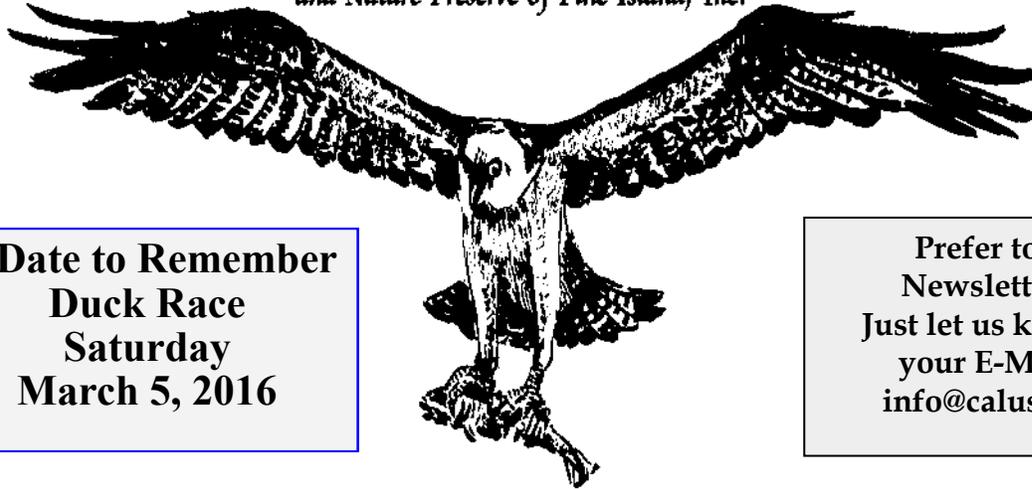


# Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



**A Date to Remember  
Duck Race  
Saturday  
March 5, 2016**

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**Newsletter #95  
Founded 1976**

**February 2016  
[www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)**

## **GREAT CALUSA RUBBER DUCK RACE SET FOR SATURDAY MARCH 5th**

The Calusa Land Trust's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race is scheduled for Saturday March 5 at Woody's Waterside Restaurant in St. James City. The festivities will begin at noon, comprising of live entertainment, drink/lunch specials, games, raffles, the live auction and a reinstated silent auction of prizes and gift certificates donated by local businesses and individuals.

The big event, however, will be the duck races occurring between 3 and 4 pm (tide is a factor.) The Lucky Duck Race is first with 100 baby rubber ducks (\$20 each sold only on race day) competing for cash winnings. The big event will thereafter be the adult rubber duck race comprising of 3000 numbered ducks (\$5 each and already on sale) racing for cash and gifts. The winning duck will earn \$1,000 cash, the 2nd place duck scores \$500 and the third place quacker brings home \$250. There will also be 5 runners up ducks each earning a bag of goodies worth at least \$100.



After resting in the off season all ducks have been in spring training since February 1 and are just itching and quacking in anticipation of race day. If you are not the owner of a winning duck, you can be satisfied by your support of the Calusa Land Trust, Pine Island's all-volunteer land conservancy with its mission to acquire, preserve and protect this paradise called Pine Island.

Rubber duck race tickets are now available from vendors, Woody's or the website ([calusalandtrust.org](http://calusalandtrust.org).) You may also contact CLT's president, John Kendall at 283-8175.

## Treasures of the Trails for February 2016: Walk Softly Through the Wigert-Barron Preserve – It's Osprey Nesting Season

Photo & Text by Judy Ott

If you walk quietly through the Barron Wigert Preserve you'll hear the resident osprey pair chatting with each other and see them tending to their nest.

Ospreys, sometimes called fish hawks, are relatives of hawks and eagles, but they have their own separate family. All Ospreys worldwide are part of the same species because they have specialized physical characteristics and unique behavior for catching prey. Their feet are designed for holding slippery fish, with spines, backward facing scales and an outer toe that is reversible so they can grasp their prey firmly with two toes in front and two toes in back.

Ospreys are large, fish-eating raptors sometimes mistaken for bald eagles. They can reach 24 inches tall and 72 inches across the wings. They have white heads and brown upper bodies like eagles, but they have a distinctive white underside. They fly with arched wings and drooping wing tips, more like gulls than eagles. Males and females look alike and both have black lines across their eyes which extend down their neck. They have golden brown eyes, with transparent blue membranes that can be pulled down for protection. And they have nostrils that can be closed during dives into the water. Ospreys are quite vocal with each other, and others who approach their space too closely. Their calls include sharp whistles, *cheep cheeps*, *yewk*, *yewks*, and frenzied *cheereeks*.

Ospreys usually live about 7–10 years, but some have lived as long as 25 years. They mate for life and mating generally occurs from December through February. This year, however, some local experts have observed that Pine Island ospreys are nesting later than usual, possibly due to the cold rainy weather. Osprey pairs do a circle dance the sky and the males add a swoop high up into the sky calling loudly, then come back to the nest bringing in fish or sticks. Ospreys usually nest in large trees, utility poles, channel markers and human-made nesting platforms. Males fetch most of the nesting material (sticks, Spanish moss, flotsam) and can be seen breaking dead sticks off nearby trees as they fly by. There was a photo in the Pine Island Eagle several years back of an osprey nest with a fishing pole in it, followed by the response a week later from the angler who was missing their pole. Ospreys use the same nest for many years, adding new materials each year, so the nest keeps getting larger and can reach 6 feet across and 10 feet deep. They defend their nests vigorously from other ospreys and birds, especially eagles. The females lay 2 – 4 yellowish eggs about 2 ½ inches across and both parents tend to the eggs and nestlings. The young hatch after about 5 weeks and fledge after about 10 weeks.

Osprey populations declined dramatically during the 1950s – 1970s, due to shoreline development and thinning eggshells associated with pesticide use. But osprey populations have been steadily rebounding since the 1972 ban on DDT related pesticides and the construction of artificial nest sites. Currently they are only listed as a Florida Species of Special Concern in Monroe County. Ospreys are a special part of Pine Island, as we hear their calls daily and watch their young fledge each year. If you're interested in a more global perspective, check out the osprey nest mapping site at [www.osprey-watch.org](http://www.osprey-watch.org)



# 2016 POKER RUN IS HUGE SUCCESS

Through 2013 the Pine Island Boat Club and the St. James City Boat Club both combined to orchestrate 18 annual poker runs with the net proceeds designated for the benefit of the Calusa Land Trust. In 2013 just over \$4000 was added to our coffers thanks to their efforts.

For a variety of reasons, no poker run was held last year. Then along came Mike Mendelson who stepped up to chair the 2016 event. This year's poker run was held on January 16<sup>th</sup> with twelve dealer stations approachable by land and/or boat and a final station at Woody's Waterside Restaurant in the late afternoon of a beautiful day. It culminated with the last draw of "7 card" poker. There were three winning hands (Brent Fredrick-5 kings-\$1000, Ed Lubejko-4 aces-\$350 and Richard Ebert-4 kings-\$150) and Walt Busch who won \$100 from the draw of losing hands.

Most importantly, this 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Poker Run netted over \$7000, almost double the best of any prior runs. The Calusa Land Trust thanks both boat clubs, Mike in particular for his leadership and the multitude of volunteers who toiled hours to raise funds for Pine Island's all volunteer land conservancy.

Although the run is held by the Pine Island Boat club, there are plenty of stations on dry land for those wanting to participate who don't have a boat or choose not to brave the weather on the water. People can boat, kayak, and bicycle to the stations of their choice.

**All Players must go to one of each numbered station (i.e. #4-W or #4-L/W, but not both number 4's). You may mix Water and Water/Land stations, but must stop at only one number. Stations do not have to be done in order.**



**Bike, Walk, Drive or Boat to these stops.**

#1-L/W 4111 Galt Island Ave.—Airport Canal—Bob & Bonnie Kellen—Land/Water  
 #2-L/W Pine Island Shores—2063 Macadamia Ln—Pink & Ron Wesorick—Land/Water  
 #3-L/W Ragged Ass Saloon—3421 Stringfellow—Monroe Canal—Land/Water  
 #4-L/W 3047 Skipper Lane—Judy & Woody Woodruff—Land/Water  
 #5-L/W Waterfront Restaurant—2131 Oleander—Henley Canal—Land/Water  
 #6-L/W 2276 Carambola Mill & Sandra Hill—Land/Water

**#7 Woody's Waterside 3051 Stringfellow—Monroe Canal—LAST STOP FOR ALL**

L=Land W=Water

**The Calusa Land Trust thanks you for your participation.**

**2016 Poker Run Dealer Stations**

**Boat to these stops.**

#1-W Long Cut—Water  
 #2-W/L Pine Island Shores—2063 Macadamia Ln—Pink & Ron Wesorick—Water/Land  
 #3-W Chino Island—Water  
 #4-W Blind Pass—Water  
 #5-W Jensens's Marina, Captiva Island—Water  
 #6 W Green Flash Restaurant, Captiva Island—Water

**#7 Woody's Waterside 3051 Stringfellow—Monroe Canal—LAST STOP FOR ALL**

L=Land W=Water



**\*\*\*\*\* Date Change for Rummage Sale \*\*\*\*\***

Saturday February 27, 2016, is the new date for the CLT's Annual Rummage Sale at Fritts Park. One of founding members Alison Ackerman is heading up this Fund Raiser again this year.

CLT is asking for donations of quality items to sell. All proceeds will go to help CLT continue its mission. Our Volunteers will be at Fritts Park taking in donations starting at noon on Friday February 26.

The Sale will begin at 8:00 am on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup>. Please look through your stuff and contribute to a good cause.



Mark Laux, Alison Ackerman and Donna Venesky



# CLT LAND STEWARDSHIP REPORT

**Work Parties:** Since our last newsletter CLT has enjoyed volunteer assistance at three work parties: On December 12<sup>th</sup> approximately a dozen determined members tackled the continuing task of exotic removal with most efforts covering one-half mile of frontage along the St. James Creek Preserve's north-south streets. On January 9<sup>th</sup>, 30 happy workers performed needed maintenance of Fritts Park in Bokeelia. This small park serves the public and also is the site of CLT's annual meeting (this year moved to the Lutheran Church due to inclement weather) and also Alison's Rummage Sale (this year on February 27<sup>th</sup>.) Of particular benefit was the re-surfacing of the stage with permanent composite decking, all with the competence of Jim Doherty's carpenter staff; this project was completed with a follow-up work party on January 13. The February 13<sup>th</sup> work party was held at the Ed Chapin Preserve with a mission of exotic removal along the road and into the paddling creek. Upcoming work parties are scheduled as follows:

March 12	Wigert/Barron Preserve
April 9	Dobbs Preserve
May 14	Taylor Preserve
June 11	Bud House Preserve
July 9	St. James Creek Preserve

For more information please contact Ed Chapin at (239) 218-7531.



The old surface comes out!



The new composite decking !!!

**Peter Ordway Mangrove Adventures:** Named after the founder of these guided paddling tours, the December 20<sup>th</sup> event was enjoyed by several outdoors fans in the St. James Creek Preserve. Once out of the wind the adventure was spectacular through the mangroves surrounded by nature. January 30 was perfect weather for another group which explored Kreie Preserve and the environs around Burgess Island in the northwest Bokeelia quadrant. Of particular interest was exploring the Ordway Tropical Hammock. The February 21<sup>st</sup> tour was held at the Big Jim Creek Preserve in Bokeelia. The last paddle of the season will be on Saturday March 19<sup>th</sup> at the new Ed Chapin Preserve beginning at 12 noon. Donations are requested but not required. Again, please contact Ed Chapin for reservations and further information.

## An unwanted guest, and a solution to a problem

One of the invasive exotic “guest” plants that is found on the new Wigert-Barron preserve on Bokeelia is *Dioscorea bulbifera* L., commonly referred to as air potato. The twisting vines with heart shaped leaves quickly overgrow even the tallest trees in the area. And they are not easy to eradicate! A small patch at Pine Island Center took the better part of three years to achieve this goal. The small patch found along Aura Lane is forming a high, thick wall of green. But it is not a large infestation, yet. This species has shown the potential to quickly overtake native trees. The plant was introduced into Florida as early as 1905, but over the last thirty years it has been recognized as a species that is able to shut out native species and thereby change plant community structures (FLEPPC 2003). It is a native of China.

Another old China hand is the leaf beetle, *Lilioceris cheni*, which has developed a taste for air potato leaves and tubers. Both adult beetles and larva will feed on the plant and they can reproduce in such numbers that they have become one of the most important biocontrol mechanisms for air potato. The eggs are typically laid on the underside of newer leaves, often causing them to curl or form upside down cups.

The adults are 8-10 mm long and have bright red or orange hind wings, making them quite easy to find. The insects eat the foliage between the leaves network of veins, appearing to skeletonize the leaves. The beetles may complete their life cycle in 20-25 days and the release of this biocontrol agent has been successful in many areas. Larva ready to pupate will drop to the soil from which they emerge in 15-17 days as adults ready to mate and eat to continue the cycle of life.



The Florida State Department of Agriculture was distributing the beetles for free and while the program is shut down for the winter season, it is hoped that we may obtain some for our own biocontrol project.

### Sources:

FLEPPC Plant List Committee. 2003. Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's 2003 list of invasive species. (27 August, 2012).

[http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/BENEFICIAL/BEETLES/air\\_potato\\_leaf\\_beetle.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/BENEFICIAL/BEETLES/air_potato_leaf_beetle.htm)

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 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 50 Donor                \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 Benefactor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Contributor        \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other Amount

Mail to:  
 Calusa Land Trust  
 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. **February 2016**



## Work Parties – Everyone Welcome

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

- March 12    Wigert-Barron Preserve Fritts Park, Barrancas Ave, Bokeelia
- April 9     Dobbs Preserve, Sabal Ave., SJC
- May 14     Taylor Preserve, Alcorn Ave, Bokeelia
- June 11    Bud House Preserve, Meadow Lane, Bokeelia
- July 9      St. James Creek Preserve, SJC

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

**Remember this date:**

**Saturday March 5th**

**DUCK RACE!**

**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.

