



Osprey Observer Summer 2023

EDUCATING . CONSERVING . RESTORING

Message from the President

by Rick Polland

I have been doing a bit of research lately on light pollution. We all know that living in or near a municipality with well-lit streets, parking lots, shopping centers, business centers, etc. make it hard to see the amazing stars and their constellations and planets in the sky.

Much study has been done confirming how detrimental artificial lights are to our wildlife and environment. Migrating birds use the natural light of the stars and moon to navigate at night. Artificial light can throw them off course, putting more of a strain on their health during these long trips. Many animals depend on night and day to know when to eat, sleep, hunt, migrate and even reproduce. It doesn't end there; our resident wildlife depends on the darkness to hunt for their food or hide from their prey. Even insects are affected. Plant life needs darkness to survive as well. Humans need darkness to get a good night's sleep.

More and more municipalities are beginning to follow the International Dark-Sky Association's recommendations to use fully shielded outdoor lighting that only face downward, use only lighting that has a temperature of no more than 3000K, and turn lights off in homes and office buildings when not in use.

Here at the Oakland Nature Preserve we are very aware of the harm of artificial lighting. Our parking lot is lit for only a short time in the evening and only if needed. It would be great to see more municipalities and residents become more aware of the damages to the ecosystem that artificial lighting does and move forward to protect the environment, so we don't go down the same path as we have with other forms of pollution. To learn more about the International Dark-Sky Association, go to www.darksky.org

Please join us for Nature Fest at Oakland Nature Preserve on September 23, 2023.

Upcoming Events

- Senior Strides – Thursdays at 9:30

- 9/11 – Homeschool series ages 6-8
- 9/18 – Homeschool series ages 9-12
- 9/22 - FMNP Upland Begins
- **9/23 - Nature Fest at ONP**
- 9/25 – Homeschool series ages 13-16
- 9/30 – Blue Hike, Lake Norris
- 10/1 – Youth Climate Project registration opens
- 10/9 – Homeschool series ages 6-8
- 10/11 – Storytime
- 10/14 – Blue Hike, Trimble Park
- 10/16 – Homeschool series ages 9-12
- 10/23 – Homeschool series ages 13-16
- **10/27-10/28 – Pumpkin Glow**



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



October 27-28

6pm-9pm



Pumpkin Glow Jack-o'-lantern Trail

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

Thank you to our Presenting sponsor
Healthy West Orange!





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

Call 407-905-0054

Nature Fest at Oakland Nature Preserve



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
10AM-2PM**

Wildlife Encounters

Guided Hikes

Food

Lake Apopka Boat Tours



Children's Activities

Merchants & Vendors

Presentations

...and much more!

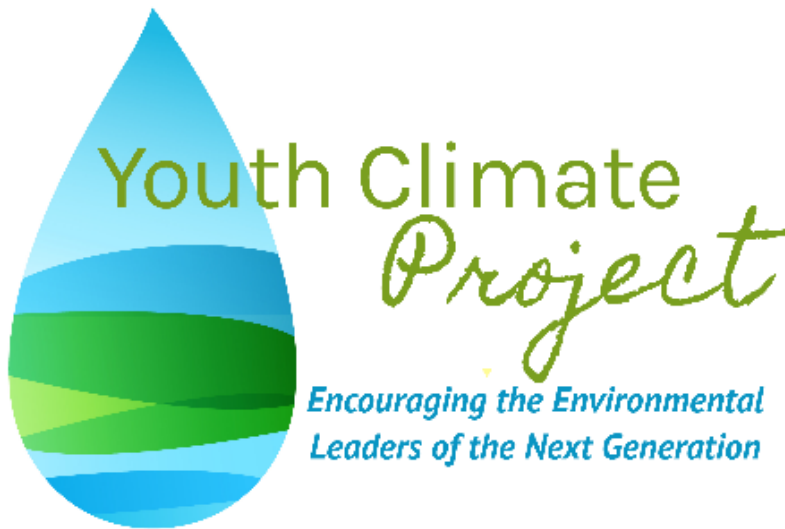


**OAKLAND NATURE
PRESERVE**

**All proceeds support the
Oakland Nature Preserve
www.OaklandNaturePreserve.org**



2023-2024 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 and south Lake 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 \$250-\$7,500. Seven students received scholarships in the 2022-2023 scholarship year!

Lisa Nguyen	Ocoee HS	\$7500
Blake Thompson	Homeschool	\$6000
Kishen Sukhu	Ocoee HS	\$5000
Tenielle MacCabe	Homeschool	\$750
Benedict Ridore	Ocoee HS	\$250
Jake MacTavish	Ocoee HS	\$250
Bruno Rodriguez-Mendez	Ocoee HS	\$250

Visit www.YouthClimateProject.org to find more information about this year's scholarship opportunity.

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.



We dig our volunteers! by Nicole O'Brien

This spring we had several scouts complete their Eagle Projects to benefit ONP. Scout projects enhance our ability to connect with all of you and we are very grateful for the hard work put into these projects.

Dillon Adams from Troop 210 built picnic tables for the Green trail and re-planted the rainbow garden in Nature Play. Thank you, Dillon!

Truman Angel from Troop 268 built a couple of benches for around the dig box and for birdwatching next to the building. He also fenced in the porch extension to reduce a safety hazard. Thank you, Truman!

Joshua Klopp from Troop 210 re-vamped the well and made a nice lining for the trail leading from the back steps of the porch to the Blue Trail, to help prevent erosion during storms. Thank you, Joshua!

Henry Cramer from Troop 996 installed a new trail and interpretation on the Green trail to explore Florida's prehistoric past. Thank you, Henry!

Lucas Mancia from Troop 210 repaired a section of fencing on our Yellow trail that a tree had fallen on and broken. Thank you, Lucas!

James Prophet from Troop 996 built a rack to display the historic canoe alongside the environmental education center. Thank you, James!





ONP HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Join us in the wild for small group hands-on science at ONP!

Explore the environment while gaining an understanding of plants, animals, and the ecosystems in which they exist. ONP Homeschool Series classes are state standard guided, hands-on small group classes allowing for age-appropriate inquiry and exploration.

Homeschool Series (2 hours)

Monthly class ages 6-16 \$10 members (family membership required)

\$12 non-members / per student

Ages 6-8

Sept 11 – Turtles, snakes, and gators;
Oh my!

Oct 9 - Awesome Amphibians

Nov 6 – Can you smell the flowers?

Ages 9-12

Sept 18 – Reptile Wonders

Oct 16 – Amphibians, our Slimy Friends

Nov 13 – Plants 101

Ages 13-16

Sept 25 – Reptiles, a class of
their own.

Oct 23 – Amphibians - Did
you know.....

Nov 27 – Plant Biology

Class limit - 16 students, 8 minimum

Visit oaklandnaturepreserve.org/Learn/ for additional information and registration

Summer Camp Fun in Oakland

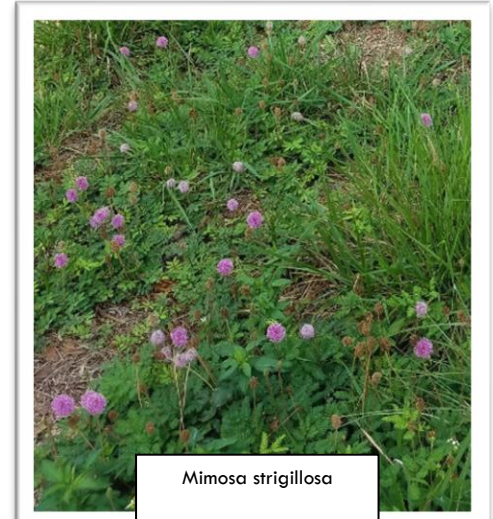




What's In Bloom

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

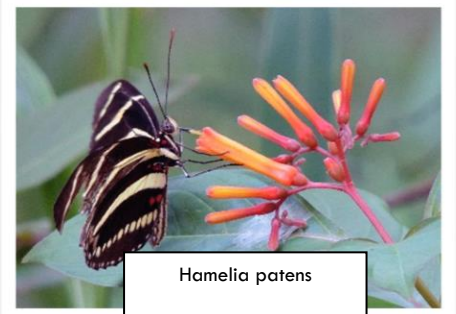
- **Mimosa/Powderpuff**, *Mimosa strigillosa*, is in bloom around the Education Center and Butterfly Gardens. The leaves fold up when touched, giving it another common name: “sensitive mimosa”. An important cover species, this species of mimosa provides many ecological functions: the seeds are eaten 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 *Satyrion 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). Although don't live in Lake Apopka, 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.

Animal Ambassador Update by Nicole O'Brien



We want to introduce you to Dart, our new Eastern Tiger Salamander. Tiger Salamanders are a type of mole (burrowing) salamander. Dart has already proven to be a gregarious ambassador animal and our visitors have loved meeting him. Come see him at Nature Fest! We also added an amphiuma to our bullfrog tank. Amphiumas are an aquatic salamander that have a single gill slit but also breath air and has non-functioning hind legs and very small front legs.

We just welcomed bobwhite quail chicks to our covey (the name for a flock of quail). They can be found in the turtle pond enclosure. Northern Bobwhite are native to the area, most often found in old growth longleaf pine sandhill habitat. They are known as the "fire bird" because they evolved to live in habitat maintained by frequent, low-intensity fire. Did you know that quail can be a great alternative to chickens for home egg production? Their eggs are smaller, but they can lay almost daily and can begin laying at a younger age. They are also smaller and therefore need less room.



Thank you to Boggy Creek Airboat Adventures for donating our wonderful new additions! <https://bcairboats.com/>

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 22 – October 27

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

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Oakland Nature Preserve, Oakland, FL
www.oaklandnaturepreserve.org
407-905-0054



OAKLAND NATURE
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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!

