



Osprey Observer Spring 2021

EDUCATING . CONSERVING . RESTORING

Message from the President

by Jim Peterson

Welcome to spring, although it is so warm, that it feels like summer in Florida right now. Spring is a busy time for insect pollinators like bees. In Florida, spring for a honeybee might start in December if the temperature is warm enough. They might have a short hibernation if the temperature is cool, then as soon as it warms up, bees are busy collecting nectar again, and pollinating in the process. All the Florida pollinators are looking for nectar in the spring, so why not celebrate Earth Day early this year and plant some native nectar and food plants at your house? I keep reading about the concerns facing beekeepers and scientists who are alarmed about the loss of insects worldwide. It might be easy to think this problem doesn't affect each of us, but 75% of the world's flowering plants and 35% of the world's food relies on pollinators according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some groups believe that the loss of pollinating insects worldwide could be the start of the next mass extinction on earth, which is quite grim.

So, let's help them by using less pesticide and planting a pollinator garden. If possible, plant flowers with a variety that will give a succession of flowers to keep nectar available for a longer period. Include native plants and remember to choose plants for all stages of a pollinator's life cycle. There is plenty of information out there for you to do a little research before you purchase plants.

It is still a crazy time out there for people trying to keep active and connected during the pandemic. We are still considering plans for summer camp this year. Currently we only have limited student activities due to the pandemic, but we look forward to the time when it is safe to resume our larger group education programs.

The Oakland Nature Preserve is open, and the trails are a great place to get some exercise and enjoy nature. We only ask that you stay safe and wear a mask at the Jim Thomas Environmental Education Center, and when you are near others. It is a great time of year to enjoy the preserve, so please come visit.

We had a very successful Pours at the Preserve in February. Thank you to everyone who supported us and attended the event.

Please check the website for details regarding upcoming events and summer camp. We have extended the Blue Hikes into June. We have weekly volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups also.

Please check our website for events and Adventure Days! registration; thank you for your continued support!

Jim

Upcoming Events

- April 7 – FMNP Wildlife Monitoring Class Begins
- April 10 – Yoga at the Lake
- April 13 – FMNP Invasive Plants of Florida Begins
- April 17 – Blue Hike
- April 17 – Yoga at the lake
- April 22 – Happy Earth Day
- April 24 – Earth Day Celebration
- April 24 – Yoga at the Lake
- April 24 – Bubbly on the Boardwalk
- May 1 – Bird Survey
- May 5 – FMNP Conservation Science Begins
- May 8 – Native plant Pop-up Sale
- May 22 – Blue Hike
- June 12 – Blue Hike
- June 14 – Summer Adventure Days! Begins



Yoga at the Lake with Barefoot Goddess Yoga

9:30 am—10:00 am

Pre-registration required, limited to 10 participants.

Family GPS Scavenger Hunt

All Day!

Start on the porch of the Jim Thomas Environmental Center
(smart phone and Action Bound app download required)

Bubbly on the Boardwalk

5:00pm—9:00pm

Enjoy bubbly and dessert at the lake pavilion. Limited to 100 participants, pre-registration required, age 21 and over.



Visit www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org
for additional
information and registration

**Be sure to follow us on Facebook
for Preserve news and events!**



Easy Ways To Give

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers shop online, the difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organizations selected by customers. Organizations must be registered and in good standing with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) to be eligible to participate. When first visiting AmazonSmile, customers are prompted to select a charitable organization from almost one million eligible organizations. In order to browse or shop at AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organization. (smile.amazon.com/about)



CARS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based out of San Diego, California. Today, CARS is partnered with over 3,500 nonprofits with the vision of expanding fundraising efforts so that they can continue to provide additional revenue to these amazing nonprofit organizations. (careasy.org/about)

Visit www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org/donate for more ways to give.

Summer Adventure Days! are Back

This summer Oakland Nature Preserve is once again offering Adventure Days! These day long experiences will give students the opportunity to enjoy some environmental fun in a safe, small group setting. The fun-filled day will be a mixture of indoor and outdoor activities with themes changing weekly. Adventure Days will run on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 9am-4pm the weeks of June 14-July 2, and July 14-July 30. Class size is limited, be sure to sign up soon! For more information and to register, visit <https://oaklandnaturepreserve.org/Adventure-Days>



Bubbly on the Boardwalk



**Saturday, April 24
5:00pm-9:00pm
Oakland Nature Preserve**

Join us for an evening stroll at the Preserve!

Enjoy an evening stroll down the Healthy West Orange Boardwalk and enjoy bubbly (plus other wine choices) and sweet treats at the lake.

www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org/bubbly

Reservations Required Adults Only Please



Yoga at the Lake

WAKE UP AND END THE WEEK RIGHT WITH THIS FUN
AND ENERGETIC HATHA CLASS FOR
BEGINNERS AND ALL - LEVELS

9:30 - 10 AM
SATURDAY MORNINGS

PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED
SIGN UP AT OAKLANDNATUREPRESERVE.ORG

THIS SLOWER PACED CLASS IS PERFECT FOR
ANYONE WHO MAY NEED A BIT OF EXTRA TIME FOR
ADJUSTMENT AND FINDING PROPER ALIGNMENT OR
ANYONE WHO JUST WANTS TO SLOW DOWN AND
RECONNECT. EACH MONTH BRINGS A NEW THEME
AND AFFIRMATION FOR THE WEEK AHEAD.
PROPS AND MODIFICATIONS ENCOURAGED

THIS MONTHS THEME:

CHRISTINA IS A 200HR
TRAINED YOGA TEACHER AND
100HR CERTIFIED MEDITATION
TEACHER SPECIALIZING IN
GENTLE, NATURE INSPIRED
HATHA YOGA

CERTIFIED IN:

- YIN
- RESTORATIVE
- CHAIR

We Dig Our Volunteers! By Nicole O'Brien

Fall brought with it some slightly cooler temperatures, a welcome reprieve from the heat of summer. We would like to thank the groups who have volunteered the past few months: David Weekley CARES Team, West Orange High School JROTC Cadets, Windermere High School Key Club, and Windermere High School FFA. With their help, we moved some big logs around a large oak tree for future seating, and planted 10,000 wiregrass plants!



**More information on all of our volunteer opportunities can be found at
<https://oaklandnaturePreserve.wildapricot.org/Volunteer>**

Ambassador Animal Updates by Nicole O'Brien

The newest members of our Animal Ambassador team arrived in October!



Welcome to ONP, Primrose and Petunia! 'The Girls' are young female opossums who were both not releasable after rehabilitation due to mobility problems. They have settled into their home on the Blue trail nicely and are already meeting visitors! The remarkable adaptations of opossums make them great animal ambassadors. Did you know that opossums have opposable thumbs on their back feet? Plus, who can resist these cute faces?! We hope you have a chance to meet our sweet gals in a program or just by chance if one of our staff has them out for enrichment.

You also have the ability to Adopt an Ambassador – donations help provide for care of our ambassadors. Adopters receive a personalized certificate of adoption via email or you can make your adoption even more special by spending time with an ambassador reptile and create beautiful and unique art to take home. This memorable encounter includes all supplies to create your personalized art with your choice of a turtle or snake as your artistic partner. <https://oaklandnaturepreserve.wildapricot.org/Adopt>



Ways you can help your Preserve:

- Volunteer your time.
- Participate in programs.
- Adopt an ONP Ambassador animal.
- Donate money.
- Donate a vehicle through the CARS program.

Visit www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org/donate for more information

New ONP T-shirt Now Available Online

The new t-shirt is in honor of the wonderful Animal Ambassadors of ONP! Show your love of these great animals with your new t-shirt or sweat shirt, lots of colors and styles to choose from.



Visit <https://www.bonfire.com/animal-ambassadors-of-oakland-nature-preserve/> to order this great shirt!



Blue Hike Paddle Tours

ONP is delighted to announce upcoming Spring dates of our Blue Hike Paddle Tours. This special program is made possible by generous support from Duke Energy. ONP's Blue Hikes show paddlers the natural beauty, history, plants, and animals of Lake Apopka, along with an interpretative telling of the restoration progress of the lake. They have since diversified to include several other locations, highlighting features and importance of many other central Florida's waterways. Upcoming Blue Hikes include:

- 17 April, Crooked River
- 22 May, Lake Norris
- 12 June, Alexander Springs

For more information and registration visit www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org/blue-hike

What's In Bloom

by Denise Byrne

With longer days, many plants are blooming earlier than usual, so there is more to see at the Preserve!

Here are some of what are in bloom right now:

Many Chickasaw Plums around the Preserve have started or are about to start blooming. These small fragrant white flowers are abuzz with pollinators and look very decorative in the presence of other trees that are often still dormant. The flowers are especially dramatic since they appear before the tree puts out new leaves! The flowers are followed by small red fruits which ripen to yellow. The fruits are popular with songbirds, and many other birds use the structure for nesting, shelter, and thermal cover. On the Preserve, you can see Chickasaw Plum at the entrance, across from the turtle pen and behind the Education Center.

As the Coral Honeysuckle in the Honor Forest blooms, it attracts many pollinators including Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, native bees, and butterflies. The fruits attract Purple Finches, Goldfinches, and American Robins. It is also a larval host for both the Spring Azure butterfly, *Celastrina ladon*, and the Snowberry Clearwing butterfly, *Hemaris diffinis*.



The Fringe Tree near the parking lot is very attractive to wildlife. Twigs and foliage are browsed by many animals. It is also a larval host of the Rustic Sphinx moth, *Manduca rustica*.



Coralbean is a butterfly and hummingbird attractant. The seeds are poisonous to humans if eaten. Sensitivity to a toxin varies with a person's age, weight, physical condition, and individual susceptibility. Children are most vulnerable because of their curiosity and small size. Toxicity can vary in a plant according to season, the plant's different parts, and its stage of growth. Be sure your children are aware of this danger. The seeds are attractive, so point them out to your children and warn them not to eat anything wild without checking it with you first.

Crossvine is in bloom along the Blue Trail. Its showy flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies.



Spiderworts are in bloom around the parking lots and education center at the Preserve. Each flower lasts less than a day, but the plants put out new flowers early very morning for six to eight weeks. Spiderwort's blooms are also dictated by the daily weather patterns. Commonly, blooms open during the cool morning hours. As the day wears on, the bloom closes up before the onslaught of the afternoon sun. That one bloom will not open again; it only has a few short hours to attract butterflies and other insects for pollination! The next day, however, prompts another bloom opening from the same cluster so that pollination possibilities increase. The leaves and stems have juice with some medicinal qualities similar to aloe vera, providing comfort when rubbed on scratches and bug bites such as spider bites, which is probably where it got its name. "Wort" is an Old English word for plant.



Family Earth Day GPS Scavenger Hunt

All Day! April 24th

Celebrate Earth Day by exploring the Preserve in a fun, family friendly way! Families will use a phone app called Actionbound to explore, photograph, create videos, and find out cool things about the world in which we live.

Come to the porch of the Jim Thomas Education Center (log cabin) to start your adventure!

Actionbound app download required for this event.

Visit en.actionbound.com for more information about Actionbound

Who is on the Prowl at Oakland Nature Preserve?

Our Trail Cameras are staying very active photographing resident bobcats, coyotes, raccoons, opossums, and rabbits in the uplands. They snapped a bobcat family recently, along with owls, and a Whip-poor-will (a first on the cameras at ONP!). Check out the album in the museum or our Facebook page for the most recent photos. A big thank you to our wonderful volunteer Gloria, who keeps the kiosk on the Orange Trail updated with recent photos too!





OAKLAND NATURE
PRESERVE



Pop-up Native Plant Sale

May 8, 2021

9am - 1pm

ONP Parking Lot

747 Machete Trail, Oakland

www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org

