

**2018 IMPORTANT  
DATES**

**WORK/FUN PARTIES**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday  
Of each Month Means  
A Work/FUN Party at a  
CLT property*

*If you would like to receive  
Work / Fun party email  
notification, send us an email at  
[info@calusalandtrust.org](mailto:info@calusalandtrust.org)*

Saturday 12 May, we will be at  
the Wigert/Barron Preserve  
9 am to noon

Saturday 9 June, we will be at  
our Baxley Preserve  
9 am to noon

Saturday 14 July we will be  
planting native palms at the  
Chapin Preserve  
9 am to noon

**PADDLES**

There are no more Paddles  
scheduled for this Spring. We  
expect to restart in the fall, so  
keep your eyes on this spot.

Thanks for your support.

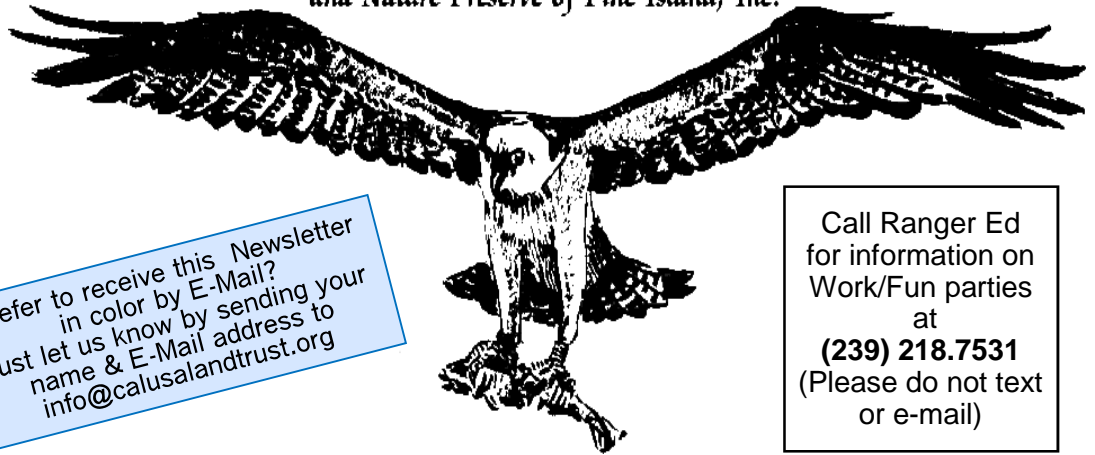
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let us know. All of the pictures  
are in color and some are  
spectacular.

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**Calusa Land Trust**  
and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



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name & E-Mail address to  
[info@calusalandtrust.org](mailto:info@calusalandtrust.org)

Call Ranger Ed  
for information on  
Work/Fun parties  
at  
**(239) 218.7531**  
(Please do not text  
or e-mail)

**Newsletter #105**  
Founded 1976

**May 2018**  
[www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org)

**Calusa Land Trust Awarded LCEC Environmental Funding Grant**

Submitted by Frank Potter

LCEC (Lee County Electric Cooperative, Inc.) announced on March 16, 2018 that it will provide the CLT with an environmental funding award of nearly \$6,000. The award will partially fund the establishment of trails and provide interpretative signage in the Wigert-Barron Preserve in Bokeelia.

In 2015, the CLT acquired a 31-acre parcel located in Bokeelia, FL on the northern end of Pine Island. After the CLT purchased 10 acres, a long-time CLT member and adjacent neighbor, the Wigert family, donated 21 acres to form what we call the Wigert-Barron Preserve.



When the CLT obtained these parcels, the land contained many exotic invasive plants including Australian pine, Brazilian pepper, and ear-leaf acacia. In 2017, the CLT cleared the preserve of the exotic plants to allow the native plants to re-establish. The native plants are now growing in the preserve (and unfortunately so are the exotic plants, which require periodic removal during monthly work parties).

The preserve includes a mangrove habitat, a 1.5-acre fresh water pond, a coastal scrub habitat, and Florida pine flatwoods habitat. The coastal scrub habitat area includes delicate native plants and lichen and active gopher tortoise colonies (the gopher tortoise is a threatened species in Florida). The gopher tortoise is seen as a keystone species because it digs burrows that can provide shelter for at least 360 other animal species. An inventory of the native species was conducted by CLT volunteers (some of whom are certified Florida Master Gardeners or Florida Master Naturalists) with the assistance of members of the Pine Island Garden Club. The native plants will be tagged, and the specific locations will be identified that are best examples of the different environments (the mangrove habitat, the coastal scrub habitat zone and the Florida pine flatwoods zone).

The nature trail will be established using a panel at the preserve entry with a map identifying the trails and environmental zones. Along the trails, signage will explain how these native plants help preserve the island and can survive and reproduce in a harsh coastal environment of primarily sand with limited organic matter and high salt levels. The interpretative signs will provide opportunities for elementary and secondary school students and the general community to observe the variation in the habitats and to understand the flora and fauna living in each habitat.

Other awardees of the LCEC environmental award this year include the City of Sanibel, the Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW), Coastal Keepers, the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum, and the Monofilament Busters. LCEC has awarded nearly \$79,500 since the inception in 2014 of the environmental funding awards.

## Message from the President - Rad Hazen

I think nothing is more rewarding than getting feedback that people are using and enjoying our preserves. Nancy Glickman is a long time Pine Island resident and a very talented nature photographer. The pictures accompanying this article were taken by Nancy during one visit to the Wigert/Barron Preserve recently. Admittedly, she has a trained eye for seeing the details of the natural world but, any of us can have the rewarding experience of "seeing" if we slow down and look.

I hope we can share more of Nancy's photos in the future and invite our readers to send your pictures from our preserves to me at [radfordhazen@gmail.com](mailto:radfordhazen@gmail.com). Let me know where you took the photo and any info that you deem important. We will use these pictures in future news letters. Pine Island is unique in the amount of preserved land it offers. Take the time to get out and enjoy.

Rad

Photos Courtesy of:  
Nancy Glickman

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Prickley Pear Cactus



Red Bellied Woodpecker



Screech Owl



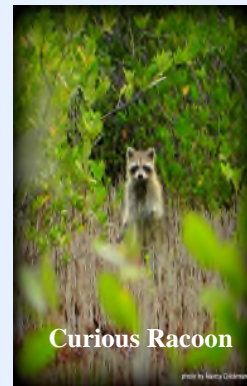
Vireo



Green Heron



Dragonfly



Curious Raccoon



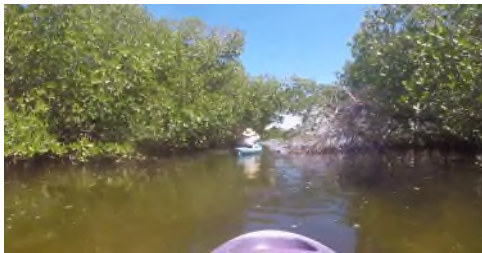
FROM  
THE  
RANGER'S  
HUT

If you have not had the pleasure of joining one of the Peter Ordway Paddles, the images below will give you an idea of what you have been missing. They were taken from a Todd Alan film posted on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/YbkWy2mh2ws>.

This Paddle occurred on Saturday March 24, 2018 at the Chapin Preserve. This was the last Paddle of the Spring Season, but we expect to resume in the fall.

Don't forget, if you are not getting this Newsletter by e-mail, you are not getting this Newsletter in Full Color! Send us an e-mail at [info@calusalandturst.org](mailto:info@calusalandturst.org) to get your Newsletter via e-mail.

Thanks to:  
a todd alan film



## Hammerheads Committee



The Committee is working on installing a bridge at the south end of the Dobbs Preserve to create a loop trail. This Preserve is located near Tropical Point on Sabal. We hope to have this done in the next few weeks.

Ed Chapin (239) 218-7531 (Please do not text or e-mail)

## Treasures of the Trails for April 2018: Searching for the Skunk Ape at St James Creek Preserve

Photo and Text by Judy Ott

My April CLT Trail treasure hunt took me to the Eagle Preserve in search of a Skunk Ape. Eagle Preserve is part of the St. James Creek Preserve, which includes over 540 acres of pine flatwoods and mangroves between the St. James City Post Office and St Jude Harbor. The trail entrance is located off Castile Road just south of the post office.



The Skunk Ape, according to folklore, is a large, hairy, foul-smelling apelike creature which runs upright on 2 legs and lives in Florida woods and wetlands. Sightings of the Skunk Ape peaked in the late 1960s but photos captured one near Myakka River State Park in 2000. To find a Skunk Ape requires stealthy walking using all your senses. Feel the warm breeze on your face. Listen to the wind in the pines, the staccato call of woodpeckers, the melodic song of the cardinal, the rustling of the palmettos by unseen animals. Look for slash pines of all ages, gopher tortoise burrows, bachelor buttons and hat pins. Smell the dry broom sedge and sweet palmetto flowers.

A favorite haunt of Skunk Apes are undisturbed pine palmetto habitat like those found in the Eagle Preserve. Pine flatwoods are important, widely distributed habitats found throughout Florida. They can be wet (hydric), moderately wet (mesic) or dry (xeric), depending on how often they are inundated by standing water and what types of understory plants are found below the pines. Our Pine Island flatwoods are dominated by a canopy of Slash Pine (*Pinus elliotti*) with an understory of Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) and mixed grasses and a middle layer of varying amounts of Cabbage Palm (*Sabal palmetto*). As the name implies, pine flatwoods typically grow on low, flat land with poorly drained sandy soils. The habitat is fire-dependent and regular burning is required to maintain the open, diverse plant communities. The Eagle Preserve underwent a

prescribed fire about 10 years ago to restore its value to wildlife and help fire-dependent plants germinate and flower. Fire also slows the habitat progression to more mature oak hardwood hammock. Pine flatwoods provide important habitat for many different wildlife species: greater than 25 species of reptiles, including gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*); mammals including bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) and armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*); and birds, including eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and red-bellied woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*).

So as you take a spring hike with lower mosquitos and heat, can you hear the Skunk Ape traipsing through the underbrush or see its eyes through the palmetto or smell its musty smell? Or is it just April Fools?



Photo Courtesy  
Pine Island Eagle

### Rubye Woodhead Pond Dedication

Retiring Long Time CLT Board Member, Rubye Woodhead was honored on 21 March by the dedication to her of a fresh water pond at the Wiegert/Baron Preserve.

A native gumbo limbo tree was planted in her honor, which will provide shade for the bench.



# Great Calusa Land Trust Annual Rubber Duck Race Saturday, March 03, 2018



The 2018 Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race was another tremendous success! Many, Many thanks are extended to the army of volunteers that contributed hours and hours of their time soliciting donor gifts, attending countless organizational meetings, selling Duck tickets and working the Duck Race!

We appreciate the donations from the multitude of area businesses that so generously give to Calusa Land Trust each year. It definitely takes an Island to accomplish this charitable endeavor year after year.

The winners this year were as follows:

**Super Duck Race winner:**

\$1000 Don Reisner

**Great Duck Race winners:**

\$1000 Cathy Christopher #2010

\$500 Jerry Brommer #710

\$250 Patti Sweeney #1660

**Runner's up Gift Bag winners:**

4th Place Tony Popillo #1484

5th Place Sandra Hilt #1566

6th Place Bill Spikowski #242

7th Place Mary Ann Billheimer #848

8th Place Dave (no last name) #1031



*Three thousand ducks thundering to the finish line*

After the Race, all 3000 ducks must be counted, cleaned, dried and placed in their summer/fall nesting grounds til next year. Again the volunteers took this chore in hand and accomplished it all in one day! Kudos to them!



*Counting, bathing, and getting three thousand ducks ready for next year*

So, like the Ducks, we will spend the summer and fall resting and building up our energies to do this again next year! For now, the Ducks are gone...but before you know it, you'll be seeing "THE DUCKS ARE COMING, THE DUCKS ARE COMING" at your local watering hole or food store!

Thanks again Calusa Land Trust members for all you do!

Alice Trant  
Duck Race Coordinator



## Do you shop online at Amazon?

If you do, next time go to  
[www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com)

Then select the Calusa Land Trust  
as your charity of choice.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases  
to the Calusa Land Trust.

*“How do I get to the”*  
**Calusa Land Trust (CLT) Preserves and Trails**  
([www.calusalandtrust.org](http://www.calusalandtrust.org))

Submitted by Ellen Ballard

### **North (Bokeelia) end of Pine Island**

**Wigert Barron Preserve** 7124 Barrancas Ave (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.6939 Long -82.1434) Access is on a paved road with parking at the trail head. This is upland habitat with many gopher tortoise dens, a freshwater pond, mangroves, pine flatwoods, and a coastal scrub habitat. No dogs are allowed.

**Fritts Park/ Big Jim Creek Preserve** 7725 Beach Daisy Lane (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.6799 Long -82.1525) Access is via a generous single lane dirt road. It is a dog friendly park with lots of parking on grass, picnic benches and native vegetation to enjoy in this former mango grove. There is a canoe/kayak launch at the NW corner of Fritts Park. A medium to high tide is required for this trail to be navigable. It is about 1 mile from the launch site to Pine Island Sound. This trail is part of the Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail.

**Ed Chapin Preserve** 5492 Royal Okley Lane (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.6637 Long -82.1180) Access is via a single lane dirt road that may not be passable in wet weather. Follow CLT signs from Harbor Dr to Mannheim to Lockhart to Royal Okley (may show as Royal Oakly on GPS). Work is being done to open access to a paddling route to Smokehouse Bay.

### **South (St. James City) end of Pine Island**

**St. James Creek Preserve** is the primary conservation for the southern end of Pine Island, totaling 543 acres of environmentally sensitive property. It includes the St. Jude Nature Trail and the Eagle Preserve.

**St. Jude Nature Trail** has 2 access points – one is at approximately 3557 Stabile Rd just after the intersection with Crestwell Ct. (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.5128 Long -82.0816). Access is on a paved road with street parking. There is a stunning 8 foot tall piece of public art with shells and copper inserts with a hollow face to portray “The Spirit of the Calusa” by Wayne Harms, local artist at this entry.

The second entry is approximately 3550 Crestwell Ct (GPS Coordinates: 26.5234/Long -82.0810) by the Ward Bridge, dedicated 1/28/18. From this vantage point you can see to your left the Smith Dewane Vista with a picnic area & tiki huts. The St. Jude Nature Trail is a ½ mile walk to Calusa Point and a beautiful open vista of St. James Creek. The trail begins in flatlands and passes through a mangrove forest. All vegetation on the trail, which is still being restored, is native to this area. The trail is built on an old roadbed constructed several decades ago by the St. Jude Harbor Corporation as part of a development including shopping centers and restaurants!

**The Eagle Preserve** approximately 3680 Castile Road (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.521857 Long -82.085368) comprised of 118 acres of cabbage palms, slash pines, and saw palmettos is owned by Lee County but forms a part of the St. James Creek preserve. Access and street side parking are on Castile Rd. This Preserve is fenced to protect the winter home of a pair of nesting bald eagles.

**Galt Preserve** 3821 Stringfellow Rd (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.5164/Long -82.0849) This 166 acre preserve is managed jointly by Lee County 20/20 program and the Calusa Land Trust. There is a paved parking area as well as rest rooms & trash receptacles. Boardwalk trails are well marked. Hiking trails venture through a mix of pine flatwoods, mangroves, saltwater access, and a brackish lake. There is a pair of Bald Eagles in this preserve. Leashed dogs are welcome.

**Dobbs Preserve** 5705-5799 Sabal Ave (at the intersection of Sabal & Mango St) (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.5445/Long -82.0831) Access to this 70 acre preserve is on a paved road with street parking. Extensive work continues on this trail to clear invasive exotics.

**Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve** 6351 Stringfellow Rd. (GPS Coordinates: Lat 26.5518 Long -82.0928.) This 92 acre preserve is managed jointly by Lee County 20/20 program and the Calusa Land Trust. There is a gravel parking area. Old logging roads are now great hiking trails through all native pine flatwoods with slash pine, eastern longleaf, palmetto, and lots of gopher tortoises and wildflowers. There is a pair of Bald Eagles in this Preserve.

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Calusa Land Trust  
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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 2018**

**RETURN OF THE PLANKS!**

Submitted by Marty Kendall

Many of you will remember in 1997 (picture on right) when CLT sponsored a "plunk a plank" campaign whereby one could purchase a routed lumber plank, in order to support the "new" St. Jude's Nature Trail. The response was overwhelming with first the observation deck completely full, and then the boardwalk, and then the benches, until after the sale of hundreds of planks, we ran out of space.



LOVE PLANKS: Rick Moore, left, and Norm Gowen are members of the Calusa Land Trust. Members of the club received \$25 per plank to get the names of loved ones engraved on them.

The construction of the two new tiki huts at the Smith/Dewane Vista at the St. James Creek Preserve now allows us to offer twelve (yes, only 12) four feet long planks to be installed in its rafters. Thanks to the recent donation of sufficient composite boards, CLT is now offering the opportunity to reserve your routed engraved plank for a gift of \$100.

Your donation may be processed via mail or at calusaland-trust.org. The plank information should be sent to john@calusalandtrust.org or call (239)283-8175.

**CLT Ranger Report April 2018**

Submitted by Ed Chapin

**Past Work/Fun Parties:**

Our Sat Feb 10th Fun/Work Party was at our Kreie Island Preserve. This is a mostly mangrove island on the south of Burgess Bay, on the Northwest end of Jug Creek, near Bokeelia. This preserve has a small upland of about two acres, with unusual oaks, hog plum, and palmetto estimated to be over one hundred years old. We had to boat to get to the site and had a great turnout of 22 volunteers. We have not worked at this site for many years. We call the upland site the Peter Ordway Tropical Hammock after Peter who negotiated a bargain purchase from the Kreie Family. We had a lot to do and were able to get it back to a usable site to visit.

On Sat March 10th we were at the Bud House Calusa Canal Preserve. Again a great turnout with 21 hard working volunteers. This preserve is about 3 acres, on Meadow lane, off of Harbor Drive in Bokeelia. This preserve contains a remnant piece of the Old Calusa Canal that was dug by the Calusa from Pineland to Indian Field Island. It also has some second growth long leaf pine emerging from the existing seed bed since we have removed the Brazilian Pepper, Ear Leaf Acacia and Australian Pines. Another Work Party well done!

**Future Work/Fun Parties**

By the time this News Letter is out we will have completed our April Work Party at the Taylor Willow Lake Preserve just south of the Catholic Church.

On Saturday 12 May, we will be at the Wigert/Barron Preserve 9 am to noon.

On Saturday 9 June, we will be at our Baxley Preserve at the end of Redwood 9 am to noon.

And on Saturday 14 July we will be planting native palms at the Chapin Preserve. Located at the end of Royal Oakley 9 am to noon.

August is Vacation.

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



**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.