

# APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Apalachee Audubon Society Mission Statement:

Protection of the environment through education, appreciation, and conservation.

NEWSLETTER OF THE APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

JULY - AUGUST 2013



*Editor's note: We hope you'll enjoy our summer e-newsletter.*

*Special thanks to everyone who took time out to share some of their summer activities with us.*

## Adventuring on Hog Island Maine

By Pat Press and Carol Franchi

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The only way to get to the Audubon Camp on Hog Island, Maine, is by boat or ferry across Muscongus Bay. It's a short trip, but one that can be dangerous due to the highs and lows of the tides. Our immediate surprise was the setting. We were right in the middle of lobster fishing heaven. Lobster boats and colorful identification floats were bouncing everywhere across the sparkling blue water. The sounds and sights of shore birds were everywhere. We eventually learned to recognize the terns, gulls, guillemots, eider ducks, herons, ospreys, eagles and more during our stay.

After the short half-mile trip across to Hog Island we were greeted by our smiling camp staff and hosts who generously gave us a hand with our belongings and helped us settle into our cabin called The Porthole. All the while we noticed the native birds greeting us also. We could hear the screeches and calls of a pair of ospreys and their fledging youngsters who were perched on a pole high above the kitchen out-buildings. You can check them out on a 24/7 live cam on the Audubon website, <http://hogisland.audubon.org/>, but by now the young ones have probably flown from their roost.



Hog Island

Courtesy of Friends of Hog Island [www.fobi.org](http://www.fobi.org)

Carol and I enjoyed our room at the Porthole. It reminded me of my dorm room my freshman year in college at Florida State. Two beds and a bathroom and shower down the hall. It was rustic and clean, but not air-conditioned, which for this particular July week was very difficult. They rarely have days in the 90's without rain every day, but that's what we had all week until the last day. It was bearable, helped out by electric fans which someone generously brought over for the last two days.

We took our meals at a large building near the dock called the Bridge. The food was excellent, gourmet quality, and well-prepared.

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## Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

2013 – 2014

### Officers & Directors

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Membership includes *Audubon*, our bimonthly flagship publication. Each issue of this award-winning publication features beautiful photography and engaging journalism. Our Apalachee Audubon chapter newsletter will keep you informed of local and statewide Audubon and other nature-related events and will share birding and conservation information and news.

You can pay for membership using a credit card by calling Audubon's toll free membership number, 1-800-274-4201. **(Please mention our chapter ID, E19, for AAS to get full credit for a new membership).** If you prefer to pay by check for an annual membership, send your \$20 check made payable to National Audubon Society **(please add Apalachee Audubon's chapter ID, E19)** and mail to:

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PO Box 422246  
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2246

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

## Radium Springs Monarch Butterfly Pollinator Garden

Monarch's Across Georgia's

### "2012 Outstanding Pollinator Habitat"

By Suzanna MacIntosh



Radium Springs Monarch Pollinator Garden  
*Monarch Butterfly Photo by Sylvia Lanier*

When the third annual AAS Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour was held on February 20, 2010, no one could have guessed that one of the far-reaching consequences would be an award-winning Monarch Pollinator Garden at Radium Springs in Albany, Georgia.

As a good friend and I picked up our tickets at Native Nurseries, we heard about a book, *Bringing Nature Home* by Doug Tallamy, <http://www.plantanative.com/>, which had taken the gardening world by storm. As we toured the lovely gardens of David Copps, Donna Legare & Jody Walthall, Eleanor Dietrich, Jim Stevenson & Tara Tanaka, and Molly Hocking & Joe Dodgeat, we heard again and again about Tallamy's book.

I was convinced I wanted to read Tallamy's book and I was also convinced I wanted to learn more about this great Audubon chapter; together those two actions changed my life.

That year AAS President Ed Gartner with a team of very dedicated and talented men and women were hard at work on a Monarch Pollinator Garden at St. Marks NWR, among many other great projects. With Ed's encouragement and the advice of Ann Bruce I started plans for a Monarch Pollinator garden in Albany, Georgia. I also enjoyed many informative AAS programs. David Copps program, *"Beyond the Birdfeeder: Habitat Landscaping for Songbirds"* was especially informative and I have shared his advice many times.

Radium Springs, one of Georgia's 7 Natural Wonders, was the perfect location for a Monarch Pollinator garden and fortunately the Dougherty County Commission with a wonderful team were

*Continued on page 4*



Meals were family style and quite one of the best parts of the camp experience. Here we exchanged information and got acquainted with the other 50 campers and group leaders. So many avid birders and nature-lovers from all over the United States all in one place at the same time was exhilarating.

Each day was filled with the routine of breakfast, workshop or trip, lunch, workshop, dinner, and evening programs where everyone would meet for informative speakers and historic or scientific discussions. On the first evening we all became introduced and learned a great deal about the history of Hog Island, <http://hogisland.audubon.org/legacy-hog-island>, and its importance in the conservation and ecology movement. We were divided into 4 groups for the daily workshop activities which were rotated all week long.



**Relaxing & Getting Acquainted**

*Photo by Pat Press*

On the second evening Steve Kress spoke and showed slides of the famous Project Puffin, <http://projectpuffin.audubon.org/>, a seabird restoration project he has fostered with the help of volunteers. Kress described the transportation of the puffin eggs from Nova Scotia down to Eastern Egg Rock near Hog Island in Muscongus Bay. This small island is a craggy barren outcrop with windblown grasses and no trees. Kress explained how he decided to make painted decoys of puffins to trick the real puffins into thinking they had companions on this island. Apparently, puffins are gregarious and social animals, so this creative idea worked, and the birds decided to stay after two or three years of enticement. Researchers and volunteers made nesting areas and set up cameras to record how the island became inhabited by the puffins and fellow birds over the past 40 years. Now Eastern Egg Rock is well-populated and puffins are happily enjoying the Maine coast again. Kress also described mirror boxes he tried as another trick to socialize the reluctant birds into staying to nest. These creative ideas have been picked up and used by other animal restoration researchers all over the world and apparently have been very successful in other species besides birds. One of the most exciting days of all was our trip out to Eastern Egg Rock. Here we glimpsed and photographed the colorful puffins as well as several other species of northern shorebirds.

On the next evening we enjoyed the company and program of Phil Hoose, a famous author and researcher. Hoose wrote the book called *Moonbird*, <http://philliphoose.com/books/moonbird/>, which details the surprising migration adventures of and routes of a red knot who came to be called "The Moonbird." This unusual bird was tagged "B95" in Tierra del Fuego and it traveled each season on a migratory circuit from the bottom of the world to the Arctic for nearly two decades. It is a relatively large sandpiper with a pointy, mid-length bill, a dappled brown-and-black back. It depended on the horseshoe crab eggs at its stopping point in Delaware Bay on the 18,000 mile migratory journey. It was called the "Moon Bird" because it has traveled the amount of one and one-half times to the moon and back over its lifetime.



**Project Puffin Program with Dr. Stephen Kress**

*Photo by Pat Press*

Our daily workshops included photography, journal writing and making, sketching and art, bird watching hikes, creative language arts lessons, inter-tidal zone exploration, boat trips, music and other educational programs. One of the most interesting workshops to us was the book-sharing activities to use with children.

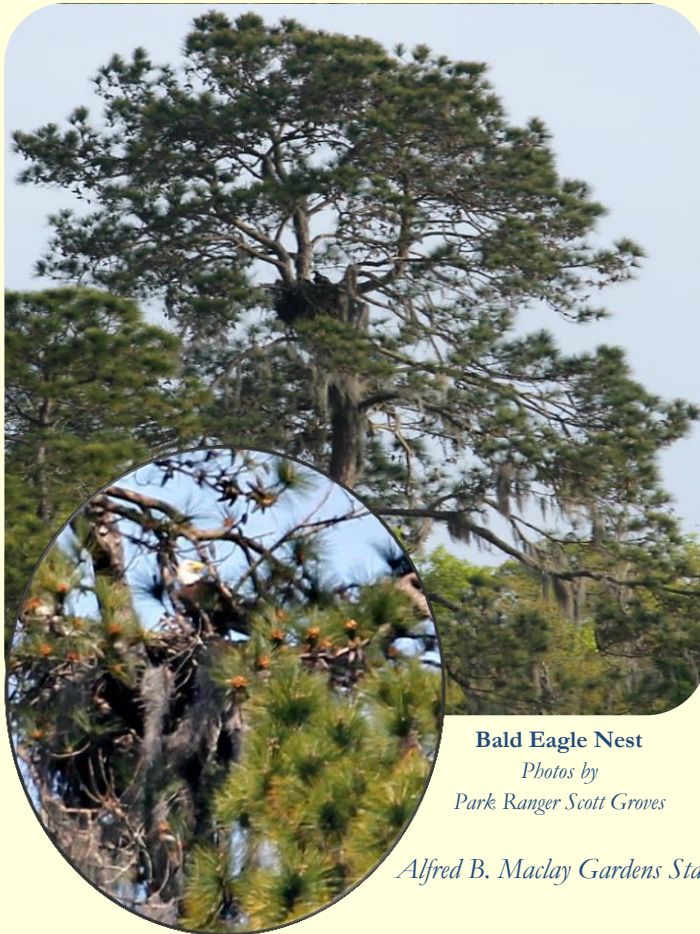
After a week of physical and mental indulgence we dragged ourselves home through the airports of Portland, Washington, D.C., and Jacksonville to our favorite place to return to - Tallahassee, Florida. Maine is nice, but Tallahassee is so special and beautiful it is always a joy to return home.

## New Bald Eagles in the Park

By Elizabeth Weidner

*Park Manager, Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park*

A little bit of old Florida has come home to roost. There is now a Bald Eagle nest in this 1,176-acre jewel of nature which is within the burgeoning City of Tallahassee. This nest was first discovered in 2010. At that time it was thought to be just a secondary nest, because it didn't seem used very much, but as time went by, we saw more work being done on it and the size of the nest increased. This nest isn't readily seen from the trails in the park. It is hidden in a quiet less frequented, but exceptionally beautiful area, within the park. The nest can be viewed from a spot along the trails across Lake Overstreet.



**Bald Eagle Nest**

*Photos by  
Park Ranger Scott Groves*

This spring, for the first time, we saw nesting activity, and at times were able to observe two eaglets' heads peeking above the top of the nest. In the past couple of months park staff has seen two juveniles flying around in the vicinity of the nest, so it appears that the eaglets have successfully fledged. Maclay Gardens, the Phipps Park and the plantation land are adjacent parcels of forested land, a good slice of continuous habitat for eagles.

We will plan for an interpretive hike on the Lake Overstreet trail, which will give a good opportunity for viewing the eagles nest, sometime in November or December (date TBA). We encourage anyone interested in joining us to look for an announcement at <http://www.floridastateparks.org/maclaygardens/>.

*Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park is located in Tallahassee, Florida at 3540 Thomasville Road.*

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*Continued from page 2 - "2012 Outstanding Pollinator Habitat" By Suzanna MacIntosh*

working to reclaim this timeless treasure for present and future generations after the devastating floods of 1994 and 1998. The Commission agreed a Monarch garden would be a good addition to the gardens at Radium Springs and so a collaborative effort began between Dougherty County and the Southwest Georgia Master Gardeners (of which I am a member).

One thing led to another and recently the garden was designated by Monarch's Across Georgia as 2012's Outstanding Pollinator Habitat. Master Gardeners recognized the great work that Dougherty County has done at Radium Springs in June with a special program and together with the community we all celebrated the award.

Radium Springs is located at 2501 Radium Springs Road, Albany, Ga. and is open Tuesday – Saturday from 9 am - 5 pm & Sundays 1- 5 pm  
[http://visitalbanyga.com/see/attractions\\_a-z/monarch\\_butterfly\\_pollinator\\_garden](http://visitalbanyga.com/see/attractions_a-z/monarch_butterfly_pollinator_garden)



**Dougherty County Commission Chairman Jeff Sinyard shares the award.** *Photo by Master Gardener Phyl Strawbridge*



# A SWIFT NIGHT OUT



## Swift Night Out at Wakulla Springs

**Saturday, September 7  
7:30 -8:30pm**

**Free with Park Admission**

During *Swift Night Out* people all over the country stand beneath chimneys to watch and count chimney swifts enter their roost. The Lodge at Wakulla Springs has a large flock that roosts in one of its inactive chimneys. Come to witness the “flying cigar” shaped birds perform their swirling aerial dance prior to their descent into the chimney. Be part of a nationwide program to estimate their numbers. Enjoy this unusual ranger-led program to see firsthand one of nature’s amazing spectacles. Please call 561-7286 to let us know you are planning to attend.



## A Swift Night Out

By Jeff Hugo

The magic of the swifts circling the Wakulla Springs Lodge prior to their sunset descent into one of the building’s chimneys has made a comeback.

The *Swift Night Out* scheduled the second Saturday of September in 2012 was a huge disappointment. Not only were there no chimney swifts roosting in the Lodge chimney as they had done in previous years, further insult was added to injury as rain washed away any hopes of a pleasant evening outdoors.

Already, 2013 holds the hope of once again seeing a flock of birds numbering into the hundreds once again coming to roost at the lodge. Of course, the official count will be Saturday evening September 7 from 7:30pm-8:30pm in front of the lodge.

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The Lodge at Wakulla Springs has a large flock that roosts in one of its inactive chimneys. Witnessing the “flying cigar” shaped birds perform their swirling aerial dance prior to their descent into the chimney is part of this unusual ranger-led program to see firsthand one of nature’s amazing spectacles. It is a great opportunity to be part of a nationwide program to estimate their numbers. Please call 561-7286 to let the park know you are planning to attend. *Jeff Hugo, Park Service Specialist, Wakulla Springs State Park, [www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings](http://www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings)*



Wakulla Springs State Park Entrance Photo by Suzanna MacIntosh

Apalachee Audubon Society

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July – August 2013

## St. George Island

By Budd Titlow

St. George Island is always beautiful. I hope you'll enjoy these photographs from earlier this summer.



**Willet:** This adult willet conveniently lifted off from St. George Beach at just the right moment for me to capture his distinctive wing bars.



**Sandwich tern:** I spent about an hour watching and photographing two mixed tern colonies on St. George Beach as the adult members successively blasted by me - back and forth between the two colonies - with freshly-caught fish to feed their young.



**Black skimmer:** A small flock of skimmers has been working the surf line just down from the easternmost picnic pavilion on St. George Island for the past several weeks and I was fortunate to catch several skimming fresh "lunches" out of the breaking waves (like the shot pictured here).

### SOME ONLINE BIRDING RESOURCES

By Fran Rutkovsky

How can you find out what birds are being seen locally? Check out the following web sites to find out.

eBird - a real-time, online checklist program with contributions by participants; data sources for global birding abundance and distribution. Hosted by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society. <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/>

American Birding Association list archives: You can read from any birding email list on the web site below but will have to join individual lists to post any messages. <http://birding.aba.org/>

We are Florida North under the Eastern US list. Florida Birds is a statewide list. You can also go directly to the North Florida Birds site. North Florida Birds is a yahoo email list, where members report on what birds they're seeing. Most of the email activity will be fall through spring and is an excellent place to keep up with what's going on locally or nearby. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nflbirds/> Please use the below address to subscribe: [nflbirds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:nflbirds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

*To be continued in the next newsletter*



## A Visit to the Tallahassee Museum Is Always Fun!

By Nick Baldwin

The grandkids and I had a great time at the Tallahassee Museum. There is always something interesting to see and do. We had fun playing around Jim Gary's amazing metal "Twentieth Century Dinosaurs", dinosaur sculptures which are all created with automotive parts. Click here to learn more:

<http://tallahassee-museum.org/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=63&cntnt01returnid=319>



Photos by Nick Baldwin



## We Enjoyed the Great Summer Field Trips

Special thanks to Helen King for coordinating these and many more summer field trips!



Photos by Daphne Asbell

### Torrey State Park Field Trip

By Helen King

Despite an overcast July 4th holiday weekend, four members tallied 29 species in Torrey State Park, which had fairly empty hiking trails due to inclement weather. (Top photos)

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/torrey/>

### In Search of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker

By Helen King

Jim Cox led a group of brave birders on July 25 through Tall Timbers, where the summer heat had actually not begun! (Photo left)

<http://www.talltimbers.org/ve-research-rcw.html>



### Early September Field Trips

**Sunday, September 8:** We will explore the Southwood area. Meet at 8 a.m. at the parking lot in front of Grazie's Restaurant on Merchant's Row Blvd. This will primarily be a driving/ stopping to look trip.

**Friday, September 13:** Leon Sinks Geological Area. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot. This will entail some walking. Bring bug spray.

Both events will be finished by lunch time. Please respond to Helen at [thekingsom@gmail.com](mailto:thekingsom@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.



### Workshops to Enjoy at Native Nurseries

1661 Centerville Road, Tallahassee, FL 32308  
850-386-8882 [www.nativenurseries.com](http://www.nativenurseries.com)

#### METAMORPHOSIS MAGIC WITH DONNA

Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup> 10am Free

Learn about the natural history of butterflies and moths and how to successfully raise caterpillars into butterflies. After the slide show, tour the Native Nurseries butterfly garden. We should have caterpillars for folks to take home to raise.

This is a perfect workshop for teachers and families.

#### SOWING SEED TO PLANT YOUR

FALL AND WINTER VEGETABLE GARDEN

Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup> 10am

Free, but reservations required - 386-8882

Class size limited

Lilly Anderson-Messec will demonstrate how to plant the fall vegetable garden from seed. It is the most economical way to grow lettuce and leafy greens like mustards and collards.



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