

APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Apalachee Audubon Society Mission Statement:

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2014



Speaker Series

Free and open to the public.

Social begins at 7 pm & meeting at 7:30 pm (unless otherwise noted). Located at the Historic Amtrak Station, 918 Railroad Avenue, Tallahassee. For more information: (850)322-7910 or www.apalachee.org Map: <http://tinyurl.com/3q9q77s>

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January: Thursday, Jan. 23rd

Social at 7 p.m. with Program at 7:30 p.m.

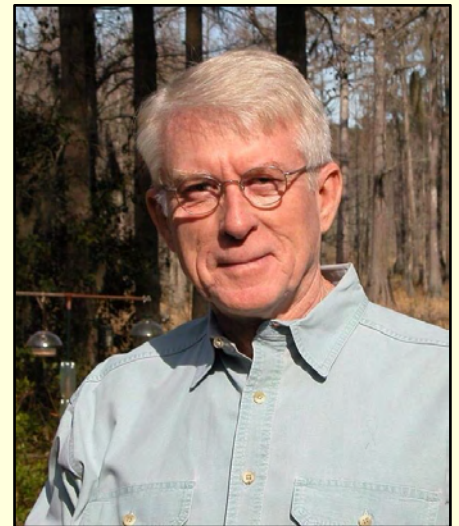
THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF A DEAD TREE

Speaker: Jim Stevenson

More than 25 bird species of birds found in Florida require cavities or holes in trees as nesting sites. The species range from the diminutive Brown-headed Nuthatch to the imposing Turkey Vulture and what these birds are looking for may be a large fallen log in the very last stages of decay or a tree that was recently killed and is still standing tall.

Many cavity-nesting species of birds are declining as a result of declines in the number of dead trees (also called "snags") available. Once killed, a tree may take 25 years or more before it deteriorates to nothing, and, at each stage of decay, there are species that might make use of the structure. Jim Stevenson will be talking about cavity-nesting birds and the importance of dead trees in a range of landscapes.

Jim Stevenson served as Chief Biologist for the Florida State Park System for 20 years during which time he developed the educational and the land management programs for the state park system. He was Chairman of the Florida Springs Task Force that developed a protection strategy for Florida's springs and he was Director of the Governor's Florida Springs Protection Initiative that implements springs protection projects. Jim retired in 2003, after 38 years with the Department of Environmental Protection.



Jim Stevenson

Jim coordinated the Wakulla Spring Basin and the Ichetucknee Springs Basin Working Groups for 18 years. He serves on the boards of the Wakulla Springs Alliance and the Florida Springs Institute. In recognition of his dedication to the protection of Florida's springs, the State of Florida named a large spring on the Suwannee River "Stevenson Spring" in his honor.

And for his longstanding stewardship of Florida's public lands, the Governor and Cabinet dedicated the "Jim Stevenson Resource Manager of the Year Award" that is given annually to the most deserving state land managers in the Department of Environmental Protection, the Division of Forestry and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Continued on Page 2

Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

2013 – 2014
Officers & Directors

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Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. (AAS) is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Speaker Series – Continued from page 1

February: Thursday, Feb. 27th

Social at 7 p.m. with Program at 7:30 p.m.

A Short History of Bird Migration

Speaker: R. Todd Engstrom

Engstrom Ecological Research and Consulting, Tallahassee, FL



R. Todd Engstrom

Migration is one of nature's most amazing spectacles. From now until the end of May, millions of birds will collectively fly millions of miles as they move from winter homes that lie as far away as Argentina to summer haunts well north of the Canadian border. The mass movement of whole populations provides a great time to experience the beauty of some of our most colorful songbirds. For example, Purple Martins already have begun to move through north Florida and very soon we'll be hearing the buzzy songs of Parula Warblers in the trees and the harsh "wheeps" of Great Crested Flycatchers.

Todd Engstrom has over 30 years of experience with the migration phenomenon in North Florida. Todd received his Ph.D. from Florida State University in 1986 and was the Vertebrate Ecologist at Tall Timbers Research Station from 1990-2002. With Bobby Cranford, he published a 29-year review of the avian mortality that occurred during migration at the WCTV tower in northern Leon County in 2001. This long-term study provides an unparalleled look at migration in our region, and Todd continues to monitor migration through his connections with the eBird Program, www.ebird.org, at Cornell Lab of Ornithology and his work with professional ornithological societies.



Ring-Necked Duck

Aythya collaris
(Left)



Canvasback Duck

Aythya valisineria
(Below)

Photos by Nick Baldwin



Seán McGlynn

Photo by Nick Baldwin

President's Message

Dr. Seán E. McGlynn

Bring on the New Year

I would hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. The New Year didn't come with a Cloud-Apocalypse, or a Rain-Ageddon, but a Polar Vortex. A veritable hurricane of cold descended upon us. Drastic temperature swings, like this, are a threat to wildlife. All manner of creatures, from tiny midges to blumbering manatees are overwintering here because it's warmer lately, and suddenly the temperature drops into the 20's. That's a problem. Migrations were already delayed and then a Polar Vortex makes a drastic cold snap. Don't call it "Global Warming" anymore, that just makes some people mad; call it "Climate Change", or even better, "Increasing temperature variance." That would be safer, but, not for the creatures. This is weather variability, it's jumping around, up and down, and is particularly hazardous to our wildlife, who cannot expect the unexpected.

It will be a while before we assess the damage, which may be mostly to citrus planted by homeowners. The strawberries were smiling at me at the grocery, and I knew they had survived the chill. About forty manatees hunkered down in their newly adopted hot tub, the waters of Wakulla Springs, whose constant temperature saved them from the chill. Even the Whooping Cranes made it to St. Marks, after a few miscues due to the terrible weather. Perhaps the invasive Asian tiger mosquito, the one that carries dengue and yellow fever, will take a hit. It might hurt the invasive exotic Burmese, Northern African and reticulated pythons and boa constrictors that have been surviving in Florida. But the New Year has brought us even more dramatic shifts, in which the birdless Seminoles beat the mighty War Eagles to a national championship. Maybe it's time for FSU to get a bird mascot too... Only time will tell.



FLORIDA'S Water & Land Legacy

We did it!

The Water and Land Conservation Amendment will be on the November ballot!

WE DID IT!!!

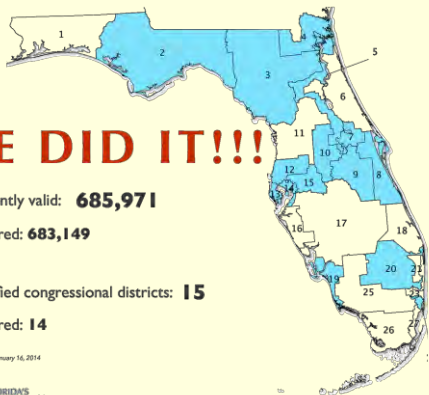
Currently valid: **685,971**

Required: **683,149**

Qualified congressional districts: **15**

Required: **14**

Updated: January 16, 2014



Citizens across the state banded together in support of the amendment because deep funding cuts are seriously jeopardizing what's best about Florida: miles of beaches, beautiful parks, crystal clear springs, endless opportunities to swim, bike and fish, and an amazing diversity of plants and animals. The Amendment will allocate **less than one percent** of our state budget (starting in with \$648 million in 2015) to keeping our waters clean and to protecting our beaches, springs, wildlife habitat and other natural areas for future generations!

As we await our amendment number designation, please be a part of this historic effort for Florida's conservation lands and help us get ready for the vote in November 2014 by [making a financial contribution today!](#)

Operation Migration: The Class of 2013 Arrives at St. Marks

By Kathleen Carr



Whooping Cranes on final approach to St. Marks NWR

Photo by George Burton

On Saturday, January 4th, over 1,500 enthusiastic craniacs gathered in the town of St. Marks for the Operation Migration Flyover, featuring eight juvenile Whooping Cranes. It was a cold, but sunny morning and conditions were perfect. Excitement mounted as OM team member Liz Condie announced, “They’re in the air!” About a half hour later, as eyes began to glance expectantly towards the north, Liz made another announcement. “The birds won’t fly today. Sorry”.

It wasn’t laziness or stubbornness. Although the air at ground level was perfectly calm, it was unstable enough at ultralight flying altitude that the cranes couldn’t form up on the wings properly. Out of frustration and discouragement, they dropped off and flew back to their pen. Liz informed the crowd that there probably wouldn’t be another attempt before mid-week. But with a Polar Vortex headed our way, that didn’t seem very hopeful. The OM team and cranes were stuck in Leon County, 28 frustrating miles away.

At 6:51 the next morning, rather late in the morning for the OM team, an email went out saying that a flight that day was possible and the team was scrambling to get the ultralights and cranes in the air. It wasn’t enough time for a large crowd to show up in town, but it was a good decision and they were able to get the cranes to their winter home.

This year, the welcoming committee awaiting the young cranes at the pen site comprised more than the three costumed OM caretakers. Two cranes from the Class of 2012 were standing outside the pen where they had stayed last year and they didn’t seem at all concerned about the costumed figures inside. One of those figures, Christine Barnes, wrote on the OM blog,

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Operation Migration Team, (Left to right): Brooke Penney packer, Jo-Anne Bellemer, Colleen Anne Reidy Chase, Heather Ray, Geoffrey Tarbox, Richard Van Heuvelen, John Cooper, Liz Condie, and Joe Duff.

Photo by Claire Timm

“Out of the cloudy northeastern sky they came into view, first the trike, then eight small dots in pursuit, then two loud calls from the stretched, taut bodies of the wild Whoopers nearby as the noise from the trikes spread over the salt-marsh. . .

“As their focus and attention transferred from the aircraft which they had followed for 1100 miles from Wisconsin, the brood calls and the promise of food and fresh water in this new place gradually won the juveniles over, and they began to land. The woosssh of their powerful wings as they came in just over my head was as thrilling a moment as I can recall – an endangered species, trusting us to help them take the final step to freedom, into the wild.”

Read more about this year's journey at:

<http://operationmigration.org/InTheField/>

Read bios of the Eastern Flock Whooping Cranes at:

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/crane/13/BandingCodes.html>

This year's class of Whooping Cranes and ultralight escorts took flight on October 2, 2013 from Green Lake, Wisconsin and arrived at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge 96 days later, on January 5, 2014. All eight juvenile cranes, three females and five males, completed the journey safely, as did the remarkable people of Operation Migration.



Photos, Jan. 5, 2014 at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) (Top left clockwise): Juvenile Whooping Crane lands near an Operation Migration costumed handler in the release pen; Juvenile Whooping Cranes are led back to the release pen after landing near two adult Cranes from the 2012 OM Migration waiting at a nearby pond; OM handler escorts juvenile Whooping Cranes to the top-netted section of the release pen at St. Marks NWR. Photos courtesy of George Burton, St. Marks NWR Photo Club. To learn more about the St. Marks NWR Photo Club and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, please see: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/St_Marks/visit/photoclub.html



Photo collage by Glenda Simmons

Resurrection of A Snag By Glenda Simmons

I had a wonderful snag, a remnant of a Maple Tree, at the end of my driveway. This snag was used by a Red-bellied Woodpecker pair, two years, in a row, successfully fledging two broods each year.

Being so close to my house, I was able to observe their entire nesting cycle; from excavating the cavity, “changing of the guard” behavior, as the adults relieved each other during incubation, followed by non-stop food deliveries, then cocky little heads peeking out, and finally witnessing one fledge, which I was lucky to record on video.

On Memorial Day, I was saddened to find the snag had fallen during the night. The snag was also a favorite perch and lookout for all of my yard birds, and I knew it would be missed.

A couple of months later, I found a large segment had broken off another snag, and wondered if I might be able to plant this, to replace the previous one. Soon after, with two strong men, my snag was resurrected!

It was fun to see the expressions on people’s faces, when I exclaimed with a big smile, “I just planted a dead tree!”

If you have a dead tree, and it poses no risk to a structure, should it fall, leave it for wildlife to use.



IN YOUR YARD

By Fran Rutkovsky

January and February can bring in some winter birds that you may not see as often in November and December. After a cold front and a freeze, hungry birds may be coming to your feeders more often. Hordes of Chipping Sparrows will be looking for their favorite food, white proso millet. When Goldfinches have consumed all the sweetgum balls from the trees, they may come down in droves looking for sunflower and nyjer seeds. Many types of birds will readily come to suet feeders. A chart from Project FeederWatch lists "Food and Feeder Preferences of Common Feeder Birds" for all regions of the country at this link: <http://feederwatch.org/learn/common-feeder-birds/>



Chipping Sparrows

Photo by Glenda Simmons

You may see birds going to any flowers that are blooming--not for the nectar but for tiny insects. The birds will also work over dead plants and tree bark looking to glean any insects and berries. If you can leave a patch of "weeds" in your yard, you may be rewarded with a chance to observe this behavior. I have left standing the dead pokeweed, ironweed, and passion vine plants that treated us last summer to an abundance of Zebra Longwing butterflies. Now the birds are enjoying the dried berries. I have watched 3 or 4 Cardinals jockeying for position on the pokeweed stems to pick off the dried berries. If you can add native plants to your landscape, they will attract the native insects which will attract birds. Don't forget to provide fresh water as well.



Pine Warbler at Feeder

Photo by Glenda Simmons

Great Backyard Bird Count, 2014

By Fran Rutkovsky

Get ready--the annual Great Backyard Bird Count takes place February 14-17, 2014! This event provides a "winter snapshot" of birds across the United States and Canada. Observe and count the birds you see at a given location and enter the results at <http://www.birdcount.org>. At the GBBC website you can watch the tallies grow all weekend, with thousands of observations reported. The counts can be conducted anywhere, though a

separate checklist must be made for each location. During the weekend, the online data is updated many times a day, and you can keep up with what birds are being reported where (click on "Explore Data"). Another part of the event is the GBBC Photo Contest. Check out the Photo Gallery on the website for past photos and winners at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/gallery>.

The GBBC coincides with our annual Apalachee Audubon "Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour" on February 15th. Some of our hosts will be keeping yard tallies for the day to submit later. You can help by pointing out any birds you see that are not already on the list. (See page 10 for more on AAS's 7th Annual Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour.)

The Great Backyard Bird Count, GBBC, is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada. It also receives support from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Red Buckeye Welcomes Returning Hummingbirds!

Red Buckeye, *Aesculus pavia*

By Eleanor Dietrich

Isn't it amazing how things in nature (except for some species) have evolved to work with each other for their mutual benefit? When awareness of this cooperation comes to me, I am in awe. And so it is when the pennyweight Ruby-throated Hummingbird arrives from its 500 mile non-stop trip across the Gulf of Mexico to find the nectar-rich tubular red flowers of the Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) open for business. Some think that this hummingbird may be the primary pollinator of this plant. It is one of the first tubular red flowers open for the hungry hummer. Their interaction with each other is literally a matter of life or death. We, of course, delight in the beauty of each.

Red Buckeyes are small trees that grow naturally in rich open woodlands. I have planted a number of them in the woods around my house. The first buds show themselves in late February, and by March they are in full bloom all month. They typically grow in places with partial shade, but my mother had one planted out in the full sun and it was abundantly happy there. The foliage was much denser, the flowers and leaves weren't quite as large, but it bloomed and bore seed profusely (and needed her to water it during summer dry spells).



Red Buckeye, *Aesculus pavia*

Photo by Eleanor Dietrich

By late summer the leaves will turn yellow and begin to fall, and the large buckeye seeds will ripen. These seeds are very easy to propagate, and I have used this advantage to spread the trees throughout the woods. In the right conditions, a tree can begin to bloom as early as 3 years from birth. If you are interested in planting this lovely tree, you will find it widely available in nurseries. *Eleanor Dietrich is a longtime member and Past President of the Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, FNPS, www.magnolia.fnpschapters.org.*



Red Buckeye Blossoms

Photo by Eleanor Dietrich



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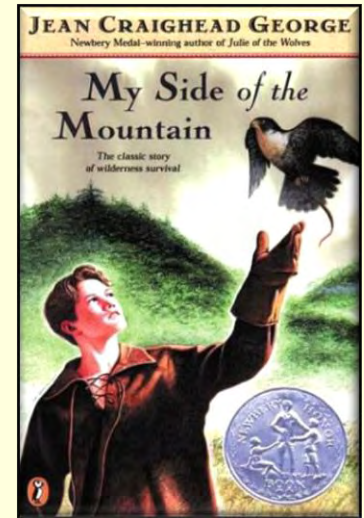


Reading a Good Book is Transporting By Pat Press

One of my favorite authors is Jean Craighead George. Her website, www.jeancraigheadgeorge.com, is amazing as are all her books. She was the daughter of a naturalist and was raised to appreciate the natural world and everything in it. This is what you will be doing when reading any of her wonderful books such as *Hatchet*, *Brian's Winter*, *Julie of the Woods*, or all of the *My Side of the Mountains* trilogy.

Imagine yourself as a 14 year-old runaway boy going to the woods of upstate New York to spend a year living off the land all by yourself. Well, that's exactly what Sam Gribley does in *My Side of the Mountain*. He decides to live on his family's ancestral homestead in a hollowed out giant hemlock tree and be a sort-of Henry David Thoreau, which is what his friend Bando nicknamed him, "Thoreau."

In the process of living in the wild, which he does, Sam does rely on a few close friends to get by, such as the librarian down in the nearest town. He captures a peregrine falcon nestling and brings it home to raise and help him hunt for food, but he needs a book to learn about how to train falcons. Frightful is the name of his bird, who is friend, family, and food gatherer in the wilderness for Sam. In the spirit of storytelling, Jean Craighead George, gives Sam some fantastic adventures, which you the reader, will experience right along with him. He will learn how to find edible roots, nuts, plants, and berries. He will learn how to make a clay fireplace for his hemlock tree home, and live through a winter of blizzards and ice storms. He will raise and care for a wild bird and learn the consequences.



Whether you are a child or an adult, this book will hold your interest. Ms. George's delightful pen and ink drawings are a real treat and make the transporting of your imagination even more possible. Read this book for yourself, to a young friend, or give it as a gift to someone who loves the wild. Then read the two sequels: *The Far Side of the Mountain*, and *Frightful's Mountain*. You will be rewarded with storytelling at its best, the kind that makes you want to go to the mountains yourself. *Pat Press is an Apalachee Audubon Society Board Member, along with her sister, Carol Franchi. Together they co-chair the AAS Education Committee.*

My Journey in Florida's State Parks: A Naturalist's Memoir By Jim A. Stevenson

My Journey in Florida's State Parks: A Naturalist's Memoir by Jim A. Stevenson is an informative and entertaining set of short stories and essays of the evolution of Florida's state parks from 1965-1989. Jim began writing these stories for his retired park service associates. Since the history of state park interpretation and resource management is not recorded elsewhere, he expanded it to inform the park rangers of today about the management of the parks during this 24 year period. It has since been adapted to be of interest to readers who enjoy our parks and nature in general. Jim began his career as a park ranger and later became the chief naturalist of the state park system. Prior to his retirement in 2003, he became the Department of Environmental Protection's lead on the protection of Florida's springs. He continues that effort today through tours and presentations and serving on the board of directors of the Florida Springs Institute and the Wakulla Springs Alliance. Jim Stevenson will be the Speaker at the AAS Program on January 23rd (*see page 1 for more information*).





Announcing the 7th Annual Apalachee Audubon

Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour

Saturday, February 15th

10 am - 4 pm

By Pam Flynn



It's that time of year again for the 7th Annual Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour sponsored by Apalachee Audubon. If you haven't done this tour before, those who have will tell you it's one of the best \$10 you can spend for an activity here in Tallahassee! Each year we have chosen yard hosts for their environmentally-friendly yards and the great ideas they have come up with to attract local and migrant birds and wildlife. Each yard has unique features to attract a variety of birds and other wildlife such as wintering hummingbirds, orioles, tanagers, finches, and Pine Siskins as well as our year-round residents. You'll see many great ideas for landscaping your own yard or green space for wildlife, whether it is one birdfeeder, one nest box, a wildflower bed, garden path, or natural area. We can make a difference for wildlife, one yard at a time!

With this tour happening in the middle of winter, it is not a typical garden tour. It's a chance to see the 'bones' of the yard and catch a glimpse of some fabulous winter birds. Winter is planting time, so you can take notes, then go home and start that yard project you've always wanted to do, welcoming birds to nest in your yard.

This year our event takes place on Saturday, February 15th from 10 am – 4 pm. Tickets are available at Native Nurseries at 1661 Centerville Road, www.nativenurseries.com, and at Wild Birds Unlimited at 1505-2 Governor's Square Boulevard, www.tallahassee.wbu.com, and will be available through the day of the tour. The tour takes place rain or shine. Birds are very active when it's stormy, so don't let that stop you.

Once you purchase your ticket, you will be given all the information you need for the tour. The final slate of yard hosts includes Russ and Robin Frydenborg, Sarah and Terry Sherradan, Robin Preston, Francie and Jim Stoutamire, Rick and Jovita Ashton. It's shaping up to be another spectacular year not to be missed!

This is a fundraiser for the local Apalachee Audubon Chapter. We are very appreciative to all the great hosts and volunteers who work so hard to help make this day a success and for your support coming out and enjoying the tour. We look forward to seeing you soon! For additional information about the event, go to www.apalachee.org or contact Pam Flynn at tallypfly57@yahoo.com or (850)322-6287.



2013 AAS Wildlife Friendly Yards
Photos by Fran Rutkovsky



“AUDUBON ADVENTURES” EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

“The 2013-14 edition of *Audubon Adventures* is on its way! Audubon's beloved signature annual curriculum for elementary-age students celebrates its 30th year of publication with a theme that's near and dear to us all: **Sharing Our World with Birds**. You are invited to join us and celebrate Audubon Adventures 30th season!”

~ *National Audubon Society*

As Audubon Adventures celebrates its 30th season, Apalachee Audubon is celebrating too! For many years Apalachee Audubon has offered Audubon Adventure kits to teachers to support their efforts and benefit students. Apalachee Audubon was recognized by National Audubon for our chapter's outstanding 2012-2013 efforts as one of the top 50 chapters across the nation supporting this important program. Audubon Adventures is provided through our AAS members fundraising efforts and your contributions and support. This fall Apalachee

Audubon offered free AUDUBON ADVENTURES subscription kits to 3rd and 4th grade science teachers in Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, Franklin, and Jefferson counties.

This year's theme, “Sharing Our World with Birds”, includes units on “Hooray for Hummingbirds!”, “Raptors-The Birds of Prey”, “Seabirds-Feathered Ocean Travelers (*Starring PROJECT PUFFIN*)”, and “Caring for Our Planet—Join in the Action!” The kit's colorful illustrated student newsletters present information and activities on these topics. The Teacher Classroom Guide on each unit advises how to use the kits, provides background information, discussion questions, vocabulary words, and hands-on activities. The unit on Raptors has a blank graph and chart for “Counting Hawks”. The unit on Seabirds has a column asking the student, “What are YOU doing?” It suggests students can speak up through art, paintings, skits, stories and poems to tell about protecting the oceans and shores where the seabirds live, by removing trash from our creeks, riverbanks and beaches.

National Audubon has added an interactive website in conjunction with the four printed units of the AUDUBON ADVENTURES kits. The new website has videos correlated with this year's topics on birds. You'll find lots of interesting information and activities here; just take a look at www.audubonadventures.org. Teachers are advised that the website will be updated monthly with new content about birds and wildlife.

BIRDATHON IS COMING!

Apalachee Audubon teams will hit the road in mid-April for the annual Birdathon fundraiser. Birdathon 2014 is being organized by Harvey Goldman with help from a host of AAS members. This important fun and fund raiser helps AAS provide Audubon Adventures to local schools. It also helps raise the funds needed to sponsor a local middle-school student in a fantastic summer birding program known as Camp Talon. The program immerses young birders in a world of like-minded souls and provides stories and bonds that last a lifetime. These are just two of the important goals of Birdathon which helps us as AAS members fulfill Audubon's mission. To help with a team, please contact Harvey Goldman at 850 385-5222. To send a donation, please make your check out to *Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.* and mail to: Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. P. O. Box 1237, Tallahassee, FL 32302-1237. Thank you for your help!



Birding at Lost Creek Forest By Beth Grant

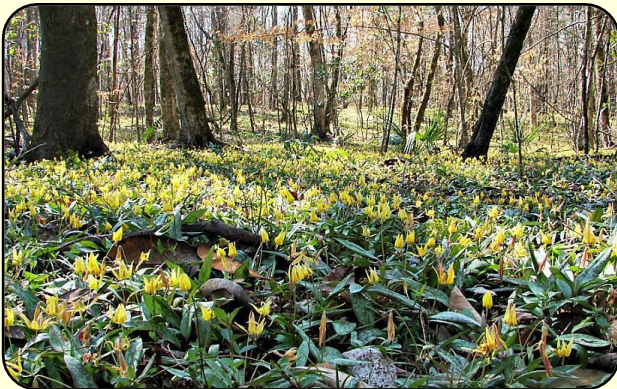
The Apalachee Audubon Society sponsored the first public birding tour of Lost Creek Forest in Thomas County, Georgia, on November 14th. This is a beautiful old growth hardwood slope forest which was saved from industrial development in 2008. It is much like it would have been for thousands of years! The forest canopy is so high that much of the birding was by ear and binoculars. The most birds were seen in a large Swamp Chestnut Oak near a creek. Species heard or seen included Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, Blue-headed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Phoebe, American Crow, Turkey Vulture, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Northern Cardinal, and Sandhill Crane (flying high overhead).



*Photo by
Beth Grant*

The tour was led by Helen King and Beth Grant, President of Friends of Lost Creek Forest and attendees included Anne Schmidt, Diane Vary, Jan Blue, Brian Lloyd and Aubrey Heupel. Another AAS birding tour will be scheduled in the spring. For more information about Lost Creek Forest, see www.lostcreekforest.org.

Swamp Chestnut Oak at Lost Creek Forest- *Top left photo by Jerry Turner*



Trout Lilies

Photo by Aubrey M. Heupel

Trout Lilies to Bloom Soon! Wolf Creek Trout Lily Preserve By Beth Grant

Tens of millions of Trout Lilies, covering about ten acres, will soon be in bloom at Wolf Creek Trout Lily Preserve in Grady County, Georgia, along with thousands of deep maroon Spotted Trillium on the property. This largest known concentration of Dimpled Trout Lilies was discovered by Florida botanists about a decade ago. The long-time land owners had known they were there, but

did not know this was anything notable. In 2009, the whole 140 acre tract was saved from development by members of the Magnolia Chapter, www.magnolia.fnpschapters.org, of the Florida Native Plant Society.

The plants, dormant most of the year, begin emerging in January and reach full bloom in several weeks. This time varies depending on the winter temperatures and sunlight, so each year in mid-January the bloom time must be estimated for later in January or February when the Trout Lilies will carpet the forest floor for as far as the eye can see! As these plants only remain in the South as a remnant from the last Ice Age, it is likely this colony has been growing here for thousands of years!

This year's estimated bloom time will be posted on the website, www.wolfcreektroutlilypreserve.org. Public tours will be scheduled or you can go on your own. You can request to be added to the notification list for the bloom schedule each year. You don't want to miss this magnificent sight!



Join Us On
A January Field Trip
By Helen King

Sunday, January 26: Wakulla Beach and Road

We will meet at 8 a.m. at the St. Mark's Rails to Trails main parking lot on Woodville Highway. We will carpool, so please indicate if you are a willing driver. There will be a \$5 riding fee. We hope to see wintering sparrows, migrants, and ducks. This will mainly be a driving tour with little walking involved. If you plan to attend, please email me at thekingsom@gmail.com. Field trips are limited to 12 participants. Please respond if you plan to attend no later than 24 hours before each trip.

Field Trip birding reports are recorded at ebird, NFB, and with Apalachee Audubon.

Some of our recent field trips include:

Nov. 9th: Lake Henrietta,

Robert Williams Birding Trail, Innovation Park

Nov. 14: Lost Creek Forest, Thomas County, GA

*A summary of our field trip to **Lost Creek Forest** is on page 12.*

A spring AAS field trip to Lost Creek Forest will be scheduled.

For information, see www.lostcreekforest.org.

Dec. 7th: St. Mark's WMA

Dec. 13: Rhoden Cove Landing, Lake Jackson

Jan. 10: Tram Road Water Treatment Plant



Come bird with us when you can!

GREAT BIRDING SPOTS
in Tallahassee, Florida
and Surrounding Areas



Apalachee Audubon Society

THIS GREAT NEW GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Remember Our Winter Hummingbirds!



Just a reminder that winter in the southeast means the return of our winter hummingbirds. If you took your feeder down, hang it back up! And if you see a hummingbird, please contact master bird bander, Fred Dietrich at 850 591-7430 or fdietrich@gmail.com. Fred will come out and do his best to band your bird. His work, along with other banders, is helping us to understand the migratory habits of these birds. More information and updates: <http://hummingbirdresearch.net/>

Wild Birds Unlimited



Everything for the birds and the serious birder!

NATURE GIFTS
OPTICS ~ FIELD GUIDES ~ FEEDERS
BIRDBATHS ~ SEED ~ NEST BOXES

1505-2 Governor's Square Blvd. Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 576-0002 tallahassee.wbu.com

Save the Date!
7th Annual



Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour

Saturday, February 15th

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Tickets are available at
Wild Birds Unlimited & Native Nurseries



**8th Annual
Wildlife, Heritage and Outdoors
"WHO" Festival
February 1st from 11 am-4 pm
ST. MARK'S NWR**

Join us at the WGO Festival!

Enjoy food, live music, contests, and activities for all ages. A Silent Auction will be held to benefit the Refuge's Environmental Education program. For more information, call the St. Marks NWR at 850-925-6121 or www.fws.gov/saintmarks



Bringing Nature Home

Spread the word of **Bringing Nature Home!** Contact Beth Grant at bethgrant@bellsouth.net, to bring Doug Tallamy's slideshow to your community group -

garden clubs, libraries, civic organizations, scout troops, schools, and more.

For information about the important message Doug Tallamy shares in, *Bringing Nature Home*, see www.plantanative.com.



Wakulla Springs State Park

Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State

Park will host a ranger-led trek through its varying forest communities on January 18 and on February 22, 2014 from 9 - 10:30 am. Meet in the lobby of the Lodge.

The tour is free with paid park admittance. Space is limited to 10 participants. Please call (850) 561-7286 for your reservation.

Glean tidbits of park history and observe the nuances of nature with the aid of your guide. Fuel up with breakfast in the historic Wakulla Springs Lodge prior to the walk. There's no better time of year to enjoy the old-growth Southern hardwood forests of the park, www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings/

Birdsong Nature Center

**2106 Meridian Road
Thomasville, Georgia**

**Wednesday, Friday & Saturday: 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 1 - 5 pm**

Admission: \$5-adults; \$2.50-children, 4-12 years



**Using Native Wildflowers, Trees & Shrubs
in the Home Landscape**

An interactive workshop to assist gardeners in the selection and placement of native plants in the home garden.

Saturday, March 1st from 10 AM – Noon

Dan Miller, expert grower of native plants and owner of Trillium Gardens, will teach us practical techniques for selection and placement of native trees, shrubs, and certain wildflowers in north Florida and south Georgia gardens. Dan will show slides of ornamental native plants and talk about cultural requirements for specific plants and their propagation practices and lead a question and answer session. Please bring your questions and be prepared to describe any problems or issues you may be having with growing and placing natives in your garden. *Cost: \$15. One free native wildflower is included in the cost; there will be a choice of several plants. Also included is a continental breakfast.*

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.

Please call by noon on Friday, February 28th.

This year's "Old Timey Plant Sale" is March 15th! *This workshop is intended to give you the background you need to select the plants most appropriate for your garden, so become a knowledgeable shopper by attending this valuable workshop.*

For more information about these and many other great activities, please see www.birdsongnaturecenter.org or call 229 377-4408 or 800-953-BIRD (2473)





Workshops to Enjoy at Native Nurseries

1661 Centerville Road, Tallahassee, FL 32308
Monday-Saturday, 8am-6pm
850-386-8882 www.nativenurseries.com



Birding for Beginners Saturday February 8th 10 am - Free

Learn how to identify the birds you see in your yard and in the field as well. Jim Cox, Director of the Stoddard Bird Lab at Tall Timbers, is a biologist studying Bachman's Sparrows, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, Brown-headed Nuthatches and other songbirds.

Jim is a wonderful teacher!

Parent/Child Bird House Build Saturday February 8th at 2pm

\$15.00 plus tax for the pre-cut cedar nest box;

Call to register

Class size limited

We will start inside with a short slide presentation about birds that depend on natural cavities in trees and nest boxes. Then we will teach the children, with your help, how to build a chickadee or bluebird house.

Don't forget to bring a hammer!

VEGETABLE GARDENING 101 Saturday March 1st 10am OR Thursday March 6th - Noon (lunch and learn)

*Free, but call to register
Class sizes limited*

If you haven't started a vegetable garden yet, this workshop is for you! Our staff of experienced vegetable gardeners will help you get started. We'll start with the basics of soil preparation and when to plant different vegetable varieties. Then we'll move out to the demonstration garden for hands-on experience



Hummingbirds & Butterflies of Ecuador

February 8, 2014 at 2 pm

Maguire Center in Westminster Oaks



Last October Hairstreak Chapter members Dean and Sally Jue spent ten days exploring the Ecuadorian Andes looking for birds and butterflies. As the first NABA Hairstreak Chapter activity for 2014, the Jues will present their program, "Hummingbirds and Butterflies of Ecuador," at 2 pm on Saturday, February 8th, at the Maguire Center at Westminster Oaks, 4449 Meandering Way, off Dempsey Mayo Road in east Tallahassee. *For more information about the program, please call Virginia Craig at (850) 894-0293 or e-mail her at vdellcraig@centurylink.net.*

Audubon Academy 2014 Coming Soon!

WALKING THE WALK - MAKING CONSERVATION REAL

SAVE THE DATE and register as soon as possible! The 2014 Audubon Academy is being held at DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center located in Parrish, Florida, near Bradenton. DaySpring, with 92-wooded acres on the north shore of the Manatee River, offers hiking, biking and canoeing/kayaking opportunities and is near some great birding areas. This year's Academy is being held April 11-13 and the theme is "Walking the Walk-Making Conservation Real". Academy will offer outdoor and indoor workshops and information sharing sessions to enhance the abilities of both current and future Audubon chapter leaders to build stronger and more effective chapters. Regardless of your chapter size or location, the fun activities—entertainment, chapter displays and poster sessions, conservation training, hospitality and more—can help enable chapters to expand and invigorate their outreach and conservation activities. Information—including the schedule, descriptions of the workshops and registration—will be sent out in January and posted on the Audubon Florida website, fl.audubon.org. Registration is by mail. Note that early registrations, received by February 7th, will help the organizers make arrangements. Do not miss this once a year opportunity to network at this "for the chapters, by the chapters" event, dedicated to protecting and conserving Florida's natural resources.

~ Bob Stamps, Audubon Academy 2014 Co-coordinator