on **Saturdays**, May 3, 10, 24 from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm. This course will involve field observation and identification of butterflies at Orlando Wetlands Park and Seminole Ranch Conservation Area in east Orange County. Instructors will be Orange Audubon members Randy Snyder and Mary Keim.

Fees for Audubon members (\$25) and non-members (\$40) are payable in advance by check or money order to Orange Audubon Society (OAS). Non-members may join the Audubon Society when they register to enjoy the reduced member rate. Pay \$45, which includes class registration (member price \$25) and an introductory, annual 3-way membership in Orange Audubon and National Audubon Societies and Audubon of Florida (promotional rate \$20).

The class is limited to the first twenty (20) to register and will be offered to the general public on March 21st. Reserve your spot by contacting Teresa Williams (407-644-0796 or mwilliams@cfl.rr.com); then mail **one check payable to Orange Audubon Society** along with your name, address, phone and e-mail information (if joining OAS, include your new member application form) to ORANGE AUDUBON SOCIETY. Note on check "Butterfly Field Course" and mail to: OAS Butterfly Course, PO Box 941142, Maitland, FL 32794-1142. Registration deadline (receipt date) is April 25th. For a membership application or to learn more about Orange Audubon Society visit our official website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org.

Recommended field guide is *Butterflies through Binoculars: Florida* by Glassberg, Minno, and Calhoun, 2000, Oxford Univ. Also recommended are close-focusing (6 ft. or less) binoculars. Eagle Optics Ranger SRT 8x32 (www.eagleoptics.com/index.asp?pid=4699), for example, has a minimum focus of 3 feet. See www.birds.cornell.edu/Publications/LivingBird/winter2005/Age_Binos.html for other binocular suggestions.

Meet at the Orlando Wetlands Park parking area on Wheeler Rd. in Christmas, FL at 2:30 pm. For more information call 407-851-5416.

Orange Audubon's March Madness

It's March and you know what that means — time for the Orange Audubon Society's (OAS) nominating committee to come up with a slate for the annual election, which is held during the business section of the April general meeting.

This year, not only 5 board member's 3-year terms, but also the five officer's 2-year terms expire at the end of the June general meeting (potluck dinner, Chertok awards, and silent auction). This provides ample opportunity for you to "ask not what OAS can do for you, but what can **you** do **for** OAS?"

For those of you who are 'afraid' to venture into this realm of volunteerism, you may wish to attend the Audubon Academy, a fun-filled weekend (April 4–6) in Vero Beach sponsored by Audubon of Florida and intended to excite your interest and give you ideas about how to get involved to help 'save' what's left in your corner of the world. Registration for the academy is only \$25 (food and field trips not included) and information may be obtained at www.audubonofflorida.org. The point being that Audubon — your local chapter, current and previous board members, and both the state and national organizations — are here to help you succeed in serving your chapter. There are numerous resources available to those of you who have yet to 'take that first step' towards volunteering and feeling fulfilled for having done so.

If you would like to be more involved and help give direction to your Audubon chapter, please consider serving on the board in some capacity. For information regarding responsibilities of board members, or to place your name in nomination, please contact one of the committee members: Bob Sanders (procrow@bellsouth.net or 407-766-5490), Loretta Satterthwaite (LNS-OAS@att.net or 407-886-2925), or Dick Smith (RLS-OAS@earthlink.net or 407-257-7361). Thank you for calling. We appreciate your willingness to share the responsibility.

Loretta Satterthwaite, Nominating Committee Chair

Photo Contest Deadline

Reminder

Participants in Orange Audubon Society's 2007 (20th Annual) Kit & Sidney Chertok Nature Photography Contest are reminded of two important deadlines. As a courtesy and to enhance the educational value of the contest, entries received by April 17, 2008 will be pre-screened for compliance with contest rules and participants notified as soon as possible thereafter of any that are disqualified. These entries may be replaced at no additional cost, but must meet all other contest rules/requirements and be post-marked by the final deadline, May 15, 2008.

Entry forms containing complete contest rules are available at all future OAS meetings, at CPH, 634 N. Mills Avenue, Orlando and on OAS' website: www.orangeaudubonfl.org (download and print entry forms using free Adobe Acrobat Reader© software).

Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair

Fort DeSoto Field Trip on April 25 - 26

The Fort DeSoto Park Field Trip to St. Petersburg is scheduled for April 25-26, 2008. Arrangements have been made for us to stay at the Continuing Education Center at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg on Friday night, April 25th. This will allow us to get an early start for birding on Saturday morning. Plan to join us for this premier birding experience during spring migration.

Each room has two double beds. The cost is \$90.00 for a room with one person or \$100.00 for a room with two people. Anyone who has other accommodations in the area may join us on Saturday morning for a cost of \$10.00 per person.

The initial response was very good, but we still have a few rooms available. Please make your reservation by March 20th, the date of our next meeting. We can take later reservations if there are still rooms available.

Payment is due by April 11th, but a full refund will be provided if you need to cancel until April 22nd. Payment information and other details will be sent to everyone who makes a reservation.

If you plan to go to Fort DeSoto please sign up at the meeting on March 20th or contact Ted or Gaye Smith at 407- 249-3969 or smith_ted_gaye@bellsouth.net.

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Calendar of Events

March 1, 2008 - Saturday

LARA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870/pbowen@sjrwm.com

March 8, 2008 - Saturday

Little Big Econ S.F. - Joshua Creek Track Bird Survey
Lorne Malo 407-349-2536/407-659-4853(w)

March 15, 2008 - Saturday

Mead Gardens Bird Survey; 8:00am-10:00am.
Dexter Richardson 407-760-8193
dex@dexwine.com

March 15, 2008 - Saturday

Limited Edition Field Trip - Shilo Marsh
Bob Sanders 407-766-5490/procrow@bellsouth.net

March 20, 2008 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.
OAS Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Dick Smith 407-257-7361

March 22, 2008 - Saturday

OAS Field Trip - Rock Springs Run State Reserve
Mary Keim & Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

March 29, 2007 - Saturday

Seminole Ranch (North) Butterfly Survey.
Mary Keim & Randy Snyder 407-851-5416

April 5, 2008 - Saturday

LARA Bird Survey; 7:30am-Noon.
Pam Bowen 386-329-4870/pbowen@sjrwm.com

April 17, 2008 - Thursday

General Meeting, 7:00pm, Leu Gardens.
OAS Board Meeting takes place prior to the
General Meeting at 5:30pm. All welcome.
Dick Smith 407-257-7361

May 10, 2008 - Saturday

Baby Owl Shower, 10:00am-2:00pm
Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, Maitland
407-644-0190

Chertok Nature Photo Contest Update

In 2004 Colonial Photo & Hobby (CPH), Orlando became co-sponsor of OAS' Kit & Sidney Chertok Nature Photography Contest by donating prizes to 1st through 3rd place winners. To honor excellent nature photography and promote the competition, CPH expanded its role in 2006 by selecting several winning images to be enlarged and featured in its retail location's front window and interior displays.

This year CPH has selected ten images from the 2007 winners to grace the front window, in rotation, now through May 17th. If you attended the 2007 awards presentation of all qualifying entries, you know that excellent photography did not stop with images selected by the judges to win. Attendees from CPH agreed. Therefore, to recognize the overall quality of the competition, promote nature photography and honor other exceptional photographer/participants, CPH has also selected ten entries at large from the 2007 competition to be featured in rotation within the store.

Orange Audubon Society is grateful to all the photographers who support its annual contest/program by competing; to Colonial Photo & Hobby for its continued, expanding sponsorship; and to its contest committee for annually contributing their time to bring a quality program to you. Teresa Williams, CNPC Chair

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