

Apalachee Audubon

The Newsletter of the Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

Vol. 108, No. 1

September 2009

www.apalachee.org

CALLING ALL HANDS!

AAS embarks on a new project at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

by Lynn Reynolds

Our chapter has started work on an exciting and worthwhile project to create a butterfly garden of over 2600



square feet at the Picnic Pond area in the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Partnering with the St. Marks Refuge Association (President **Gail Fishman**) and the Hairstreak Chapter of NABA (President **Sally Jue**), we will add native species of larval-host and nectaring plants to support monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Nectar plants will also be added along Lighthouse Levee Trail, where the monarchs congregate in October and November, before their migration.

Thanks go to **Sunny Phillips** and **Elizabeth Platt** for spotting and passing along information about a “Monarch Waystation” program operated by the University of Kansas. Our President **Ed Gartner** and St. Marks’ **Robin Will** collaborated to perfect the idea for the benefit of wildlife at the Refuge.

We are also pleased to have the expertise and assistance of Native Nurseries, St. Marks NWR Photography Club, our ‘Waystation’ Consultant **Sue Martindale**, the Phoenix Club of Leon High

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

by Ed Gartner

The President’s message for September 2009 is that the message should come from the members. AAS has been active for a long while and we may have overlooked some of the possibilities and wishes of our most important members—those who support our goals year after year but are seldom heard from when programs, trips or other activities are planned. So let’s hear from you, our readers.



Those who attend the next few programs will be asked to voice their ideas and wishes. In this newsletter, you’ll find a membership survey on page 5. You can cut out the page, fill it out and mail it in, or go to our web site and print a copy from there.

And please don’t be shy. We really want to expand our membership (especially to younger people) and our outlook.

School and their Sponsor **Scott Brown**, Lincoln High Horticulture Instructor **Jim West**, and the Wakulla High School Advanced Placement Environmental Science class taught by **Angie Williams**.

To help fund the project, AAS will be seeking a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Our grant writers, **Lynn Reynolds** and **Ann Bruce**, thank National Audubon’s **Jacqui Sulek**, for her timely alert about this Refuge Friends Group Grant Program.

The groundbreaking will be held sometime in October, and we urge you to come join us! Bring your pennies, your pep and a plant or two, and be a partner in this exciting, multi-group venture!

SEPTEMBER 24TH PROGRAM 7:00 p.m. (Social at 6:30 p.m.)

Fritz Davis will present *Rare Bird*, a movie about David Wingate who rediscovered the Cahow (Bermuda Petrel) on Bermuda and has been working to restore its breeding population.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Remembering Sylvia Cohen	2
FeederWatcher News	2
Florida Hometown Democracy	3
Saving the Florida Panther	3
Upcoming AAS Programs	3
Stamps for Injured Eagles	3
Bird Bits	4
Coastal Cleanup	4
Committee Reports	4
Membership Survey	5
Family Birding Basics	
Field Trip	7
Map to Amtrak Station	7

BECOME A MEMBER

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For just \$20 a year you can be a member of both National Audubon and our local Apalachee Audubon chapter. Your membership will include *Audubon*, our bimonthly flagship publication. Each issue of this award-winning publication features beautiful photography and provocative journalism. Our chapter newsletter will keep you informed of local and statewide Audubon and other nature-related events.

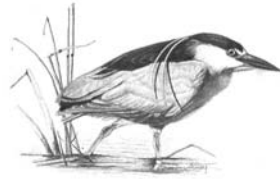
You can pay for membership using a credit card by calling Audubon's toll free membership number. (***Please mention our chapter ID E-19 for us to get full credit for a new membership.***)

1-800-274-4201

If you prefer to pay by check for an annual membership, send your \$20 check made payable to National Audubon Society and mail to address below:

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Allow 4-6 weeks for arrival of your first issue of *Audubon*. The cost of membership is tax deductible except for \$7.50 (which is allocated to *Audubon* magazine).



*Black-crowned Night-heron
by Daniel S. Kilby*

REMEMBERING SYLVIA COHEN

AAS member **Sylvia J. Cohen** died June 15, 2009, in Shands Hospital, Gainesville, Florida. Her obituary read, "It is not possible to reduce to words, the essence of her life: the love she had for her family, daughter Amanda and the grandchildren, Iliana and Emmy; the lives she touched from the day of her birth, September

21, 1950, in Zanesville, Ohio; her excitement for life; the dog shows; walks through Birdsong; photography of St. Marks Refuge; or to curl up with a good book."

From Member **Andy Wraithmell**, "I would like to say that of all the people I have birded with for the last 30 odd years she was up there with my favorites. A kind generous person who gave her all in whatever she did. She made people laugh with her eccentricity and spoke from the heart. You could always rely on Sylvia to tell you what she thought. There was no disguise. I am fortunate to have met her and spent time with her and I will miss her sorely. The birding community has lost a very special person and she will be missed."

Memorial contributions can be made in her name to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge or your favorite wildlife and environmental organization.

FEEDERWATCHER NEWS

Earlier this year, AAS member **Fran Rutkovsky** became a "Featured FeederWatcher" on the Project Feederwatch web site. Project FeederWatch is operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Fran first started FeederWatching in 1999 at her home in Tallahassee, Florida. She counts on every other Monday and Tuesday, checking her feeders periodically throughout her count days.

Fran has been lucky to host a Western Tanager and a Bullock's Oriole at her feeders for several winters, both rare for Florida in winter. Over the years, she has also had hummingbirds (Black-chinned, Allen's, and Calliope) and a Summer Tanager unexpectedly visit her feeders in winter.

Read the write-up online via: tinyurl.com/n3l4bt

Apalachee Audubon Society (AAS) 2009 – 2010 Officers and Board Members

President:	Ed Gartner	(850) 386-6543
Vice President:	Harry Hooper	(850) 668-0498
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Chris Borg	(850) 893-4153
Ann Bruce	(850) 224-4760
Melissa Forehand	(850) 510-4877
Karen Wensing	(850) 386-7766 (<i>Special Projects</i>)

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Newsletter is published 8 times yearly
(Sept.-May, except Dec.).

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AAS is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization.
All contributions are tax deductible.

Mission Statement: Protection of the environment through education, appreciation, and conservation.

FLORIDA HOMETOWN DEMOCRACY

by Jan Bordelon

“Transportation Concurrency” is defined as ensuring that the transportation infrastructure is in place before a new development creates additional traffic. Developers were often required to improve the nearby roads prior to construction. When Governor Crist signed Senate Bill 360, state-mandated transportation concurrency requiring new developments to be accompanied by necessary transportation upgrades was effectively removed.

Supposedly, the basis for this decision was to boost the construction industry in a listless economy. With over 500,000 empty structures and Florida’s population decreasing for the first

time since 1946, why do we think more development will solve our economic despair? Building homes and commercial properties that sit empty worsens our economy and chips away at Florida’s natural assets.

Although local governments may require developers to mitigate traffic congestion by ensuring that roads can handle the new growth, growth management rules have now been severely weakened. This change will likely fuel a continuation of urban sprawl throughout Florida.

So how does the Florida Hometown Democracy Amendment help curb the yielding of land to development?

This amendment will give Florida citizens a voice on comprehensive plan amendments. As growth management weakens, the need for the Hometown Democracy Amendment is even greater as a means for citizens to protect Florida’s green spaces, pastures, and woodlands from unnecessary construction.

With input from citizens, I believe Florida can discover new and greener avenues of economic development, other than building endless strip malls and housing. Florida voters will have an opportunity to weigh in on the Florida Hometown Democracy Amendment. Please give it your full consideration.

SAVING THE FLORIDA PANTHER

by Kathleen Carr

In a recently published brochure, the Sierra Club notes that the Florida panther’s decline has made it one of the most endangered mammals on Earth. Panther populations are being decimated by development, poisons in their environment, inbreeding, over-hunting, and roadcrossing fatalities.

Road accidents have become the single largest cause of death for panthers. Between February, 1972 and June, 2007, 112 Florida panthers were involved in vehicular collisions—only 8 survived.

Since then, highway deaths have escalated dramatically. A total of 28 panthers were killed by vehicles in a recent 27 month period. This year, eight panthers have been killed on roads. The most recent victim was hit by a truck August 5th on I-75 in Collier County.

The construction of wildlife underpasses on I-75 and SR29 has decreased some panther collisions in those areas. But because female panthers generally do not establish home ranges in areas containing highways, they are not likely to use underpasses. Thus, female panther habitat remains fragmented even in areas where underpasses have

been constructed to give the animals a way to cross roads safely.

In fact, the latest fatality occurred on a stretch of road that was bordered by fences and was equipped with underpasses.

Audubon of Florida and the Collier County Audubon Society are participating in the Florida Panther Protection Program, which is working to designate areas as critical habitat for the panther, create wildlife corridors, and build more underpasses.

Upcoming AAS Program Speakers & Topics

October 22	Terry Peacock (St. Marks NWR)— <i>Whooping Cranes</i>
November 19	Fred Bassett (Hummer Bird Study Group)— <i>Hummingbirds</i>
2010	
January 28	Jim Cox (Tall Timbers)— <i>Hunting</i>
February 25	Sandy Beck (St. Francis Wildlife)— <i>Owls</i>
March 25	Donna LeGare (Native Nurseries)— <i>Planting for Wildlife</i>

Injured Eagles Need Your Used Postage Stamps!

Yes, it’s true! The Audubon Center for Injured Birds of Prey (located at Maitland, Florida) collects used postage stamps and sells them to wholesalers for sale to collectors all over the world. All you have to do is cut postage stamps from your mail, leaving at least 1/4 inch of paper all around the stamp. (Or just bring the envelope and I will trim them.) Any postage stamp is useful—big, small, U.S., foreign—any postage stamp! There will be a box to collect them at Audubon meetings. If you have a lot of stamps, you can call to arrange for a pickup.

We appreciate your help.

If you have questions or want to arrange for a pickup, call **Eileen Boutelle** at (850)656-3346.

BIRD BITS: WHAT'S IN A NAME

by Harry Hooper

Cerulean Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Northern Cardinal, colorful birds, colorful names. But how did each of these beautiful birds acquire their name?

The Cerulean named for its sky blue plumage, the Prothonotary for the robe of an English "prothonotary" that included a saffron yellow hood or long hooded cloak, the perfect match for this warbler. The Cardinal's name originated from Roman high church officials whose robes and hats were red.

Many species were named for individuals who either discovered these species, for a friend of the discoverer, or for a famous individual. Examples include Bell's Vireo for John Graham Bell, a well known New York taxidermist who accompanied Audubon on his Missouri River exploration during 1843 and Swainson's Thrush for William Swainson, a traveled and quite knowledgeable naturalist who collected, illustrated, and wrote about mollusks, fish, birds, and other wildlife. Additionally, Audubon named the Swainson's Warbler after the naturalist.

Kirkland's Warbler was named by Spencer Baird for Jared P. Kirkland, a well-known physician who founded the Cleveland Medical College in Cleveland, Ohio. The warbler was first discovered near Cleveland.

Spencer Baird was the first United States Fish Commissioner and secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Audubon named a sparrow for Baird. In addition to the sparrow, Elliott Coues, a surgeon in the U.S. Army named a sandpiper for this naturalist. Following this trail of famous naturalists will lead to many other species named for famous and not so famous individuals.

Then there are the not so simple names, the Blackpoll Warbler for its black cap, the Hermit Warbler for allegedly being rare when first discovered, and the vulture, its old Latin *Vultur* transcribed as tearer, to pluck or tear.

Easier names include the Wagtail for pumping its tail, the Ruddy Turnstone for turning over stones in search of food, Roseate Spoonbill for its spatula shaped bill, and the Black-necked Stilt for the black-napped bird with disproportionately long legs.

We can go on till our hearts are content discovering the origins of bird names. I will give you a start with Prairie Warbler. Catch up with me at the September meeting and let me know what you may have discovered.



Swainson's Thrush
by Kirsten Munson

HELP AAS WITH COASTAL CLEANUP

by Melissa Foreman

Last year, 6.8 million pounds of trash was collected in 100 countries and 42 states during the 2008 International Coastal Cleanup, the world's largest volunteer effort of its kind. Thousands of birds, dolphins, seals, turtles, and fish eat things they shouldn't—like bottle caps and toothbrushes—and lose their lives. Ingested trash can cause choking, blockage of the digestive system, or poisoning.

Be part of the solution and join us for the 24th Annual International Coastal Cleanup Saturday, September 19th at Bottom's Road in Panacea. Bring gloves, closed toe shoes, bug repellent, and a friend. Afterwards we'll go to St. Marks NWR for free T-shirts and lunch. For event details, contact **Melissa Forehand**, (850)510-4877 or birdingtreefrog@gmail.com.

To learn more, visit www.OceanConservancy.org.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education

Planning Meeting: Dawn Saucier and Elizabeth Platt, Education Committee co-chairs for the coming season, invite interested teachers and other persons to attend a planning meeting on Wednesday, September 16th at 4:00 p.m. at the Cornerstone Learning Community at 2545 Hartsfield Road, Tallahassee. The purpose of the meeting will be to follow up on ideas suggested at a similar meeting in May during which area teachers explained various activities they had done to educate their students about birds or other creatures and their habitats. During our meeting on the 16th we will focus on some specific educational and conservation goals for the school year and commit to achieving them.

Birding hikes for teachers: Expert birder Gail Menk has offered local teachers the opportunity to accompany him on brief hikes around local birding spots so that they can learn enough to take their students outside to learn as well. Dr. Menk prefers to work with small groups only. To arrange for this excellent opportunity to learn about our local birds and migrants, call him at (850)575-9361. (**Note:** Dr. Menk retires early, so please don't call in the late evening.)

Field Trips

Field trips and other related outdoor activities are being planned for the 2009-10 year. So far there are several openings. So far we have a family birding trip, a canoe/kayak trip, a backyard birding activity, a butterfly field trip, and a few trips to popular area birding spots.

If you would like to lead a trip, conduct a hands-on workshop, or teach a useful nature-related skill, please contact **Elizabeth Platt** at ejplatt@embarqmail.com or (850)284-9063. A complete schedule will be available in the next newsletter and on the AAS web site.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY: GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

Thank you for your membership in Apalachee Audubon Society. In order to better serve our members and our community, we ask that you provide us with some information about your current interests and level of participation in our chapter. The primary purpose of this survey is to help us design the activities, programs and field trips that will be of greatest interest to you.

1. Have you ever attended an Apalachee Audubon program? Yes No
2. Which of our program areas most interests you?
 - a. bird- related programs
 - b. mammals and other wildlife programs
 - c. conservation issues
 - d. travel –related programs
3. I would greatly enjoy a program that _____

4. Have you ever attended an AAS bird walk or field trip? Yes No
I would enjoy a field trip to _____
5. Which of the following activities would most interest you?
 - a. family-oriented nature walks for those with young children
 - b. overnight van trips to birding hotspots in FL, AL, GA etc.
 - c. athletic/sports related field trips, such as hiking, cycling, paddling to birding areas
 - d. other (please explain) _____

6. Do you participate in other related clubs or activities such as gardening or butterfly clubs?
Please describe: _____
7. Could you assist us by volunteering? If yes, please check an area of interest or expertise below.
 - a. provide a program (topic: _____)
 - b. assist with habitat restoration and/or clean-up
 - c. guide a field trip (or assist other guides)
 - d. assist with education events in local schools, senior centers etc.
 - e. staff the AAS display at special events such as wildlife festivals etc.
 - f. assist with hospitality and set-up at meetings/programs
 - g. other (please describe) _____

We are truly grateful for your helpful information. If you have noted a willingness to volunteer, please fill in the contact information below. THANK YOU!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Apalachee Audubon
P.O. Box 1237
Tallahassee, FL 32302-1237

FAMILY BIRDING BASICS

Sunday, September 20, 2009

8:00 a.m. to noon

Family-friendly Birding Field Trip to Piney Z / Lake Lafayette with **Melissa Forehand** and **Marvin Collins**.

This field trip will cater to beginning birders and kids over 5 but everyone is welcome. Expect to see Great Blue Herons, Kingfishers, Green Herons, Red-shouldered Hawks, Osprey, Woodpeckers, and maybe some early migrants.

Tour begins at: 8:00 a.m. at 950 Piney Z Plantation Rd. For carpooling, meet at Wild Birds Unlimited at 7:30 a.m.

Directions: Meet at the park at Piney Z. Driving east on Park Ave., cross Capital Circle and continue east on Conner Blvd. for 1.5 miles. Then turn left onto Heritage Park Blvd., and pass through the traffic circle, staying on Heritage Blvd. This will dead end at the entrance to the park.

Expect to be finished by: Noon.

Difficulty: Walking on level, unpaved trails.

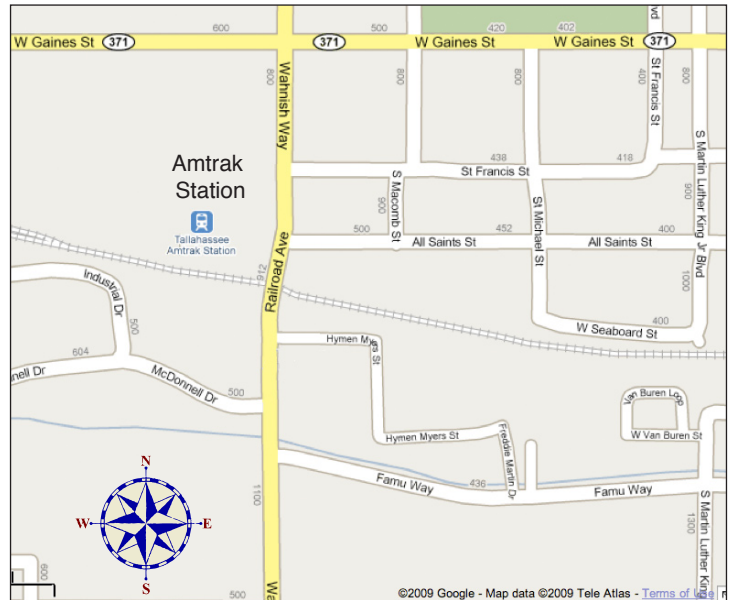
Bring: Binoculars, bug repellent, walking shoes, friends.

For more information: Contact Melissa Forehand at (850)510-4877 or birdingtreefrog@gmail.com.

AAS PROGRAM MEETING LOCATION

Historic Amtrak Station
918 Railroad Avenue
Tallahassee, Florida

Note: A reminder that Gaines Street is undergoing construction and portions of the road will be closed between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Please allow extra time for potential detours.



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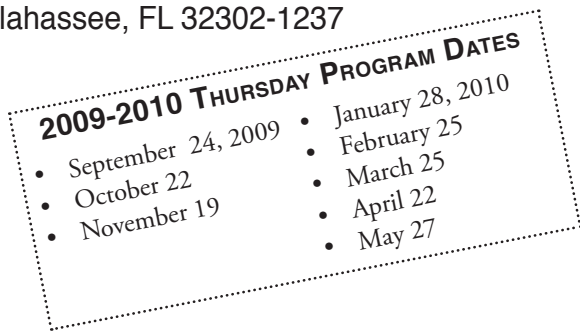
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APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR: SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2009

Note: A reminder that Gaines Street is undergoing construction and portions of the road will be closed between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Please allow extra time for potential detours.

Programs are open to the public and are located at the historic Amtrak Station, 918 Railroad Avenue (see page 7 for map).

Chapter/Audubon Events

September

- 20** Family Birding Basics at Piney Z with Melissa Forehand & Marvin Collins. Meet at Wild Birds Unlimited at 7:30 a.m. for carpooling, or meet at Piney Z at 8:00 a.m. (details on page 7).
- 24** **Program Meeting:** Fritz Davis will present *Rare Bird*, a movie about David Wingate, who rediscovered the Cahow (Bermuda Petrel) on Bermuda and has been working to restore its breeding population.

October

- 22** **Program Meeting:** Operation Migration/Whooping Crane update from Terry Peacock from St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.
- 23-24** **2009 Audubon Assembly:** St. Petersburg. Details at audubonofflorida.org.

Chapter social begins at 6:30 p.m. Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. For details, call (850)510-4877 or visit: www.apalachee.org

Related Events

September

- 19** 24th Annual Coastal Cleanup, Bottoms Road Beach Clean-up. Contact Melissa Forehand, (850)510-4877 or birdingtreefrog@gmail.com.
- 20** Tall Timbers tour of historic properties. Tours begin at 2:15. The tour begins on the Beadel House front porch. Call (850)566-3390.
- 22** Bruce Means will speak to the Tallahassee Scientific Society about his new book on the diverse wildlife of Florida's Panhandle. Book signing will follow. R. A Gray building, 500 S. Bronough. 7:00 p.m.

October

- TBA** Butterfly garden planting project at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

See page 3 for upcoming program speakers and topics.