

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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VOLUME XXXVII

November - December 2020

Number 2

President's Column

Greeting and Salutations,

With Autumn decorations out with pumpkins & scarecrows on the front porch. I step back and ponder what I've learned about the Fall.

I've learned that Fall typically beckons migratory birds that pass through our state or over-stay the winter as a Florida bird. Warblers, Chickadees, Goldfinches, Sparrows, Song Birds and Hummingbirds, and Shorebirds start showing up in September. October brings Raptors from their breeding grounds up north to wintering grounds in Florida, Central and South America. November brings large numbers of land birds, waterfowl, loons and grebes. So, what does all this mean you might be asking yourself? I will tell you what it means it's that a "Plants for Birds" garden in your backyard is even more important than ever for our feathered friends. They like to enjoy the delicacies of insects, frogs, toads, lizards, grasshoppers and grubs, among others. I find myself often glancing towards the sliding glass door to get a look at who is in the garden or at the bird feeders. Will I get to see our Hummie (Male and Female) Ruby Throated Hummingbird in the garden or the Yellow Throated Warbler eating the Butter Bark that is on the back porch. Bird watching is really addicting.

With this being the month of October I've learned several news things. One how important Bats are. They are a big help around the garden and backyard. They eat pest insects and even pollinate flowers. Who knew they did that? A single bat can eat hundreds of moths, beetles or mosquitos in an hour. With a healthy bat population, they can keep insects from being pests in your yard and garden. After learning all this I said let's get a bat house. So, now we have proudly set up a bat house to let them sleep during the day. Let's see how long it will be before they discover it. Anyone else have a bat house or two in their yard?

The other thing I learned about is the Black Witch Moth: the erebid moth, Ascalapha odorata. It is a large bat-shaped, dark-colored nocturnal moth, ranging from the southern United States to Argentina. It is the largest noctuid in the continental United States. In the folklore of many Central American cultures, it is associated with death or misfortune. Please click on to the link below to learn more about the Black Witch Moth

https://blog.nature.org/science/2020/10/12/black-witch-moths-a-night-time-trick-or-treat/

As, we continue to deal with the COVID-19 limitations, we have learned through a survey poll (sent out in September) that 45.6% of you would like to have programs with social distancing outdoors. We will be giving this a trial run for our November 1st program. The program will be held at my house (113 Burrell Road in Eustis). It's very close to Trout Lake Nature Center - less than 5 minutes away. We will follow all Florida/CDC guidelines with Social Distancing, staying at least 6 feet apart and wearing a mask. I look forward to seeing everyone soon and learning what you're seen during our Summer Quarantine. (continued to the right)

At-a-Glance

Nov 1, 2 pm - Program/Social: "Quarantine Summer"

Nov 5 - Deadline for Clermont Photo Contest Submissions Nov 14, 9 am - Field Trip: Idamere Park TBD - December Program Dec 14, 2020 - Jan 5, 2021 - Christmas Bird Counts January 9, 2021, 1 pm - Field Trip: Lake Louisa State Park February 6, 2021, 1 pm - Field Trip: Yearling Trail March 13, 2021, 10 am - Field Trip: PEAR Park April 17, 2021, 9 am - Field Trip: Lake Griffin State Park May 8, 2021, 8 am - Field Trip: Ellis Acres



Juvenile Eastern Bluebirds, preparing to bathe (in the frog) in the yard where we will meet on Nov. 1: I'm first - you always get to take a bath first. Mom says I smell, so I'm going first. Photo by Mark Heinemann.

One last thing to mention during these times of the COVID-19. We are always learning and trying to be creative in providing wonderful educational programs and field trips for our members during these unprecedented times. So, at times we might have a last-minute update or change that will be sent through email. We don't want to overload you with emails, but being well informed is necessary. So, I ask please bear with us if we sent out an extra e-mails. We strive to provide only the best for our members.

Happy Owltober, Stacey

1 of 10 =

PROGRAMS 2020-2021

We would like to thank Holley Short for the informative presentation she gave for our September program- "Why Shorebirds Should Matter to You." A recording of the presentation can be found here. In her presentation, Holley pointed out the differences between wading birds, shorebirds, and seabirds. She shared pictures of the different shorebird species and what a shorebird nest looks like. She also discussed the effects humans can have on nesting birds. Besides the great photos and facts she shared, I learned something I didn't know before, that many shorebirds have taken to nesting on rooftops. The Audubon Society coordinates volunteers in a Stewardship and Monitoring program. The volunteers help with outreach, education, and monitoring both along the beaches and at rooftop-nesting sites. We hope in the future, our chapter can visit Holley in Fort DeSoto to go on a bird walk and learn more about the volunteer programs that help protect nesting shorebirds along the beaches and rooftops.

Our October program was rescheduled for November 1st. We will all get to catch up with each other and meet new members while social distancing. The program is titled "Quarantine Summer." Peg will send us all a slideshow to download to our mobile devices before we arrive to the program. We will be able to view the slideshow on our personal devices while sitting a responsible distance apart. The meeting will be held in Stacey's big backyard at 113 Burrell Road, Eustis Florida 32726. Her house is right by Pine Meadow, so if you come early you can enjoy a nice bird walk on your own beforehand. Please bring a chair and your own snacks and beverages, if desired.

The results of our poll regarding what type of program you'd like to attend going forward (73 responses) had inperson, social distancing outdoor meeting (45.6%) edging out an online Zoom meeting (25.2%), with in-person, social distancing indoor meeting (18.4%) coming in third, and Facebook Live (5.8%) and YouTube Live (4.9%) less favored.

For those of you looking to stay in, Holley's chapter, the St. Petersburg Audubon Society, is hosting a Speaker's Series that our members are invited to attend. You can check out their schedule and register for their Zoom webinars here: https://www.stpeteaudubon.org/2017-18-calendar/202021-speakers-list Orange Audubon also is holding their meetings online. You can watch their recorded programs and weekly Bird chats here.

We have been working on creating content we can share on Zoom for our chapter's programs going forward. Watch for notifications in your email regarding what we have planned for December.

Michele Cotty Loger, OVAS Program Coordinator

Feg Lindsay

Bob and I moved to a new home. We had planned to move to Lakeview Terrace in Altoona, but with the lockdown we changed plans and moved into a smaller home near my sister in Minneola. We got rid of a LOT OF STUFF.

I got way better than I should at some computer games.

I made lotsa bread.

The high points of my summer were social distance hikes with a few of my friends – see Peg Urban's page.

And I adopted a doggie.







Quarantine Summer
Sunday, November 1st, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.
(Remember to Fall Back – no longer on Daylight Savings Time)

We are hosting a socially-distanced outdoor gettogether so we can catch up with each other and find out how you spent your "Quarantine Summer". Previously, we requested you send us your photo submissions and brief summaries. Those received by October 26th are incorporated into a slide show.

Prior to the meeting, we will send you a link to the compiled slide show. When you come to the meeting bring along a snack and a lawn chair along with the slideshow, downloaded to your tablet or smartphone. Please remember to respect social-distancing guidelines to reduce the risk of viral transmission, staying six feet or more apart from people you are not in regular contact with, and wear a mask if you need to go indoors to use the facilities.

We will start at 2 pm; please start to arrive at 1:30 pm **Meeting location**: backyard of 113 Burrell Road, Eustis, Florida 32726 (very close to TLNC)

Send your RSVP to Peg Lindsay, pegcondor@embarqmail.com (her backup email is peg26805@icloud.com).



Monarch Butterfly (Photo by Stacey Kelly)

FIELD TRIPS 2020-2021

How do you plan a field trip for 20 or so participants with COVID-19 threatening our health, using Social Distancing guidelines? The fun part of the field trip is meeting up with friends and sharing time in the outdoors. 20 people all staying six feet apart makes for an obviously long line of people. The Board of Directors has suggested some changes in the structure of future field trip events, at least until the risk of COVID-19 is diminished.

Past field trips were usually planned as a morning activity followed by a BYO picnic lunch. We can all still enjoy a picnic lunch after the hike, but probably not with everyone within the same pavilion. If you bring a picnic lunch to enjoy following the hike, it's probably a good idea to bring along a lawn chair and maybe a small folding table so we can sit a safe distance from each other.

The Pod concept (described below) with multiple leaders may give us more flexibility to hold the same field trip at different times during the same day, or even on different days to accommodate everyone. Please share your thoughts about field trip planning with me directly at peg26805@icloud.com. I'm really looking forward to the new season.

- 1. We will select locations with a large open parking lot so we can all initially meet and greet, while still keeping our distance from each other.
- 2. Locations selected will also have wide trails or open paths so we can hike (or amble) while still keeping our distance from each other.
- 3. We will use a "Pod" concept. Participants will join a Pod of no more than six people and each Pod will have a leader/captain. Pods will hike independently of each other. The Pod captain will use a laser pen to identify the location of interesting things to see, without having to stand close to a participant to point to the item of interest. Pod captains will carry a cell phone to keep in communication with the other Pods, sharing location of interesting things to see or even photographs.
- 4. Since we will all be outside and keeping our distance from each other, masks are optional. If you are seriously concerned, we will create a Pod where everyone must wear a mask.
- 5. This structure obviously requires more than one field trip leader. If you have above-average naturalist knowledge or are enthusiastic about all things outdoors, please volunteer to be a Pod captain.
- 6. This structure limits the maximum attendance to six times the number of volunteer Pod captains. So, preregistration is a requirement.
- 7. Let's all be diligent and remind each other of respecting distancing rules. Participants who put themselves or other at risk may be barred from future events.

Peg LIndsay, OVAS Field Trip Coordinator



Barred Owl (Photo by Stacey Kelly)

Social Distance Hike Lake Idamere Park Saturday November 14, 2020 at 9 a.m.

Those of us who were able to attend the hike at Pine Meadows are really looking forward to the next one. We were all respectful of each other's safety and wore our masks, kept our distance from each other, and still we had a good time outdoors enjoying the sunshine, nature and each other's company. We've all been too long in isolation, sheltering at home.

The next hike will be at Lake Idamere Park, billed as a Miracle Park by Lake County Parks and Trails. It was designed to be handicap-friendly and is open for all of us to enjoy: https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/offices/parks_and_trails/lake_idamere_park.aspx

We will explore the park's diversity of life. More than 20 species of butterflies, 85 species of birds, Scrub Lizards, Gopher Tortoise, and on occasion a Bobcat, and many other animals and insects have been spotted in this 45-acre park. The park also has many species of native plants and a native plant garden at the entrance.

Following our walkabout, those who choose can stay to enjoy a brown bag lunch at one of the park's pavilions. **QUESTIONS:** If you have questions contact Peg Lindsay at peg26805@icloud.com

MEET: 9 a.m. at Lake Idamere Park, 12335 County Road 448, Tavares, FL 32778. Meet in the parking lot.

RESERVATIONS: Register and donate online at https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org/events

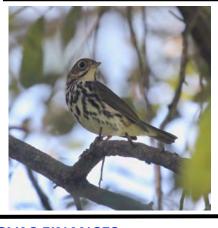
COST: Free, but we suggest a donation to OVAS (\$10 for adult members and \$15 for adult non-members)

Christmas Bird Count Dec 14, 2020 - Jan 5, 2021

The Christmas Bird Count is one of National Audubon Society's Citizen Science projects; this will be the 121st year. Our OVAS chapter has participated in the Emeralda Marsh Christmas Bird Count since 1987. SJRWMD has yet to approve the Emeralda Marsh Count this year. Normally, we encourage our readers to volunteer for the CBC; this year, opportunities may be more limited due to COVID-19. You do not need to be an experienced birder to participate. If you are willing to drive your car carrying a team, or keep a checklist record of the birds your team sees, or even identify and count the birds you find in your assigned territory, you may want to volunteer to help. Make new friends. Freeze your butt off. Spend a day outside in nature. Have fun. Contact a compiler if you are interested; below we've listed some of the local counts that we are aware of. Review the National Audubon's website for further information: https://www.audubon.org/ conservation/science/christmas-bird-count

Local Compilers:

Maybe: TBD Emeralda Marsh – Barbara Gay stkite52@gmail.com (352) 751-6069 or cell (73) 516-5757 12/17/2019 Zellwood-Mount Dora – Gallus Quigley gallusq@gmail.com (407) 242-7833 12/19/2020 Wekiva – Jay Exum jay.h.exum@gmail.com (321) 229-5653 12/19/2020 Bay Lake – John Thomton



john.thomton@gmail.com (630) 201-3864

01/03/2021 Clermont – John Thomton (see above)

Ovenbird at Pine Meadows Conseravation Area, (Photo by Dennis O'Neil)

Lake County Solar Co-op



Solar United Neighbors of Florida, with leadership from local partners, launched the Lake County Solar Coop on September 1st. The co-op is open to all of Lake and Sumter Counties. Solar United Neighbors

brings homeowners together into a group, or co-op. They provide unbiased, installer-neutral support through each stage of the process of going solar. Their experienced team ensures you understand how solar works, how it can be financed, and how it can be installed on your home. So far, 1,750 homeowners in Florida have "gone solar" as co-op participants. The Lake Solar Co-op is #56 in the state and is open through October 30th. Co-op partners include the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County, Poder Latinx, Sierra Club Central FL Group and the Trout Lake Nature Center.

The National Audubon Society <u>supports going</u> <u>solar</u>, sharing that "climate change is the #1 threat to birds." Florida is prime for solar energy and home to many bird species, such as the <u>Hermit Thrush</u>, which stands to lose 73% of its Summer range to climate change.

SUNF reports that as of October 23rd, 57 residents have joined the Lake co-op. Optimus Energy Solutions was selected as the installer. Optimus will reach out to everyone in the order they joined the co-op. For more information see the co-op's website



OVAS FINANCES

We normally provide our members financial information by displaying recent bank statements, annual financial reviews, etc. on the sign-in table for our program meetings. Because we have not been able to meet in a while – and likely will not for months to come – we will provide our readers some information via our newsletter. This is a new idea and we hope to provide more detail in upcoming newsletters.

OVAS Bank Account Balance:

Ending August 31, 2020 \$2,979.99 Ending September 30, 2020 \$2,585.29 October 27, 2020 (publication date) \$1, 515.60

Note: We incur monthly expenses for our two insurance policies (\$159.56 in total, per month) and in October we paid \$1000 for our insurance deductible related to property litigation.

Dear North Shore Birding Festival friends,

The North Shore Birding Festival (NSBF) will be held despite the COVID-19 pandemic but with many modifications. Festival sponsor Orange Audubon Society has polled people in our area, and many people are ready for outdoor learning opportunities. Most of our past trip leaders have been willing to lead again under our careful new protocols, and we have recruited some fabulous new leaders. Orange Audubon Society's 5th annual festival is based out of the McDonald Canal, CR 448A, Mount Dora. Expert-led trips drive into areas otherwise inaccessible except on foot or bicycle. This fun event is for all levels of birders and nature photographers. There are 42 trips this year, including 4 new locations. Trips will be led by 43 leaders, 15 of which are first time at the festival. Your online registration supports Orange Audubon Society's nature center fund.

Trips will be limited to 10 people with 2 leaders, masks will be required, and carpooling will be strictly voluntary. We will require of all participants, on our liability form, the affirmation that they aren't sick or exposed to COVID-19. We won't have the lunch buffet of past years, but since most of our sites are remote, we will provide lunches — box lunches from a well-known local supermarket (Publix). We won't have our keynotes with dinners. The one kickoff keynote on Thursday night will be on Zoom.

Prices have inched up very slightly, as you get more value with small trips and our expenses are greater, but there is still no additional festival registration fee making it is still a great deal. College students can still register for half-price and there are travel scholarships for out-of-town December 3-7, 2020

SHORE

SHORE

FESTIVAL

www.orangeaudubonfl.org/festival

students. And, with the festival run entirely by volunteers, all proceeds go to Orange Audubon Society's Nature and Environmental Education Center fund.

Biggest change: Although in the past (and probably in the future) our festival has been held the 3rd weekend in January, we have switched this year to December 3-7, 2020. The reason for the date switch is that we were able to secure the Youth Camp at Wekiwa Springs State Park in Apopka on those dates. Wekiwa Springs State Park is one of the Crown Jewels of the award-winning Florida State Park system, a fabulous park, very birdy. Securing the Youth Camp for the duration of the festival allows us to provide lodging for our out-of-town leaders, to rent cabins to out-of-town participants, and to hold night activities, including a star program. Among the festival's 42 trips, most still profile the Lake Apopka North Shore, about a half hour away.

Here is the updated website (refresh if it still comes up with January dates). https://www.orangeaudubonfl.org/festival/

Registration is now open!

Let us know if any questions at festival@orangeaudubonfl.org or 407-637-2525.

Thanks for your past participation, and we hope we see you this year for some wonderful birding. Hope we see you in December!

Deborah Green North Shore Birding Festival Committee Chair 407-637-2525

City of Clermont Fall Photo Challenge

As most of you already know, Bob and I have moved, mailing address Groveland, but realistically closer to Minneola or Clermont. I've been finding new outdoor things to do in the southern parts of Lake County. I stumbled on this event sponsored by the City of Clermont.

I've spoken with a few OVAS members and we're going to submit an entry for our Audubon chapter as a group entry. So if you live in the southern part of Lake County, or feel like visiting Clermont to take some photos, let me know. We have to submit 10 photos from our group; send me your photos so that I can submit them on behalf of OVAS. Photos must be in .jpg format, taken within city limits, match the prompt "words", and be taken between October 16th and November 6th. I need your your entries no later than Nov. 5th so that I can meet Clermont's 3 pm Nov 6 deadline. Here are the prompt words: Pumpkin, Spooky, Leaf, Candy, Spider, Turkey, Harvest, Apple, Ghost, and Hay Ride.

For more information, go to https://www.clermontfl.gov/events/

You can contact me at peg26805@icloud.com or text me a 352-348-9258.

Peg Lindsay

City of Clermont Signature Events



Champions Fall Photo Challenge

Enjoy the outdoors and come out to see the City of Clermont by participating in this fun Fall Photo Challenge. Fill out an entry form and submit for your chance to win by taking photos at different locations in the challenge!

Photo Challenge criteria words will be released via email on October 16, 2020 to all those who have submitted the entry form available below. Photo entries must be

received no later than 3:00pm on November 6, 2020.

Deadline to submit photos: November 6 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Champions Fall Photo Challenge Flier

Champions Fall Photo Challenge Entry Form

Northern Waterthrush and Louisiana Waterthrush

Dennis O'Neil reports that this is the first time that he's been able to photograph both of these waterthrushes in the same year. He provided a side-by-side comparison of the Northern Waterthrush and the Louisiana Waterthrush, and provided the following information about how to distinguish the two species. The most notable difference that he sees is the plain white chin on the Louisiana, whereas the chin of the Northern is spotted and striped. The white eyebrow on the Louisiana seems to be more prominent than on the Northern, and the Louisiana's bill seems to be longer and sharper. Another good field mark distinguishing the Louisiana is that it continually bobs the back half of its body up and down.



Northern Waterthrush MacDonald Canal boat ramp, Sep. 24, 2020



Louisiana Waterthrush Palm Island Park, Mt. Dora, Oct. 8, 2020

Recap of Field Trip to Pine Meadows Conservation Area

On Monday October 5th, 8 intrepid OVAS members met for a socially distanced hike at Lake County's Pine Meadows Conservation Area. We knew it would be a good day when 6 Wild Turkeys greeted us at the entrance and 3 Peregrine Falcons flew over our car as we drove to the main parking area. Huge flocks of Chimney Swifts and Purple Martins passed overhead, as well as a small "V" of Double-crested Cormorants.

Since there were only 8 of us, we decided to hike as a group, spread out. So not everybody was able to see every bird. Our last foray was along a wooded trail to a large oak tree, where everybody in the group spotted several warbler species high in the canopy. As always, the American Redstart is a spectacular, showy warbler and we all enjoyed good looks at both male and female American Redstart.

Around 11 a.m. we all decided it was too hot to continue, so we sat at picnic tables and enjoyed a socially distanced brown bag lunch, but still close enough that we could enjoy the company - until the mosquitos chased us out. Number of taxa recorded: 37.



OVAS Birders at Pine Meadows Conservation Area (photo by Peg Urban)



OVAS Birders enjoying a picnic lunch while social distancing after their field trip (photo by Peg Urban)

OVAS Board of Directors 2020-2021

POSITION NAME
President Stacey Kelly
1st Vice President Michele Cotty Loger
2nd Vice President vacant
Secretary Sherry Chester
Treasurer Lisa Cain

Director-at-Large Jane Lovejoy
Director-at-Large Maria Distefano
Director-at-Large Peg Lindsay
Director-at-Large Judy Knizner
Director-at-Large vacant



Do you order from Amazon.com? If so, you can identify OVAS as your charity of choice to receive 0.5% of your eligible purchases. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same. On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. They will remember your charity selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. You can change your charity any time.

The Big Sit!

On October 10th, our Audubon chapter participated in a worldwide, semi-competitive event called the Big Sit! This year it was sponsored by the New Haven Connecticut Bird Club.

We gathered at the pavilion at the North Shore Lake Apopka McDonald Canal Boat Ramp, and from that circle we were able to see and/or identify 52 species of birds between the hours of 7:00 and 11:15 am. Some of our members were there for the entire Sit, and others came and left the event throughout the morning. There were nine participants all together. We were fortunate to be joined by Gallus Quigley (Lake County Office of Parks & Trails, Recreation Coordinator Trails). His extraordinary birding skills (at least extraordinary compared to us ordinary birders) helped us add a few of the more difficult to find species, such as Scarlet Tanager, Painted Bunting, and Indigo Bunting. We were all very respectful of our own and others' safety, keeping our distance and wearing our masks. It was a fun morning, seeing birds while enjoying each other's company.



OVAS Birders in their Big Sit! Circle (photo by Peg Urban)



OVAS Birders, Greg Gensheimer and Sherry Chester, during The Big Sit! (photo by Peg Lindsay)

Confusing Fall Warblers

The migration is on and many different species of warblers are being reported in the area. Dennis O'Neil photographed these 3 warblers on the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive on August 9, 2020. left to right: American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, and Yellow Warbler.



OVAS - Join/Renew/Support

You are what hope looks like to a bird.

We're in a race against time to give birds and wildlife a fighting chance in a changing world. Show your love today by joining, renewing, or donating to Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society (OVAS).

Membership benefits include: Household membership (\$20/yr); Timely, relevant news about birds, their habitats, and the issues that affect them; Planned birding, environmental, and community events happening near you; A powerful voice in the fight to protect birds and wildlife, plus advocacy opportunities; Receive Oklawaha Valley Audubon's bi-monthly newsletter and other communications; Helping support OVAS partner organizations; Special offers and discounts available only to members.

By joining or renewing your local Audubon chapter, you support Oklawaha Valley Audubon directly. All funds stay with our chapter and support the organization of educational programs, field trips, our conservation efforts, as well as allow us to help our partner organizations locally.

We appreciate your support annually at the beginning of each FY/program year, which is July 1. Membership is not a requirement to attend or participate in the OVAS programs or field trips. There are 3 ways to join/renew OVAS locally.

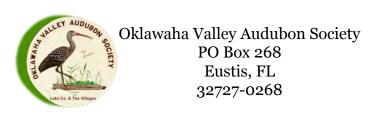
You can use the renewal form below. Mail your check to OVAS, PO Box 268, Eustis, FL 32727.

You can pay at a monthly program with cash or check.

You can go to https://oklawaha-valley-audubon.org and pay with PayPal.

OVAS M	lembership App	olication		
New	Renewal	Today's Date		
Print Name	e			
Mailing Ad	dress			
E-mail Add	lress(es)			
Phone nun	nber(s)			
Committee	that you would be	willing to volunteer assistance:		
		tee- help organize or participats, and /or record field trip repor	te in the annual Emeralda Christi ts data	mas bird count, monthly bird
Fund	draising Committee	- Assist with Donation box, bo	at rides, raffles, and special ever	nts
Hos	oitality Committee –	Help with refreshments for me	embership meetings and 2 potluc	ks
Men	nbership Committee	- membership and e-mail list,	new name tags, sign-in book	
Con	servation Committe	e - attend public meetings, help	o write letters to legislators	
Outr	each Committee - S	Set up display at events, mainta	ain bulletin board at TLNC, adver	rtise events in newspapers/internet
Digit	al Communications	Committee - website e-mail b	lasts. Facebook and social medi	а

Newsletter Committee - bi-monthly electronic newsletter and OVAS brochures



TO: