

# The JAY



*The mission of the Seminole Audubon Society is to promote awareness and protection of the plants and animals in the St. Johns River basin in order to sustain the beneficial coexistence of nature and humans.*

March –April -May 2019

A Publication of Seminole Audubon Society



Jim Peters with gourd pole at new location and with new sign.

by Jan Peters

from their wintering grounds in the tropics. It was once thought these were males in search of nesting locations who would then return South to guide their colonies to the chosen nesting site. We now know this is not true. Scouts can be male or female. A martin nesting colony is actually a group of unrelated birds attracted to a common breeding site. The birds arrive and depart in late Summer independently. They do not travel as a flock. The martin scouts may return to a previous nesting site.

## Spring has Sprung

For me, the harbingers of Spring are the arrival of Purple Martin scouts, *Progne subis*, and the arrival of Northern Parulas, *Setophaga americana*. Both species come here to breed, but spend the winter elsewhere. Purple Martins winter in South America. Northern Parulas winter primarily in eastern Mexico and on islands of the West Indies. Once both of these species have arrived in Central Florida, Spring and warm weather is not far behind. On February 18 I saw both of these species.

Purple Martins, *Progne subis*, are the largest species of swallow in North America, measuring about eight inches. This cavity-nesting species breeds primarily in the eastern U.S. They winter in South America. Due to habitat loss and degradation in their breeding grounds, these insect-eating birds are now almost completely dependent on man-made structures for nesting sites.

The oldest individuals in a population migrate north first. They are known as "scouts", and arrive in mid-January or early February



Both sets of gourds erected on Lake Monroe

by Jim Peters



As mentioned in Myra Platel's SAS History article in this issue, Purple Martins have nested in the vicinity of Lake Monroe for many years. Thanks to SAS volunteer Jim Peters, for the past few years, our Chapter has been able to provide two poles with eight nesting gourds each. One set of gourds has been used while the second has not. At the end of the last nesting season the decision was made to relocate the set that had not been occupied.

In late January, with the cooperation of Robert Beall, Operations Manager for the City of Sanford and the assistance of Amos Sparrow, also of the City of Sanford, Jim Peters was able to re-install one set of gourds and relocate the second. Signs identifying Seminole Audubon Society as providing entity were placed on the poles this year.

Apparently a good location was chosen for the poles and gourds as Purple Martins have already been sighted at both sets of gourds.

*Faith Jones*

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## News from Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee

On Sunday, January 27, 2019, members of the Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee (RCC) met to discuss issues of regional concern and to report on progress toward our two regional conservation goals adopted at Audubon Assembly in October 2018. Representatives from five of our ten member chapters were able to attend. We encourage a representative from every chapter to attend our next meeting scheduled for Sunday, April 7, at [Audubon Center for Birds of Prey](#), 1101 Audubon Way, Maitland, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. The center has recently been renovated. Bring a bag lunch and stay to tour the grounds and bird aviaries and see raptors up close and personal.

Charles Lee, Audubon Florida staff advisor to our RCC, alerted us to a new issue – the Northeast Connector Expressway Extension – a proposed toll road from US 192 in Osceola County to State Road 50 in Orange County. The Central Florida Expressway Authority has undertaken a concept, feasibility and mobility study, raising issues regarding the future of the eastern part of the county, which now consists largely of rural farmlands, natural areas and scattered rural homesteads and settlements. This proposal is in the beginning stages. Detailed plans are needed for each segment and all the land will be subject to wetlands testing. Our RCC action plan is for chapter leaders in Orange, Seminole and Osceola Counties to form a committee to meet with Charles Lee to create a comprehensive plan on how to advocate.

In preparation for the upcoming legislative session – March 5 through May 3, 2019 – Audubon Florida has selected bills to be watched and worked on with legislators. In general, AF's legislative activity will follow water quality, water quantity/supply, climate change, Indian River Lagoon, septic tank issues and conservation program funding. Governor DeSantis has requested larger amounts of money for environmental and conservation issues than previously recommended by the Scott administration. Follow all 2019 bills at [Welcome: Online Sunshine](#).

Contact your chapter president or conservation chairperson if you'd like to be involved in either of these initiatives. "The Advocate" is a weekly e-mail update distributed when the FL Legislature is in session. Sign up [here](#) to ensure you receive legislative updates and action alerts in a timely fashion.

The following action has been taken on our regional goal to promote Lake Apopka Restoration, Visitor Access & New Audubon Nature Center: The 70-acre former nursery site adjacent to the Wildlife Drive entrance was transferred from St. Johns River Water Management District to the City of Apopka with deed restrictions. A Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Orange Audubon Society crafted over two years ago and signed in June 2017 is the working document and is referenced in the deed restrictions.

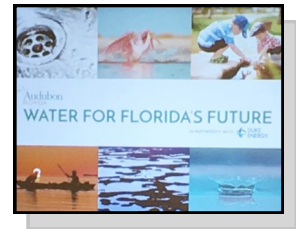
*Paula Wehr*

*Central Florida Chapters Representative Audubon Florida Board of Directors*



# Program Notes

## Water for Florida's Future



Katie Warner, Center Director for Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, presented Water for Florida's Future along with Laura, the Education intern at the center. What a treat to meet Gopher, the Burrowing Owl as we learned about ways to conserve water and statistics about our overuse. The average Floridian uses 80 -100 gallons of water per day and over 60% of daily residential water consumption comes directly from the aquifer. We can improve these stats by installing faucet aerators, checking for leaky toilets, and installing high-efficiency toilets. Almost 31% of overall household water consumption comes from toilets. A change to high-efficiency toilets alone reduces toilet water use by over 50% and indoor water use by

16%. It was startling to learn that the average leaky toilet wastes about 200 gallons of water per day. Check for leaks! As far as outdoor use 50% of total water consumed in households is from outdoor use. This can be reduced by adjusting irrigation based on the weather, checking for leaks, and adopting Florida and Bird Friendly Landscapes. Some program attendants were thrilled to go home with gadgets to reduce water use in their toilets

### Native Plants help Migrating Birds

During our February program Faith Jones explained bird migration which is seasonal, predictable, and repeated every year. She explained why birds migrate, and the difficulties they must endure. Two to six days of continuous flight requires a lot of energy. This energy is provided by fat. All food the bird eats, whether insects, berries, or seed is converted into fat. Some songbirds increase their body weight by 70% before they migrate. Birds rely on "re-fueling stations" along their migration route. You can create bird-friendly habitat in your yard by providing food, water, and shelter. Native plants provide food and shelter.



Cedar Waxwing

Ken Schmidt

Why are native plants so important? They attract 96% more insects than non-native plants, and birds eat insects. Native plants are also important for the birds that breed here as parent birds feed their young mainly insects. A Carolina Chickadee needs 200 caterpillars per day to feed four nestlings.

We then were treated to some of Ken Schmidt's images on the birds that can be attracted. The birds were organized by the time of year they can be seen, and the range map for each species was shown.

## Black Hammock Trip



On January 19, SAS enjoyed hiking 4.5 miles along the trails and board walk at Black Hammock Wilderness Area. The hike went through mixed hardwood swamp, sand pine scrub, and pine flatwoods.



Marguerite Terwilliger



# A Long, Beautiful Day at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge



Morning Group Shirley Reilly

SAS volunteers recently guided members of the Basic Birding Class on a tour of Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (MINWR). This course is annually conducted by Faith Jones and consists of 4 days of instruction and a trip to MINWR to put our learning to the test.



Shirley Reilly

Afternoon Group

Faith Jones



Green Heron

Shirley Reilly

Our class was so large that in order to provide a meaningful experience we split into two groups, morning and afternoon. The morning group identified 50 species of birds, many of which were featured in the class. The afternoon group identified more ducks, but only 41 total species. Both



White Ibis & Roseate Spoonbills

Shirley Reilly

groups were entertained at the start by Dolphins playing around at Parrish Park before we headed to Black Point Drive.

Special thanks to Faith Jones, Shirley Reilly, and Joy Rector for volunteering their time and knowledge for these classes.

By Shirley Reilly



## Owl Class

On Saturday February 16, 2019, SAS provided the instruction for Seminole County Natural Lands Program's Owl Class. Faith Jones detailed the characteristics of all owls including formation of pellets. She provided in depth information about the owls in our area, and concluded her presentation with a story and images of Barred Owls that nest near her home.

The lecture was followed by a video showing the production of owl pellets and how to dissect them. The participants were then provided with owl pellets to dissect. Most found the skeletons of rodents, but a few discovered the skeletons of small birds. The class



concluded with a night hike led by Natural Lands volunteers, Patti Smith and Heather Mahoney. This is a class offered annually by Seminole County Natural Lands. Their schedule of activities can be found in their newsletter <http://www.seminolecountyfl.gov/departments-services/leisure-services/greenways-natural-lands/natural-lands/events.shtml>

# SAS History 1985 – 1989

11<sup>th</sup> in a series by Myra Eisencoff Platel

This article is summarized from SAS minutes.

## **Legislations and Conservation**

Our Chapter continues to be active in the above areas from 1985 – 1989 with Ralph Coggeshall as Chairman.

In November 1985 it was reported that Governor Bob Graham was in favor of getting rid of squatters along the Wekiva River since they cause an increase in pollution.

The Super Fund to clean up toxic waste was discussed in the Spring of 1986. Also the conservation chairman stated that the number one priority was MARTA and who owns lands submerged under water. In late Fall the acquisition of more land for Big Cypress in south Florida was a goal of our newly elected U.S. Senator Bob Graham who would introduce legislation in Congress.

In January 1987 Ralph Coggeshall reported a property exchange had been arranged between Arizona and Florida which will result in additional acreage for Big Cypress. This was made possible by the Collier family. Also, twenty-four tracts were being considered for purchase by the State.

The Conservation Chairman announced a meeting in the Spring of 1987 at the Seminole County Courthouse regarding new rules for the protection of wetlands. He urged members to write the Executive Director of St. Johns River Water Management District in Palatka to stress the need for the protection of the St. Johns River against further encroachment.

In October 1987, our Chapter passed a resolution against off-shore oil drilling. Both the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Acts were authorized at the Federal level.

Of environmental importance in the Spring of 1988 was the announcement by Ralph Coggeshall, Conservation Chairman, that Freon will no longer be used in spray cans because it damages the ozone layer.

Following up on MARTA and the ownership of submerged lands issue of two years previous, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states could claim lands covered by water at high tide.

At the first meeting in 1989, the chairman told of the favorable attitude of Governor Martinez toward the environment. A buffer zone has been established along the Wekiva River and most squatters have been told to leave. At the next meeting a trade off of beltway lands along the Wekiva River for wetlands was reported.

## **Programs**

In early 1985 our Vice President, Al Lathrop, introduced Charles Lee, Florida Audubon Society lobbyist, who spoke about bills coming up in the Legislature. In March, Dave Marsh, weather reporter for WESH Channel 2, gave a talk on climate, weather, and television. The April program was Tom Williams who spoke on endangered species and the role of captive preservation.

Moving forward to the Spring of 1987, there was a program by Eddie Williford who showed slides and talked about the Wekiva and Little Wekiva Rivers. At that time, Eddie had forty years of first-hand knowledge of the Wekiva River. The beginning of 1988 saw Doris Mager, *The Eagle Lady*, give the program showing raptors from the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey.

## **Field Trips**

Among the trips during these years was one to Sorrento to see Burrowing Owls in March 1985. In January 1988 members took a trip to the Wekiva River with activities including a one-hour boat trip from the Wekiva Marina. Following the luncheon at the May meeting, the group went birding at Mullet Lake Park. In the Spring of 1989, the field trip was to Smyrna Dunes Park with twenty-one species sighted.

## **SAS News 1985 - 1989**

Appreciation was given to FPL for allowing the group to use their Sunshine Room for meetings. Attendance at meetings varied from eighteen to forty. Membership increased from 160 to 200 members.

In May 1987, Ed Friend brought attention to the deaths of eagles and also infertile eggs.



The new book, *The Voice of the River* by Marjorie Stoneman Douglas was recommended in November of 1987.

March 1989 Bird Report included that Purple Martins had returned to Lake Monroe. Numerous White Pelicans were also reported on Lake Monroe. Ospreys were nesting at various locations near the lake.

October 1989 *Audubon Adventures* were provided by our Chapter to four classrooms at Midway Elementary and one at Geneva Elementary. At this meeting it was with sadness that the death of Ralph Coggeshall, Conservation and Legislative Chairman of SAS, was announced.

*This is the final in a series of articles about our Chapter's history from 1949 written over the past few seasons for us by Myra Platel. We thank Myra for the time she has spent going through old minutes and summarizing them.*



The charismatic and colorful Florida Scrub-Jay is our state's only endemic bird species, found nowhere else in the world. The birds are bold and curious. They often approach people in noisy



Florida Scrub-Jay

Faith Jones



Florida Scrub-Jays

Faith Jones

family groups. Florida Scrub-Jays are cooperative breeders in which "helper" birds monitor for danger and feed nestlings. Groups with helper-birds raise more offspring each year than groups without helper-birds. Florida Scrub-Jays have special federal protection because the statewide population has declined historically by more than 90%. The oak scrub habitat they require must be burned every 5-20 years to thin the oaks and restore the bare sand patches where a single Florida Scrub-Jay can bury 6,000-8,000 acorns a year for its winter food supply.

To learn more about Florida Scrub-Jays and volunteer to help with summer bird surveys attend a **Florida Audubon training session**. The next training session will be held at Lyonia Preserve in Deltona on **Saturday May 11**, starting at 8:00 am and ending by 12 noon. Pre-register Jacqui Sulek at [jsulek@audubon.org](mailto:jsulek@audubon.org).

## Outreach Activities at Seminole College

Seminole Audubon Society was contacted by Duke Energy Foundation in early December with an opportunity for a grant for planting to attract pollinators and birds. Phyllis Hall made the connection with Dr. Debra Socci, the environmental club advisor at Seminole College. Dr. Socci and her team completed the application and received the grant. Seminole State College students will work with community partners to learn and create habitats for pollinators on the Oviedo campus as an extension of learning in the classroom and activities of the Environmental Club.

Neta Villalobos-Bell, (Florida Native Plant Society, Cuplet Fern chapter, and SAS member), spoke to Dr. Socci's students on February 14 on the topic of planting for pollinators.

Neta also gave the presentation, "Plant Strategies to Attract Pollinators", at the biology colloquium on the Oviedo Campus on February 22. Over 50 students and faculty attended this event. Neta was presented with a gift and gift t-shirt (Pollinator Power) designed by one of the students. Photo: student, Neta, Dr. Marisol de Jesus Berrios, Microbiology professor.



## Gardening Expo

There was a great turn out for the 9th Annual Seminole County Gardening Expo held Saturday February 23. Approximately 200 people visited our SAS booth and learned about SAS and Audubon's Healthy Yard and other campaigns. Thanks to Phyllis Hall, Marty Shepherd, and Jenny & Jules Stewart for helping with this



## Conservation Committee

This year the Florida Senate and House Session will convene on March 5, 2019 through May 3, 2019. Florida Forever funding for conservation land acquisition, plus warding off the incursion of roads and development into rural and designated conservation areas, continue to be big Audubon efforts.

Sign up on the Audubon Florida Advocate for calls to action: <http://fl.audubon.org/conservation>

Follow the Audubon Florida's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AudubonFlorida>

## 2019 Community Outreach for SAS

### Earth Day Celebration

**Seminole College Oviedo Campus**

**Thursday, April 18, 2019, 11:00 – 2:00 pm**

### Lake Lotus Earthfest

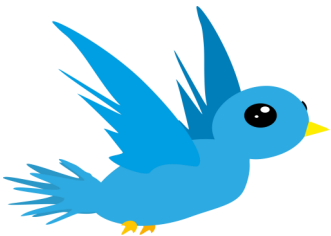
**Saturday, April 20, 2019, 9:00 am – 2:30 pm**

1153 Lake Lotus Road, Altamonte Springs

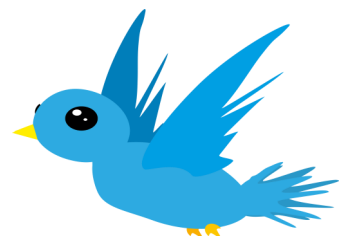
Lake Lotus Park in Altamonte Springs is a 150-acre nature preserve dedicated to protecting our wildlife and ecological systems. Event activities include: Live Music & Guest Speakers, Nature Exhibits & Park Tours Plant & Tree Giveaways, Butterfly Gardening & Release, and more.



The printing and mailing of this newsletter is made possible in part by the generous donations of ACE Hardware stores in Sanford, Longwood, Casselberry, and Oviedo.



**Visit our website:**  
**[SeminoleAudubon.org](http://SeminoleAudubon.org)**

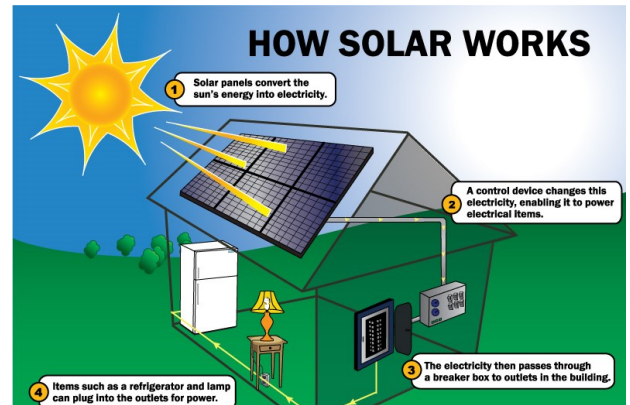


# Second Seminole Solar Co-op Organizing

Solar United Neighbors (SUN) is coordinating a second Solar Co-op in Seminole County. After the kick-off celebration on February 27 public meetings will be scheduled around the county. Last year nearly 400 people attended these instructional meetings. Co-op organizers report that sixty-four homeowners who joined took advantage of the lower prices and had solar installed on their homes. All meetings, membership and dealer quotes are free. This is an excellent opportunity to get a good price. SAS will notify membership about upcoming meeting times and dates. For more information:

<https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/florida/go-solar-in-florida/go-solar-in-a-florida-group/seminole-county-solar-co-op/>

Sam Kendall



## Upcoming Programs

Our March meeting will be held at 2 pm in the meeting room of the Seminole County Public Library, North Branch -150 N. Palmetto Ave., Sanford. Our April meeting will be held along the Wekiva River. Please see program description for details.

## Reg Garner Photographer - Landscape Photography in Seminole Co.

**Sunday March 10**

Reg Garner is a professional photographer with a passion for capturing the beauty of nature with his camera. He spends his free time afield taking pictures along beaches, natural springs or deep in the Florida swamps in his kayak. Reg's inspiration for photography comes from the master of landscape photography, Ansel Adams, whom Reg met as a young man.

Reg has received numerous awards including:

*2015 Photographer of the Year, Professional Photographer's Society*

*2014 Artist of the Year, Seminole County Arts Foundation*

*2009 Nature's Best Photography Contest, Work displayed at Smithsonian National Museum, Washington DC*

## Wekiva River Potluck and Kayaking Annual Meeting and Board Election

**Sunday April 14 (note the different meeting time)**

Join us for food, fellowship, and kayaking during our last meeting of the 2018-2019 season. Bring the entire family! Bring food to share. This event replaces our monthly meeting at the library.

We will meet at 164 Wekiva Park Drive, Sanford, FL 32771, near Katie's Landing. There will be kayaking at 10 am, potluck at 12 noon, and more kayaking at 1 pm. Kayaks will be available or bring your own. Thank you to the Russells for inviting us to their property for fun on the river!





# Upcoming Trips

## Marine Discovery Center, Boat Trip

**Saturday March 16**

Join your friends from Seminole Audubon Society on an exciting boat tour of the mangrove backwaters of the Indian River from New Smyrna Beach. Our tour is scheduled for Saturday, March 16 at the Marine Discovery Center located at 520 Barracuda Dr, New Smyrna Beach. (North Causeway)

We will meet at the Center at 12 noon.

The fee is \$24. payable to Shirley Reilly, preferably cash. Bring water, sunscreen, a camera, and binoculars if you have them.



## St. Augustine Alligator Farm

**Saturday April 20**

Attractions include Wading Bird Rookery, Lemurs of Madagascar, Python Cave, Saltie Crocodiles, Birds of Africa, and all sorts of great reptiles. The Oasis on the Nile exhibit has wonderful picture-taking opportunities as well. Nile Crocodiles and vipers figure prominently. As those of you who went to Gator Land with us this year know, a wading bird rookery above the gators can be spectacular.

The Park is located at 999 Anastasia Blvd. in St. Augustine. This is a one and one-half hour trip from Sanford. Carpool will leave from JoAnn's Fabrics in Sanford at 7:00 am. Cost of Admission is \$25.00.



## We Need Assistance with 2 Tasks

### Monitor Agendas on Website

Do you have 5-10 minutes a week available to visit a website for the SAS Conservation Committee?

Much of our Conservation Committee's work revolves around changes being made to Seminole County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. In order to be aware of pending activities, we need to monitor the agendas of six meetings per month. These agendas are posted to the County website.

We are seeking someone to look at these agendas and notify the Committee of anything that might be of interest to SAS.

If this sounds like something you might like to do, or if you would

like more information contact [phylliscath814@gmail.com](mailto:phylliscath814@gmail.com).

### Mail Welcome Letters to New Members

Do you have a few minutes each month that you could use to print a welcome letter to new members who have not provided an email address? You would then mail the letter with a copy of the most recent newsletter and a Season Brochure to the new member.

Contact [faithaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:faithaudubon@gmail.com) for details and to volunteer.

**2018-2019**  
**Board of Directors & Committee Chairs (eff. 7/1/18)**  
**407-797-4636**

seminoleaudubon@gmail.com

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Frances Brewer	Lake Mary
William Cordoni	Sanford
Elizabeth&Mark Gustin	Lake Mary
David Lewis	Sanford
Megan Martin	Deltona
Glenn Pollack	Lake Mary
Hipolita Rios	Deltona
Gail Standiford	Deltona
James Tingle	Winter Springs
Noreen Yuskaitis	Sanford

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## For New Audubon Members Only

When you join Seminole Audubon Society, you also become a member of Audubon of Florida and the National Audubon Society. Your member benefits will include our newsletter *The JAY*, Audubon Magazine, and the Florida Naturalist. Most importantly, your membership will help us work for better preservation of the environment for the benefit of all species, including humankind.

### Introductory offer \$20.00 / 1 year

Make checks payable to: **National Audubon Society**

and mail with this form to: Seminole Audubon Society

P.O. Box 2977

Sanford FL 32772-2977

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If you join elsewhere, please use Chapter code **C9ZE310Z**

## Seminole Audubon Associate Membership

Available to Audubon Society members assigned to other chapters. Make check payable to Seminole Audubon Society.

**\$10.00 / year**



# The JAY



Seminole Audubon Society

PO Box 2977

Sanford FL 32772-2977

## Calendar of Events

[www.seminoleaudubon.org](http://www.seminoleaudubon.org)

**Program Meetings:** March meeting will be held at 2:00 pm in the Meeting Room of the Seminole County Public Library located at 150 N. Palmetto Ave., in downtown Sanford. Call 407-797-4636 for details.

**Sun. Mar. 10** **Reg Garner Landscape Photographer** in Seminole County

**Sun. Apr. 14** **Wekiva River Potluck & Kayaking**, Annual Meeting & Board Election. See page 7 for details.

**Field Trips** Details and registration information for all of these trips are in this issue of The JAY and on [www.meetup.com/seminoleaudubon-com](http://www.meetup.com/seminoleaudubon-com), [seminoleaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:seminoleaudubon@gmail.com)

**Sat. Mar. 16** **Boat trip Marine Discovery Center**, New Smyrna Beach. Meet at noon. 520 Barracuda Dr. NSB \$24.

**Sat. Apr. 20** **St. Augustine Alligator Farm**. Meet 8:30 am. or carpool 7:00 am from Sanford. Details page 8.

**Crystal Lake Preserve, Lake Mary. Work mornings.**

**Thu. Mar. 14** Time and meeting location 407-323-4506 or [bdenslow@cfl.rr.com](mailto:bdenslow@cfl.rr.com)

## **OTHER**

Sat. Apr. 20 **Lake Lotus Earthfest** 9:00 am—2:30 pm 1153 Lake Lotus Rd., Altamonte Springs. Visit the SAS Booth.

Sat. May 11 **JayWatch Training** 8:00 am—noon Lyonia Preserve, Deltona. Register [jsulek@audubon.org](mailto:jsulek@audubon.org).

**Seminole County Natural Lands Guided Hikes. \$3.00 Online registration** [recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov](http://recreation.seminolecountyfl.gov)

Mar. 23 **Herp (Reptile) Hike** 7:30 pm—9:30 pm Geneva Wilderness Area

Mar. 30 **Compass Class** 9:00 am—11:00 am Geneva Wilderness Area

Apr. 13 **Bats of Florida** 7:00 pm—9:00 pm Ed Yarbrough Nature Center, Geneva Wilderness Area

Apr. 20 **Morning Trail Trek** 8:00 am—noon Black Bear Wilderness Area

May 4 **Swamp Walk** 8:00 am—10:00 am Spring Hammock Preserve

May 25 **Night Hike** 7:30 pm—9:30 pm Lake Proctor Wilderness Area