

**IMPORTANT
DATES
FOR
2024**



Annual Meeting
January 21, 2024
Fritts Park,
on Beach Daisy Lane,
Bokeelia

Work/Fun Parties

January 13
9 AM - Noon
Fritts Park on
Beach Daisy Lane

**Duck Race
March 2nd**

Marker #3 Coastal Cantina,
SJC

**Peter Ordway Memorial
Paddles**

(To be determined)

For more Information

Check your email,

Our website

Calusalandtrust.org

Our [Facebook page](#)

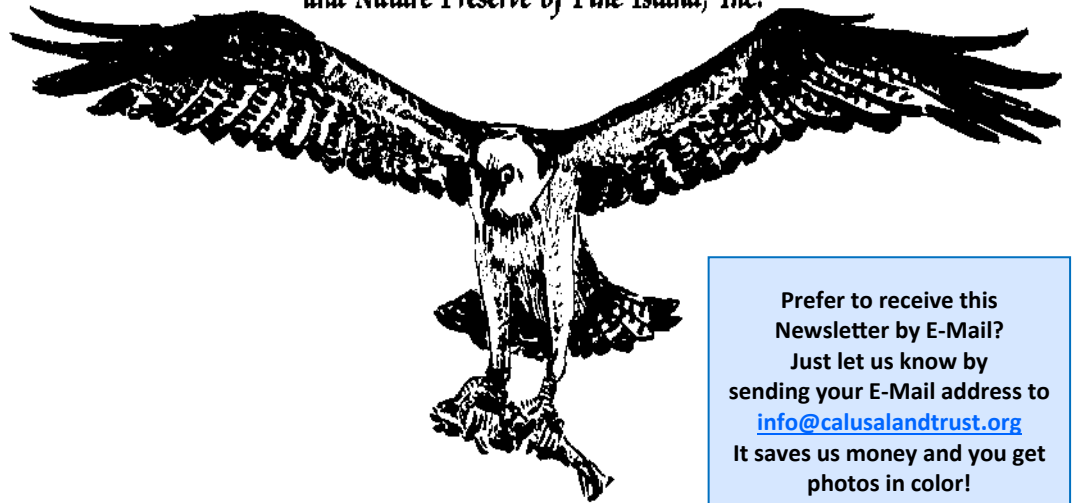
or

the [Pine Island Eagle](#)



Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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Just let us know by
sending your E-Mail address to
info@calusalandtrust.org
It saves us money and you get
photos in color!

Newsletter #124
Founded 1976

January 2024

www.calusalandtrust.org

The Presidents Corner

December 2023 marks five years that I have served as your CLT President. At the January Annual Membership Meeting, I will be turning over the gavel to a new President. It has been an honor to represent this fine organization for the past 5 years and what follows is an overview of our accomplishments in that time.

Preserves - In my hometown of Bokeelia, we finished the development of the Wigert-Barron Preserve trails and cleared the east side adding trails and a second entrance. A long leaf pine tree restoration effort was undertaken, and 100 seedlings were planted on the preserve. At the Taylor-Willow Lake Preserve, nature trails were established and signage created. The entry was cleared, and the access planted with trees. A gate and culvert were installed and a small parking area was developed with a welcome kiosk. This preserve suffered major hurricane damage but real progress has been made in getting it cleaned up. The Ed Chapin Preserve was next on the project list. With the addition of the two-acre Kell Kellerman Vista this upland piece needed major clearing of invasive trees and plants. Three years later, this Preserve vista looks very good now. In Saint James City, the tireless work of members and volunteers improved the trail at the Dobbs Preserve including walk-ways across the wet areas and leveling the path over some of the dirt mounds.



The Saint Jude Trail suffered major hurricane damage and a record 39 volunteers turned out for the recent December Work/Fun party. These efforts were supported by Gerard's Tree Service with time and equipment at no charge to CLT. Williamson Brothers provided the use of a large dumpster for cleanup, also at no charge. The CLT deeply appreciates the donated resources of these two key Pine Island businesses. Work will be ongoing at this Preserve for the foreseeable future as the boardwalk and dock that overlooks Saint James Creek must be replaced. A \$95,546 contract was signed with Williamson Brothers for this work and permitting is underway with various government agencies.

Administrative -For the first time, the Acquisitions and Planning Committee did a needs assessment of each Preserve, then created short-term and long-term management goals for each Preserve. The Finance Committee improved our money management to get a higher rate of return on our savings as we continue to search for suitable properties to purchase. On the technical side a new database program called Donor Perfect was purchased to aid us in the management of our membership and donor list and keep track of volunteer hours.

Member Outreach - A new Calusa Land Trust web page was created along with a Facebook page to help us keep in contact with members and future members. Brochures were designed for the two new preserves, Wigert-Barron and Taylor-Willow Lake, that include a brief history and trail map of the preserves. Two additional brochures were also designed, one describes the Calusa Land Trust and its mission, and the other covers the different CLT walking and paddling trails. A major redesign and update of the popular Nature Lover's Guide to Pine Island was completed and is now in its third printing.

Fund Raising - But you can't plan for everything....While all of this was going on we had to navigate through some trying times, i.e. the COVID 19 epidemic followed a couple of years later with the worst hurricane in our Island's history, Hurricane Ian. COVID caused us to cancel our major fund raiser, the Rubber Duck Race in 2021. The race needed to be cancelled again last year because of widespread damage from Hurricane Ian. But thanks to some innovative and creative thinking by Committee Members an alternative Duck Raffle was generated (both times but different formats) and was very successful. The Duck Race is ON for March 2, 2024 at the newly renovated Marker 3 Coastal Cantina (formerly the Ragged Ass) in Saint James City!

Goodbyes - Long time CLT Board Member Ed Chapin served in many capacities over the history of the CLT but health issues led to his resignation from the Board, then the hurricane hastened his moved north to his brother's home. We noted "final Goodbyes" on the passing of former Board members Jaren Cernicky, Russ Costa and longtime CLT historian Rubye Woodhead. And just this past month, current Board member, Nancy Weir, passed away suddenly while setting up for a CLT sales event.

I will continue to see you at CLT events and the monthly Work/Fun Parties. I will continue to serve on the Board in other capacities but now it is time for a new leader. It has been my pleasure to serve you.
Robert



ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

48th Annual Meeting of the Calusa Land Trust and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.

Please join us for the 48th Annual Meeting of the Calusa Land Trust to be held Sunday, January 21, 2024, beginning at 1 pm. The location will be at the Land Trust's Fritts Park on Beach Daisy Lane in Bokeelia. Beach Daisy lane is to the west of Stringfellow Rd, just north of the fire station and south of the Palms of Pine Island trailer park. The meeting is open to all. Attendees will be briefed on the care of the Land Trust's 2,400 + acres of preserved land, status of our preserves, continuing Hurricane Ian challenges and pending restoration plans for 2024 and beyond. Also available will be the Calusa Clothesline (to buy CLT t-shirts, jackets, hats and other merchandise). The newly published 7th edition of *The Nature Lover's Guide to Pine Island* will be available

There will be socializing with old and new friends, raffles, and a deli spread buffet feast. To join four continuing directors (Robert Ballard, Carol Mullin Joe Perry and Les Smith) the membership will choose to elect seven incumbent directors (Carolyn Murphey, Judy Ott, Frank Potter, Joan Rosenberg, Cheryl King, Marty Kendall and John Kendall). Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. For any questions, contact John Kendall at (239)283-8175.



Another way to contribute to the Land Trust

As a reminder, qualified charitable distributions or QCDs, offer eligible older Americans a great way to easily give to charity such as CLT (a 501(c)3 charity) before the end of the year. Moreover, for those who are at least 72, QCDs count toward the IRA owner's required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year. Please contact your financial advisor for more details.

‘The Dirty (Three Fourth) Dozen Invasive Exotic plants on Pine Island

A rough personal description with links to photos and control measures by Brian Cotterill
(Use the included links for photos, control measures and distribution).

Australian Pine - *Casuarina* species

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/casuarina-species/>

Australian Pine was the dominate tree on the northern most part of Wigert Barron preserve when CLT first acquired the property. A lot of the wood chips on the paths are from their removal. While mostly removed, the wetter high grounds are still perfect habitat for their return. Occasional sprouts still appear, and vigilance is required to ensure they don't take over again and form dense "monoculture" thickets with little value for native plants birds or insects.



Brazilian Pepper - *Schinus terebinthifolia*

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/schinus-terebinthifolia/>



Brazilian Pepper, it seems like we've been fighting this tree forever! Related to both poison ivy and poison sumac, the small green finely toothed compound leaves with its peppery smell are unforgettable to many. The tiny red berries are its chief method of dispersal via bird. It's the number one invasive plant species in Florida, infesting huge swaths of land in South Florida. Cold weather keeps this population mainly south of I-4 interstate

Carrotwood tree - *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/cupaniopsis-anacardioides/>

I recognize this by its dark green compound leaves that are often curled under at the edges. Its seeds are shiny black set in an orange seed pod and seemingly irresistible to birds who spread the seeds onward. The trees bark is smooth and uniformly light brown.



Earleaf Acacia - *Acacia auriculiformis*

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/acacia-auriculiformis/>



The curling asymmetrical leaves are the big give-away for this exotic invasive from Australia and this time of year the plant produces sprays of small yellow flowers. On Pine Island it is forming dense thickets of trees with little else growing beneath.

Java Plum – *Syzygium cumii*

<https://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/syzygium-cumini/>

USF's Florida Plant Atlas* describes the tree as "young stems grayish white and lower bark coarse and discolored. Leaves opposite, simple, entire, elliptic to broadly oblong, smooth, glossy, somewhat leathery, 5-10 cm (2-5 in) long, short pointed at tips; petioles to 3 cm (1.2 in) long; leaf midrib prominent, yellowish; blades with many lateral veins closely parallel." The Taylor-Willow Lakes preserve has many examples.



Melaleuca – *Melaleuca Quinquenervia*

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/melaleuca-quinquenervia/>



There should need no introduction as it's one of the earliest plant invaders from Australia. e bark of the tree falls off in paper-like sheets, the wood is brittle and flowers come in whorls of white bottlebrushes, the leaves are alternate, simple with parallel venation. Forms dense stands with little understory,

Word Climbing fern - *Lygodium microphyllum*

<https://myfwc.com/media/3225/invasiveplants-lygodium.pdf>

It's a vine, it's a fern, it's both! This plant climbs up neighboring plants to get sunlight to its lacy leaves. Control can be difficult, as mechanical or physical removal may enhance spore dispersal in some cases. Can be found at St Jude's trail and Taylor Willow Lake



Rosary Pea - *Abrus precatorius*

<https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/abrus-precatorius/>



The pretty shiny red & black seeds from this SE Asian vine is considered one of the most poisonous plants in the world, though not to birds that disperse their seeds. The leaves a compound and lacy, was prolific vine on the fences surrounding Wigert-Barron Preserve.

Umbrella Tree - Schefflera actinophylla
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST585>

Everyone has seen this old Florida landscape plant that has escaped from horticulture to weed status in the wild. Curiously, not considered a problem in north Florida where cold weather holds them at bay, the seemingly unique palmately compound leaves are a dead giveaway. I have found clusters of the red flowers and fruits that had been trimmed and apparently thrown in the water, that had washed up on adjacent islands like Picnic Island and sprouted many dozen seedlings.



Great Calusa Land Trust Annual Rubber Duck Race

**Mark Your Calendars!
The Ducks Are Coming!
The Ducks Are Coming! Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race
Saturday, March 02, 2024 at
Marker #3 Coastal Cantina in Saint James City.**

After a long 2 years of quiet hibernation, the 3,000 Bright Yellow Ducks are in their Winter Nesting grounds. Soon they will start their rigorous exercises and training in preparation for 2024's Best Duck Race, hitting the water for their long awaited swim on the Island!

A fun filled day awaits with Live and Silent Auctions, Entertainment, Food, Beverages and Games for all ages. Your support of the Calusa Land Trust, Pine Island's all-volunteer conservancy, is greatly appreciated. We could not fulfill our mission to acquire, preserve and protect this special place we call home, without our Island of volunteers and donors. If you have recently moved to the island and/or have a new business on the island and would like to donate an item for the Silent Auction, Live Auction, Plant Table, Lucky Duck Wheels or Money, to the Duck Race AND/OR volunteer to work the day of the race, please call or text Alice Trant, Queen Duck Wrangler, at 239 243-6381 or email atrant1661@comcast.net and we can Make it Happen!

Duck Race Tickets will be on sale this month from CLT volunteers and at Island Restaurants & Eateries in January - so Buy Early and Buy Often!

First Place Duck WINS \$1,000!

See you at Pine Island's Premier Event

Our Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race

Saturday March 2, 2024!



Warmly Remembering Nancy Weir

With deep sadness and regret, the Calusa Land Trust shares the loss of one of our members on November 25, 2023 due to an unexpected health event. Nancy Weir was a devoted member of the CLT Board of Directors and Chairperson of the Merchandising Committee. She passed away while setting up our booth for the monthly Outdoor Island Market. Nancy will be remembered for her tireless energy at the CLT Work/Fun Parties and at the annual Rubber Duck Race and Rummage Sale. She was always ready to pitch in and help with whatever was going on. Nancy was instrumental in the push to get the trails upgraded at the Dobbs Preserve and she worked tirelessly with others to see that they were completed.

We send our deepest and sincerest sympathy to Nancy's family and friends. We will always picture her friendly smile. She will be always remembered as a team player with a positive energy which made her a pleasure to work with.



Nancy & Ed Chapin taking a break at Wigert Barron work party



Annual Membership Form (Renewal due Jan 1st)

_____ \$ 25 Basic Member
_____ \$ 50 Donor
_____ \$100 Contributor

_____ \$500 Patron
_____ \$1000 Benefactor
\$ _____ Other Amount

Mail to:
Calusa Land Trust
PO Box 216
Bokeelia, FL 33922

CREDIT CARD #: _____ **EXPIRES:** _____ / _____ **Sec. Code** _____

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Name: _____
E-Mail: _____
Address: _____
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State, Zip code : _____

<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> E-Mail How do you want your newsletter delivered?

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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.
November 2023



Board of Directors

Robert Ballard President	John Kendall Director	Bill Hummer Director
Frank Potter Vice President	Joan Rosenberg Treasurer	Carolyn Murphey Director
Cheryl King Director	Carol Mullin Director	Judy Ott Planning & Acquisition
Marty Kendall Secretary	Joe Perry Director	Les Smith Land Steward

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



The Calusa Land Trust Mission Statement

“The purpose for which the corporation is organized is to own and hold real and personal property for the use and benefit of the general public; to perform all other matters and acts authorized pursuant to the laws of the State of Florida for corporations not for profit; to acquire, hold, and manage environmentally sensitive lands, archaeological and historic sites, and other natural lands; to encourage education and research in the fields of conservation and preservation; to establish nature preserves or other protected areas to be used for scientific, educational, aesthetic, or passive recreational purposes; to cooperate with other entities having similar or related objectives; and to engage in any other activity relating to the furtherance of the foregoing objectives”*.

The Calusa Land Trust represents people's willingness to put their money and time where their hearts are to make a difference.

*Calusa Land Trust Articles of Incorporation, Article II