

Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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Newsletter #96

Founded 1976

June 2016

www.calusalandtrust.org

A TRIBUTE TO PHIL BUCHANAN

John Kendall, President

On May 19th, while strolling in his own home garden, conservation icon Phil Buchanan, age 72, passed away leaving his wife, Sam, and the rest of us in mourning. A retired attorney, Phil was born and raised on an Indian Reservation in North Carolina; he was fluent in five languages, including his native Cherokee.

Perhaps once every generation or so an individual appears who dedicates his skills, energy and passion to such an extent that it carves a community's persona. Phil was that person for Pine Island. A past president of CLT he preached pragmatic preservation and championed the cause of flora and fauna that would otherwise possess no control over their destinies against the hands of human beings.

As the Island's land conservancy, the Calusa Land Trust deeply regrets our loss of Phil. However, we remain optimistic that his movement and his spirit will forever guide the future of Pine Island. A celebration-of-life memorial is in the planning for next January together with a nature preserve to be named in his honor.

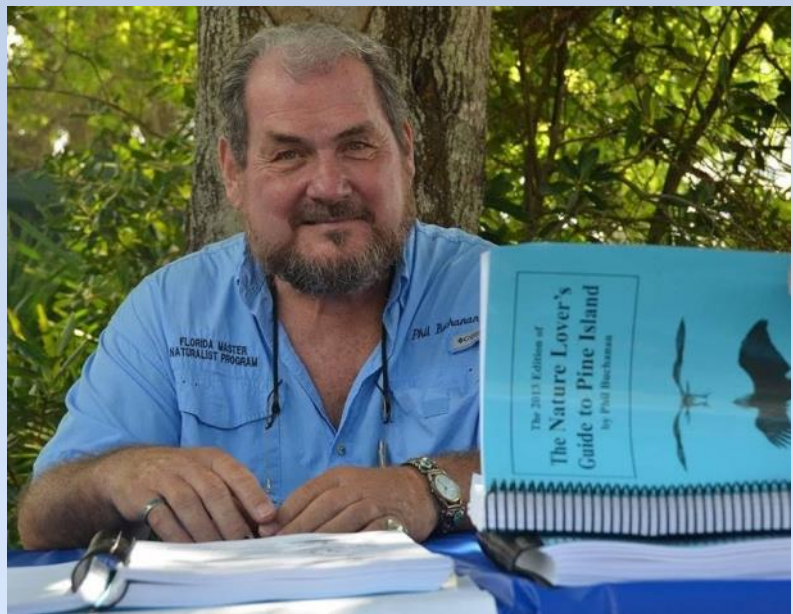


Photo by Michal Fidler

FROM THE BIRDS' NEST

NEW HOMES FOR OUR SYMBOL

John Kendall, President

Past Birds' Nest articles have explored multiple subjects (preserves, operations, fundraising, projects, etc.) so perhaps it became time for a Birds' Nest article to discuss, well, bird nests.

The Calusa Land Trust, as Pine Island's land conservancy, acquires land to create nature preserves. Its intention is to provide in perpetuity suitable habitat for the survival of nature's interlocking creatures including, of course, birds. Our preserves ensure homes for virtually all birds native to Florida's subtropical southwest gulf coast, most prominent being the several active bald eagle nests located therein.

However, CLT chose the osprey as its logo persona, it being a symbol of the independent, industrious, nature respecting, resilient, fishing dependent inhabitants of Pine Island dating from the native Calusa to today's islanders. Thus, assisting the osprey in house construction was a logical venture.

Last year, in order to complete a final merit badge requirement needed to attain the coveted Eagle Scout honor, local Troop 20 boy scout Justin Chura constructed several osprey nests with materials provided by CLT. Earlier this spring CLT volunteers attached the nests to the utility poles which were then erected by MasTec, a contractor compensated by Lee County Electric Cooperative. Of the four elevated nests two were located at the St. James Creek Preserve, one at the Dobbs Preserve and the last at a private preserve in Bokeelia. The ospreys must have indeed loved their new castles for the accompanying photograph was snapped within one hour of its completion.



The Calusa Land Trust does not just acquire property, but rather we steward the land utilizing the sweat and funds donated from people like you! CLT (and its ospreys) thank you for your continuing support.

Dobb's Preserve Work Party Report from April 9, 2016

By Gloria Andrews

A band of 8 dedicated warriors set out to clear the path & open "headways" on each side of a distant waterway to make way for the placement of a donated bridge to link the 2 sections of our Dobb's Preserve on this comfortable sunny Saturday.

Two sturdy plank bridges have already been built by our Scouts to get us to into the beauty of the Preserve.

Further along the way, while some workers trimmed back invading plant life, makeshift "Log Bridges" were being created over "mucky" areas. In the meantime other workers dug with beveled edged stone into the mosquito ditch piles for "concretions" to create a "Rock Bridge" (Stepping Stones) over another mucky area in the path. This was envisioned and created by Tom & Pat Vandervelde.

The experience & the place lent us to thinking "what if" this was 1516? We would all be Calusa Indians making way to the fishing canoes coming into "safe harbor" from the Gulf to unload their catch.



Tom and Pat Vandervelde

So watch the progress as work is being done to prepare the way for the latest bridge to be "put into place". Better yet, volunteer to help our Chief Sr. Ranger, Ed Chapin, with this plan. Call him at 239-218-7531.

Make **your** way to Dobbs Preserve and see what **you** experience. Directions: Stringfellow to Tropical Point, turn right onto Sabal Drive and follow to Preserve signs.

Land Stewardship Report

Ed Chapin

Work Parties past:

The volunteer turn out at our work parties have been record breaking this year. It is really amazing how much work can be accomplished in 3.5 hours with 20 volunteers working. Our thanks go out to our many hard working volunteers

On Saturday February 15th we had 23 volunteers toiling at our new Ed Chapin Preserve which is located on northeast Pine Island at Smokehouse Bay. We worked on clearing the road easement on Royal Oakley Lane and the parking area and launch site for the Peter Ordway Paddling Trail. This paddling trail is currently being worked on and should be ready for paddlers in the Fall.

On Saturday March 12th we had 20 volunteers working on another new preserve, the Wigert/Barron Preserve which is located in Bokeelia, on the east end of Barrancas Blvd. and Aura Lane. We worked on clearing and cleaning up the fence line. The fence and parking area are now completed and soon we will have a local company, Forestry Resources doing some major invasive exotic plant control on this new preserve.

On Saturday April 9th we had 19 volunteers working at our Dobbs Preserve which is located near Tropical Point on Sabal Drive in St. James City. This Preserve is about sixty acres of Mangroves with a mosquito ditch along the western property line. We have been developing a walking trail along the spoil piles by the ditch, removing invasive exotics like Australian Pines (*Casuarina* spp.) and Brazilian peppers (*Schinus terrebinthifolius*). Also the Pine Island Boy Scout Troop have built two foot bridges on the north end of the trail and we are planning one more bridge on the south end of the path, creating a loop trail. The last bridge should be finished in the Fall.

And on Saturday May 14th we had 18 volunteers working on our new Taylor Preserve located on Alcorn St, near the Catholic Church. This preserve is about 9 acres and it has an active Bald Eagles nest! We worked on creating a maintenance and observation trail (without getting too close). We were able to establish a rough trail and found a lot of invasive exotic plants. This will be an ongoing project for years to come. Our thanks to Greg Lignelli for having the crew over for lunch at his house which is next door to the preserve. Greg is on the CLT Board of Directors and is the Lead Ranger for this Preserve.

Work Parties Coming Up:

Saturday 9 July	St. James Creek Preserve, Stabile Road, SJC
August –	SUMMER VACATION!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Saturday 10 Sept.	Wigert/Barron Preserve, Barrancas Blvd & Aura Lane, Bokeelia

NEWS FROM THE PAST - TWENTY YEARS AGO

The Walbridge Otto (Bill) Fritts Park 1995

On May 10th we closed on our \$10,000 purchase of a 1½-acre uplands parcel just south of the Pink Citrus mobile home park near Bokeelia. Immediately north of the parcel (across Beach Daisy Lane) is an existing drainageway that connects to an old mosquito control ditch system which then flows into our Big Jim Creek Preserve. This site is an excellent location for picnics and meetings and we hope as a base for canoe outings into Big Jim Creek and Pine Island Sound.

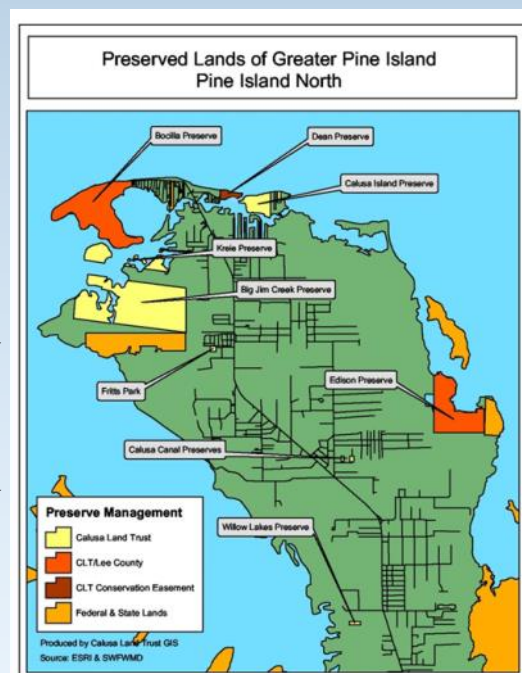
Despite untold hours of research over many months by Rich Larkin and his Land Acquisition Committee, we don't have definitive assurance that we can launch canoes directly from this site into the drainage system. The title and easement history of this drainage system is truly baffling. Our option to buy this parcel was expiring, so after considerable debate, the Board decided to go ahead with the purchase. The Board of Directors has hired title professionals to take over the research and get to the bottom of this situation. We will keep our members posted on what we learn. We managed to pay cash for this purchase in order to take advantage of the opportunity, but there goes our emergency fund again. We also have an option to purchase an adjoining acre to expand this park and so must decide whether to pursue the expansion or not. Further details will follow.

A celebration for this newest parcel is being planned but first we must complete our obligations under the contract including exotic plant removal, putting up suitable memorial signage, and planting a native plant hedge to separate us from the former owner.

The Land Management Committee discussed the Trust's obligations for improvements to the new Walbridge Otto (Bill) Fritts Park on Beach Daisy Lane. These include the immediate removal of all Brazilian pepper trees and the partial removal of Australian pines. Selected Australian pines will be retained for shade until our newly planted native vegetation can serve that purpose. We have committed 170 hours of volunteer labor on this property by mid-August.

AND WE ARE STILL GROWING ...

As of May 8 of this year (1995), the Calusa Land Trust had 411 names on its mailing roster, 197 of which were current with their dues. *(Editors note: we now have over 600 current members!)* This is an increase of 19 new members since our last newsletter. Membership is tracked one year from the date of a previous donation; when that period has passed, an asterisk (*) is printed after the member's name on the mailing labels. While we added 19 new members, many existing members have not yet renewed, so please consider this newsletter as your friendly reminder. *(We now use the Pink Label System to remind members to stay current with their annual dues, a task maintained by our Membership committee Chair, Bill Hummer)*



Zika! What's in a name?

Zika is the word that seems to be on every newscast lately. The name comes from the Zika Forest in East Africa where this particular virus was discovered in 1947 in monkeys. It was thought to be relatively harmless until it spread outside Africa, first to French Polynesia and later to Brazil. It was in the Western Hemisphere that the problem of birth defects became apparent. It is now widely distributed throughout the Caribbean, South and Central America. The virus is spread by a particular mosquito (or two) that are commonly found living near people. *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* are aggressive day biters known as “container breeding” mosquitoes. These skeeters love to lay eggs and live as larvae in almost any object that holds water, such as bird baths, rain barrels, clogged rain gutters, flower pot saucers, old tires, even tank bromeliads. Larvae have been found in the caps of 2-liter soda bottles that happened to land wrong side up and had collected rain water. Anything that holds water for more than a week can breed these mosquitoes. They are **NOT** found breeding in mangroves, salt marshes, flooded fields or ditches where you might expect to find salt marsh or flood water mosquitoes.

The adults are not known to fly far from their breeding sites, so if you have these pesky vector mosquitoes outside your home, they are likely breeding in your or your neighbor's yard. The solution can be as simple as policing your neighborhood, flushing bird baths and tank bromeliads weekly, taking out tires out to the curb for trash pickup, turning over or removing any containers that hold water.

For things are not easily flushed or drained, a product like “Mosquito Bits” can be useful. These are small corn cob grits impregnated with a commonly found, EPA approved bacteria, Bti (*Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis*) that is safe for mammals and even adult insects but very effective in particular against the larvae of these two mosquito species. This product may be found in many home and garden centers or even ordered on line using the popular web site www.Smile.Amazon.com.

Ridding your area of these two mosquito species will also protect you from Dengue Fever, another virus which these two mosquito species also vector. Dengue (aka: break bone fever) has just made a reappearance in the Florida Keys after a ten-year hiatus. At that time (2006) Dengue also popped up in Miami-Dade and Martin Counties as well.

Are you shopping online any time soon?



Our CLT treasurer was notified this month that we will be issued a \$51.87 donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between January 1 and March 31, 2016. If I can't find an item I need “on the Island”, I'll use Amazon and why not help out the Land Trust at the same time? Yuou can use this link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-1782265> which will automatically load the Calusa Land Trust Smile page and the CLT will be rewarded with a 0.5% donation every time you shop.

_____ \$ 25 Basic Member
_____ \$ 50 Donor
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_____ \$1000 Benefactor
\$ _____ Other Amount

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PO Box 216
Bokeelia, FL 33922

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Full financial details, including federal tax returns, can be obtained by contacting the Land Trust's Treasurer at (239) 283-3871 during working hours. Federal Employer Identification Number: **59-1782265**. The Calusa Land Trust is an exempt Organization under section **501(c)(3)** of the IRS code. Florida Dept of Agriculture & Consumer Services registration number **CH3439**. No portion of donations received by the Trust is paid to any professional solicitor. 100% of all donations are received by the Trust.
June 2016

Work Parties – Everyone Welcome

**They are on the second Saturday of each month except August.
9:00am to Noon We need your help.**

Saturday 9 July	St. James Creek Preserve, Stabile Road, SJC
August –	SUMMER VACATION!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Saturday 10 Sept.	Wigert/Barron Preserve, Barrancas Blvd & Aura Lane, Bokeelia



Future work parties, check with Ranger Ed 239.218.7531

Corporate Gift Matching Programs

Many larger corporations have programs where they will match employee donations to eligible charities. The Calusa Land Trust qualifies for these matching contributions. If you are an employee or retiree of one of these corporations, remember to follow up and ask for the matching gifts for your recent and future donations. This is a great way to augment your charitable giving and make a significant impact on CLT funds.



Calusa Land Trust & Nature Preserve
of Pine Island, Inc.
P.O. Box 216
Bokeelia, Florida 33922

PINK
ADDRESS
LABEL? TIME
TO RENEW.

The Calusa Land Trust Mission Statement

The purpose of the Calusa Land Trust is to protect the natural diversity and beauty of the Pine Island region by acquiring, managing and preserving in perpetuity environmentally sensitive or historically important land and to foster appreciation for and understanding of the environment and our past.

The Land Trust is a broad coalition of individuals, families, and businesses who agree that the acquisition and protection of natural land is important if we are to retain the quality of life which makes the Pine Island region so attractive to people and to wildlife. The Land Trust is supported entirely by people who donate their time, talent, and financial support to protect irreplaceable natural resources. The Land Trust does not engage in political activity or lobbying and takes no position on zoning or regulatory matters. The Calusa Land Trust represents people's willingness to put their money and time where their hearts are to make a difference.

