



# Osprey Observer Summer 2022

EDUCATING . CONSERVING . RESTORING

## Message from the President

by Jim Peterson

Our Water World. No, not the Kevin Costner movie, but I like to think of our world as a water world. The earth is seventy percent covered in water. Ninety eight percent of that water is in the oceans. Only 1% is potable and 0.3% is groundwater. Luckily, we live in a state that has ample fresh water and a truly magnificent source of underground water found in our aquifers. Rainwater and surface water must seep through the soil and porous limestone in the ground to fill up those aquifers. Some of that aquifer water is under pressure and enters other waterways as artesian wells or springs. Florida has over 1000 natural springs, more than any other state. If you haven't visited a spring in Florida, you must go visit one of our unique springs, and Disney Springs doesn't count, because it is not real!

Scientists can age the water in our aquifers using carbon dating. Most of the shallow aquifers might have water only a few years to a few hundred years old. Deep aquifers can have water that is thousands to millions of years old. I find it fascinating that in some of the springs you might be swimming in water that collected underground before humans existed.

Most central Floridians rely on underground water (ground water) for household use, business needs, and agriculture in the area. The Orlando Utilities Commission typically pumps 90 million gallons per day and that is just for the metropolitan Orlando area. One OUC estimate stated that 40% of that water is used for lawn irrigation.

When I see all the new development that is ongoing in our area, I keep saying to myself, how are we going to have enough water for all those new homes and businesses? A study by the St. Johns River Water Management District a few years ago stated that there will not be enough ground water in the future, and we will have to find other sources to supplement our water needs. One source might be the St. Johns River. Other sources might be other streams and lakes or possibly the desalinization of seawater. Those other sources will not be as pure or as cheap to obtain than the ground water we are using currently. That is why we must keep conserving. That is why we must encourage reuse water (treated sewage) for irrigation. That is also why we need to encourage the purchase and protection of wetlands and aquifer recharge areas.

We also have to be very careful about septic systems and the pollutants that are going into our sewage. The EPA lists hundreds of forever chemicals that are getting into our groundwater. The groundwater is safe to drink, but there are chemicals out there that we should be aware of and try to avoid if possible. The EPA just released advisories for some chemicals called the acronym PFAS. They are Polyfluoroalkyl substances, and some food containers have them, water resistant and flame retardant clothing was found to have them, and personal care products used them in the past. I don't want to alarm anyone, but these compounds are already inside the bodies of 99% of all Americans, according to some recent studies. We just want to make sure we don't add more of them to ourselves and the environment by the products we use.

Meanwhile I am still glad to live in a state where we can enjoy recreation in and around our abundant water resources. I am grateful I can paddleboard and kayak in the rivers, springs, and lakes of Central Florida before I must start drinking from them!

Please check our website for upcoming events and please join us for our first Wildlife Festival held at the Oakland Nature Preserve on September 24.

# Upcoming Events

- Senior Strides – Thursdays at 9:30
  - Yoga at the Lake – Sat. at 9:30
- 
- 8/10 - 1<sup>st</sup> day of school (Orange County)
  - 9/7 – Homeschool series ages 6-8
  - 9/21 – Homeschool series ages 9-12
  - **9/24 - Nature Fest at ONP**
  - 9/24 – Mindful Hike
  - 9/24 – Science Saturday
  - 9/30 - FMNP Upland Begins
  - 10/1 – Youth Climate Project registration opens
  - 10/5 – Homeschool series ages 6-8
  - 10/12 – Storytime
  - 10/19 – Homeschool series ages 9-12



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



Join us for what could be West Orange county's only nighttime Jack-o-lantern hike. The Glow Trail will be lined with Jack-o-lanterns created by members of the community, creating an ethereal and beautiful night-time hike.

For more information and to register your Jack-o'-Lantern visit [www.oaklandnaturepreserve.org/pumpkinglow](http://www.oaklandnaturepreserve.org/pumpkinglow)

Donations benefit the Oakland Nature Preserve.



## Sponsorship Opportunities Nature Fest at Oakland Nature Preserve

	Lake Apopka \$5,000	Gopher Tortoise \$2,500	Longleaf \$1,000	Bobcat \$500
Available	1	3	5	10
	Preserve Benefits	Preserve Benefits	Preserve Benefits	Preserve Benefits
Family Memberships	5	4	3	2
T-Shirts	5	4	3	2
	Event Benefits	Event Benefits	Event Benefits	Event Benefits
Exhibitor Space	2	1	1	1
Speaking Opportunity	1			
	Event Recognition	Event Recognition	Event Recognition	Event Recognition
Sponsor Board	Most Prominent Logo Most Prominent Logo Most Prominent Logo	Prominent Logo Prominent Logo Prominent Logo	Logo Logo Logo	Logo Logo Logo
	Additional Recognition	Additional Recognition	Additional Recognition	Additional Recognition
Preserve Website	Most Prominent Logo -w- Link	Prominent Logo -w- Link	Logo -w- Link	Logo -w- Link
Social Media	Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment
Digital Newsletter (Fall Edition)	Most Prominent Logo	Prominent Logo	Logo	Logo

Visit [www. OaklandNaturePreserve.org/naturefest](http://www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org/naturefest)

Email [jhunt@OaklandNaturePreserve.org](mailto:jhunt@OaklandNaturePreserve.org)

Call 407-905-0054



# Nature Fest

## at Oakland Nature Preserve



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**  
**10AM-3PM**

**Wildlife Encounters**

**Guided Hikes**

**Food**

**Lake Apopka Boat Tours**



**Children's Activities**

**Merchants & Vendors**

**Presentations**

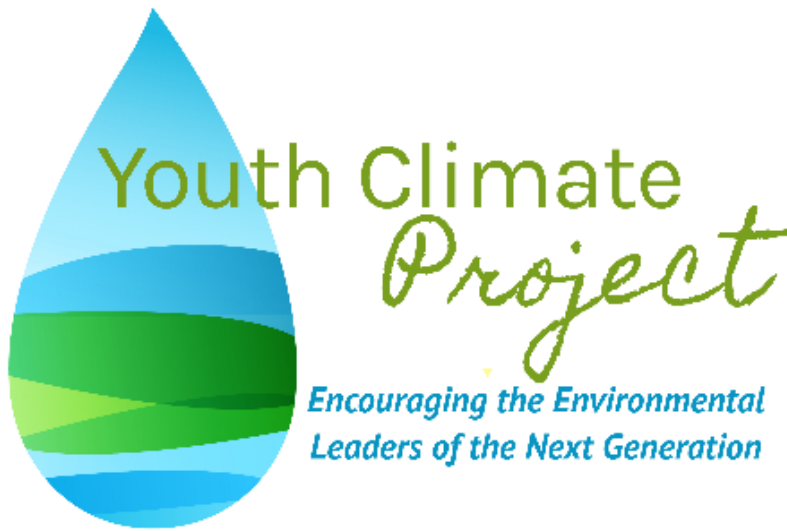
**...and much more!**



**All proceeds support the**  
**Oakland Nature Preserve**  
[www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org](http://www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org)



# 2022-2023 Youth Climate Project Scholarship Opportunity



The Amon Family Foundation, in partnership with the Oakland Nature Preserve, are excited to announce an opportunity for high school seniors in West Orange County High Schools and homeschool students to participate in the Youth Climate Project (YCP).

The effects of climate change are taking place all around us and the YCP is designed to “encourage the environmental leaders of the next generation.” The knowledge derived from science, research, and education is the key to solving the problems created by climate change and finding innovative solutions. YCP was created to support participants as they work towards their goals and will be

awarding \$20,000 in scholarship funding, participants who receive high scores on their research could receive between \$1,000-\$7,500. Four students received scholarship in the 2021-2022 scholarship year!

Benedict Ridore	Ocoee High School	Scholarship Amount	\$7,500.00
Milena Lynch	Innovative Montessori	Scholarship Amount	\$6,500.00
Toshani Krishna	Ocoee High School	Scholarship Amount	\$3,000.00
Angelina Nguyen	Ocoee High School	Scholarship Amount	\$3,000.00

Visit [www.YouthClimateProject.org](http://www.YouthClimateProject.org) to find more information about this year’s Amon Family Foundation, Inc.

The Amon Family Fund Inc (AFFI) was founded in May 2021 by Jack Amon, former resident of west Orange county. As a farmer, community activist, and participant in environmental efforts in Central Florida, Jack’s goal was to establish a sustainable vehicle to encourage and support environmental and educational opportunities for young people focused on environmental challenges of the 21st century.



The operation of the Fund is assisted on the Board of Directors by two of his children, Jennifer Triggs and Jonathan Fritz, and guided locally by the accounting firm of Derek Blakeslee project.





## Who goes there? by Nicole O'Brien

This spring we welcomed a new animal ambassador to our team. Meet Mozart (Mo) the Milksnake! While this species is not found in Florida, it is a great representation of mimicry. Batesian mimicry is when a harmless species has evolved to resemble another species that has chemical defenses such as venom or toxin. By resembling a venomous species, the mimic can make possible predators mistake it for the venomous species and thereby evade predation. What native snake does he remind you of? I'd venture that most of you have heard some form of the rhyme about how to tell apart a venomous coral snake from a nonvenomous mimic – can you recall it? The common saying is 'Red Touches Yellow, Kill a Fellow. Red touches black, venom lack' or some such variation, but many people have trouble remembering the order. Eastern Coral Snake patterning is generally red and black bands separated by smaller yellow bands. Two Florida native mimics are the Scarlet Snake and the Scarlet Kingsnake which have red and yellow or white bands separated by black. Eastern Coral Snakes also typically have a black tip of the face, while Scarlet Snakes and Scarlet King Snakes have a red tip of the face. What do you notice about Mo? In its native region, the Nelson's milksnake and the coral snake both have black faces! The best way to stay safe when you see a snake in the wild is just to observe and let it be!



Mozart, Nelson's Milksnake



Scarlet Snake

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/myfwc/38666852574/in/photostream/>



Scarlet Kingsnake

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/42389547@N00/2628095198>



Eastern Coral Snake at O NP



# Discover Nature!



with naturalist Don Kendzior

Presentations start at 11 am

- September 24: Magical Hummingbirds
- October 29: Mischievous Raccoons
- November 19: Garden with Nature
- December 10: Backyard Birding



OAKLAND NATURE  
PRESERVE

Join noted naturalist Don Kendzior at the Oakland Nature Preserve as he shares the wonder of nature in educational and entertaining presentations. Don is president of Noah's Notes, a nonprofit environmental organization, and a certified naturalist with a comprehensive knowledge of the environment. He is a popular speaker and has inspired many to make a difference for the planet right in their own backyard.



**NOAH'S NOTES**  
*Saving nature in your backyard*  
NoahsNotes.org

Noah's Notes, Inc. is a 501C3 nonprofit environmental organization with a mission to inspire and educate people to save nature. You can save wildlife and wild places by donating today. Together we can insure future generations will be able to experience the wonder of nature.  
[NoahsNotes.org](http://NoahsNotes.org)



## Summer Camp Fun in Oakland

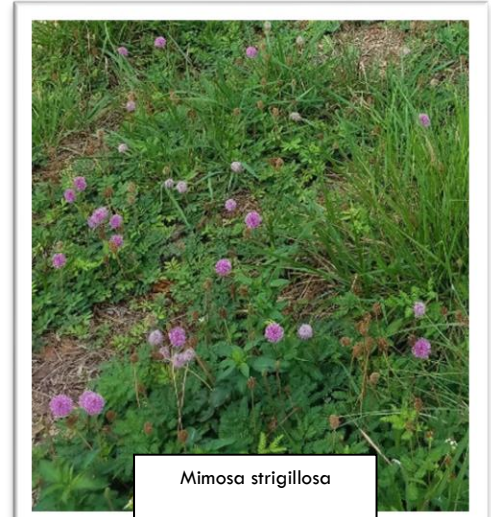




# What's In Bloom

## There is a lot in bloom right now in the uplands at the Preserve:

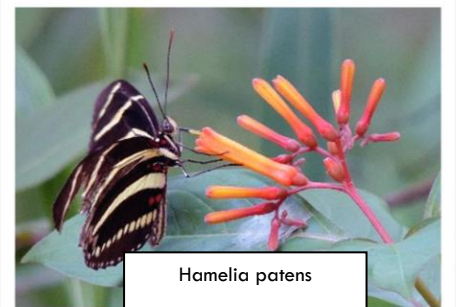
- Mimosa/Powderpuff, *Mimosa strigillosa*, is in bloom around the Education Center and Butterfly Gardens. The leaves fold up when touched, giving it another common name: "sensitive mimosa". An important cover species, this species of mimosa provides many ecological functions: the seeds are eaten by quail, songbirds, and Gopher Tortoises; foliage is eaten by gopher tortoises and wild turkeys; it is pollinated by bees and is the larval host of Little Sulfur Butterfly.
- Purple Passionflower, *Passiflora incarnata*, is also known as maypop and passionvine. It is a deciduous vine that climbs by tendrils and spreads rapidly with underground runners. It is a larval host plant for numerous butterflies including Gulf Fritillary Butterfly, *Agraulis vanillae*, Zebra Longwing, *Heliconius charithonia*, Variegated fritillary, *Euptoieta claudia*, and the Banded Hairstreak *Satyrus calanus*. Young tendrils are eaten by Wild Turkey. The fruits are edible by mammals, including humans. At the Preserve you will see Purple Passionflower in bloom on the Red and Orange Trails.
- Firebush, *Hamelia patens*, in the Bird, Butterfly and Dean Gardens, is a wildlife attractant for a variety of butterflies, hummingbirds, wasps, and halictid bees. Bees are considered the principal pollinator because they crawl down the floral tube to access nectar. The leaves are food for the Pluto Sphinx and Nessus Sphinx moths.
- Turk's Cap Mallow, *Malvaviscus arboreus*, related to hibiscus, has petals that are folded spirally and only partially unfurl to form a turban-shaped flower, to encourage pollination by hummingbirds. You will see Turk's Cap Mallow around the Education Center; the luscious flowers are a favorite of our resident Gopher Tortoises.



*Mimosa strigillosa*



*Passiflora incarnata*



*Hamelia patens*

## In the wetlands you will see:

- Buttonbush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*, which attracts butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. The seeds are a source of food for ducks and shorebirds.
- Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis*, is a member of the honeysuckle family. Its fruits (black berries) are popular with birds, and the flowers attract a variety of pollinators.
- Grassy Arrowhead, *Sagittaria graminea*, attracts lots of pollinators, and its seeds are eaten by birds.
- Pickerelweed, *Pontederia cordata*, has vibrant purple flowers that attract a variety of butterflies, wasps, and bees. One species of solitary ground-nesting bee, *Dufourea novaeangliae*, only uses Pickerelweed to gather nectar and pollen. Small seeds are produced that are food for a variety of animals, including ducks and other waterfowl. Deer and geese will munch on leaves and roots of the plant, while fish, birds, insects, amphibians, reptiles, and other critters use pickerelweed as cover. Dense mats of growth provide excellent cover for pickerel fish, which feed on the insects that are attracted to the flowers of this plant (giving the plant its common name). They don't live in Lake Apopka, but manatees also eat pickerelweed!



- Scarlet Hibiscus, *Hibiscus coccineus*, produces beautiful blooms that provide nectar to a variety of pollinators including the specialist Rose Mallow Bee and Ruby Throated Hummingbirds. This plant also hosts caterpillars of gray hairstreak, painted lady butterflies and several moths and skippers.

## Take a (Mindful) Hike!



Join 500hr Trained Yoga Teacher Christina Hunt for a meditative Fall Hike and Yoga session at the Oakland Nature Preserve, Saturday September 24 at 9am.

We'll check-in at the Education Building, then head off for a short meditation followed by a 2-mile hike through the beautiful trails of the Oakland Nature Preserve. We'll explore the same route we took on our previous hikes so we can observe the changes in nature over the season. Then, find release with an all-levels friendly yoga session on the lake, followed by a short group chat and final, silent walk back down the boardwalk.

Be sure to bring your mat and water bottle, as well as a journal to record anything that comes up during the morning.

Cost is \$15 per person and pre-registration is required.

*Christina, aka the Barefoot Gnome, is a yoga teacher, mindful art facilitator, and outdoor educator. Join her each Saturday for yoga at the Preserve.*



# Registration Now Open

## Florida Master Naturalist Program

## Upland Systems

**Join us for this exciting class!**

The Florida Master Naturalist Program (FMNP) is an adult education UF/IFAS Extension program developed by the University of Florida. FMNP training will benefit persons interested in learning more about Florida's environment or wishing to increase their knowledge for the use in education programs, volunteers, employees, ecotourism, and others.

Registration for this this course is open, course dates are  
**Fridays September 30 – November 4.**

For more information on class schedule, instructors, field trip locations, and to register please go to [www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.masternaturalist.ifas.ufl.edu). Select "Current Course Offerings", go to Uplands or Environmental Interpretation, and then Orange County.



Oakland Nature Preserve, Oakland, FL  
[www.oaklandnaturepreserve.org](http://www.oaklandnaturepreserve.org)  
407-905-0054



OAKLAND NATURE  
PRESERVE



## 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 ONPI!). 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!

