



The Limpkin Call

The newsletter of the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, a chapter of Audubon Florida and the National Audubon Society and a not-for-profit organization.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As you know, my personal goal for Oklawaha Valley Audubon is to make Lake County a mecca for nature lovers by being the best advocates for the protection of land, water, and wildlife. I want to thank the newly, and early, seated board members for all of their help in creating a strategic plan that will help make sure my goal is achieved. (The strategic plan is almost complete; I can't wait for you all to see it!)

I am very excited to announce that throughout the year you will see many more goal-oriented programs and field trips focusing on:

- (1) Working Lands: The quality of wildlife habitat on government and privately managed lands in Lake County and the region.
- (2) Water and Coasts: Water quality and water flows in the watersheds of the Oklawaha and St. Johns rivers, and the lakes, wetlands, springs, and aquifers in Lake County and the region.
- (3) Wildlife-Friendly Communities: Engaging and encouraging the local community to ensure that there are wildlife-friendly habitats created and maintained throughout the region, commercially and in our own backyards.
- (4) Climate and Coasts: Energy conservation in homes, workplaces, and communities; and advocate for the reduction of greenhouse gases.

With these goals in mind, there is an awesome event that will help us reach our goals: the "Festival of Flight and Flowers". Planning has already begun for October 11-13. The FREE festival will be on Saturday, October 12, 2019, 10am – 3pm, at the Eustis Community Center and will be surrounded by field trips on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We will have a raffle this year, so if you all can help us collect gift certificates from some of your favorite merchants and restaurants that would be wonderful!! (I have a donation request letter if you need one.)

Oklawaha Valley Audubon is your organization and the board wants to organize things that are of interest to you. If there are any topics or field trips you are interested in and would like to see OVAS organize, please let me know. Call Lori at 352-432-8866. Or email president@oklawaha-valley-audubon.org.

Please click on the question to give Lori your answer ... [If we were to have a contest, what prize would make you want to participate?](#)

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that our new FY begins on July 1 and dues for FY2019-2020 should be remitted at the beginning of the FY.

Thank you all again for your guiding me with your input and experiences.

It's all for the birds,
Lori



Male Painted Bunting photographed by Alex Vigh during our Lunch on the Lawn birding event at Pine Meadows Conservation Area and Stu Anderson's house on March 7, 2019.

OVAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lori Patterson, President
Lavon Silvernell, 1st Vice President
vacant, 2nd Vice President
Stacey Kelly, Treasurer
Judy McAuley, Secretary
Sherry Chester, Director
Andrea League, Director
Peg Lindsay, Director
Judy Knizner, Director
Lisa Sonietz, Director
vacant, Director

On July 1, the beginning of our new FY, Alex Chester will become Treasurer and Stacey Kelly will become a Director.

COMING EVENTS - Programs

All Programs are at 2:00 pm on the first Sunday of the month, September through June, at Trout Lake Nature Center, Eustis, unless otherwise noted

"Birds and Their Habitat in the Seminole State Forest: Management Challenges and Successes"

Sunday, May 5, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.



Most Birders know that if they want to spot scrub jays they need to visit an area with low growing oaks and few or no tall trees. Those birds have specific habitat needs. While not all species are so habitat specific, all species need food, water, and shelter in the correct configuration. Just acquiring land and protecting it from development won't necessarily meet those needs over time. It takes active

land management, to maintain a healthy forest. Biologist Ralph Risch with Seminole State forest is one of those people tasked to maintain the diversity of habitat needed to protect the plants and animals that thrive there.

Ralph will use the stories of 5 avian species (Florida scrub-jays, Bachman's sparrow, South Eastern American Kestrel, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and Florida Sandhill Cranes) to tell the story of the work that goes into maintaining the varied habitats within the 27,540 acres of Seminole State Forest protecting those species and many others.

"Falling in Love with Butterflies" **Sunday, June 2, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.**

Stacey Kelly, began snapping photographs at an early age. As her skills in photography advanced, she found her camera frequently aimed at butterflies. Photographing living butterflies is a challenging undertaking. It must be done outdoors, under varied light conditions and with a target that is seldom still. And equally as challenging can be labeling the Lepidoptera you capture in the photo, as well as the flower it may be perched upon. But, working on both makes you a better photographer and a better naturalist.

Whether you just enjoy pretty pictures, you want to work on butterfly ID, or learn more about the plants that will bring butterflies close to photo and admire, you will find this program a pleasant and informative way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



Call for Missing History

We are compiling OVAS's history and digitizing it for safekeeping. Remarkably, we have archived nearly all the annual brochures (since 1970) and newsletters (since 1984), but we are missing a few. If you still possess any of the following, please allow us to borrow them to be scanned. Contact Sherry Chester (epperlychester@gmail.com) to arrange the loan.

OVAS Program/Field Trip brochures
1997-1998
2016-2017

Limpkin Call newsletters
Vol. VII, No. 3 Oct 1990
Vol. XXV, No. 3 Jan/Feb 2010
Vol. XXV, No. 4 Mar/Apr 2010

In addition, we have scanned all our scrapbooks, but there were none after 2000. We've received some photos from 2008-present. If you have any photos of OVAS members doing anything OVAS-related 2001-2007, or newspaper clippings about OVAS for 2001-present, please send them to Sherry.



Baby Birds! Great Egret chicks (top) photographed during OVAS' Gatorland field trip on March 23, 2019 and a Limpkin chick (bottom) photographed at Sweetwater Wetlands Park during the field trip to the Paynes Prairie Preserve on April 20, 2019. Both photos are by Stacey Kelly.

COMING EVENTS - Field Trips

Field Trips are subject to change due to weather or other circumstances. Please contact the trip leader to confirm a space and for more information, including carpooling instructions. For most trips you will need outdoor shoes, insect repellent, sunscreen, a hat, raingear or jacket, binoculars (of course), water, and a snack or lunch. We suggest a donation of \$10/adult for each field trip for OVAS members and \$15/adult for non-members; children are free. Actual costs, such as entry fees, etc., are separate, and are noted in each write-up. Hope you can make them! Check our website for updated information and to register.

The Disney Wilderness Preserve Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The Nature Conservancy's Disney Wilderness Preserve is a remarkable place for all ages and interest. The preserve is home to hundreds of wildlife species. Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers and Florida Scrub Jays call this preserve home, and we hope we will get a glimpse of these special birds. The preserve is bordered by one of the last remaining undeveloped lakes in Central Florida.

We are going on an off-road buggy tour and a small hike on a tour guided by Daniel Cole. In addition, a presentation will be given by a preserve scientist. We will learn about the preserve's resident plants and animals and the Conservancy's efforts to restore and protect them. Please bring snacks or a bagged lunch.

Cost: The buggy is limited to 20 persons, at a cost of \$200 (\$10/person if group size is 20). Donations to OVAS are recommended; pre-registration is required.

Carpooling may be available, if needed. Meet at Winn Dixie near TLNC (corner of SR 19 and CR 44, Eustis) at 7:45 a.m. or meet at 9:15 a.m. at the Preserve (2700 Scrub Jay Trail Kissimmee, Florida). It is a 1.5 hour drive.

Contact: Stacey Kelly s.heinemann2019@gmail.com (352) 408-2901.



St. Augustine Alligator Farm and Zoological Park Saturday, May 18, 2019 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



It is nesting season at St Augustine Alligator Farm and Zoological Park, and it is in full swing. In May there are chicks of every species in the rookery at this time, but still displaying from all species with the exception of the wood storks. Green heron chicks hatching out within the park. The Great egret and stork chicks are giant. There are chicks of every size from every species. Many species still continuing to display. The wading bird rookery is only a small part of the park. There are other shows and exhibits such as Alligator, Birds of Africa and Exotic Birds and Mammals, Reptiles, Crocodiles.

Carpooling may be available, if needed. Meet at Winn Dixie near TLNC (corner of SR 19 and CR 44, Eustis) at 6:45 a.m. for a departure of 7:00 AM. OR meet at 8:45 a.m. at the St Augustine Alligator Farm and Zoological Park (999 Anastasia Blvd St Augustine, Florida). The drive is 1.75 hr.

Cost: approximately \$40 for entry fee, lunch, and OVAS donation:

The entrance fee should be \$18.19 (includes a 30% discount for a group size of 10+) and lunch is \$10.95. A donation to OVAS is recommended. A menu will be sent to everyone who has registered to choose what they would like for lunch. We are pre-ordering to help with any dietary needs etc., and so they can prepare lunch for us in a timely manner to be served.

If enough people are interested, we possibly can arrange a behind the scenes tour for an additional \$10.00.

This is a photographers dream... If you are a photographer there is a photography pass that allows entry into the park an hour before the park opens to the general public. The price is steep \$74.95 for 2 days and this is from 8:00 AM until Sunset. There is a year pass of \$109.95

There may be an overnight option for staying Friday night for those interested. I will be looking into this and sharing information as I compile my research for places to stay and prices.

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Little Big Econ State Forest Saturday, June 8, 2019 7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lorne Malo, a knowledgeable and experienced guide, will lead this combination birding, botany, and butterfly hike into the Little Big Econ State Forest. The hike will take the group through pastureland, sandhills and flatwoods and holds out the possibility of seeing a wide variety of birds—including Bachman's Sparrows, Brown-headed Nuthatches, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and Eastern Meadowlarks. Past butterfly surveys have identified Cloudywing, Cerulean Blue, Southern Pearly, Checkered White and Pipevine Swallowtails. Many different wildflowers are possible too.

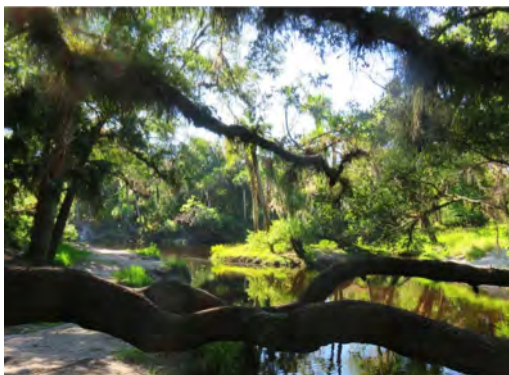
The Little Big Econ State Forest flanks the Econlockhatchee River. There are more than 5,000 acres of upland and cypress swamps with tall bluffs and river tributaries.

The hike of up to three miles is rated at easy to moderate. Remember to bring a bag lunch, water, hat, sunscreen, bug spray, binoculars and camera. Please wear close-toe shoes.

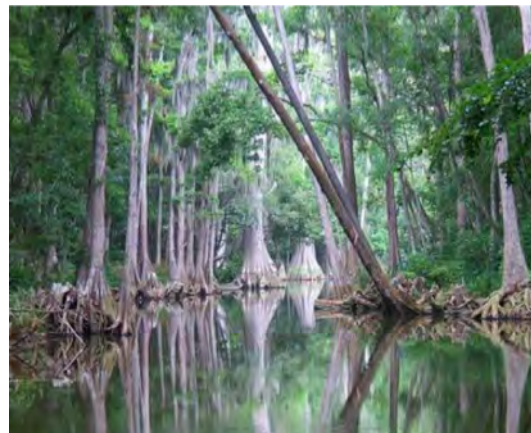
Meeting place: Carpooling may be available, if needed. Meet at Winn Dixie near TLNC (corner of SR 19 and CR 44, Eustis) at 6:15 am OR meet at 7:30 am at 1350 Snow Hill Road, Geneva.

Cost: \$5, plus recommended donation to OVAS: \$10 for Audubon members; \$15 for non-members. Reservations are required.

Contact: Stacey Kelly s.heinemann2019@gmail.com
(352) 408-2901.



Lake Dora and Dora Canal Boat Trip Wednesday, June 12, 2019 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.



This two-hour narrated eco-tour of Lake Dora and the Dora Canal includes a brief history of Mount Dora and the Harris Chain of Lakes. Eagles, ospreys and various water birds may be spotted as we cross Lake Dora. The first part of the Dora Canal was dug by hand and is the residential section. Beyond this section, the natural river winds its way through the jungle-like environment of a cypress swamp. Meandering through the 2,000-year-old trees provides opportunities to search for herons, egrets, anhingas, turtles, alligators and the small birds that live along the canal.

Following the tour, the group can lunch at any of Mount Dora's restaurants or bring a bag lunch on board the pontoon boat. A cooler can be brought on board. Water, sunscreen, bug spray, binoculars and camera are recommended. Please wear close-toe shoes.

Meeting place: Premier Boat Tours, 100 Alexander Street, Mount Dora.

Cost: \$28, plus recommended donation to OVAS: \$10 for Audubon members; \$15 for non-members. Reservations are required.

Contact: Stacey Kelly s.heinemann2019@gmail.com
(352) 408-2901.



Gatorland Adventure field trip, March 23, 2019

COMING EVENTS - Field Trip / Fundraiser



The Second Annual, Festival of Flight and Flowers October 11-13, 2019

If you are interested in helping the environment, conserving what we have and helping the birds, then we could use your help.

Returning again this year, the Festival of Flight and Flowers will be focusing on the need to conserve and restore natural ecosystems in and around Lake County Florida, and we, the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, will be energizing and engaging all generations by bringing more awareness of Real Florida.

Our vision, as you know, is to help the world be a place in which people and wildlife thrive. We are doing this by doing our part to protect birds, wildlife, and the places they need throughout Lake County and the region using science, advocacy, and conservation. The Festival of Flight and Flowers is part of our plan to make this a reality!

We can use your help if you ...

- have high resolution images we can use on our website and marketing materials
- have ideas for expert presentation topics
- are able to spend a couple of hours with us on October 12, 2019
- know fellow conservationists, birders, nature lovers
- can help spread the word about the festival to your network of friends and colleagues
- know experts who love to share their expertise
- know journalists who could write about the festival

This is your event! Please contact someone on your OVAS board and let us know any ideas you have.



OVAS members birding at Green Isle Gardens (above) before taking advantage of the native plant sale/fundraiser (below) on March 30, 2019.



OVAS Birders on field trip to Lower Wekiva Springs, April 7, 2019.

NEWS FROM CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (RCC)

On Sunday, April 7, members of the Central Florida RCC met to discuss issues of regional concern.

Charles Lee, Audubon Florida staff advisor to our RCC, provided a report prepared by Audubon Florida's policy staff showing current bills where AF has at least a casual interest. Audubon Florida is focusing on Florida Senate President Galvano's bill to fund three new major toll roads (SB7068.) AF policy staff members are working with the legislature to include the same environmental protections as are included in the Wekiva Parkway project; i.e.: rigorous study regarding need, impact on the community and natural habitats.

At the time of our meeting Governor DeSantis had recommended \$100 million for Florida Forever. However, only \$45 million was included in the Senate version of the budget.

A large portion of Conlin/Lake X property will go under easement through the operation of a new mitigation bank. This will help the Kirchman Trust monetize the property without any loss to conservation and help prevent the property falling into developers' hands. The property remains high on the Florida Forever priority list and still must be purchased to ensure it remains undeveloped.

These are just a few of the many conservation issues being monitored by Audubon Florida and/or the local chapters in central Florida.

We encourage a representative from every chapter to attend our next meeting scheduled for Sunday, October 6, at [Audubon Center for Birds of Prey](#), 1101 Audubon Way, Maitland, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Paula Wehr
Central Florida Chapters Representative
Audubon Florida Board of Directors



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Mr Apopka Update

In July 2017, a Swallow-tailed Kite was taken to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey for rehabilitation. It had been found disoriented in the Altamonte Springs area. It later was moved to the Avian Reconditioning Center for flight conditioning, along with two other kites. Avian Research and Conservation Institute outfitted Apopka with a transmitter and released him July 29th, along with the two other rehabilitated kites. He was dubbed "Apopka," after his release site (Lake Apopka North Shore). DNA testing later determined Apopka was a male. ARCI tracked Mr. Apopka southward to Brazil and then back to the Altamonte area.

In 2018 Apopka did not seem to nest, but spent the summer season in the Altamonte Springs area. He moved to a pre-migration gathering area on the St. Johns River where he prepared for migration for almost a month. He left south on migration through the Florida Peninsula on August 11, 2018, and spent a night in Cuba before landing on the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico. From there, he continued his southbound route to Rondonia, Brazil where he had a very defined wintering range. This is a very similar area to where he spent winter 2017/18. He was in Rondonia from September 27, 2018 to February 2, 2019.

He started back north early February, making his way through the Amazon, over the Andes mountains, and, in 2 days, safely crossed the Gulf of Mexico. From the northern Yucatán Peninsula the winds took him directly north to Gulfport, MS. He spent a day there before heading east and back to his summer grounds near Altamont Springs. He arrived there on April 7th. At this point it does not appear that he has settled into nesting. ARCI will keep watching the GPS locations to see if he does.

Mr. Apopka's travels February 2- April 26, 2019. Information and graphic were provided courtesy of Gina Kent, ARCI.



RENEW YOUR AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP NOW

OVAS local chapter membership renewals are due at the beginning of each Fiscal Year/Program Year (July 1 - June 30). If you join OVAS on a local basis, chapter membership per household is \$15, which supports your local chapter. Go to <https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org/> and click on Membership and pay with PayPal, or use the renewal form below and mail your check to OVAS, PO Box 268, Eustis, FL 32727. You also may pay for your membership at the monthly programs with cash or check. You will receive OVAS newsletters.

If you wish to renew your membership on a national basis, go to www.audubon.org, click on Renew, and pay with a credit card (\$20 per person). Be sure to include your zip code so that you will be assigned to OVAS, your local chapter. Part of your National membership dues (\$2.50) will be applied to our local chapter and you will receive: (1) Annual membership with the National Audubon Society as well as with Audubon Florida and Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society; (2) National's *Audubon* magazine; (3) Audubon Florida *Naturalist* magazine; (3) OVAS newsletters. National memberships need to be renewed on the anniversary of your joining.

Membership is not a requirement to attend or participate in the OVAS programs or field trips.

OVAS Membership Application

New _____ Renewal _____ Today's Date _____

Print Name _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail Address(es) _____

Phone number(s) _____

Committee that you would be willing to volunteer assistance:

_____ Citizen Science Committee- help organize or participate in the annual Emeralds Christmas bird count, monthly bird counts, monitor local rookeries, and /or record field trip reports data

_____ Fundraising Committee – Assist with Donation box, 50:50, boat rides, raffles, special event

_____ Hospitality Committee – Help with refreshments for membership meetings and 2 potlucks

_____ Membership Committee – membership and e-mail list, new name tags, sign-in book

_____ Conservation Committee - attend public meetings, help write letters to legislators

_____ Outreach Committee - Set up display at events, maintain bulletin board at TLNC, advertise events in newspapers/internet

_____ Digital Communications Committee - website, e-mail blasts, Facebook and social media

_____ Newsletter Committee - bi-monthly electronic newsletter and OVAS brochures

OVAS is a Florida Not-for-Profit Corporation

<https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Oklawaha-Valley-Audubon-Society>



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