



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.

Published a minimum of four times a year.

PO Box 268, Eustis, FL 32727-0268

<https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org/>

OklawahaAudubon@gmail.com

VOLUME XXXV

November-December 2018

Number 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wow, what a whirlwind the last month or so has been. The final planning of the "Festival of Flight and Flowers" zoomed by and before we knew it, the weekend was here.



October 12 started with a well-attended Winged Migration Hike at Ferndale Preserve and ended with Butterfly Hike at Rock Springs Run, and in between there was even a kayak trip!

A flurry of activity took over Fountain Green Park at 7am October 13, with trucks entering, unloading and exiting the park. People were everywhere setting up tents, preparing food, displaying

their wares and putting the birds on their perches and releasing the butterflies in their screen enclosure! The day closed with a Meet 'n Greet at 1884 with Greg Miller (movie made) and Yve Nagy Morrell (761 birds), two incredible birders who committed 12 months of their lives to completing a Big Year! Wow, the stories they told.

October 14 rounded out the weekend with a very well attended North Shore/Clay Island Driving Tour, and even a fun Pokemon Go and Birding Hike.

Overall the inaugural "Festival of Flight and Flowers" was a huge success, all who attended had a great time and are looking forward to next year. If you couldn't make it out this year, be sure not miss next year. Mark your calendars for October 11-14, 2019.

The Audubon Assembly took place October 19-20, in West Palm Beach. For those of you who are not aware, the assembly is the annual meeting for Audubon Florida chapters and it is where grassroots leaders from around the state join Audubon's professional staff and partners to grow their knowledge and skills to protect Florida's precious natural resources. This year, Stacey Kelly and I attended to absorb some of this knowledge and share it with you all when we return.

ALSO ... at the assembly OVAS was nominated for Chapter of the Year for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, we came in a close second, and are slated to be nominated again next year. This is a great honor and a testimony to the hard work and many changes that OVAS underwent over the past year, and the hard work yet to come.

Thank you all for your support, especially with the transition of Jim and Linda Kochanowski moving and me stepping in as interim president. I look forward to working with you to keep up the momentum and reach my goal to make Lake County a mecca for nature lovers, by being the best advocates for the protection of land, water, and wildlife.

We have some surprises coming up for you all in next several months, so keep your eyes on the website calendar (<https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org/events/>), Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OklawahaValleyAudubonSociety/>), email blasts, and the newsletter for updates and details of special upcoming OVAS programs and events.

It's all for the birds,
Lori Patterson, OVAS President

Sunday, December 2, 2018 at 1:00 pm Holiday Luncheon with our Environmental Friends

OVAS will host our traditional holiday luncheon at Trout Lake Nature Center with our friends from Lake Beautyberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society and Trout Lake Nature Center. We will begin at 1 pm with a potluck buffet and ask that each guest bring a holiday dish to share. We will provide drinks and table settings. Following lunch we will present the 2018 Lake County Conservationist of the Year award.

We will have a fund raising raffle again. Clyde and Phyllis Stephens did a great job coordinating the raffle last year and graciously have agreed to do it again this year. They are seeking quality unwrapped donations of bird/nature items for the raffle – bring them to our November program meeting or arrange to get them to the Stephens (352-343-6468); you also may bring items the day of the luncheon. Tickets will be on sale the day of the luncheon.

We also **need volunteers to assist with set up** (be there at noon) and clean up. We hope you will join us. If you have any questions call Lavon at 352 223 4761.



COMING EVENTS - Programs

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

Sunday, November 4, 2018 at 2:00 pm
“The Dragonflies of Lake County”

Peg Lindsay is a long-time birder, and a talented photographer; perhaps it was these two interests that caused her to turn her interest to Odonata, dragonflies and damselflies. As a photographer she found herself researching the name of that iridescent blue creature whose image she had captured. As a birder, who somewhat obsessively counted every bird species she saw, even on a trip to the grocery store, she soon found herself naming and listing dragonflies. But as with any species there is more to dragonflies than naming them and Peg began to learn which dragonfly would be found skimming over a lake and which dragonfly would be found near clean flowing water. The logical next step is to share what she has learned. So if you attend this program beware, you may become addicted to Dragonfly Watching too.



Sunday, January 6, 2019 at 2:00 pm
“May All Your Blues be Birds”



Bluebirds are among the favorite backyard visitors. With their striking colors, musical voices and gentle habits, who wouldn't want to welcome these beauties into the backyard? Faith Jones' (Florida Bluebird Society, Inc.) program includes information about bluebirds, their history in America, and some of the challenges they face. It also includes information you need to know before putting up a nest box, how to install a nest box, and what to anticipate if you have a nest box.

www.floridabluebirdsociety.org
floridabluebirdsociety@gmail.com

Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 6:30 pm
“Birding in Iberia”

(NOTE THIS IS NOT OUR REGULAR DAY AND TIME FOR PROGRAMS)

João Jara is in the country to attend the Space Coast Birding Festival. He has agreed to come talk about Birding in Iberia and we are delighted. This will be a photographic presentation with an emphasis on why the Iberia Peninsula is such a special region in Europe and in the world, from the birds and wildlife point of view (including several endemic bird species). Other than nature, there are also numerous other interesting facets to explore in this fascinating region. He also will talk about some of the practical aspects, should you plan a visit.

Birds & Nature Tours Portugal
(+351) 913 299 990
joao.jara@birds.pt



European Bee-eaters, *Merops apiaster*

OVAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lori Patterson, President
Lavon Silvernell, 1st Vice President
vacant, 2nd Vice President
Stacey Kelly, Treasurer
Jean St. John, Secretary
Sherry Chester, Director
Judy Knizner, Director
vacant, Director
vacant, Director
vacant, Director

We can use some help! If you wish to serve on the Board, please email Lori at president@oklawaha-valley-audubon.org Board meetings are at 6:30 pm on the Wednesday preceding the program meetings and are at the TLNC. Members are welcome to attend!

COMING EVENTS - Field Trips

Field Trips are subject to change due to weather or other circumstances. Always consult our website for updates and, also, 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!

Editor's Note

OVAS' membership is diverse, encompassing many age groups and motilities. Some of our members cannot "hike through the woods". Peg Lindsay has stepped up to accommodate the chapter's varied needs by organizing a few field trips for us. Peg's idea is to be wholly inclusive: those who can hike will still meet up and hike through the woods: enjoy the day, listen to the birds, get down on our hands and knees to inspect a lawn orchid, chase the butterflies, admire an iridescent beetle, learn from each other. Then, members and guests, including those not on the hike, will share a self-provided brown-bag lunch on a lawn and include members who cannot get out as before. In the past, friendships were made over the sharing of a meal. Peg asks that if your lawn (and bathroom) is available as a lunch spot, contact her: pegcondor@embarqmail.com 352-326-2045. Clyde and Phyllis Stephens have agreed to host the first of such lunch events on their lawn after our Halloween field trip. Peg also has arranged a tram tour of the Circle B Bar Reserve, followed by lunch under the pavilions.

Hickory Point Park Wednesday, October 31, 2018, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

You can come for the hike, come just to share lunch, or come for both. We'll walk the boardwalk at Hickory Point Park. At 12:30 pm we will visit with Clyde and Phyllis for lunch (BYO brown bag lunch) at their home on the eastern shore of Lake Harris. There is LIMITED PARKING at their house, so please call Peg in advance to reserve a parking spot. We may have to car-pool to their house. Come in costume if you want - could be fun!

Suggested donation to OVAS: \$10/adult (members) or \$15/adult (non-members).

Meet at Hickory Point Park at 9:00 am, 27341 State Road 19, Tavares, FL. The Stephens' address is 11314 Davison Lane, Tavares, FL.

Email Peg Lindsay at pegcondor@embarqmail.com or call her at 352-326-2045 to register and arrange for parking.



Chinsegut Conservation Center and Ahhochee Hill Sanctuary Saturday, November 10, 2018, 8:00 am – 2 pm

These two wildlife conservation areas are located very close to one other in Hernando County, near Brooksville.

Chinsegut is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The 850 acre Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area is home to many wildlife species and wildlife viewing is available throughout the year. From the Conservation Center you can stroll along the boardwalk taking in the nature that surrounds you. The boardwalk leads you out to May's Prairie, which is a choice location to see resident birds as well as the migratory birds such as American Redstarts, Black and White Warblers, Cape May Warbler, Indigo Bunting, and Blackpoll Warbler. If you're lucky you may hear a Pinewoods Treefrog or a Squirrel Treefrog.

Surrounded by publicly protected land, including the Withlacoochee State Forest, Ahhochee Hill is part of a large greenway that remains untouched by urban sprawl. It is managed by the Florida Audubon Society. Ahhochee Hill is part of the Brooksville Ridge and is one of the highest hilltops in the State. Roughly 17 acres at the top of the hill are cleared, offering areas of old habitat and landscaped gardens planted by the former owner. The remainder of the property is wooded and represents several of the Florida habitats that are quickly being lost to development. A remnant Sandhill community, Longleaf Pine forest, hardwood and cedar hammocks, combined with cypress wetlands are interspersed throughout the property.

Visiting Ahhochee Hill is a special treat for us as group visits are on a limited basis. There is a 2-mile loop that leads through fields into the forest and to a boardwalk to view the wetlands. There are several bird stations near the Sanctuary buildings that provide a cool shady spot for those not up to a longer hike. White-tailed deer, Wild Turkeys, Owls, Bluebirds and Hawks abound. Enjoy the wildflowers and butterflies in the fields and on the forest floor.

The hikes are easy to moderate. Bring your bagged lunch. To reserve your spot, send email OklawahaAudubon@gmail.com or call 352-432-8866. Trip leaders are Christie Anderberg and Stacey Kelly. Suggested donation to OVAS: \$10/adult (members) or \$15/adult (non-members). Meet at Chinsegut Conservation Ctr. at 8 am: 23212 Lake Lindsey Road, Brooksville. Carpooling is available on a limited basis; inquire if needed. <http://myfwc.com/chinsegut> <http://fl.audubon.org/conservation/ahhochee-sanctuary>

Circle B Bar Preserve Tram Tour Tuesday December 18, 2018, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

There was a time when cattle and cowboys roamed Circle B Bar Reserve, but what was once a functioning cattle ranch is now recognized by USA Today Travel as one of the 51 Great Places to See Wildlife. The 1,267-acre property features several diverse Central Florida habitats including freshwater marshes, hardwood swamps, oak hammocks, creeks and lakes, which are home to a wide variety of ducks, shorebirds, wading birds, native and migrant birds, ospreys, bald eagles, and to more than 45-species of butterflies.

When we arrive at Circle B Bar, we will have about 15 minutes to use the facilities and assemble at 9:00 for an all-morning tram tour. Bring your scopes and binoculars – the volunteer tour operator will stop on request at various locations along the route. Bring heavy jackets, maybe a blanket, because it's December and could be cold and windy.

Room on the tram is limited, thus **reservations are required.**

After the tour we'll have BYO brown-bag lunch in one of the pavilions. After lunch you're on your own to tour the Visitor Center, walk out on the levees and leave for home whenever.

Suggested donation to OVAS: \$10/adult (members) or \$15/adult (non-members). We'll pass the hat for donations to the Preserve.

Meet at 7:15 at the Winn-Dixie parking lot on the corner of US-27 and CR-482, 27405 US-27, near the BB&T Bank in Leesburg to car-pool. We will depart the lot at 7:30 a.m. sharp.

Email Peg Lindsay at pegcondor@embarqmail.com or call her at 352-326-2045 to register. Let her know the number of persons in your party and whether you can carry other passengers in your car to Lakeland or whether you need a ride.

Circle B Bar Reserve, 4399 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, Polk County



Christmas Bird Count December 14, 2018 - January 5, 2019

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of community science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere go out over a 24-hour period on one calendar day to count birds. The data are used to keep track of the health of bird populations in North America. This 111th count runs from December 14, 2017 – January 5, 2018.

There is a specific methodology to the CBC, and all participants must make arrangements to participate in advance with the circle compiler within an established circle, but anyone can participate. If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher.

Each count takes place in an established 15-mile wide diameter circle, and is organized by a count compiler. Count volunteers follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile (24-km) diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear all day. It's not just a species tally—all birds are counted all day, giving an indication of the total number of birds in the circle that day.

OVAS always participates in the Christmas Bird Count. We will post opportunities to our website as information on dates and places become available.

OVAS birders on the Haines Creek Canal, December 2017



**Golf Cart Birding with the Villages
Birding Club
January 2019 (date to be determined),
8:00 am - 12:00 pm**

The Villages has always been one of the best locations in Lake County to observe waterfowl in the winter. Some species of interest that have been reported in the past include Snow Goose, Greater Scaup, Redhead, Common Golden-Eye and Buffleheads. Wintering warblers and shorebirds may also be observed. Carpool options may be available from North or South Lake county if interested. There will not be much walking or strenuous hiking for this field trip. Binoculars, spotting scope, camera, water, and warm clothes are recommended. Lunch at the Orange Blossom Country Club following birding.

Check our website for the date and exact details.

Meet at the Orange Blossom Hills Country Club, 1542 Water Tower Cir, Lady Lake, FL 32159.

Suggested donation to OVAS: \$10/adult (members) or \$15/adult (non-members).

Space is limited, thus pre-registration is required. Send an email to OklawahaAudubon@gmail.com to register in advance.



Visitors to the Festival of Flight and Flowers enjoyed seeing all the live animals. Fran Prager - the Bat Lady, from Tampa Bay Bats - shows one of her furry friends. She was a presenter at the Festival.



Conservationist of the Year

Since 2008, OVAS has presented a Conservationist of the Year Award at our annual December luncheon with our environmental friends. The award recognizes persons who have made a significant contribution to environmental conservation in Lake County. The past recipients have included citizen activists, a journalist, and a County Commissioner.

We would like to invite you to submit nominations for this year's award.

Please submit a brief narrative (500 words or less) that provides the following information: name of nominee, nominee's affiliations, how long the nominee has been active in conservation in Lake County, background, and projects/accomplishments of the nominee.

Please submit your nominations via email to Sherry Chester (epperlychester@gmail.com) and Lavon Silvernell (lavonsilvernell@gmail.com) no later than Saturday, November 24th.

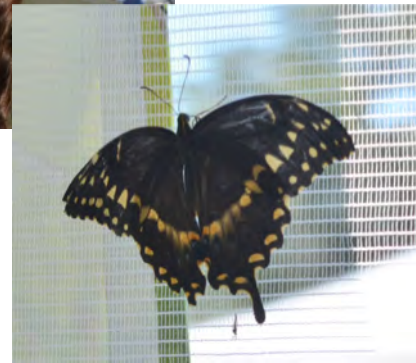
The OVAS board of directors will review the nominations and the award for Conservationist of the Year will be presented at the holiday luncheon on Sunday December 2nd.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you at the luncheon.

Lavon Silvernell (center) receiving the award for Conservationist of the Year in December 2017



Festival of Flight and Flowers



Special Thank You to Our Sponsors!



T-shirts and Posters for Sale

Thank you! We are deeply appreciative to our sponsors and partners for their generous participation and time. The Festival of Flight and Flowers could not have come to fruition without the passion, commitment, proficiency and tenacity of the individuals that have dedicated countless hours to helping plan this Inaugural event.

We have Festival t-shirts in all sizes available for purchase during our meetings and other venues. They are \$20 each. The front is decorated with the beautiful artwork of Krysta Smith, and the back contains the logos of our many sponsors in the Festival. A limited number of first edition posters also are available for \$5 each.

352.432.8866 | festivalofflightandflowers@gmail.com
 FestivalofFlightandFlowers.org | /festivalofflightandflowers

COMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

North Shore Birding Festival January 17-21, 2019

Location: McDonald Canal Pavilion, 24600 CR 448A, Mount Dora, FL 32757

The North Shore Birding Festival is Orange Audubon Society's three-year old festival, that allows birders to add to their life lists at an amazing birding area, the 20,000-acre Lake Apopka North Shore. 360+ species have been sighted there, more than any other inland location.

Full-day trips and half-day trips, including sunrise photo and birding trips, are offered, along with keynotes and dinners. Trips are affordable and there is no additional registration fee. All proceeds go toward Orange Audubon Society's Nature and Environmental Education Center fund.

For details and registration link (registration is now open), visit the website, www.orangeaudubonfl.org/festival and please LIKE the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/northshorebirdingfestival/>. If you have any questions, call 407-637-2525.



22nd Space Coast Birding & Wildlife Festival January 23 - 28, 2019



Discover why Florida's Space Coast is your launch pad to incredible nature-based experiences. The Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival features world-class photographers, field trips, workshops, and presentations, in addition to exhibitors and vendors representing optics



Trouble's handler, Robert, smiles as he holds the Bald Eagle during a presentation at the Festival of Flight and Flowers. Trouble and Robert are from the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland.



Festival Keynote Speakers, Greg Miller (left) and Yve Nagy Morrell (right) surround OVAS members Beck Smith and Gallus Quigley.

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 (\$7) 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 _____

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>