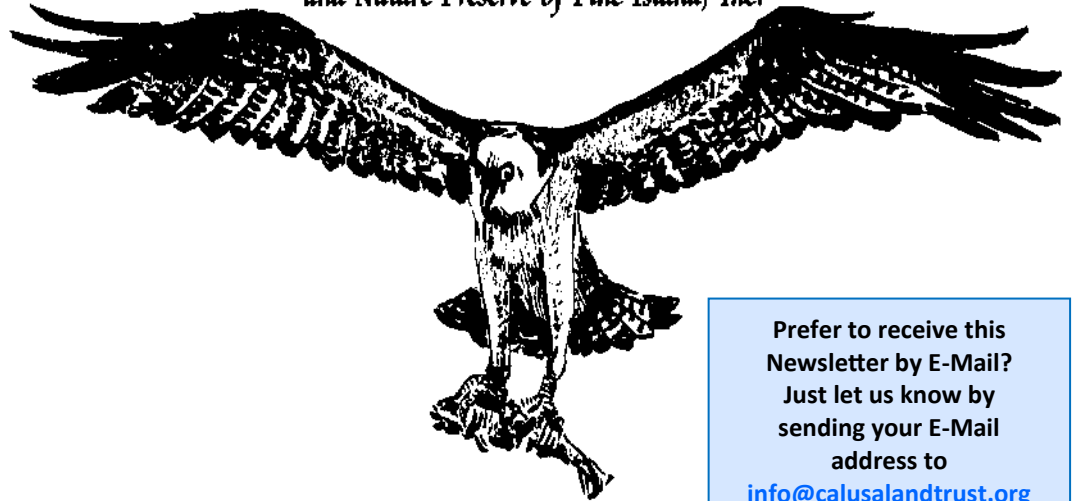


Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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2021 IMPORTANT DATES



Save the Coral Reef Art Exhibit

June 8th
(see story page 6)

Mini Mango Mania

July 17th
Fishers of Men Lutheran
Church

Work/Fun Parties TBA

Check your email, our
website or
the Pine Island Eagle



American Beauty Berry

Newsletter #116
Founded 1976

June 2021

www.calusalandtrust.org

President's Report

As we wind down our CLT activities going into the summer recess, I reflect on the year we have completed. Despite the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic among which included cancellation of the Duck Race and the Annual Rummage Sale, suspension of the Peter Ordway Paddling Trips, and loss of our regular Board of Directors meeting place, we adapted.

Our Duck Race Chairwoman came up with our Duck Waddle Raffle that was very successful, and though it did not replace the "in person" fun of the Duck Race event, it did help make up some of our needed revenue. My garage became the conference room for our Board meetings. We did continue our monthly Work/Fun Parties at our preserves. It gave volunteers a chance to be outside and socialize at a safe distance while working on the preserves. We had the highest turn out yet for work parties when we reached 35 for the Fritts Park cleanup and two other work parties had over 30 volunteers.

A lot of work was completed on several preserves this year.

- At the Wigert-Barron Preserve, 100 Long Leaf Pine seedlings were planted. A butterfly habitat was also planted at the west entrance and a new descriptive sign installed in front of it. A new mangrove forest interpretative sign, purchased with funding from the Cape Coral Community Foundation, was installed as was a new Wigert-Barron Preserve sign at the east entrance. A brand-new brochure with an east trail map is now available at the preserve entrance.
- At the St James Creek Preserve, work focused on clearing the invasive trees and plants across the canal east of Stabile Road and along the St. Jude Trail. Repairs were made to sections of the boardwalk and to several benches.

- Walking trails at the Taylor-Willow Lake Preserve were established, cut and cleared in February. An interpretive Mangrove Forest sign, funded by Coast & Heartland National Estuary Program, was installed on the west end of the Loop Trail. A new informational kiosk was installed at the entrance gate on Alcorn Street. A brochure with trail map was developed and is now available at the kiosk.
- Invasive plants and trees were removed at the Chapin and Bud House Calusa Canal Preserves.

In addition to work on the various Preserves, significant time has been spent doing a major revision and update to the Nature Lover's Guide. This much-loved guide was initially compiled, written & edited by Phil Buchanan and first published in 1998. The 7th edition is due for publication this fall. Copies can be purchased for \$20 at the Greater Pine Island Chamber of Commerce and Matlacha Post Office, The Greater Pine Island Water Association Office and at the Wild Child Gallery in Matlacha. It is also available on our website, calusalandtrust.org, for \$25 which includes \$5 for shipping.

I wish all of our volunteers and members a safe, happy and restful summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall at our first Work/Fun Party.

Robert Ballard, President



Wigert Barron Preserve kiosk with new trail map

Student Volunteer

This past season we have been supported at our monthly Preserve Work Parties by Stephen Bush, a young man who will be graduating high school in June. Stephen has been joined by his mother Mary O'Leary at the Work Parties. He is home schooled and will be graduating with the Cape Coral High School class. Stephen's work with CLT was part of his community service program requirements for graduation and we are glad he chose to serve it with us.

We hope that when he is home from college and looking for something to do on the second Saturday of the month that he will come out and join us then & at any of our other functions.

Robert Ballard, President



PLUNK-A-PLANK IS BACK!

Perhaps many of you will remember our fundraising campaign in the last decade, whereby you could purchase a wooden board, engraved, and then attached to a St. Jude Nature Trail boardwalk or bench. This was a great effort which resulted in a full sell out, with funds used to continue our conservancy mission. No boardwalk or benches are now available, but we have room for about 30 planks (20 spaces per plank) in the rafters of the three tiki huts at the Smith/Dewane Vista and on the trail. We will engrave your names/message on near permanent composite planks and erect it where you designate. Cost is \$100. Order yours online or mail your request to us. Your plank will help insure preservation for Pine Island's future.



By John Kendall

SEARCHING (SLOWLY) FOR LOVE By: Marty Kendall

It is mating season for the threatened gopher tortoises and their yearning search for a mate will likely lead them across Stringfellow or other Pine Island roadways. These native tortoises (terrestrial not water creatures like their turtle cousins) enjoy a lifespan of upwards of sixty years while in the wild. They begin their lives as a clutch of five to nine ping pong sized eggs deposited by their mother in the sandy apron entrance to the nesting burrow. The incubation period takes about three months and their gender (similar to alligators and crocodiles) is determined by the surrounding sand temperature (above 85 degrees being female). Hatchlings are about 1 ½ inches in diameter and they only grow about one inch a year thereafter. Sexual maturity requires nine to twelve years for males and ten to twenty-one years for females.

Gopher tortoises are called a “keystone” species, since their burrows (over six feet deep and some fifteen feet long) also serve as shelter for up to 350 other creatures. The burrowed tunnel offers a safe home and maintains a stable temperature and humidity throughout the year. They graze on nearby grasses, which provide not just food nutrients but also water, since they do not otherwise “drink” for subsistence.

Along with dog attacks their greatest threat is road mortality from passing vehicles. If you observe a tortoise attempting a roadway crossing, one should carefully stop and carry it off road in the direction it was heading. A reminder that they are land based and placing it in water will cause it to drown. Injured tortoises should be safely placed in a box and follow this up with a call to CROW (472-3644) which will arrange for a volunteer to transport it to its clinic on Sanibel Island. Let's share our lives with these wonderful island residents.



The Calusa Clothesline by Nancy Weir

Our merchandise hats & tee shirts are available online at [Shop! Calusa Land Trust](#). There you can see the items and pick your favorites. The process is easy (even I can do it!). But if you have a problem, call me and we can chat it out or make an appointment to come to my house in St James City. You can save the \$5 shipping fee and hand pick your items.

You may contact Nancy at (859) 221-2104 or NWeir749@gmail.com

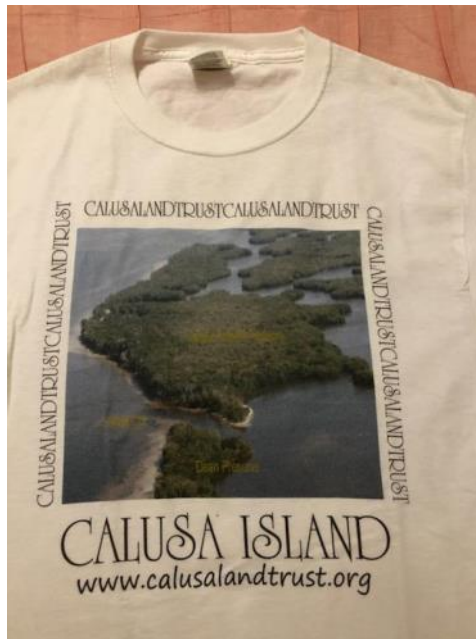
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A Favorite Paddling Route—Tropical Point to St Jude Trail - Judy Ott

For a quiet yet adventurous paddle, an interesting route is from Tropical Point Park to the boardwalk overlook at the CLT St. James Creek Preserve. The one-way distance is about 2.5 miles, passing along mangrove shorelines and through pristine island passages. If you are observant, fish and birds abound along the route, including: snook, mullet, mangrove snapper, crabs, herons and egrets. Launch at Tropical Point Park, where there is limited parking, a portable toilet and a shallow launch shore.

Follow the shoreline south to the St Jude Nature Trail Overlook (GPS: 26° 30.850' N & 82° 4.455' W). It is a good idea to bring a GPS unit with you because there are few landmarks along the route. For the return trip, either paddle back the same route or paddle up the creek on the north side of the boardwalk, haul out at one of the “alligator crawl” openings in the mangroves and portage to the St James Creek Preserve parking lot. From the overlook to the parking lot is about 0.4 miles. There are no services along the route, bring water etc...



SAVE THE REEF exhibit and Pine Island artist Zan Lombardo

The public, and especially Calusa Land Trust members, are invited to the SAVE THE REEF exhibit at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center (SBDAC) in Fort Myers. This exhibit, which runs June 4th through June 24th, is an international collaborative of fiber artists curated by Doris Florig. To complement the fiber exhibit, noted Bokeelia artist Zan Lombardo will premier her 15-foot watercolor of “The Mangroves” from CLT’s St. Jude Trail in a free presentation on Tuesday, June 8th at 6 pm.

CLT’s preserves on Pine Island protect over 2/3 of Pine Island’s mangroves, the heart of our fragile subtropical ecosystem. Zan started painting “The Mangroves” last summer and finished in April. She posted on Facebook “...seeing what I’ve painted...gives me a renewed appreciation for the light, shadow, color and complexity of the red mangroves”. Interested readers can follow her detailed progress on this painting, and view her other art work on her Facebook posts or on her website, www.zanlombardo.com.



In addition to her watercolor, Zan led the creation of a multimedia presentation, The Mangroves as Poetry. Zan Lombardo’s crown sonnet entitled “Mangroves: The Walking Tree” has been recorded by NYU Shakespearean Theater Professor David Brimmer in his resonant voice and is accompanied by a beautiful and educational slide show of the mangroves and their many features. A storyteller, Claudia Aldred, has chronicled the fauna that populate the mangroves in “Mangroves: Sanctuary of Life, Grotto of Fertility”, a poem that Zan Lombardo will present in an engaging visual format.

Per the SBDAC website (www.sbdac.com), “SAVE THE REEF” is an international effort presented by a team of artists who share an interest in educating the public about the need to conserve and preserve our fragile ocean environment. We offer an interactive three-dimensional exhibit surrounding the attendees with texture and color. The art communicates messages intended to stimulate discussion and promote action needed to protect our environment for future generations.”

Submitted by Ellen Ballard

Photo credit: Bob Lombardo

CALUSA LAND TRUST — PINE ISLAND MOOSE EGG - STRAVAGANZA

Easter 2021 came early for the children on Pine Island as they drove through the Pine Island Moose Lodge 1954 parking lot on April 3rd. They received bags of Easter goodies from Women of the Moose, Pine Island Garden Club, VFW, American Legion, Kiwanis, Elks and the Calusa Land Trust. Calusa Land Trust’s Coloring books, crayons and candy filled Easter eggs were passed out to 120+ egg-static children on that egg-straordinary day!

The Easter Bunny greeted many Happy faces filled with chocolate smiles from 10am-12pm as they hopped down the Bunny trail of the Moose Lodge!



By Alice Trant

Annual Membership Form

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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 2021

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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