



## THE LIMPKIN CALL

is the newsletter of the Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society, a chapter of Audubon of Florida and the National Audubon Society and is a not-for-profit organization. Published four times a year.

Circulation- 850

PO Box 268, Eustis, FL 32727-0268.

WWW.OKLAWAHA-AUDUBON.ORG.

VOLUME XXIV

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008

NUMBER 2

### COMING EVENTS

#### NOVEMBER 16 SUNDAY

Regular Meeting 2:00pm If you are a member of this Audubon chapter you are probably familiar with Trout Lake Nature Center as we meet at their premises. Perhaps you know that OVAS founded TLNC. But as with so many things in life, Trout Lake has changed and evolved over the years. Come hear their Naturalist Lavon Silvernell tell us facts about the Center you may not know as well as introduce you to some of the Center's animal ambassadors.

#### NOVEMBER 21 FRIDAY

Field Trip to Lyonia Preserve. This is a Volusia County park near Deltona, famous for scrub jays but there are wetlands too for water birds. See Page 13 of The Great Florida Birding Trail East for more details. Meet at Winn-Dixie Eustis parking lot, 8:00am. Leader-Dennis O'Neil, 383 6309. Please remember, participation requires signing the liability waiver.

#### DECEMBER 6 SATURDAY

11:30am. This is our Christmas Picnic/Lunch/Banquet, held together with Trout Lake and is our only time to be together at the holidays. It will be indoors at Trout Lake and please bring enough food to share with others. Last year we had a very good turn-out. OVAS/TLNC will provide table decorations, settings, drink and music. We will also hold a raffle of quality items donated by members. Leader- Jerry Bohmann 735 5922.

#### DECEMBER 10 WEDNESDAY

Field Trip to Orlando Regional History Museum. We visited this in April 2007 and it was welcomed by all. It explains the history of central Florida with skill and is an exceptional experience, highly recommended. Meet at 12 noon at either Publix Leesburg parking lot or Golden Triangle Mt Dora parking lot. Leader- Peg Lindsay 326 2045. After visit, dinner at a near-by Vietnamese restaurant, also highly recommended. Please remember, participation requires signing the liability waiver.

#### DECEMBER 15 MONDAY

Christmas Bird Count. We can always use all the volunteers we can get for this event so please try to make it. Contribution is \$ 5. Even if you don't know birds from bats, there are plenty of things to do to help. Meet at 7:30am at Emerald Marsh Wood Duck parking lot. Leader- Peg Urban 326 3868. At conclusion, refreshments at the Blue House, Sunnyhill Farm. Please bring desserts!

## JANUARY 17 SATURDAY

Field Trip to Lake Apopka area. This is always a very welcomed trip. Since we drive on the dikes, we will car pool to minimize traffic and a St Johns River Water Management District official will accompany us in areas closed to the public. Meet at 9:00am at the County Agricultural Extension Center, Highway 19 and Woodlea Rd, Tavares. This trip is **limited to 30** so it is essential to call in advance. Leader- Ron Boddicker 342 5365. Please remember, participation requires signing the liability waiver.

## PROJECT FEEDER WATCH BENEFITS BIRDS AND PEOPLE

*Ithaca, NY*-More than 100 studies have shown that getting closer to nature reduces stress and promotes a feeling of well-being in children and adults. So, filling feeders and counting the birds that visit may be just what the doctor ordered! For more than 20 years, that's what participants in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch have been doing-benefitting themselves and the birds.

The 2008-09 season of **Project FeederWatch gets underway November 8** and runs through April 3. Participants count the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders each week and send the information to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Participants submitted more than 115,000 checklists during the 2007-08 FeederWatch season, documenting unusual bird sightings, winter movements, and shifting ranges-a treasure-trove of information that scientists use to monitor the health of the birds and of the environment. Scientists learn something new from the data each year, too, whether it's about the movements of common backyard birds or unusual sightings of rarely-seen species. Highlights of the most recent season include the largest southward movement of Red-breasted Nuthatches in the history of the project-part of an expected influx of northern birds that fly farther south when their food supplies run short. Other northern species showing up in record numbers included Common Repolls and Pine Siskins. Among the rare birds reported was a Streak-backed Oriole in Loveland, Colorado-the state's first report of this bird, native to Mexico. A December nor'easter deposited a Dovekie in Newton, Massachusetts, the first time this North Atlantic seabird has ever been reported to Project FeederWatch.

Beyond the benefits to birds and science, however, is the benefit to participants. "Nature is not merely an amenity; it is critical to healthy human development and functioning," says Nancy Wells, Cornell University assistant professor of design and environmental analysis. Her studies find that a view of nature through the window or access to the environment in any way improves a child's cognitive functioning and reduces the negative effects of stress on the child's psychological well-being. Wells also notes that when children spent time with nature early in life it carries over to their adult attitudes and behavior toward the environment.

Project FeederWatch welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels, from scout troops and retirees to classrooms and nature center visitors. To learn more and to sign up, visit [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org) or call the Lab toll-free at (800) 843-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds in their area, a calendar, complete instructions, and the FeederWatch annual report, *Winter Bird Highlights*.

Beyond the benefits to birds and science, however, is the benefit to participants. "Nature is not merely an amenity; it is critical to healthy human development and functioning," says Nancy Wells, Cornell University assistant professor of design and environmental analysis. Her studies find that a view of nature through the window or access to the environment in any way improves a child's cognitive functioning and reduces the negative effects of stress on the child's psychological well-being. Wells also notes that when children spent time with nature early in life it carries over to their adult attitudes and behavior toward the environment.

Project FeederWatch welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels, from scout troops and retirees to classrooms and nature center visitors. To learn more and to sign up, visit [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org) or call the Lab toll-free at (800) 843-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds in their area, a calendar, complete instructions, and the FeederWatch annual report, *Winter Bird Highlights*.

## OVAS RAFFLE

To help supplement our income, OVAS will sponsor a small raffle during each of our membership meetings, starting with the Christmas Lunch. Items should be worth at least \$ 15, in mint condition and have a theme related to nature. Please contact Linda Bystrak at 357 2207 to advise her what you will donate.

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPACE COAST BIRDING & WILDLIFE FESTIVAL- JANUARY 21-26 2009

This is the festival we attended on our 2007 overnight and is based traditionally at North Brevard Community College in Titusville. It offers a large range of events over a five day period which are too numerous to list here. Registration will begin shortly and is at a reasonable cost. To obtain a complete program and to register, go to – [www.nbbd.com/fly](http://www.nbbd.com/fly).

## **OVAS CONSERVATION COMMITTEE** **ACTION PLAN FOR** **FALL 2008- FALL 2009**

Committee Members: Mary Remer, Ron Boddicker, Linda Bystrak  
Adopted Oct. 22, 2008

Our committee goals this year will be to:

Support AOF conservation efforts thru e-mails, letters of support, and requests of legislators.

Support Audubon's Central Florida Regional conservation goals and activities.

Continue to monitor the non-migratory whooping crane population in Lake/ Sumter counties, and be advocates on their behalf when ever possible.

Continue to monitor and support the Hometown Democracy initiative.

Encourage more OVAS member participation in conservation activities by sending them conservation news thru our own e-mail list, and asking for support at meetings and in the newsletter.

Work with local governments and other organizations to promote more water conservation, and to only irrigate lawns 1x a week.

Continue to monitor and participate in the regional Alternative Water Supply issues, and CUP permits for lakes and Niagara.

Work with others to try and implement a more effective countywide fertilizer program such as the one adopted by the Sarasota Board of County Commissioners.

Support the NAS effort to educate our membership about the impact of world overpopulation and its effects on the environment.

Ask SJRWMD for more wildlife viewing days for the public at Emeralds Marsh.

Encourage the county government to establish "Lake and Stream Friendly" standards for Low Impact Developments and municipalities.

Support the Governors Energy Bill by encouraging local production of biofuels from nuisance terrestrial and aquatic vegetation.

Continue to monitor the nesting bald eagles on the SW corner of Lake Dora and attempt to acquire the property adjoining the Tavares Nature Park where they nest.

Award a "Conservationist of the Year Award" at the December meeting. Tailor the award to the contributions of the recipient.

## SOME WORDS, NOT JUST FOR THE MONTH, BUT FOR FLORIDA FOREVER

In the words of the novelist and columnist Carl Hiaasen:

“You don’t have to be a wacko enviro to want your kids to be able to swim in a lake or maybe see an animal that isn’t in a cage or a seaquarium. And even people who don’t give a rat’s ass about the panther will care when saltwater comes out of their faucets.”

#### PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Why Eat Organic? Even if you cannot notice a great improvement in taste of organic foods, what you gain for certain, is that you are no longer consuming pesticides. There are no long-term studies to determine what these chemicals, which are toxic to insects, fungi and weeds, do in humans when consumed over a lifetime. In addition to eating these toxins, they also go into the water supply from rain run-off on pesticide treated fields and the industrial agricultural producers are not covered by the Clean Water Act. It is not just produce which contain pesticides but even more, animal products, since animals grains treated with these chemicals and they become more concentrated in their tissues. Food products coming from abroad can have even contain DDT which was eliminated in the US in 1972. So you do yourself and the earth and water a very big favor by eating organically raised food.