

## 2017 IMPORTANT DATES

**May 13, Saturday**

Work Party  
Taylor Preserve

**June 10, Saturday**

Work Party  
Chapin Preserve

**July 8, Saturday**

Work Party  
Wigert-Barron Preserve

**August**  
**Vacation Month**  
**No Work Party**

**2nd Saturday**

Of each Month Means  
A Work Party at a  
CLT property

**Boaters and**  
**Water Quality**  
**Volunteers**  
**Needed!**

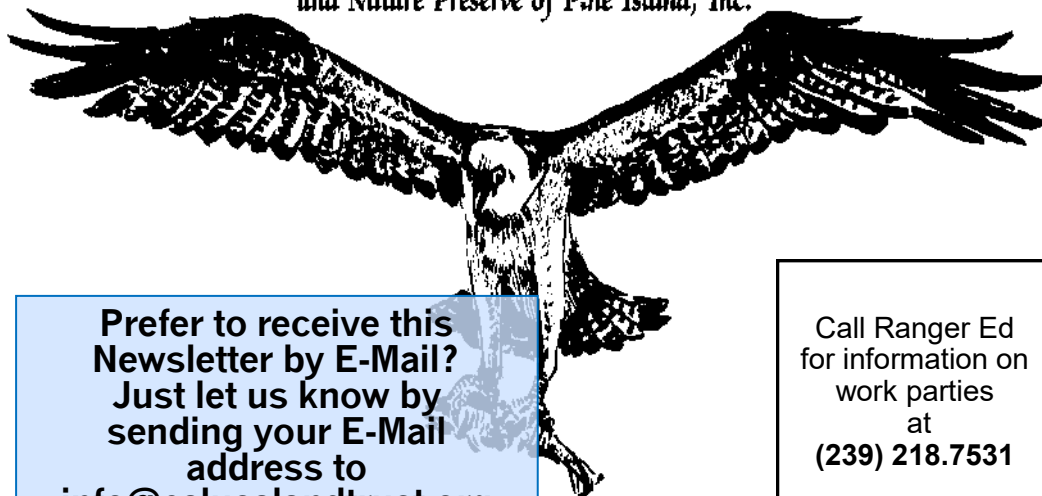
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Channel

**LATEST**  
**PURCHASE SEE**  
**PAGE 6**



# Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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Call Ranger Ed  
for information on  
work parties  
at  
**(239) 218.7531**

**Newsletter #100**  
Founded 1976

**May 2017**  
[www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)

## Centennial Issue: This is issue number 100.



The first issue was in January of 1990 and was simply an announcement of the first annual meeting. Later that year the details of the organization were laid out in an additional newsletter. There were 28 family members and 28 individual members along with a few businesses. The list of current contributors exceeds 600 with almost 2000 entries in our database. You can read this original newsletter and all of our newsletters up to the current one on our web site [www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org).

Alison Ackerman, long time Board member and leader of the annual rummage sale, assembled the newsletter for more than 17 years, always informing the reader about Board activities and new acquisitions. The newsletter has helped Land Trust members stay informed and helped the Trust grow. Each mailing of the newsletter encourages members to make another contribution to the Calusa Land Trust so ever more precious land on Pine Island can be preserved. You can receive the newsletter by "snail mail" or E-Mail and you can read it on our web site. (Alert! E-mail newsletters are in color.)

You can also make a contribution at our web site or send a check or credit card information to PO Box 216 in Bokeelia, FL 33922. Page 7 of this newsletter is a membership application/renewal form. If it has been a while since you have helped the Land Trust, consider a donation now. The Trust also accepts contributions of land and many folks include the Land Trust as a beneficiary in their estate planning. Also remember that those who have retired from larger corporations may be able to obtain matching funds from their previous employers.

If you are a regular contributor, we sincerely appreciate your support and know that we have accumulated title to more than 2100 acres and have helped 20/20 buy a bunch more land on Pine Island.



## YES! OUR MISSION ALSO INCLUDES ARCHAEOLOGY

The Calusa Land Trust is best acknowledged by Pine Islanders for its mission to “protect the natural diversity and beauty of the Pine Island region by acquiring, managing and preserving in perpetuity environmentally sensitive lands”, however, the last segment of the sentence continues by adding “or historically important lands”.

For its first four decades CLT had obtained title to several parcels with evidence or written accounts of aboriginal presence: Calusa Island (1976), Calusa Canal “Bud House” lots (1999) and Wigert/Barron Preserve (2014), however, nothing that would strike visual excitement. This all changed in 2015.

The Randell Research Center at Pineland (a program administered by the Florida Museum of Natural History located on campus in Gainesville) traces its roots to 1983 when Colonel Donald and his wife, Patricia, Randell granted access to their 53 acre parcel, in order to allow archaeologists to excavate and study this former Calusa Indian village and its 2000 years of history. Antiquities include the original cross-island canal vista, water ponds and two shell middens (mounds) which rise some 25 feet above ground level and were likely occupied by its chieftains. In 1996, the Randells proceeded to gift the entire land to the University of Florida Foundation. To its east, tantalizingly just across a fence, rested the 5 acres “Smith Mound”, which stands as documented sacred Calusa burial grounds.

In 2015 this property (which also includes the Low Mound) was placed on the market for sale. The barrier to its acquisition by RRC was obvious...money! Due to the generosity of Tim and Judith Sear the first \$150,000 towards its purchase became available. With time almost expiring this left RRC \$50,000 shy of the needed funds. There appearing to be no quick fix to this problem, the Calusa Land Trust donated the money to the University of Florida Foundation, in order to complete the transaction.



Art by Merald Clark used with permission of Florida Museum of Natural History

Included with this article is an artist's depiction of the site. To today stand and gaze at the existing water moat and winding staircase leading to its apex is truly spectacular. CLT encourages all its members to visit and support the RRC in its programs and services. RRC is administered under the long-time leadership of Dr. William Marquardt with support from fellow colleague, Dr. Karen Walker, and its local coordinator, Cindy Bear. The Calusa Land Trust is proud to have enriched RRC with this “historically important site”.

John Kendall, President



## Saint Jude Trail

by Rad Hazen

Acquisition and Planning Chair

One of the jewels of the Calusa Land Trust's preserves is the almost 400 plus acre Saint James Creek Preserve which is home to the Saint Jude Trail. Originally intended as a road in a planned sub-division, this trail has become a perfect way to hike through the mangroves while enjoying a tropical upland environment.

Purchased 25 years ago, much volunteer work has gone into removing the exotic plants along the trail and planting appropriate natives. There is a tiki hut with benches for relaxing and picnicking out of the elements and an observation platform at the end to enjoy the quiet beauty of Saint James Creek. Several benches along the way also offer chances to relax. You may see a number of unique animals associated with the mangrove environment including the Mangrove Cuckoo and the harmless Mangrove Snake as well as the Mangrove Skipper, a butterfly. I have encountered a bobcat, raccoons, otters and lots of bird species over the years while enjoying the Trail.

The Saint Jude Trail is pet friendly but please keep all pets on a leash and use the provided bags to take care of "deposits" if they occur.

To access the trail, head south on Stringfellow Road and turn left on Laratonda Road which bears to the right and becomes Stabile Road. Just after Crestwell Court on the left, you will see an interesting sculpture and the entrance to the trail. Parking is currently along the east side of Stabile. Look for more amenities and improved parking on our new Crestwell Court property in the near future.

As always, please remember we are an all volunteer Land Trust and we depend on you, our members and friends for support. Please volunteer on work party days and donate. We'll keep preserving paradise. Thank you.



ABOVE: Can you see the Raccoon?

RIGHT; Looking down the Trail

BELOW: Saint James Creek, a Bug and some Crabs



## **Treasures of the Trails for May 2017: Strolling through Pinewood Trails Park on a Cool Morning? Watch for the Eastern Corn Snake**

Text by Judy Ott

While enjoying a cool morning walk through the Pinewood Trails Park near Pine Island Center recently, I happened across an Eastern Corn snake warming in a sunny spot on the trail. The photo below closely captures what the Corn snake looked like that morning.

Eastern Corn snakes are very common, non-venomous snakes found throughout Florida. They live in native palmetto/pine flatwoods, hardwood hammocks, pine rocklands, mangrove forests, and swamps in all Florida counties. They are also common in agricultural fields and disturbed habitats and are the only large, red-orange snakes likely to be found in urbanized areas. Eastern Corn snakes, also known as Red Rat snakes, are about 1 ½ to 4 feet long and usually are orangish-brown with red patches with black borders along their back and a spear-shaped “V” on their head. Red Rat snakes are closely related to Yellow Rat snakes, being the only 2 species of the rat snake genus found in Florida.

Both Red Rat and Yellow Rat snakes come in many color variations and both have been commonly called “corn snakes” for over 300 years – perhaps because of the checkered “colored corn” pattern on their bellies, or because they like to live near grain storage bins. Both species are great tree climbers because of specialized scales on the underside.



Photo from  
<http://www.kingsleylake.org/facts/snakes/CornSnake.jpg>

Because of their color patterns, Corn snakes are sometimes mistaken for Copperhead snakes, but Corn snakes have brighter colors, slenderer bodies and narrower heads. Corn snakes are harmless, and are actually beneficial to humans because they keep

rodent populations in check. They don't have fangs or toxic venom. They eat lizards and frogs when young and amphibians, small mammals and bird eggs as adults, which they subdue by constriction. Corn snakes usually live about 6-8 years in the wild, and over 20 years in captivity. They breed in the spring and lay about 30 leathery shelled eggs in the early summer, then abandon the nest. About 2 months later, the young snakes escape the egg shell using a sharp specialized scale or “egg tooth” and are about 5 inches long when they emerge.

About half of Florida's native snake species lay eggs and half bear live young. Florida has 44 native species of snakes, more than any other state in the southeast U.S. Unfortunately, we also have over 6 species of very invasive exotic snakes which thrive in our tropical climate and displace native snakes and their prey. While many people are afraid of snakes because of folklore, superstition or lack of knowledge, in reality, snakes play an important and intricate role in Florida's complex natural ecosystems. Only about 6 of Florida's snake species are venomous and 2 of those only live in northern Florida. So the snakes we are likely to encounter here in southwest Florida are not likely to be venomous. But like all our unexpected meetings with critters in the wild, when we do come across a snake, it is best to just step back and admire it from a distance, without trying to harm or capture it. By learning to recognize our non-venomous snakes and understand their habits, it's easier to observe them calmly and appreciate them as an integral part of amazing natural systems around us. More information about our snakes is available on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Website at: <http://myfwc.com/conservation/you-protect/wildlife/snakes/>.





## Great Calusa Duck Race Alice Trant Duck Race Coordinator

The 2017 Calusa Land Trust Great Rubber Duck Race was a gratifyingly successful event. Not only did the Sunshine State live up to its name, providing a warm and breezy afternoon, but the great food and beverages provided by the Low Key Tiki brought everyone together for a rollicking good time. Add to that the entertainment provided by Little Lily's Hula Hoop Troupe, the Hot Flashz Dancers, Island Sound and High Tide Bands and it was a party worthy of Pine Island.

### CLEANING THE DUCKS

If you enjoyed the Annual Duck Race then you might like to see what happens to the ducks when they are not racing. A couple of weeks after the race a bunch of CLT volunteers joined together at our Fritts Park and washed each duck in soap and water then rinsed them while checking that they were in racing condition.

The ducks were then sun dried as seen in these photos. Next they were sorted and each duck from 1 to 3000 was accounted for. Finally they were placed in clean dry barrels for their summer hiatus. Rest assured they are ready for next year's race. The volunteers spent two days on this wash and dry chore and came away more tired than the ducks ever get.

Alice Trant, our Duck Race Coordinator, was pleased to announce that more than \$24,000 was raised at our 2017 event and the Low Key Tiki was a terrific new venue. More photos at: [www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)

For your calendar, our fun event, the Duck Race Fundraiser will be on Saturday March 3rd 2018.

The CLT is most appreciative of all the attendees that contributed to the Silent and Live Auctions, Games and Authors Tables and purchasing all those Duck & Super Duck tickets. As usual, the Pine Island community (businesses & individuals alike) came together to help our most worthy cause for land conservation and preservation. And had a heck of a good time in doing so!

Many thanks for everyone's continued support and we hope to see y'all next year when we do it all over again!





## Work Parties—Everyone Welcome

**Preserve work parties are on the second Saturday of each month from 9:00am to Noon. None in August. We need your help. Check the Pine Island Eagle or our web site: [www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org) for the current month's location.**

### Past Work Parties Report:

On Saturday March 11th, we had a good turn-out at our St. James Creek Preserve. We had 18 volunteers and we worked on the familiar Invasive Exotic Plant Control (IEPC). We found the usual invaders such as Brazilian Pepper, Carrotwood, Melaleuca, and Australian Pines. We got a lot done in three hours covering about a mile of road frontage.

On Saturday, April 8th, we were back at the Dobbs Preserve near Tropical Point. We had 15 volunteers. We worked on the maintenance and observation trail which will eventually be a loop trail. As usual, we also found Australian Pine and Brazilian Pepper. This trail is almost ready for a bridge on the south end.

We have just started the long awaited restoration at our Wigert/Barron Preserve in Bokeelia. We have Mike's Lawn & Landscaping Service removing about 7 acres of invasives. This project will be ongoing until the end of May.

### Up Coming work parties:

May 13th—Taylor/Willow Lake Preserve

June 10th—Wigert/Barron Preserve

July 8th—Chapin Preserve

August—is our vacation time—no work party in August

For more details, check with Ranger Ed 239.218.7531

Beverages and Snacks provided to show appreciation for our super volunteers.



## Late Breaking News

The Calusa Land Trust, Pine Island's all volunteer land trust, is pleased to announce the purchase of a 28 acre parcel off of Alcorn Street consisting of nineteen acres of uplands and nine acres of mangroves and salt flats. Special thanks to the owners, Show Me LLC represented by Mr. Bill Love, for providing a generous discount, making this purchase possible. This parcel has a common border with our eight acre Taylor Preserve and connects with a number of state, county and federal lands along the west side of Pine Island creating quite a large area under preservation.

This new addition consists of old pine flat-woods, scattered oak trees, fresh water marshes, salt flats, mangroves and a portion of what has been described as the only natural coastal willow pond on Pine Island. We are naming this thirty six total acre property the Taylor/ Willow Lake Preserve. The CLT Board recently toured this parcel and the primary response from them, even after a hornet attack, was that it is "primeval, wild and beautiful." Access for the public is not yet available but is planned for the future.



\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 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 #:**

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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 profession-  
al solicitor. 100% of all donations are received by the Trust.

**May 2017**

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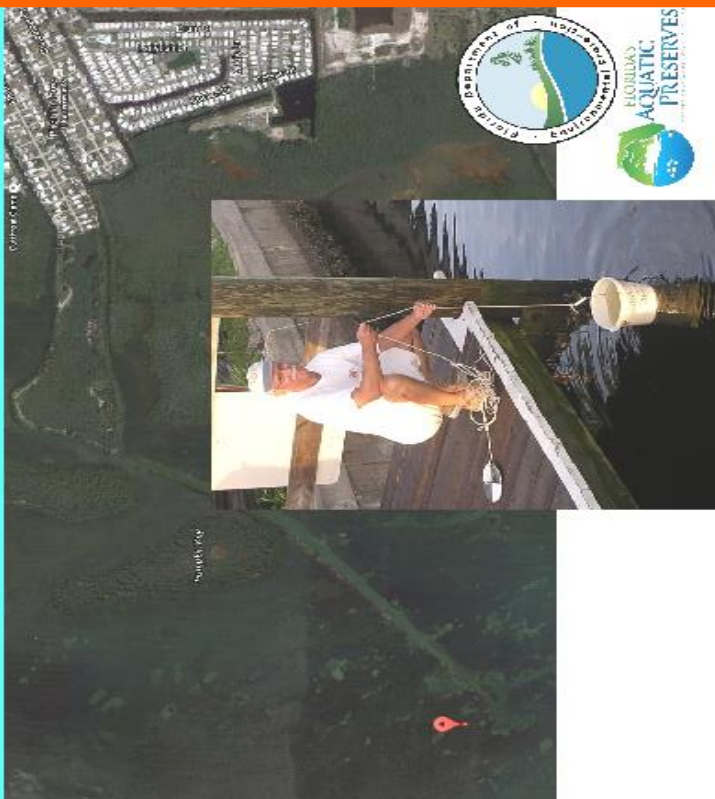
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PINK  
ADDRESS  
LABEL? TIME  
TO RENEW.

## Boaters and Water Quality Volunteers Needed!



- Volunteers are needed the first Monday of every month to collect water quality at a sampling site near Flamingo Bay Channel. This site is only accessible by boat.
- Call 941-575-5861 if interested; training and equipment are provided (Ask for Arielle)