

# Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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**Newsletter #87**

**Founded 1976**

**May 2014**

[www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)

## Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race

**by Ron Wesorick**

### It Was A Ducky Day!

The Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race which was held Saturday, March 1 was once again a fantastic success. Over \$30,000 was raised for the Calusa Land Trust which procures and preserves environmentally sensitive land here on Pine Island.

The weather, the wind and the tides were perfect and 3000 bright yellow ducks jumped into the water at 4:00pm and raced down the canal at Woody's Water-side. The first duck crossing the finish line was #910



belonging to Gerry Fischer who won an offshore fishing trip with "Better Days Charter Service". The

remaining 19 of the "Olympic Swimmers" that also reached the finish line won a variety of great prizes for their owners.

Watching and cheering the racers was an enthusiastic crowd of people enjoying the food, drinks, music, raffles and auctions.



The success of the day was due to the tremendous support of the many people who bought 3000 duck tickets and those who came to Woody's to participate in the auctions and raffles while enjoying the day and watching the race.

The race committee and the Calusa Land Trust will send letters to thank the more than 200 contributors whose generous donations made the day possible.



We also want to thank our host, Woody's, the planning committee, the fantastic duck dumpers, all the ticket sellers, and the many workers, who spent many hours to assure the day was successful and enjoyable for all.



We especially want to thank retiring Pink Wesorick for her many years of growing and leading this important fund raising event.

## Fund Raising - Duck Race Leader

This year's Duck Race was once again a fantastic success. Now it is time to find a new leader.

For anyone considering picking up this important position, one suggestion would be to scale back to a duck race only with cash prizes like the Poker Run. This would save all the work soliciting donations and organizing the auctions. Organizing ticket sales would be the major effort.

That being said, the new leader could also continue soliciting a few gifts to use for prizes and conduct a modified event without the auctions. Any options or suggestions could be developed into a new and better duck race.

For more information or details, call Ron Wesorick at 239-283-7249

## Ranger Report by Ed Chapin

### WORK PARTIES

Our volunteer rangers have been out in force this year so far. Thank you to all our volunteers for their hard work!

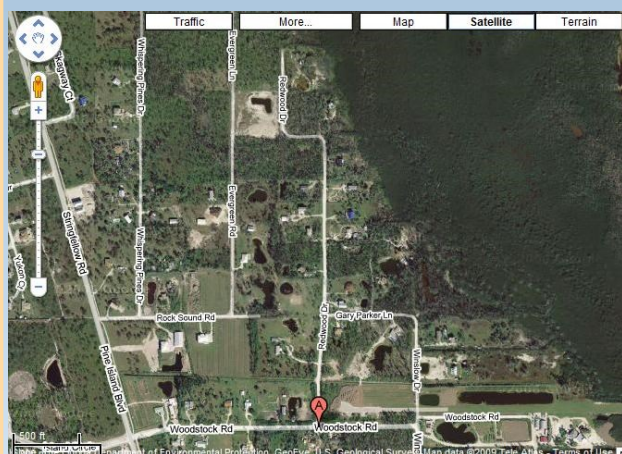
On Saturday January 11th we had 22 volunteers working to set up the tent for our Annual Meeting and Rummage Sale at Fritts Park on Beach Daisy Lane in Bokeelia. With all the help, we managed to set up the tent in record time plus spent a lot of time sprucing up the Park grounds. It was a job well done!

The next monthly work party was on February 8th when we had 12 volunteers back at Fritts Park taking down the big tent, once again in record time. By now we just may be getting the hang of this process! We also distributed a lot of free mulch that was chipped up from palm fronds and tree trimmings from the weeks before then. This was all chipped up by Mike's Landscaping Service of Pine Island. The mulch was put around the mass planting we did at



the park nine months ago. Out of this planting, we had a whopping 96% survival rate! I have also been working on reopening the paddling trail that leaves from Fritts Park to Big Jim Creek and its like named CLT Preserve via a series of DOT and Mosquito Control ditches dug in the 1950's. The trail is reopened but will need continual maintenance. I am hoping to recruit a crew to keep this trail open, so if you want to help call me, Ed Chapin at (239) 218-7531.

This last month on March 8th we were back at our Dobbs Preserve near Tropical Point in SJC. We had seven volunteer rangers working on blazing trails and invasive exotic plant control. This will be a new loop trail that we have been working on for several years. There are plans for a pedestrian bridge that will complete the loop.



The last work party on April 12th found us

back working on the St James Creek Preserve along Stabile Road in St James City from 9 am to noon. We had a good turn out helping to keep the Preserve in good condition.

On Saturday, May 10th we will be at the Baxley Preserve which is located at the end of Redwood Drive. Trail maintenance and Invasive Exotic Plant Control (IEPC) will be the order of the day.

And on June 14th we will need all the volunteers we can muster to plant more pine trees at our St James Creek Preserve, once again starting at 9 AM until noon (or we run out of energy or plants).

The work party for July is yet to be determined, but will be announced shortly.

## PETER ORDWAY MANGROVE ADVENTURES

Our January paddle was on the 26th and we had twelve paddlers who explored the CLT Kreie Preserve. This Preserve is accessible only by water, and is between Jug Creek and Burgess Bay in Bokeelia. The February paddle on the 16th was on St James Creek Preserve in SJC. Eleven paddlers explored the hidden mangrove passages and almost managed to get lost a couple of times!

The March paddle was out to Big Jim Creek via Fritts Park. There were five hardy paddlers who went out in spite of stiff southerly winds. They were, for the most part protected by the mangroves on this paddle. Once again, I am looking for some volunteers to help keep this canoe trail open on a regular basis. If you are interested, call Ed Chapin.

B- Calusa Land Trust Trails Fritts Park Blueway



## WEEDS - What's in a name?

What is a weed? A common response is “anything growing where it's not wanted”. It gets more complicated when it comes in exotic weeds or even more so with invasive exotic plant species.

The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) is the “go to” organization that helps take the guess work out of it all. Its mission is “*to support the management of invasive exotic plants in Florida's natural areas by providing a forum for the exchange of scientific, educational, and technical information.*” One of the ways the FLEPPC helps is to define terms and make lists of plants that are considered to be problematic. Exotic plants are defined as those not native to Florida. Invasive exotics are non-natives that expanding their range on their own within the State.

Invasive exotic species are subdivided into two categories. Category I includes the most problematic include plants that are altering or displacing native plant communities. Example are Melaleuca and Australian Pines which have altered areas like Little Pine Island to such a large degree that it chases out native plants, birds and other animals that can't forage for food or find places to live among them. The second Category II are those plants that have greatly expanded their range with or without our help, but do not seem yet to greatly alter the native plant community structure. In other words, the jury is still out and some Category members may be upgraded if their ability to cause ecological damage is substantiated.

A walk down any trail in SW Florida and you may find many of these lesser known invasive plant species of both categories. More information on exotic invasive plant pests may be found at <http://www.fleppc.org> which is the web page for the Florida Exotic Plant Pest Council.



*Abrus precatorius*, or Rosary Pea is a vine and Category I pest that has very showy and very poisonous seeds if eaten and is native to Indonesia.



*Lygodium microphyllum* or Old world climbing fern seen growing around a sea grape. It's going to be a long term process to get rid of this Category I pest species. It has the ability to produce large number of spores and can climb trees like Kudzu.





Madagascar Periwinkles are still cultivated by many gardeners in Florida and also have some toxic alkaloids in the leaves.



*Sansevieria hyacinthoides* or Bowstring hemp a popular plant with previous generations of Florida gardeners. The long thick fleshy variegated leaves were thought to be a source of fibers like common hemp or agave



*Kalanchoe pinnata* is another old favorite of Florida Gardeners and can be spread by plantlets found on the leaf margins or by seed from their showy red flowers.



Hairy Indigo is a weedy species to most but also sold as a high protein forage for Florida cattle and its seeds can still be purchased for that use.



*Richardia grandiflora* or Large Flower Mexican Clover has low growing light violet flowers and seems to be taking over South Florida lawns and wild spaces alike. It attracts a lot of pollinators and seems to bloom all year long.

## **From The Birds Nest**

**John Kendall, President**

Wow, another fantastic Rubber Duck Race, our largest annual fund raiser resulting in some \$32,000 in net proceeds, a major CLT marketing tool and providing Pine Islanders with a memorable social event. But what do we do with all that money? As an all volunteer force, our administrative expenses are minimal (less than 3.5% of 2012-13 revenues with insurance coverage being by far the largest item.) We also expend monies in cooperation with other similar minded entities (the subject of a future article) and have stewardship costs (1.8% last fiscal year.) However, as a “raise money, acquire and protect” land conservancy, essentially we utilize cash to acquire title to land. So, procedurally, how do we do that?

First, the Board of Directors has an active “Acquisition Committee”, chaired by past president Harold Bruner. The Board has directed this committee to give priority to mangrove wetlands (also to be discussed in a future article) and has adopted an Evaluation Worksheet, whereby a point system allows one to compare various parcels. By research this Committee contacts landowners of interest and is also approached by willing sellers or their agents. Our first wish is an outright gift (such as Calusa Island in 1975 which started it all), then secondly a bargain sale and lastly purchasing the property at fair market value. The Board abhors paying in excess of FMV.

After recommendations by this committee the Board must approve all purchases drawing on proceeds from its “Acquisition Account”, which is allocated from any single donation in excess of \$99 or from funds earned from any fund raising event (including PI Garden Club, PI Boat Club, bequests, et al.) After the closing and recording the deed the Treasurer uses procedures to remove the parcel from the tax roll and it is then added to our inventory (today about 2000 acres) to thus begin our stewardship responsibilities to hold and protect in perpetuity.

Perhaps a tad more complicated and time consuming than that, but there you have it!

## **Sales & Marketing**

**Gloria Andrews**

A project that was in much of need of help was been rescued by member, Dianna Wilman just in time for our Annual Meeting, 2014. Thank you, Dianna, for re-inking our street sign on Stringfellow at Beach Daisy Lane. It now is very visible as BEACH DAISY LANE - FRITTS PARK Another good example of CLT Volunteerism. ☺

Something new is coming! Watch our website, CalusaLandTrust.org, for more information on how you may be able to obtain either a CLT front license plate or CLT yard sign. The offer details will follow on the site. PR is important to spread the word about who we are and what we do; as tokens to help initiate conversations to that end.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Patron  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 Benefactor  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ 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.

**May 2014**

## Work Parties – Everyone Welcome

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

May 10, 2014	Baxley Preserve, Redwood Dr., St. James City (SJC)
June 14, 2014	St James Creek Preserve, Sabal Avenue, SJC
July 2014	To be determined

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

**BIG & BEIGE  
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.

