

## 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 13 October,  
we will be at  
the Dobbs Preserve  
9am to noon

Saturday 10 November,  
we will be at  
our Taylor/Willow Lake  
Preserve  
9am to noon

Saturday 8 December,  
we will be at  
the Wigert/Barron  
Preserve  
9am to noon

#### Upcoming Paddles

Sunday October 28  
Fish Eating Creek

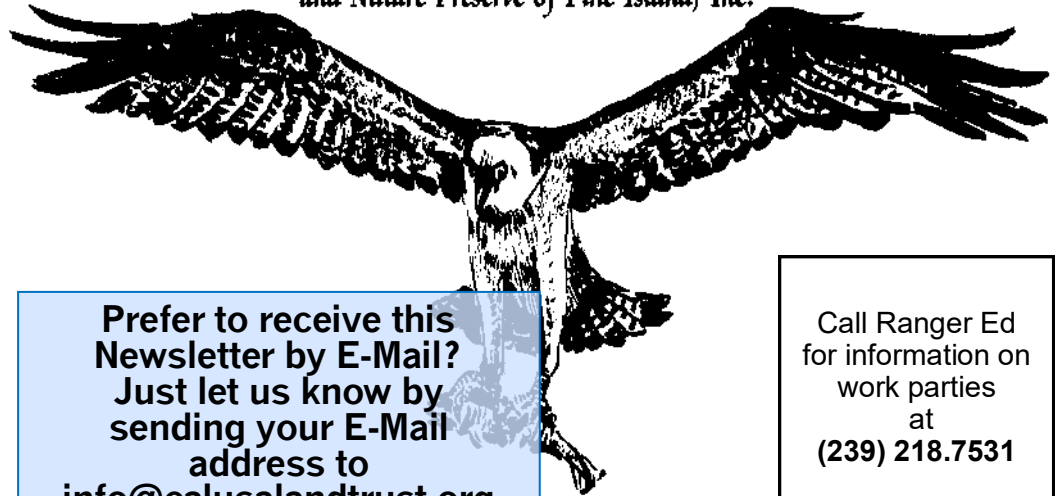
Saturday November 24  
Calusa Island, Bokeelia

Sunday December 16  
St. James Creek

Reservations and  
Information call  
Ranger Ed  
239.218.7531

# Calusa Land Trust

and Nature Preserve of Pine Island, Inc.



Prefer to receive this  
Newsletter by E-Mail?  
Just let us know by  
sending your E-Mail  
address to  
[info@calusalandtrust.org](mailto:info@calusalandtrust.org)

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

Newsletter #106  
Founded 1976

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

## COME EXPLORE OUR NEWEST NATURE TRAIL

The Calusa Land Trust's newest nature trail is located at the Wigert/Barron Preserve ( Lat 26.6939N, Lon 82.1434W ) and is situated at the intersection of Barrancas Ave. and Aura Lane in Bokeelia.

This 33 acre preserve contains three distinctive habitats: mangrove forests, pine flat woods, and a rare and endangered community called "coastal scrub". After receiving a generous grant from Lee County Electric Cooperative, Calusa Land Trust identified and provided signage for 70 indigenous plants. Each sign provides a photo of the plant, its scientific and common name, and a description of its value and use.

Along the trail we were also able to include signage for the many gopher tortoise homes that exist there. The well marked path winds through the three beautiful ecosystems and ends at a fresh water pond (Rubye's Pond) inhabited by soft shelled turtles, one shy alligator, otters, and a wealth of birds to be enjoyed.

The Florida scrub environment is relatively harsh with a predominance of shrubs and small rare plants. It represents the oldest plant community in our State, having been established well before the arrival of modern mankind. Its creatures have adapted well and include the endangered gopher tortoise, swimming sand skinks, mole skinks, lizards, bobcats, indigo snakes, osprey and numerous other birds.

The Calusa Land Trust has developed this preserve to provide a fun and educational walking tour. Come see for yourself, but remember to tread carefully, since this is home to an array of species some of which live nowhere else in the World. Because of its fragile nature, no dogs are allowed.

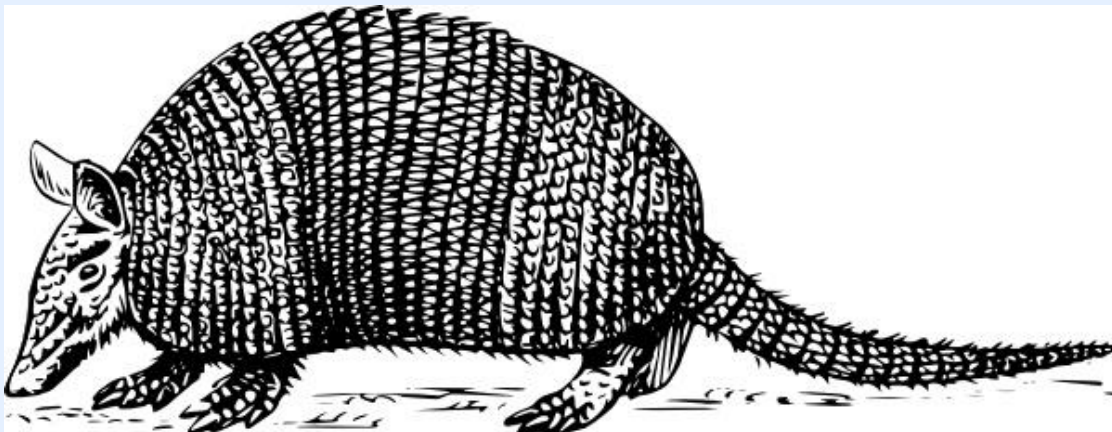


## Rad Hazen, President

Someone recently pointed out to our Ranger, Carolyn Murphey, that we had signs of rooting wild hogs at our Wigert/Barron Preserve. This was a reasonable concern given the numbers of feral hogs on Pine Island but in this case the culprit was another introduced species which is much smaller and way less damaging to the environment. The Nine-banded Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), leaves "rooting" trails through the leaf litter and detritus very much like a miniature hog. These guys are looking for grubs, insects and worms and don't disturb the plant roots to any great extent. I have covered in my tent at night while one of these creatures thrashed through the leaf litter sounding like a Grizzly Bear. They are loud. Spanish conquistadores named them "little man in armor" when they first encountered them in Mexico and the American Southwest. The only member of a unique, New World, group of animals found in the United States they are related to sloths and anteaters. The obvious, very unique, feature of the Armadillo is its rigid, armor-like skin. This armor provides very good protection from predators when these guys roll up into a tight ball.

They are mostly nocturnal during hot times of the year (so am I) and can be seen snuffling about any time during the cooler months (yep, me too). They are good swimmers and can run surprisingly fast when they need to. Their tendency to leap into the air when surprised is a deadly trait when they encounter an automobile as they end up as our most common road kill. Four identical twin babies are born in March in burrows which often have leaf litter dragged into the entrance as camouflage. The babies look like tiny pigs and start out with soft, pink skin which later hardens. They are often used in research where identical clones are required.

Once native to the Southwestern U.S. the Armadillo is thought to have been introduced to southern states as a result of roadside zoos and the pet trade. Like the Coyote, the conundrum of a native species that extends its range (is it native in its new home or not) is somewhat philosophical. In any case the "little man in armor" seems to be part of our environment now and, since he doesn't seem all that destructive, maybe we should accept him as an interesting and entertaining aspect of our lives.



# Bird Bingo

The National Geographic Society, Audubon, and Cornell University's Ornithology Lab have designated 2018 as the Year of the Bird in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Migratory Bird Act Treaty. Congress passed this treaty act in 1918 to protect migrating birds from wanton killing. Pine Island is celebrated for its natural spaces and is recognized for its bird life. Whether you are a casual observer, a passionate bird lister, an artist, or a photographer, Pine Island is the place to be! During October, the Calusa Land Trust and the Friends of the Pine Island Library are sponsoring a Bird Bingo game! Play bird bingo, explore CLT trails and preserves, and win prizes! One of the boxes that will be easy to fill in will be a "how to take pictures of birds" class with Martha Huard on October 13th. The bingo sheet asks players to make note of where on Pine Island the birds are spotted so that the results can be graphed – science displayed! The bingo sheet with Calusa Land Trust brochure will be available at the Pine Island library at the end of September. Check out these links for more information on the Year of the Bird: [www.nationalgeographic.org/projects/year-of-the-bird/](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/projects/year-of-the-bird/) ; or [www.audubon.org/yearofthebird.com](http://www.audubon.org/yearofthebird.com);

## October Happenings Celebrate the Year of the Bird



**Oct 1-30** All month long!! Play **Bird Bingo!** Info at the PI Library the end of September. Prizes!

**Sat Oct 13<sup>th</sup> 9 am** Join a **guided bird walk with Audubon of SWFL** at the Calusa Land Trust's Wigert-Barron Preserve in Bokeelia

**Sat Oct 13<sup>th</sup> 1 pm** Bring your camera or smartphone to the PI Library! Noted PI photographer **MARTHA HUARD**, gives an intro class on **"Capturing" Beautiful Birds!**

**Sponsored by the Friends of the Pine Island Library**



# Treasures of the Trails for October 2018

## Stalking the Elusive Mangrove Tree Crab in Dobbs Preserve

Photos by Judy Ott/CLT and Candy Feller/Smithsonian Marine Station.  
Text by Judy Ott



Photo: Judy Ott

Have you ever wondered how fast Mangrove Tree Crabs run? Me neither until I set out to photograph them for this article. Mangrove Tree Crabs are very common in the mangroves along the Matlacha Pass shore and trails of the Dobbs Preserve. The Preserve is located 5 miles south of Pine Island Center between Tropical Point Drive, Tangerine Drives, Sabal Avenue and Matlacha Pass. The 70 acre preserve has a small upland area, tidal wetlands and mangrove forests. It is accessible by kayak from Matlacha Pass at Tropical Point and by foot via 2 wooden bridges off Sabal Avenue.

Mangrove Tree Crabs are unique crabs that live in mangroves, traveling regularly between the tree roots and canopy, and the water and exposed mud. They are abundant but elusive in our Pine Island mangroves, as well as mangrove forests along the tropical and subtropical coasts of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean Islands. They are the only species in their genus because of their distinctive life style and physical attributes, which make them well adapted to life among the mangroves. They are quite small for crabs, about 1 inch square, with a mottled brown and olive-green carapace, wideset eyes, sharp tipped legs and small hairy claws. Their coloring makes good camouflage among mangrove foliage and their sharp legs help them skitter rapidly (up to 1 meter/second) along mangrove roots and trunks. To a casual observer, they might appear to be spiders moving among the branches.

Mangrove Tree Crabs rely on their namesake habitat for food, oxygen, reproduction and shelter from predators. Their primary food is red mangrove leaves, of which they only eat the outside layer, leaving behind characteristic scraping marks. And, unlike other crabs, they don't breathe air directly but metabolize oxygen using a thin film of water over the carapace where it covers the gills. When the film dries up, the crab must return to the water to replenish it. So they migrate vertically with the tide, between the shelter of the canopy and the need for water.

Mature Mangrove Tree Crabs mate year-round, shortly after the female molts, about 6 times a year. The female broods the fertilized eggs (up to 35,000) for about 2 weeks, then climbs down from the tree and releases the eggs into the water to become larvae. Peak egg release is during the rainy season and new and full moons. Larvae pass through 5 development stages over 1 month before becoming juvenile crabs. Only a tiny fraction (<.001%) of the larvae reach adulthood.

Mangrove Tree Crabs play many critical roles in estuarine habitats. Most importantly, they help transfer energy up through the food webs from eating the mangrove leaves, to adding larvae to the zooplankton community to serving as food for larger animals such as mangrove snapper, white ibis and raccoons. Scientists suggest Mangrove Tree Crabs grow larger and in higher numbers in healthier, less developed mangrove forests - a reminder to us to continue preserving and managing our special habitats for the long term.



Photo: Candy Feller

## Great Calusa Land Trust Annual Rubber Duck Race



Mark Your Calendars!  
The Ducks Are Coming!  
The Ducks Are Coming! Great Calusa Rubber  
Duck Race - Saturday, March 2, 2019 at  
LOW KEY TIKI in Saint James City.

After a summer of quiet hibernation, the 3,000 Bright  
Yellow Ducks are in their Winter Nesting grounds.  
Soon they will start their rigorous exercises and  
training in preparation for 2019's Best Duck Race  
on the Island!

A fun filled day awaits with Live and Silent Auctions,  
Entertainment, Food, Beverages and Games for  
All Ages. Duck Race Tickets will go on sale before  
the holidays - so Buy Early and Buy Often!  
First Place Duck WINS \$1,000!

See you at Pine Island's Premier Event -  
Great Calusa Rubber Duck Race - Saturday March 2, 2019!!



### Super Volunteers Movin' On

**Famous Board Secretary:** In 1997, Rubye Woodhead became our CLT historian. She designed and kept scrapbooks with all of the CLT press clippings which are an invaluable resource. In addition, Rubye accepted the position of Secretary of the Board of Directors a few years later. Norm Gowan, former president, made her an offer she couldn't refuse. She kept this important position for almost 17 years. She made notes, used a recorder, and produced the minutes of 187 Board Meetings. That is right - 187 sets of minutes. Rubye has sold her house and is moving with her daughter to Virginia where they have friends and relatives.

**Famous Duck Race Ticket Sellers:** For many years Phil and Ginny Schaller headed up the coordination and sales of Duck Race tickets. Their many hours of work stopping at all the pubs and restaurants dressed in duck costumes, duck hats, and duck jewelry helped set records for ticket sales. Behind the scenes they made sure all tickets were accounted for and all winners were contacted. Phil and Ginny are relocating to the City of Fort Myers overlooking the Caloosahatchee River. We are sure they will be returning to have fun at future duck races.

Thank you to these volunteers for their many years of dedication to the Calusa Land Trust.

## 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:

**Saturday, May 12** Fun/Work Party was at our Wigert/Barron Preserve at the corner of Aura Lane and Barrancas Ave. We had a great turnout with 18 volunteers and removed many recently re-emerging invasive and exotic plants.

**Saturday, June 9**, we worked at our Baxley Preserve at the end of Redwood. 12 volunteers arrived and many invasives and exotics were removed, particularly along the fence line and we reopened a maintenance trail.

**July 3**, 8 volunteers designed and built a CLT float for the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, we again had 8 volunteers help during the parade.

**Saturday, July 14**, at the Chapin Preserve at the end of Royal Oakley, our 11 volunteers planted 40 Long Leaf pines. As the rains started that same day, the pines had an excellent survival rate.

**Saturday, September 8**: Work/Fun party was at the Smith/Dewane Vista and the adjacent St. Jude Trail. With recent rains, lots of trimming and cutting were accomplished by 15 volunteers.

### Future Work/Fun Parties:

**Saturday, October 13**, we will be at the Dobbs Preserve at the intersection of Sabal and Mango Street in St. James City.

**Saturday, November 10**, we will be at the Taylor Willow Lake Preserve just south of the Catholic Church on Alcorn Street.

**Saturday, December 8**, we will be at St. James Creek in St. James City, one of our original and most beautiful trails, accessed near 3550 Crestwell Court. and also near 3557 Stabile Road.



**LEFT:** Most of the 15 volunteers resting in the shade of a new Tiki Hut. They worked Saturday September 8 at the Smith/Dewane Preserve and St. Jude Trail.

## Peter Ordway Mangrove Adventures

Every year from October to March Ed Chapin, our Chief Ranger, guides monthly paddles in memory of Peter Ordway who started these paddle trips back in the 1990s.

**Sunday 28 October** – The first paddle of the 2018-2019 season will be on Sunday, October 28th down Fisheating Creek. This is our only off island trip. Fisheating Creek is a beautiful cypress lined creek with plenty of gators and other wildlife. Our launch point is near Palmdale on US27, about an hour drive from Pine Island.

**Saturday 24 November** - The next paddle is set for Calusa Island. Calusa Island at the North tip of Pine Island was Calusa Land Trust's first purchase back in 1976.

**Sunday 16 December** – Saint James Creek Preserve – Adjacent to the Saint Jude Trail.

Reservations are required and a suggested \$20 per person donation goes to the CLT. For more information or to make a reservation, please call Ed Chapin at 239.218.7531 More paddles will be scheduled in January, February and March 2019.



**Call Ed Chapin (239) 218-7531**



\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 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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**EXPIRES:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ **Sec. Code** \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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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. **October 2018**

**RETURN OF THE PLANKS!**  
Submitted by Marty Kendall

Many of you will remember in 1997 when the CLT sponsored a "plunk a plank" campaign whereby one could purchase 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.

The construction of the two new tiki huts at the Smith/Dewane Vista at the St. James Creek Preserve now allows us to offer six (only 6) four feet long planks to be installed in their rafters. Thanks to the recent donation of some composite boards, CLT is now offering the opportunity to reserve your routed engraved plank for a gift of \$100.



Your donation can be made via PayPal at [calusalandtrust.org](http://calusalandtrust.org). The plank information should be sent to [John@calusalandtrust.org](mailto:John@calusalandtrust.org) or call (239) 283-8175.



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.

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



**PINK  
ADDRESS  
LABEL? TIME  
TO RENEW.**

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	<b>Russell Costa</b> Director	

### **Hammerheads Committee**

We have a new committee called The Hammerheads to help do some carpentry projects for the Calusa Land Trust. With their help, we installed a bridge at the south end of our Dobbs Preserve. Of course, there are many other carpentry projects on our to-do list. So if you have this kind of skill and time to help, contact me: Ed Chapin (239) 218-7531