

The Village Birders Calendar
December 2024 – April 2025
(as of November 24, 2024)

This schedule is subject to change.

Please check the website for updates and additional information.

<https://www.villagebirders.org/birding-trips>

All monthly meetings held at 9:00 AM at the Lake Okahumpka Recreation Center, 4505 Okahumpka Run.

December 2024

December 2 (Monday) Duck Day in The Villages: For fun let's see what ducks have arrived in The Villages for the winter. This is a duck species list only within THE VILLAGES. The number of each species is not important. The location of the duck is not important. Check the ponds by golf cart, car, or sitting in your lanai...it doesn't matter. Take a picture if you need help identifying. Email your list/photos to Alice Horst. Remember to look, you might be the ONLY person to see that one duck species.

December 11 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Prairie Creek Preserve. Leaders: Alice Horst and Jeffrey Forbes. Meet at 8:00 AM at "Witness Tree Junction" at the northwest corner of the Preserve (see map). Picnic lunch at the Lodge. Let Alice Horst know if you plan to go.

December 14 (Saturday) Christmas Bird Count (CBC):
Marion County

December 20 (Friday) Christmas Bird Count (CBC):
Emeralda Marsh Count Circle.

December 21 (Saturday) NO Monthly Club Meeting

January 2025

January 2 (Thursday) Christmas Bird Count (CBC):
Villages-Lake Panasoffkee Count Circle. Coordinators:
Brownwood Birders - Liz Stakenborg & Stan Lavender.

January 8 and 9 (Wednesday and Thursday) Overnight
Field Trip: St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, 1255
Lighthouse Rd, St. Marks, FL. Leader: Mark Cudney. Two
day driving and walking refuge. Overnight details to follow.

January 14 (Tuesday) Field Trip: Orlando Wetlands--Tram
Tour, 25155 Wheeler Rd, Orlando. LIMITED TO 20
PEOPLE. REQUIRED Advanced registration with \$5 fee to
be donated to Orlando Wetlands. RSVP to Leader Alice
Horst (Ahorst@comcast.net). Meet 8:00 AM at venue,
bring picnic lunch.

January 18 (Saturday) Monthly Club Meeting: Lake
Okahumpka Recreation Center. 9:00 AM. Speaker:
Tammy Martin: Birding Panama.

January 23 (Thursday) Field Trip: Ponce Inlet. Leader: Beth Sharlow. Details TBA.

January 29 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Ocklawaha Prairie Restoration Area, 7910 SE 137th Avenue Rd, Ocklawaha. Leader: Marlene Armstrong. Meet 8 am in venue parking lot. No facilities. Walking grass & dirt paths. Following optional lunch at Gator Joe's Beach Bar & Grill, 12431 SE 135 Ave., Ocklawaha 352-288-3100.

February 2025

February 5 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Fort Island Gulf Beach, 16000 W Fort Island Trail, Crystal River. Leader: Alice Horst. Meet TBD AM in beach parking lot at venue. Walking on sand and pavement. Optional lunch at Shrimp Landing.

February 12 (Wednesday) All Day Field Trip: De Leon Springs State Park -- Pontoon Boat Ride (~50 minutes). 601 Ponce DeLeon Blvd, De Leon Springs. Reservations and prepayment required. Followed by lunch at Old Sugar Mill. Stopping at Lake Woodruff NWA, 2045 Mud Lake Rd, De Leon Springs on way back to The Villages.

February 15 (Saturday) Monthly Club Meeting: Lake Okahumpka Recreation Center. 9:00 AM. Speaker: Mark Cudney: Birding Alaska.

February 20 (Thursday) Field Trip: Emeraldal Marsh Conservation Area Public Boat Ramp, located off Emeraldal Island Rd, Leesburg. Leader: Alice Horst. Meet 8 AM just past venue entrance. No restrooms. Walking on gravel road. Optional lunch to follow at Gator Bay Bar & Grill, 10320 CR 44, Leesburg approx. 1.5 miles away. (352) 365-2177.

February 26 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park—La Chua Trail, 4801 Camp Ranch Rd, Gainesville. Leader: Tammy Martin. Meet 8 AM in venue parking lot. Park entrance fee \$6.00 per vehicle or a Florida State Park pass. Porta Potty only. Walking on multiple surfaces – pavement, boardwalk and mowed grass.

February 28 and March 1 (Friday and Saturday) The Villages Outdoor Expo: Everglades Regional Rec Center, 5497 Marsh Bend Trail, Wildwood. Coordinator: Susan Pepper.

March 2025

March 6 (Thursday) Field Trip: Oakland Nature Preserve, 747 Machete Trail, Oakland. Leader: Jan Mercer. Meet 8 AM in venue parking lot. Restroom.

March 12 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Rodman Reservoir, 410 Rodman Dam Road, Palatka, FL 32177. Leader: Susan Pepper. More information TBA.

March 15 (Saturday) Monthly Club Meeting: Lake Okahumpka Recreation Center. 9:00 AM. Speaker: Pete Helmuth, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission: Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in the Withlacoochee State Forest.

March 19 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Chinsegut Wildlife and Environmental Area (pronounced "Chin-SEE-gut"), 23212 Lake Lindsey Road, Brooksville. Leader: Susan Pepper. Meet 8:20 AM at venue. Trip starts at 8:30 a.m. with brief introduction by FWC about the area. Restroom.

March 26 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Half Moon Wildlife Management Area, 8640 Sumter County Rd 247, Lake Panasoffkee. Leader: Liz Stackenborg. Meet 8 AM in parking lot at WMA Entrance Gate. Car pool for a drive through the area. Restroom.

April 2025

April 1 (Tuesday) All Day Field Trip: Cedar Key National Wildlife Refuge, Cedar Key. Leader: Beth Sharlow. Meetup in The Villages to carpool. Drive to multiple birding locations in and around Cedar Key throughout the day. Eating lunch in downtown Cedar Key. Details TBA.

April 9 (Wednesday) Field Trip: Dade Battlefield Historic State Park, 7200 Battlefield Parkway, Bushnell. Leader: Susan Pepper. Meet 8:30 AM at venue in the parking lot off to the right after park entrance. Entrance fee \$3.00 per vehicle or a Florida State Park pass. Restroom.

April 12 (Saturday) Annual Member Only Picnic:
RSVP REQUIRED Lake Griffin State Park, 3089 US-441, Fruitland Park. Coordinator: Barb Peterson. Meet 9:45 AM at venue for a bird walk followed at 11:00 AM with lunch. Entrance fee \$6.00 per vehicle or a Florida State Park pass. Restroom.
Details TBA.

April 16 and 17 (Wednesday and Thursday) Overnight Field Trip: Fort De Soto County Park, 3500 Pinellas Bayway South, Tierra Verde. Leader: Mark Cudney & Alice Horst. On Wednesday, meet 8:30 AM at the park headquarters, located at the intersection of Pinellas Bayway and Anderson Blvd (huge U.S. flag pole). Entrance fee \$5 paid at park kiosks, credit cards only, license plate number required. Details TBA.

April 19 (Saturday) Monthly Club Meeting: Lake Okahumpka Recreation Center. 9:00 AM. Program: Birding 101 followed with Binocular & Spotting Scope demos on the boardwalk behind the Rec Center.

April 24 (Thursday) Field Trip: Moss Bluff North Park, 16298 SE 95th Street Rd, Ocklawaha. Leader: Bob Smidt. Meet 8:00 AM at North Park. From SE Hwy 464C go past Dam Diner, across bridge over Ocklawaha River, turn right on first road. Park entrance fee \$5. Restroom. Go to Moss Bluff South Park. Optional lunch at Duck's Dam Diner.

May 2025 – no events

June 2025 – All Month Long is the June Challenge
Coordinator: Alice Horst. Details TBA.