



Apalachee Audubon

Newsletter of the Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

Vol. 109, No. 2 November-December 2010

www.apalachee.org

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NEWSLETTER CHANGES

This year, the print edition of the newsletter will be published bi-monthly. For timely notifications about events, subscribe to the AAS email notification list via our web site: apalachee.org/List_Serving.html or you can join at www.groups.google.com/group/apalachee-audubon

NOVEMBER PROGRAM SPEAKER: LUKE DEGROOT Stopover Ecology of Neotropical Migrant Landbirds: Current Methodologies and Findings

Thursday, November 18th, 7:30 p.m. (*Social at 7:00 p.m.*)

Recent technological advances have allowed scientists to investigate migratory events in greater detail than previously possible. Luke will discuss these advances with examples of research conducted at stopover sites in Ohio and Arizona. Then, he'll talk about how these and other methodologies can be used to connect events from one portion of the annual cycle (e.g. wintering) to another (e.g. migration).

Luke graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a Bachelors of Science in Wildlife Ecology in 2001 and earned his Masters of Science in Natural Resources from Ohio State University in 2006. He has worked on avian research projects in Hawaii, Arizona, Ohio, Bolivia, and along the Atlantic flyway. Currently, he is a Biological Scientist for the University of Florida at the North Florida Research and Education Center.

Reminder: AAS will not have a program meeting in December.

UPCOMING AAS FIELD TRIPS

Date: Weekend of December 11th

Theme: Wintering Waterfowl and Songbirds of St. Marks NWR

Leader: Conservation Biologist Chris Borg
Details To Be Announced. Please check the Apalachee Audubon Website for information updates, or join the AAS email notification list.

PETE DUNNE, THE CONSUMMATE BIRD STORYTELLER, COMING TO TALLAHASSEE

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for details for a wonderful event happening the weekend of January 22, 2011!

Thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited's generous sponsorship, Apalachee Audubon will be hosting a fundraiser featuring renowned birder, author and conservationist Pete Dunne! Details will be posted online, so check the AAS web site for updates.

Ticket information will be posted on the website and tickets will be on sale at the Tallahassee Wild Birds Unlimited store starting before the holidays—and these would make great stocking stuffers!).

Tickets for two events will be available: On Saturday, January 22, Pam Flynn will host an exclusive meet and greet social with Pete. Pete's keynote will be held at TCC on Sunday, January 23, in the late afternoon. Attendance at the meet and greet social will be limited, so buy your tickets early! Contact Pam Flynn at pflynn57@gmail.com for more information.

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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, E19, for AAS 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:

**National Audubon Society
PO Box 422246
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2246**

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).

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

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AAS is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. All contributions are tax deductible. Inquiries can also be sent to 1819 Doric Dr, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

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

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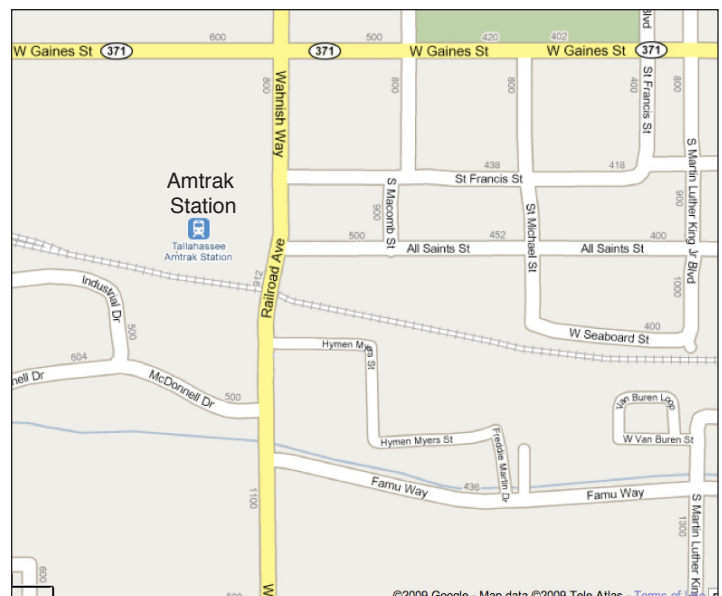
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AAS PROGRAM MEETING LOCATION

Historic Amtrak Station
 918 Railroad Avenue
 Tallahassee, Florida



*Electronic version of this newsletter
is available on the AAS web site.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY JULIE WRAITHMELL



I sit here on the eve of the November election thinking about how many people I know take pride in the fact that they vote—and I am so grateful that they do. But I also find myself wondering how many will remain engaged in their government after the robo-calls and yard signs have passed? Do you know your elected officials? More importantly, do they know you?

Yes, Audubon is about birds—it always has been, from its beginning in ending the slaughter of Florida's

wading birds for the plume trade, and passage of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, one of the staunchest protections for wildlife in America, even today. You see, as much as Audubon was built on birds, it was also built on the premise that civic engagement makes for a stronger society. And I am continually humbled by a particular facet of the early Audubon's grassroots prowess: the women who championed these causes, organized tens of thousands of telegrams sent to Congress, and ultimately convinced those men in Congress to do their bidding, did so before they even had the right to cast a vote in a federal election.

So, yes, wear your "I voted" sticker with pride, and go enjoy the shorebirds arriving for the winter at St. Marks. But, your civic duty hasn't ended with voting ... in fact, it has just begun. Follow the votes of your decisionmakers. Write their offices a good old fashioned letter that will make them sit up and take note, or better yet, give them a call at their office... even ask for an appointment. The places and species you care about can't advocate for themselves. They need your voices. Consider taking action on some of the opportunities for St. Marks included elsewhere in this newsletter. We have it so much easier than those early Audubon ladies. Let's see if we can't do their legacy proud.

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge Needs You To Contact Your US Senators and Representative!

Congress is preparing to pass its budget, including funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is used to acquire conservation inholdings and additions critical to our national wildlife refuges, forests, seashores and parks. The funding is fairly certain; where it will be spent is not.

Write your Congressman and Senators—urge them to support funding for the acquisitions identified at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. The 35,295 acres targeted for protection will assist the refuge in habitat enhancement

for endangered wildlife and plants, provide corridors for migratory birds and far-ranging Florida black bears, as well as buffer the potential effects of both climate change and sea level rise.

Urge your elected officials to speak up for St. Marks NWR so the Big Bend can enjoy its share of this important funding program.

Look up the contact information for your elected officials and even sign up to receive electronic updates on conservation issues from Audubon: fl.audubonaction.org



Special thanks to St. Marks NWR Manager Terry Peacock for her fascinating presentation at our October program meeting on the refuge and its participation in the federal Whooping Crane reintroduction! At that meeting, Operation Migration devotee Nick Baldwin challenged the board and membership of Apalachee Audubon to help fund a mile or more of the Operation Migration flock's flight from Wisconsin to Florida

Thanks to the following members for their contributions on the spot!

- Beth Grant and Yvonne Stinson
- Nick Baldwin
- Rob and Lynn Williams

If you'd like to help too or track their progress en route to the St. Marks Refuge, visit www.operationmigration.org.



Photos by James A. Carr

2010 MONARCH BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL *by Ann Bruce*

*See Lou Kellenberger's online slideshow of the butterfly garden at:
loukellenbergerphotography.zenfolio.com/audubonpollinatorgarden*

On October 23rd—a gorgeous fall Saturday—approximately 4,000 visitors from the Florida/Georgia/Alabama region came to the 22nd Annual Monarch Butterfly Festival at the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge; Apalachee Audubon's Picnic Pond Butterfly Garden was a major attraction.

Insect and human visitors alike frequented our garden. While Monarchs, Sulphurs, and Gulf Fritillaries visited native plants in the garden, many human visitors were busy photographing or just plain looking at the colorful insect visitors. Enthusiastic and positive comments from visitors came throughout the day.

It was the debut of new signage by AAS at both the garden and at the Lighthouse Road pull-off point leading to the garden; these new signs identify eight SMNWR Common Fall Butterflies with photos and text for each. A clear plexiglass box below each sign has butterfly-ID pamphlets from the Refuge and the FL Natural History Museum in Gainesville for give-away



A young visitor enjoying her first trip to the Picnic Pond Butterfly Garden. Photo donated by an anonymous, but proud, mom.



Ann Bruce presenting the President's Award plaque to Jim West, who teaches Horticulture at Lincoln High School. Photo by Lou Kellenberger



Ann Bruce presenting the President's Award plaque to Angie Williams, who teaches Advanced Placement Environmental Sciences at Wakulla High School. Photo by Lou Kellenberger

to visitors. At the main garden we have a beautiful sign identifying the Picnic Pond Butterfly Garden with a list of our five cooperating partners and Monarch photo taken in the garden by Lou Kellenberger.

At the AAS table display, butterfly stickers adorned the hands of children while they looked at butterfly life-cycle displays and enjoyed other fun educational activities. Audubon and Refuge Association newsletters will be available for give-away at the garden throughout the year.

Plaques for Outstanding Service awarded by AAS were presented to Angie Williams, Wakulla High School Advanced Placement Environmental Sciences teacher and Jim West, Lincoln High School Horticulture program teacher, who, along with their students, contributed significantly to start-up of the garden last year.

Many thanks to our volunteers **Lori and Martin Balinsky,**

Theresa Harrell, Jan Bordelon, and Ann Bruce for setting up and staffing the Audubon table throughout the Festival day.

Garden partners with AAS include the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, the St. Marks Refuge Association, the Hairstreak Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, and the Staff and Volunteers of the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.



People attending the Monarch Festival visit the new Apalachee Audubon Picnic Pond Butterfly Garden and the AAS booth. Photo by Lou Kellenberger

HUMMINGBIRD BANDING UPDATES *by Fred Dietrich*

Winter Hummingbird Update: On August 21st, I got an email from a woman who had seen what she thought was a young male Rufous hummingbird in her wonderful east Killlearn yard. I went over to her house around 12:30 p.m., set up my trap and at 1:00 p.m. a hummingbird flew in and I closed the door behind it. A couple of weeks later, she called to let me know that she had a second hummer in her yard and on September 4th; I banded another immature male rufous.

On Saturday, September 25th, I was at St Marks for the “What’s your Wild” celebration where I met a lot of people and told them about our winter hummingbird research. I had hung a hummingbird feeder there on Monday and by Saturday it was nearly empty. All day there were a number of hummers coming to feed, letting everyone see them close up. That evening I got an email from another resident who said she had a rufous in her yard. The next morning I drove to her home near Wakulla Springs and banded an adult male rufous. Shortly after I left, the bird was back at the feeder. But, after a very early start to the winter hummer season, things have slowed down.

Summer Hummingbird Surprise: It seems that all the ruby-throats have completed their migration. I’ve not seen any at my house since October 22nd. By all accounts, this was a very good year for ruby-throats; all those I’ve talked to have seen a lot of birds at their feeders in September and October.

At my house I decided to keep in practice by banding the birds in my yard this year. Like most people, I saw two or three birds in my yard on most days, and assumed they were my regulars that were around all summer.

Boy was I mistaken! Over the course of the summer I banded 72 hummers in my yard. Only two of the birds were recaptured, and that was just two days after they were

banded. It is amazing how many birds are actually passing through your yard during a season.

As part of our research into ruby-throats that spend the winter here, I banded summer birds at six different locations to see if any of them remained during the winter. I banded a total of 157 birds at these locations and as of now all of the birds have left. It will be interesting to see if any of them show up anywhere this winter.

In addition to my house, I banded at three other locations where we have banded winter birds in the past. During the summer it is hard to catch these birds since there are so many flowers and bugs for them to feed on. Going to the feeder in the trap is not high on their priority list. At three locations, I banded 3, 10, and 8 birds, respectively.

I also banded at two rural homes of former co-workers where they had lots of birds. I banded 34 at a home near Monticello and 30 at a home near Wacissa. I was going to make one final visit before going to Ft. Morgan, but a cold front came through and all the birds took off.

Be sure to leave up at least one feeder that you can watch in the morning and let me know if you see a bird after November 15th. Any time you see an unusual hummingbird please let me know and I’ll be glad to come and see what it is. I’m looking forward to having a great winter season and meeting a lot of new winter hummer hosts.

Remember, 4 parts water to 1 part sugar and **NO red food coloring**. If you don’t get a bird early, don’t get discouraged, most of the winter birds are banded in December and January. Hope to hear from you soon.

BIRDIE IN THE BAOBAB TREE *by Elizabeth Platt*

Last year I reported in this newsletter that I had visited the Mikumi National Park in Tanzania, and had caught a



Baobab tree

Photo by Elizabeth Platt

very brief glimpse of a spectacular bird called the Lilac-breasted Roller (*Coracias caudatus*). But we passed it in our land rover so quickly that I didn’t have a chance to see it.

This past June I was at the Kissama Game Reserve in Angola, and saw one again! Though at some distance, he was flitting around a baobab tree and I had the opportunity to watch him for a while. On our way out of the park we saw him again.



Lilac-breasted Roller (Coracias caudatus) by Steve Garvie of Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland.

Courtesy Wikipedia Commons



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2010-2011 THURSDAY PROGRAM DATES

- November 18, 2010
- January 27, 2011
- February 24
- March 24
- April 28

Your membership expiration date is shown at top right above your name. For problems with membership, call the National Audubon Society Office at 1-800-274-4201. For problems with mailings, contact Pam Flynn at pflynn@us.ibm.com.

APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR: NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

Social begins at 7:00, meeting at 7:30 p.m. Located at the historic Amtrak Station, 918 Railroad Avenue—map on page 2. For more information, call (850)510-4877 or visit: www.apalachee.org

Chapter/Audubon Events

November

18 AAS Program Meeting: Luke DeGroot will give a presentation on Stopover Ecology of Neotropical Migrant Landbirds. *Details on page 1.*

December

11/12 Field Trip: Wintering Waterfowl and Songbirds of St. Marks NWR. *Exact date TBA. Details on page 1.*

14 Christmas Bird Count Begins: From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the holiday season. For information about how to get involved with local CBC efforts, please contact Kathleen Carr at kcarr@nasw.org or (850)322-7910.

Related Events

December

8 2nd Wednesday Rikki Ott Reading/Discussion Group: Meet at 7:00 p.m. at the Atlanta Bread Company on Governor's Square Blvd. For more information, contact Melissa at birdingtreefrog@gmail.com.



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