

APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Apalachee Audubon Society Mission Statement:

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



NEWSLETTER OF THE APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

MARCH-APRIL 2015

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES & JOIN US FOR
Apalachee Audubon's 50th Anniversary Celebrations at both the
Wakulla Wildlife Festival on April 18, 2015 - www.wakullawildlifefestival.com -
&
Apalachee Audubon's Annual Banquet on May 21, 2015
See page 19 for more

Speaker Series

Free and open to the public

Social begins at 7 pm & Speaker Series meeting at 7:30 pm (unless otherwise noted). Please note change: Speaker Series programs are held at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2810 N. Meridian Rd., Tallahassee. For directions or more information please see www.apalachee.org.

2015 Program Dates

January 22, 2015	April 23, 2015
February 26, 2015	May 21, 2015 *
March 26, 2015	* May Banquet

Inside This Issue

President's Message	3
Officers & Directors	2
Speaker Series Programs	1
"Thank YOU!" Yards Tour	3
Yards Tour History	7
Design for Songbirds	8
Blueberries Need Native Bees	9
Blueberry Growing Tips	10
A Book Review for You	11
Birdathon is Coming!	11
In The Yard	12
Old-Timey Plant Sale	12
Rusty Blackbirds	13
Winter Hummingbirds	14
Camp Talon SCHOLARSHIP	15
Winter at St. Marks NWR	16
Audubon Assembly	17
Wakulla Wildlife Festival	19
Field Trips & Activities	20

March Program: Thursday, March 26

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

Hummingbirds & other Beauties of the Ecuadorian Andes

With Dean and Sally Jue

In October 2013, AAS members Dean and Sally Jue spent ten days exploring the Ecuadorian Andes looking for birds and butterflies. Ecuador is about the size of Colorado but has over three times as many birds and six times as many butterflies as all of North America! During their stay, Dean and Sally saw and photographed many beautiful hummingbirds with intriguing and colorful names such as "Sunangel," "Brilliant," "Emerald," and "Sylph" in addition to many other bird species and butterflies. Join us to experience some of the incredible biodiversity of the Neotropics! *Sally and Dean Jue became interested in butterflies in 2002 after bird watching together for almost 30 years. Dean works at the Florida Resources and Environmental Analysis Center (FREAC) at FSU while Sally works at the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). Since FNAI became part of FREAC in 2001, they have collaborated on several butterfly research projects. They are both active in the local Hairstreak Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, <http://hairstreakchapter.weebly.com/>.*



Chestnut-breasted Coronet Hummingbird

Photo courtesy Dean & Sally Jue

April Program: Thursday, April 23

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

Deep Thaw: The Adélie Penguin and Climate Change

With Dr. Heidi Geisz, Adjunct Professor, FSU Coastal & Marine Lab

Dr. Geisz studies the transport and fate of organic contaminants in the Antarctic food web, particularly higher predators, as well as the effects that climate change may have on the birdlife of Antarctica.

Continued on page 2



Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

2014 – 2015

Officers & Directors

All telephone numbers are in the 850 area code, unless otherwise noted.

President: Adrienne Ruhl 813 293-1081
Vice-President: Budd Titlow 320-6480
Secretary: Helen King 765-2488
Treasurer: Harvey Goldman 385-5222
Past-President: Seán McGlynn 570-1476

Directors:

Nick Baldwin 877-0249
Kathleen Carr 322-7910
Jim Cox 942-2489
Carol Franchi 459-2066
Ben Fusaro 297-2052
Pat Press 539-5765

Parliamentarian: Ben Fusaro

AAS Logo Design: Charlotte Forehand

Newsletter Editor: Suzanna MacIntosh
Aasnewsletter2011-audubon@yahoo.com

Web Administrator: Kathleen Carr 322-7910

Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 1237 - Tallahassee, FL. 32303

Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. (AAS) is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

The success of our work depends upon your support. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

This newsletter is published by the Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. ©2015 Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.



For more information and to sign up for our AAS Google Groups email notification list, please see www.apalachee.org.

Join National Audubon Society for just \$20 a year & receive a year's free membership in the Apalachee Audubon Society and Audubon Florida!

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

To pay for your membership (or gift membership) using a credit card, please call National Audubon's toll free membership number, 1-800-274-4201.

Please mention our chapter code, **E19**, for Apalachee Audubon to get credit for a new membership. You can also go to Apalachee Audubon's website and join online (click on "Join" in the left-hand column). If you prefer to pay by check, make your check payment to National Audubon Society and please include Apalachee Audubon's chapter code, **E19**. In your check memo section, please also indicate "For Audubon Membership (\$7.50 for Magazine)" and mail to:

National Audubon Society
P. O. Box 422249
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2249

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

Continued from page 1 – Programs: Deep Thaw with Dr. Heidi Geisz

Dr. Geisz also recently has spent time addressing marine science policy. As a Sea Grant Knauss Fellow, she held a position on the U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee staff and analyzed policy affecting coastal and marine ecosystems. She also remains keenly interested in exploring ways to bridge communication between science and policy makers.

2014-2015 Committee Chairs

Anniversary Celebration

Suzanna MacIntosh & Karen Wensing
Helen King, Seán McGlynn & Budd Titlow

Audubon Adventures

Judy Goldman

Awards Committee

Nick Baldwin

Birdathon

Harvey Goldman

Conservation Committee

Jan Bordelon & Elizabeth Platt

Education Committee Chairs

Carol Franchi & Pat Press

Field Trips

Helen King

Hospitality

Pam Flory & Elizabeth Platt

Membership

Kathleen Carr

Newsletter

Suzanna MacIntosh

Nominating Committee

Seán McGlynn

Program Committee

Jim Cox

Publicity

Kathleen Carr

St. Marks NWR Butterfly Pollinator Garden

Ann Bruce

Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour Committee

Ann Bruce & Tammy Brown



"One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the Spring."

- Aldo Leopold



Adrienne Ruhl

President's Message

Adrienne Ruhl, Apalachee Audubon President

This year's **Wildlife Friendly Yards Tour** - Valentine's Day edition was a smashing success! With our biggest turnout to date, over two hundred people attended this year and experienced the five different yards on the tour.

Our gracious yard hosts this year were **Lynn Sipay, Susan Drake and Charles Futch, Jim Stevenson and Tara Tanaka, Kathleen and Jim Carr, and Lynn and Michael Bannister**. Thank you for opening your yards to us (and the birds!).

It was a beautiful Saturday – clear, cold weather and lots of noisy and hungry birds. So many people commented on all of the great ideas they came away with – from battling seed theft by squirrels to picking the best feeder and seed for certain bird species. I hope those who had questions about hummingbirds come out to the March 26th program by Dean & Sally Jue about the hummingbirds of Central America.

Hats off to our intrepid yard coordinators **Ann Bruce and Tammy Brown** and **all of the volunteers who helped**. Special thanks to our partners **Wild Birds Unlimited** and **Native Nurseries** for their help with tickets.

Now is the time to nominate deserving individuals and businesses for our annual **Apalachee Audubon Society Chapter Awards**. Awards will be presented at the annual banquet in May. For more information and a nomination form, visit our website: <http://www.apalachee.org/aas/about/chapter-awards>.

Keep your calendars open in the month of April, there is quite a lot going on. First up the annual **Apalachee Audubon Society Birdathon fundraiser!** Before heading out to see how many birds they can see in a 24-hour period, team members will collect donations for the **Audubon Adventure classroom kits** for local schools in Leon County and surrounding areas. If you would like to participate, it's time to gather your team.

This year in April, Apalachee Audubon Society is co-hosting the **annual Florida Ornithological Society** conference will be held in Tallahassee Friday April 10th through Sunday April 12th. More information on events and activities will be sent via email and posted to our website.

But wait, there's more! We are celebrating our chapter's **50th anniversary** on Saturday, April 18th at the **Wings Over Wakulla festival** held at Wakulla Springs. Come join us for a variety of talks, birding and photos tours, and kids' activities. We are especially delighted to share that Eric Draper, Audubon Florida Executive Director and former Apalachee Audubon president, will attend the festival and speak. We invite anyone who has been involved in the chapter over the year to come out and celebrate with us.

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.
(850) 576-0002

Tallahassee, FL 32301
tallahassee.wbu.com



Thank You

For a Great 2015 Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour!

By Tammy Brown, Committee Co-Chair



Enjoying a Wildlife-Friendly Yard!

Photo by Tammy Brown

Tara Tanaka and Jim Stevenson, as well as an additional article on the front page of the **Chronicle**. There is no doubt this helped increase our ticket sales this year. Another special thanks to Native Nurseries and Wild Birds Unlimited. For the eighth year, they have graciously acted as our ticket outlets, and we couldn't pull this off without them!

Our deep appreciation goes to our five outstanding yard hosts this year, who shared their homes and knowledge with friends and strangers. They truly went above and beyond.

Tara Tanaka and Jim Stevenson's cypress swamp offered a rare look at a Great Blue Heron relaxing in the shade, as well as other water birds. Their variety of feeders off their back deck offered a smorgasbord for songbirds, and their beautiful rock and pebble water feature topped it all off. They even played slideshows and videos of wildlife swamp adventures for their guests!



Cypress Swamp at Tara Tanaka and Jim Stevenson's

Photo by Tammy Brown



Red-winged Blackbird

Photo by Tammy Brown

Lynn Sipay's back yard offered multiple feeders and beautiful water features. A flock of Red-winged Blackbirds, Cardinals and a Pine Warbler were enjoying their haven. Lynn even had a table of treats for her human visitors!

Kathleen and Jim Carr's suburban backyard hideaway proved that you don't have to have acres and acres to enjoy a large variety of wildlife. From the whimsical garden décor to a variety of feeders and seed, we were treated to many songbird visitors such as Red-winged Blackbirds, Cardinals and Chipping Sparrows. Kathleen even shared her very clever and effective "squirrel proofing" techniques!

Continued on page 5



Guests enjoying the Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour

Photo by Tammy Brown

Lynn and Michael Bannister’s charming midtown yard offered a variety of water features and feeders, attracting Goldfinches, Chipping Sparrows, Downy Woodpeckers, and a Cardinal who battled his reflection in their window on and off all afternoon. Their colorful, handmade feeders and stands added much interest and charm to their yard. Lynn was even digging up and sharing plants with some visitors!

Susan Drake and Charles Futch’s 2-acre native plant habitat is enjoyed by all kinds of wildlife, including an oak snake that was sunning by the pool!



Oak Snake

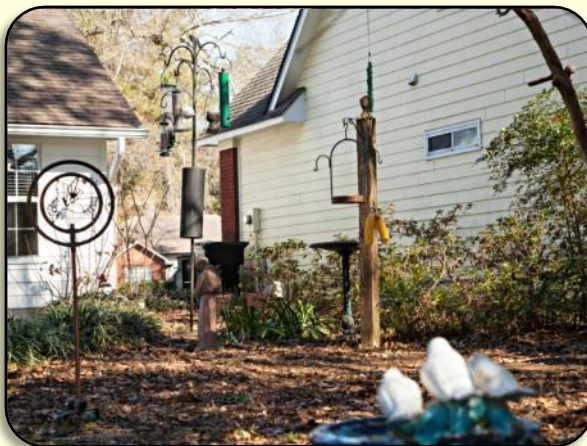
Photo by Tammy Brown

Their years of efforts in transforming their space have been rewarded with many species of birds including Pine Siskins, Goldfinches, and Cardinals. Susan and Charles graciously shared their vast knowledge with visitors by talking with everyone. They had even made ID tags for their beautiful plants, as well as signs throughout the property with different tidbits of interesting information!

Heartfelt thanks go to all our wonderful yard volunteers, too! They certainly helped the guests have a friendly and informative visit, and we couldn’t do it without you!

Our yard volunteers this year were Jan Bordelon, Ann Bruce, Pam Flynn, Gary Griffin, Laurie Jones, Sally Jue, Linda Minnock, Elizabeth Platt, Diane Quigg, Adrienne Ruhl, Fran Rutkovsky, Pete Schwartz, Glenda Simmons, Mike Tucker, Virginia Veil and Karen Wensing. And, “Thank You!” to Committee Co-Chair Ann Bruce for her great help and support.

Thanks to Fran Rutkovsky for sharing an early history of the Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour (*page 6*) and to all the great men and women who have helped make it a success over the years. Last, but certainly not least, a special thank you to Pam Flynn. Her “mentorship” is responsible for the seamless transition from her being the primary tour organizer to the rest of us organizing it. Pam’s knowledge and information made things run as smoothly as if she were still in control.

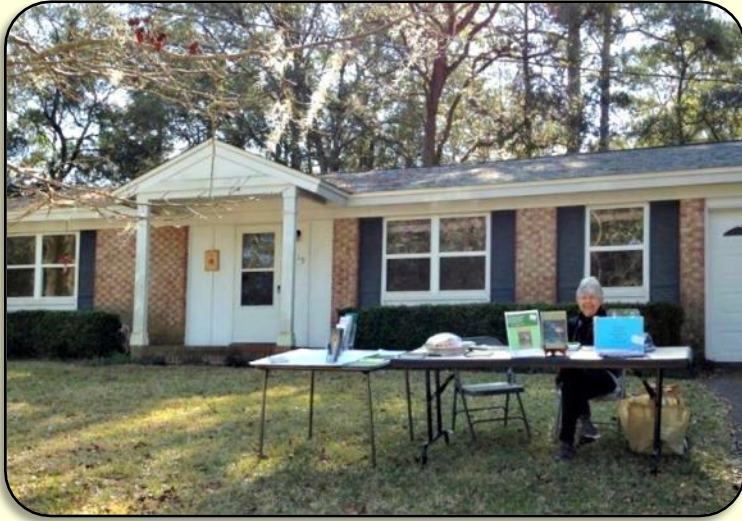


Wildlife-friendly yards attract and sustain birds and other wildlife

Photo by Tammy Brown



More Photos from the 2015 Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour
Photographs by Fran Rutkovsky



Left: Ann Bruce welcomes guests to the Yards Tour
Above: Kathleen Carr with guests



Guests enjoying the Wildlife Friendly Yards



A Brief History of the AAS Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour

By Fran Rutkovsky

About ten years ago when Elizabeth Platt was AAS President, she approached me about having a fundraiser workshop in my yard about how to attract birds. I told Elizabeth that my yard (which is not a "big lawn yard" so much as a managed area) was not big enough, but I would agree to host a field trip for Apalachee Audubon. After several conversations, over time this idea turned into a "parade of yards", which Elizabeth patterned after the spring "Parade of Homes", with reasonably priced tickets to be sold to members and the public.

I talked Pam Flynn, Fred Dietrich, and Tracee Strohman into helping me with it. I also talked to Donna Legare at Native Nurseries to get some ideas about how to do a yard tour. Four of the yards on the first tour held on February 23, 2008 (including mine, Fred's, and Pam's) were hosting several species of winter hummingbirds at the time, so we felt it was

a good time to showcase what can be done to attract winter birds. We were hoping to sell 50-75 tickets. We were totally surprised at the turnout and support, with 100 tickets sold! This yard tour has subsequently turned into a highly successful endeavor, and I have overheard customers at Native Nurseries talking about it with enthusiasm. Pam Flynn's guidance turned the yard tour into what it is today, and Ann Bruce and Tammy Brown have continued the momentum. We usually have people volunteering their yard for the next tour, so let's hope this can continue with everyone's help. It's such a treat every year to see what can be done with a tiny yard as well as a huge yard to make it friendly to wildlife.



**Wildlife Friendly Yards Tour,
2008 from Rutkovsky deck**

Photo by Paul Rutkovsky



AAS Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour Making a Difference for Wildlife with Native Plants!

By Suzanna MacIntosh

When a great team of Apalachee Audubon volunteers began planning the 2010 Wildlife Friendly Yards Tour no one could have guessed that one consequence would be the beginning of a Monarch butterfly pollinator trail connecting Radium Springs (one of the 7 Natural Wonders of Georgia) in Albany to the AAS Monarch Pollinator Garden at St. Marks NWR... a trail designed to teach about the importance of native plants, our pollinators, and the easy ways we all can help wildlife by providing needed habitat. By learning the essential elements of successful butterfly gardening, we also learn about the good gardening practices that create and protect the habitat that birds and other wildlife depend upon for their survival.

I was so impressed by the people I met on the Tour who were engaged in doing something meaningful for the community that I became a member of AAS member. I followed up by reading Doug Tallamy's important book, *Bringing Nature Home*, www.plantanative.com where I learned that the availability of native plants is critical to the survival of most of our plant-eating insects, including butterflies. I also learned that there is an alarming decline nationally in many common bird populations with one of the leading factors being a decline in needed habitat, www.stateofthebirds.org.

With the help of local volunteers, a great Dougherty County Commission and staff, help from Monarchs Across Georgia--and thanks to the encouragement and help of AAS President Ed Gartner and AAS St. Marks NWR Garden Chairperson Ann Bruce--the Radium Springs Monarch Pollinator Garden was dedicated on Oct. 24, 2012. Other gardens have been added since then and last year a beautiful Monarch garden was added at Albany's Flint RiverQuarium (home base of Albany Audubon), www.flintriverquarium.com, with a native plant educational path also on the way and in Camilla, Georgia Patsy Stripling with other Camilla Garden Club members and broad community support dedicated, not one, but two (!) butterfly gardens. To learn more about native plants: <http://www.fnps.org/plants> and <http://flawildflowers.org/index.php>



Radium Springs Butterfly Garden

Photo by Suzanna MacIntosh

Hedgerow Design and Management for Songbirds

By David Copps



When I moved into my home a few years ago, there was nothing but patchy lawn between my house and the one next door. I stopped mowing to let the seeds and roots of native vegetation sprout and grow. Natural regeneration was supplemented with the planting of trees and shrubs purchased from a local nursery. My goal was to create a hedgerow that would attract more songbirds to my yard. Recently, while looking out the window at this strip of vegetation on a chilly February day, I saw a Mockingbird jealously guarding the last of the red berries on a yaupon holly, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers stripping the hard, waxy fruits from wax myrtles, and Brown Thrashers and White-throated Sparrows tossing and scratching the leaves on the ground below in search of a meal. My hedgerow is finally paying off in wildlife viewing dividends.



Baltimore Oriole

Photo by Glenda Simmons

When designed and managed properly, hedgerows provide valuable habitat for urban wildlife, especially songbirds. Provided below are some tips and techniques that can be used to increase the number and variety of songbirds in yards and neighborhoods everywhere.

Provide a variety of small trees, shrubs, and vines throughout the hedgerow. Groupings of both deciduous and evergreen plants that flower at different times of the year provide an abundance of food in the way of fruits and seeds throughout the year. Two of my favorites are yaupon holly and wax myrtle as mentioned above. Other good ones are American beautyberry, Walter's viburnum, Chickasaw plum, cherry laurel, red cedar, winged sumac and blueberry.

Just as important as the composition of the hedge is its structure. To provide the necessary dense cover for nesting, resting, and escape from predators it is important to create multiple layers. Ideally a three-layered pattern, one that resembles the structure of a natural forest edge, should be the aim. To produce this effect, a row of small trees is planted first. In front of these go the large shrubs which are followed with a bank of low shrubs. One of my favorite models for this effect is the roadside vegetation along Lighthouse Road in St. Marks Wildlife Refuge where tight groupings of red cedar, cabbage palm, dahoon holly and saw palmetto are laced together with wild grape and pepper vine.

Leave some dead wood standing within the hedge for perching sites. During the breeding season many male birds seem particularly attracted to isolated dead branches for singing, especially when there is dense escape cover nearby. Dead wood also harbors a wide variety of insects which attracts bark-gleaning birds such as woodpeckers and nuthatches.

Finally, tell your neighbors about habitat landscaping and ask them to join in. Songbird populations greatly benefit when individual hedgerows link together to form a larger neighborhood network.

David Copps is a landscape designer and certified arborist. David specializes in the design and management of natural habitat gardens to protect Red Hill's water, wildflowers and wildlife and can be reached at David.Copps@comcast.net.

Special thanks to Glenda Simmons for sharing her photographs with us. Her photo of the female Baltimore Oriole above was included in the Project Feederwatch calendar, www.feederwatch.org.

Reprinted with permission from March 2008 AAS Newsletter.



Northern Parula

Photo by Glenda Simmons

Blueberries are Pollinated by Native Bees

By Donna Legare



In the last few weeks of March I watched some very busy bees visiting flowers of the native highbush blueberry bush planted just outside my home office window. They also visited the hybrid rabbiteye blueberry bushes in our yard and at the nursery. They look and sound like bumble bees, except they are smaller and faster. These are Southeastern blueberry bees, native to the southeastern U. S., and they forage primarily on blueberries. What amazes me is that they are active only for a short period of time each year, which coincides with blueberry flowering of mid-March into April in our area.

Blueberry flowers are visited by honey bees, bumble bees, carpenter bees and the southeastern blueberry bee. Carpenter bees are nectar robbers. They are able to make a small slit at the base of the flower to rob nectar without brushing against the pollen structures. For this reason, they are not good pollinators of blueberries. The non-native honey bee commonly uses the holes made by carpenter bees.

Blueberry flowers contain a male part called an anther that is tubular in shape with an opening at one end from which the pollen is dispersed. The blueberry bee attaches to the flower and vibrates her flight muscles very rapidly which causes the anther to work like a salt shaker, shaking pollen out of the opening. This is called buzz pollination. When the bee goes to the next flower, her vibrating flight muscles shake out pollen again and also causes the pollen clinging to her body to attach to the stigma, the female part of the flower. Thus pollination occurs, resulting in the eventual delicious blueberry fruit surrounding the seeds.



Southeastern Blueberry Bee, *Habropoda laboriosa*

Photo courtesy of the Xerces Society, www.xerces.org

Honey bees are not able to buzz pollinate. Bumble bees can pollinate blueberry flowers successfully through buzz pollination but their numbers are comparatively low in early spring. They are, however, the major pollinators of tomato plants which also need buzz pollination.

So where and how do these blueberry bees live? They are solitary ground nesting bees. They dig burrows in sandy or loose soil. Sometimes they burrow beneath hardwood forest leaf litter or in the walls of earthen holes, perhaps where a tree was uprooted exposing a hole and soft soil.

Ground nesting bees choose a bare, sunny spot that is not likely to flood. They dig a long tunnel slightly wider than their own bodies. They may do this by themselves or they may do it in the company of other bees of their own species. They are still solitary in that each bee digs her own nest and provisions her own brood. At the end of the tunnel, she builds a brood cell chamber for one baby, a larva. The mother bee fills the brood cell with enough pollen and nectar for one bee to grow from egg to adult. She lays an egg and seals the chamber. Then she may add branches to the tunnel where she provisions another cell at the end of each branch. Blueberry bees produce one generation per year and adults are active for only 3-5 weeks.

Continued on page 10

Native Nurseries

- WILD BIRD SHOP
- WILDLIFE GARDENING
- LANDSCAPE DESIGN

1661 Centerville Rd., Tallahassee, FL
850-386-8882 NativeNurseries.com

Continued from page 9 - **Blueberries are Pollinated by Native Bees**

Solitary bees do not have colonies to defend, so would only sting if you accidentally crushed them. Don't be afraid to get up close to watch these blueberry bees moving quickly from flower to flower, gathering pollen.

There are three things you can do to encourage Southeastern blueberry bees. First plant their favorite plant, blueberry bushes! Second, avoid using pesticides. Blueberries are generally pest free and very easy to grow, but you also should not use lawn pesticides which could affect underground nesting bees. Finally, allow natural patches of exposed soil as part of the habitat in your yard; this could be an area of patchy lawn or mowed weeds. Loosen up a little and have a slightly wilder yard.

For more information about Southeastern blueberry bees and other native bees such as bumble bees and sweat bees, contact The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation at www.xerces.org.

Donna Legare is co-owner of Native Nurseries, www.nativenurseries.com, and a past Board member of Apalachee Audubon.



Rufous Hummingbird - Elliott's Blueberry

Photo by Janeen Langley

Tips on Growing Blueberry Bushes

By Donna Legare

Blueberries are easy to grow. Plant them in loose, well-drained soil in full sun to light shade. Ours are planted in a large bed that they share with tall pines which provide a nice dappled shade. They do not like wet, mucky spots and will not thrive in heavy clay soils. Blueberry bushes do well in our naturally acidic soil. Some people like to mix finely ground pine bark with the soil in the planting hole to make the soil more acidic. Do not use mushroom compost, which makes the soil less acidic. Mulch with pine straw or leaves.

Blueberries like the same kind of soil as azaleas; if azaleas do well in your yard, chances are blueberries will too, providing you have enough sun. Plant them at least six feet apart unless you are trying to create an informal hedge.

Plant at least two different varieties as they need to be cross pollinated to provide lots of fruit. In addition to the hybrid rabbiteye blueberries that produce large tasty blue fruits, you might consider planting a native highbush blueberry and an Elliott's blueberry. The berries are darker and smaller, but also very tasty. Both are attractive in the landscape.

Water, especially in the early years, is critical. However, once established, blueberry bushes are quite drought tolerant. If you fertilize them when they are young, be sure to use a slow-release organic azalea-camellia fertilizer such as Holly-tone. Our mature blueberry bushes seem to get all the nutrition they need from the leaves and pine straw that fall each year.

Blueberry bushes produce berries while they are young, but you will not get a big crop for several years. My advice is always the same to anyone who is interested in producing fruit – get started as soon as possible and be patient! And don't forget to water!



Southeastern Blueberry Bee, *Habropoda laboriosa*
Courtesy of USDA - <http://blogs.usda.gov/tag/bee-basics/>

My mother-in-law, Sue Walthall, always reminded her grandchildren to get out early to "beat the birds" to the ripe berries. Of course, it's always cooler in the morning for picking!

I have such pleasant memories of picking blueberries with her and our children over the years. One child always took pride in filling up the bucket as fast as possible and the other always had a very blue mouth attesting to the fact that she ate as many as she picked.

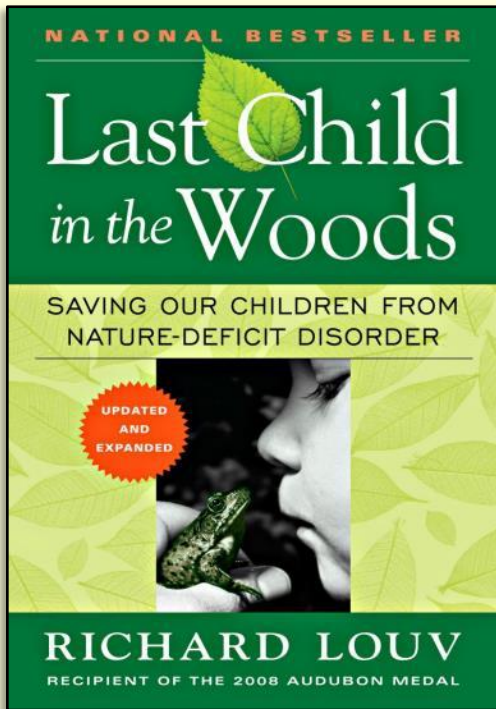


Donna Legare is co-owner of Native Nurseries, www.nativenurseries.com, and a past Board member of Apalachee Audubon.

A Book Review by Pat Press
Last Child in the Woods



SAVING OUR CHILDREN FROM NATURE-DEFICIT DISORDER



Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder by Richard Louv was published April 22, 2008. This book should appeal to anyone who is a lover of nature and the out of doors. Richard Louv's compelling thesis is that children today are suffering from a lack of connection to nature. One cannot have a complete knowledge of one's self if they do not have a real time connection to nature and the world around them.

Last Child in the Woods expresses what teachers and researchers have been reporting for the past two decades. Children are out of touch with their environment. They spend too much time indoors and attached to technology and equipment. Children need an opportunity to explore the beauties of the natural world or they really will be experiencing a nature-deficit disorder, according to Louv. This author states: "The children and nature movement is fueled by this fundamental idea: the child in nature is an endangered species, and the health of children and the health of the Earth are inseparable."

"A growing body of research links our mental, physical, and spiritual health directly to our association with nature—in positive ways," writes Richard Louv, who coined the term "nature-deficit disorder" in *Last Child in the Woods* and won the 50th Audubon Medal for bringing attention to the issue. Legislators on Capitol Hill and the medical and health experts have been paying attention "to the growing body of evidence linking the lack of nature in children's lives and the rise in obesity, attention disorders, and depression" -- *The Washington Post*. Some "green activists" have even suggested a "green hour" be included in the child's school schedule each day to increase their ability to learn from nature and the environment. The science teachers of America can surely see the significance of this suggestion in the study of biology and other related subjects in the curriculum. As a former English teacher I can see the possibilities of inter-disciplinary study units which include Language Arts (writing, reading, listening, speaking), Technology/Video Production, Science/Math, Social Studies, Music, Art, and P. E. all coming together to teach nature related topics so that children can learn from all their school disciplines. Read *Last Child in the Woods* and then give a copy to your child's teachers. To learn more, please see www.richardlouv.com. Pat Press serves on the Board of Directors of the Apalachee Audubon Society along with her sister, Carol Franchi. Together they co-chair the AAS Education Committee. Please see Apalachee Audubon's website, www.apalachee.org, for the Education Committee's recommendations of more great books.



BIRDATHON IS COMING!

Apalachee Audubon teams will hit the road in mid-April for this year's annual Birdathon fundraiser. This important fun and fund raiser helps AAS provide Audubon Adventures to local schools and also helps raise the funds needed to sponsor a local middle-school student in a fantastic summer birding program known as Camp Talon. These are just two of the many important goals of Birdathon which helps us fulfill Apalachee Audubon's mission. We need your help to make this another successful year!

If you'd like to help with a team, please contact Judy Goldman at 850 385-5222.



In The Yard
by Fran Rutkovsky

The cold winter this year brought some hungry birds down to our feeders in droves. Pine Siskins were everywhere, with a few Purple Finches mixed in. I was lucky to see four of them mixed in with the goldfinches, siskins, house finches, and chipping sparrows at my feeder. In the winter of 1997, I had to double up on the sunflower seed feeders to feed about 50 of the Purple Finches. Birdsong Nature Center hosted about 75 of the Purple Finches that winter.



Great-crested Flycatcher

Photo by Brenda Scott

Soon we'll hear the trill of the Northern Parula warblers heralding spring, and the Great-Crested Flycatchers will be chirruping. Carolina Wrens will be feeding babies and looking into foliage for worms.

Now is a good time to put out some native plants if you have room in your yard. Birdsong Nature Center's annual Plant Sale on March 21 (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) is an excellent time to be inspired. Head up to Grady County, GA, and bring home native trees and shrubs, wildflowers, old-fashioned plants and heirloom plants for the wildlife in your yard!



Native Azaleas

Photo by Fran Rutkovsky

It's Time to Get Ready for Spring!

Birdsong Nature Center's

Old-Timey Plant Sale – Saturday, March 21st

9 am – 1 pm



Birdsong Nature Center's Old-Timey Plant Sale on Saturday, March 21st is the perfect time to buy some hard to find native and "old-timey" plants to add to your yard. Hundreds of native plants, including native azaleas, wildflowers, perennials, old roses, shrubs and trees that are especially suited to our area will be available for purchase, with profits going to benefit the nature center. Many of the plants are donated "pass-along" plants that have been shared by friends and families for years. You will enjoy reading the interesting stories that accompany these "old-timey" plants. There will also be herbs and heirloom tomato plants for sale. This is one sale you won't want to miss if you are looking for the perfect plants to add to your yard and garden for your enjoyment and that of your birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.

Knowledgeable and friendly gardeners and horticulturists will be volunteering at the sale to help you make a selection for your own garden. Hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers and more will be available for purchase the day of the sale or bring your own picnic to enjoy. Please bring along your own wagon for carrying plants, if you have one. If you don't have a wagon, come anyway! We'll have some for your use.



Birdsong Nature Center's Plant Sale

Photo by Paul Rutkovsky

For more information and directions, see www.birdsongnaturecenter.org and Facebook or call 229 377-4408 or 800-953-BIRD(2473).



Birdsong Nature Center

2106 Meridian Road
Thomasville, Georgia

229 377-4408 or 800-953-BIRD (2473)

www.birdsonnaturecenter.org



Rusty Blackbirds: Looking Forward, Looking Back

Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz

By Judith Scarl, International Coordinator, & Cathy Ricketts, Florida Coordinator



Rusty Blackbird, *Euphagus carolinus*

Photo courtesy Keith Williams

A female Rusty Blackbird huddles on a Minnesota rooftop during a blizzard, fluffing herself into a ball to keep warm. A male flips leaves in a roadside ditch in Maryland, navigating partially frozen mud to hunt for spring's first invertebrates. A noisy, mixed flock of Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and the occasional Rusty lifts off from an Ohio cornfield, seeking safety in nearby trees.

These snapshots highlight the adventures and challenges of Rusty Blackbird spring migration, a journey that takes this species from its flooded forest wintering grounds in the southeastern U.S. northward to the boreal forests of Canada, Alaska, and far northern New England. Rusty Blackbirds pose both a conservation challenge and an environmental mystery. This species has experienced one of the most precipitous declines of any once-common landbird, losing up to 95% of its population over a 40-year span. Until the late 1990s, no one noticed this decline, much less understood it. Today, although some of the

bird's habits remain unstudied, our new understanding of Rusty Blackbird breeding and wintering ecology enables scientists to formulate conservation strategies for this species on both ends of its migratory range. However, we know little about Rusty Blackbird migration ecology, a critical element to ensure that the species is protected throughout its full annual cycle.

To identify migratory hotspots, understand migration timing, and inspire the public to support Rusty Blackbird conservation, the International Rusty Blackbird Working Group, in partnership with the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and dozens of state and local partners, developed and launched a three-year Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz in March 2014. This Blitz challenges birders across 38 states, 9 provinces, and 3 Canadian territories to search for Rusty Blackbirds during their northward migratory journey. While rangewide Blitz dates span the beginning of March through mid-June, each state and province focuses efforts during peak Rusty migratory activity for its region.

Here in Florida, our peak Blitz dates include the entire month of March, when the majority of Rusties will travel north. To participate, birders scour the landscape for Rusties and report their data to eBird under the "Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz" observation type, allowing the Blitz to tap into an existing network of citizen scientists and to encourage new supporters to use a broad-based conservation tool. These data will be used to identify Rusty Blackbird hotspots across the landscape and assess whether critical stopover areas are adequately protected. The ultimate goal is to ensure that Rusty Blackbirds have access to high-quality habitat throughout a journey that is energetically costly and already fraught with peril.

Continued on page 14



Ephemeral Pond in Munson Sandhills

Photo by Seán McGlynn

Rusty Blackbirds prefer foraging in wet areas, including flooded woods, swamps, marshes and the edges of ponds in winter and during migration. *"Several hypotheses have been suggested to explain the decline (of Rusty Blackbirds). Loss of wooded wetlands in southeastern wintering grounds is a likely contributor, as over 80% of this habitat has been converted to agriculture and other land uses."*

— International Rusty Blackbird Working Group, <http://rustyblackbird.org/working-group/>

Between 1 March and 15 June 2014, 4750 observers submitted 13,400 Rusty Blackbird observations to eBird, a 61% increase in submissions over 2013, the year before the Blitz. Data from this pioneer Blitz year will guide our 2015 and 2016 Spring Migration Blitz efforts; based on where observers reported large flocks of Rusties in 2014, we've identified potential hotspots that need to be revisited in 2015 to evaluate whether Rusties rely on the same areas year after year. Of course, the Blitz effort will still be looking for new hotspots in 2015, so birders are encouraged to search far and wide for Rusties and report all observations to eBird.

Although Florida is at the extreme southern end of the Rusties' winter range, there are still opportunities to document this bird. In 2014, all eBird Blitz reports of Rusties came from North Florida, but in 2013, several people found them near Crystal River. Let's try to fill in the gaps for Florida this migration! Is this species just found at low densities across the panhandle and into peninsular Florida? Or are there bigger flocks yet to be discovered?

As the Rusties' namesake plumage fades to black (for males) and charcoal gray (for females) in the spring and summer, Rusties can be challenging to identify even for more experienced birders. To ensure that the Spring Migration Blitz collects high-quality data, we ask that birders brush up on their Rusty Blackbird identification skills before participating in the Blitz. The International Rusty Blackbird Working Group Spring Migration Blitz web pages (<http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/>) contain several resources to help birders discriminate between Rusties and look-alike species, such as Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and European Starlings. If you are confident that you've seen a Rusty Blackbird, we welcome your report in eBird!

So, whether you're looking for the first spring flowers, walking your dog, hiking near wooded wetlands, or specifically out birding, keep your ears open for a squeaky-hinge call and look around for Rusty Blackbirds- your efforts will help to solve one of the final pieces of the Rusty Blackbird conservation puzzle.

To learn more about the Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz and how to participate, visit our website at <http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/> or contact state coordinator Cathy Ricketts, catherine.ricketts@myfvc.com. Adapted from an article, authored by Judith Scarl, that originally appeared in the Spring 2014 version of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies' "Field Notes" publication.

Winter Hummingbirds Hummer Update Number 3 – February 9, 2015 By Fred Dietrich Master Bird Bander



Well, it's been a while since I sent out an update on this year's winter hummingbird banding. This has been a very slow year in terms of number of birds banded, about a third of the level for the last few years. There have been a number of reports of birds but their presence has been sporadic or they refuse to go in my trap. I seem to be spending twice as much time waiting for birds and only catching half as many as in previous years. It has been like that everywhere, not just here. Throughout the East the number of birds banded has been much lower than in the past. I don't think that there is any problem with the birds, it's just that more people are planting for them and there are more feeders out so the birds have more choices. When they notice the trap they get suspicious and head off to another feeding site. *For the complete report and more, please visit, [Hummingbird Research, Inc.](http://HummingbirdResearch.com)*

Many of our winter birds will remain through March, so we've still got time to band a few more birds. If you still have a hummingbird, let me know if it is showing up regularly at your feeder (every 15 or 20 minutes) and when is the most convenient time for me to come and see if I can catch it. Please contact me at 850 591-7430 or fdietrich@gmail.com.

*Fred's work, along with other banders, is helping us to understand the migratory habits of these hummingbirds.
More information and comprehensive updates are available at Hummingbird Research, Inc. at <http://hummingbirdresearch.net/>*

Camp Talon - Teen Essay Competition

By Jim Cox



Apalachee Audubon is pleased to announce another exciting essay competition that will send a local teen on a week-long birding spree. Please share the attached information with the parents of any bird-crazed teens that you might know. Camp Talon is a 5-day, dawn-to-dusk summer birding adventure organized by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Georgia Ornithological Society.

The camp is in its 13th year of operation and runs from May 31 to June 4, 2015. The camp is based at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island, but field trips include Little St. Simons Island, Blackbeard Island, Sapelo Island, Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge, and St. Simons Island. The camp features a 2:1 student to teacher ratio, and the instructors are professional biologists and teachers that have 20+ years of experience.

Apalachee Audubon will provide a full scholarship to the winning essayist as well as a travel stipend to parents to help cover travel to Macon, GA (departure point for camp). The deadline for the submission of essays is Friday, April 3rd, and the winner will be announced two weeks later and encouraged to attend Apalachee Audubon's annual year-end banquet.



DO YOU KNOW A TEEN WHO LOVES BIRDS?

The bird-watching bug often strikes at an early age. If you know a teenager who is interested in birds, please let them know about a special essay contest sponsored by Apalachee Audubon on the theme of **“What Birds Mean to This Teen!”**

The essay should be a maximum of 300 words and must be submitted by Friday, April 3rd, 2015. Essays may be submitted as an email or attached PDF or Word file to necox@embarqmail.com. Printed or hand-written essays also may be submitted via normal mail addressed to: Jim Cox, 1503 Wekewa Nene, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Essays will be reviewed by Cox and two environmental education specialists. The essays will be judged on grammar, originality, inspirational qualities, and knowledge of local bird life. Essays with any profanity or derogatory language will be disqualified.

The winner of the contest will receive a free scholarship to **Camp Talon**, a five-day birding extravaganza sponsored by the *Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Georgia Ornithological Society*. The \$300 registration will be covered completely by Apalachee Audubon. The winner will be announced on Thursday, April 23rd and will be encouraged to attend the Apalachee Audubon year-end banquet on Thursday evening, May 21st.

What the winning student can expect at Camp Talon is tons of birding with 15 other teens. The camp is based at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island, but field trips include Little St. Simons Island, Blackbeard Island, Sapelo Island, Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge, and St. Simons Island. The camp features a 2:1 student to teacher ratio, and the instructors are professional biologists and teachers that have 20+ years of experience.

Students must be 12-16 years of age and live in Franklin, Gadsden, Leon, Liberty, Jefferson, or Wakulla counties.

The dates of the camp this year are Sunday, May 31st, through Thursday, June 4th, and more information is available at <http://www.gos.org/conservation/2014CampTALON.html> for 2014 (*the 2015 site has not yet been posted*).

Parents must transport the winning student to Macon, GA, to rendezvous with other students. Apalachee Audubon is providing a \$200 stipend to parents to cover travel expenses in addition to providing a full scholarship for the winning student.

Winter Is a Busy Time at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

Photographs by Nick Baldwin



My Adventures at 2014 Audubon Florida Assembly

By Jan Bordelon

With Kathleen Carr, Elizabeth Platt, Adrienne Ruhl, and Budd Titlow

It's been said the public's response to the state of the environment can be likened to Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' dying and grief model (i.e., Denial; Anger; Bargaining; Depression; Acceptance). If this is the case, I can attest that I've been firmly entrenched in the "Depression" stage. So why reflect on Audubon Assembly by first acknowledging my "Environmental Depression?" Because this Assembly of like-minded, caring and committed Environmentalists gave me hope and lightened my grief for three wonderful days. So much so, the enthusiasm I carried from the Assembly has fortified me for the continued battle to protect this beautiful earth and its inhabitants. A greater comprehension of our environmental state, has incongruously failed to deepen my depression, but girded my armor against Ross' fifth stage of emotional detachment and acceptance of destruction.

That being said, I want to share some of the highlights of the Assembly that made me laugh *and* some that made me cry. Saturday morning the event began with a choice of field trips, of which I chose the .8 mile trek in the Savannas Preserve State Park. My 'car' lucked up and got lost on the way to meet the group, allowing us a brief opportunity to visit the Park's Educational Center. When we found our guide, Chris Vandello, the Park Biologist, he explained the challenges of managing three distinct ecosystems – coastal scrub, freshwater marshes, and scrubby flatwoods – within the Park. The intrepid among us trudged through wet marsh to a great viewing site and saw ibis and limpkin. The Savannas Preserve State Park is also home to the sandhill crane, otters and tortoise. Like much of South Florida, we found this protected piece of heaven all within close proximity to housing developments and highways.



From left: Jan Bordelon, Adrienne Ruhl, & Elizabeth Platt

Not shown: Kathleen Carr & Budd Titlow

Upon our return to Assembly, Audubon Florida board member John Orcutt reported on the ecological crisis of the Indian River Lagoon. The Indian River Lagoon receives nutrient pollution from Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie Basin resulting in toxic algae blooms in the Lagoon's waters. The fertilizer and storm water from the Okeechobee watershed, along with local runoff, creates the downstream nutrient-laden water that leads to the growth of toxic algae that is harmful to humans, birds, and amphibians. Mr. Orcutt stated while working on this project, he suffered several months of illness attributed to exposure to the waters of the Lagoon. In an effort to manage the condition of the Indian River Lagoon, the C-44 St. Lucie River Reservoir will store and treat water from St. Lucie and Lake Okeechobee watersheds. The intent of the C-44 St. Lucie Reservoir project is to limit the discharge and pollution flowing downstream into the waters of the Lagoon, thereby reducing the nutrients and toxic algae.

Audubon Magazine's May/June 2013 issue had a fascinating article on roseate spoonbills as harbingers of the health of the Everglades, which featured Mac Stone, a young field biologist from the Everglades Science Center at Tavernier. To my delight, the Audubon Assembly Kick-Off Luncheon brought Mac Stone center stage as the guest speaker! Naturalist and photographer extraordinaire, Mac took us on a virtual journey through Florida's wildlands, swamps, and wetlands. His passion for conservation is captured in his awe-inspiring images. Later, Mac's documentation of the Everglades was made available to us through a coffee-table book of photographic aerial, underwater, and remote scenes of the River of Grass. For me, the gems of attending Assembly are the opportunities that bring a greater understanding of the people I meet and the knowledge they share; whereas, my past may have held only a cursory awareness of either.

Three afternoon breakout workshops gave participants a chance to attend two sessions of their choice. The first workshop I attended challenged us with "Engaging the Next Generation of Conservationists."

Continued on page 18



Pine Flatwoods in Savannas Preserve State Park

Photo by Budd Titlow

Since our Chapter is comprised primarily of the ‘over 50 set,’ I found AmeriCorps Team Leader Natalie Siedhof’s comments, on the need to be tech-savvy and willing to have meetings where young people congregate, potential sources of drawing young conservationists into our family. Many great ideas came out of this workshop, including family programs, partnerships with service clubs (e.g. Key Club) and city parks and recreation, after school programs (e.g., Green Hour), community hours to students, and more. Our chapter will review the workshop presentations shared by Audubon Florida to gain insight into ways to create a more diverse Chapter and engage our youth in conservation activities. The second session on “Balancing Land Conservation, Habitat Restoration or Maintenance” laid the groundwork for prioritizing the needs for conservation using Amendment 1 funds. I, like most of the participants in the workshop, weighed more heavily toward funding habitat acquisition, though recognizing the need for restoration and maintenance. The third workshop, “Getting to Yes with Amendment One,” highlighted the ways modern technology can improve grassroots efforts. A few simple clicks on a website can help motivated individuals to send a few emails and make some phone calls about these important issues. It will also allow those contacted to the opportunity to do the same – no longer relying on centralization but growing the message by engaging with individuals within communities. This makes the message more personal and reaches many more individuals than could be done otherwise.

Dr. Leslie Kemp Poole, keynote speaker at the evening banquet, gave a history of women in Florida’s environmental movement from her forthcoming book, “Saving Florida: Women’s Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century.” Notables in my history bank include Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Marjorie Carr, but how many of you know May Mann Jennings? First Lady and wife of Florida Governor William Sherman Jennings, May Mann Jennings was a prominent activist and President of the Florida Federation of Women’s Clubs. She was instrumental in the creation of the Florida Park Service, Florida Forestry Service, and the Everglades National Park (which today includes what used to be the Royal Palm State Park, a private park she helped create in 1916 to preserve one of the last natural stands of Royal Palms).

The last morning was a full assembly on Climate Change. Rather than end my reminiscing of ‘what I did at Audubon Assembly’ on a note of desperation or a futile attempt to synopsise very complex data, I recommend the following website: <http://fl.audubon.org/be-climate-change-messenger-coastal-birds-and-habitat>. This site allows you to review videos, which include: *Rising Seas: Florida’s Vulnerable Beaches and Islands*; *Rising Seas: Florida’s Vulnerable Saltmarsh*; *Rising Seas: Florida’s Vulnerable Everglade*; and a PowerPoint on Rising Seas. Understanding the facts of climate change and its impact on Florida may help each of us become more articulate in sharing the message of climate change and the vulnerability of our environment.

The last experience reflecting hope in our future, and sealing my belief that we can contribute to the betterment of our environment, was a short but precious visit to Possum Long Nature Center and Sanctuary. Upon his death, Possum Long, a local science teacher in the community, donated his property to Audubon of Martin County. The Center houses an extensive natural history library, bird art, and a collection of taxidermy specimens. The Sanctuary, behind the Center, includes almost 5 acres of urban forest that allows you to slow down, walk the trails, enjoy the butterfly garden, have a picnic, or just spend a peaceful time of solitude. Adjacent to the Sanctuary, the City of Stuart has constructed a stormwater retrofit project, engineered to allow a pond and sloughs to act as wet and dry cycles of natural wetlands, attracting wading birds and ducks. A lasting and pleasant memory from Audubon Assembly – the legacy of one beloved teacher, with the unique moniker of Possum Long, and the peaceful refuge he’s left for all of us to enjoy. *You can read Audubon Florida’s 2015 Conservation Action Agenda [here](#).*



Please Join Us
Apalachee Audubon 50th Anniversary Celebration!
Wakulla Wildlife Festival



Saturday, April 18, 2015
www.wakullawildlifeFestival.com

In the fall of 1963 an extraordinary group of men and women from the Big Bend area of North Florida came together to form the Apalachee Audubon Society. Focusing on conservation and working closely with Audubon Florida and National Audubon, for over 50 years Apalachee Audubon members have joined with like-minded men and women and forged ties with organizations with compatible goals to protect and preserve the natural environment.

The theme of this year's Wakulla Wildlife Festival is "Wings over Wakulla" in recognition of the past 50 years of Apalachee Audubon's conservation efforts at Wakulla Springs and throughout the Big Bend. Apalachee Audubon will be celebrating milestones with additional special tours, presentations and children's activities at this year's festival as together we look forward to the next 50 years. Many thanks go to Friends of Wakulla, www.wakullasprings.org, and Wakulla Springs State Park, <https://www.floridastateparks.org/park/Wakulla-Springs>, for helping AAS celebrate in such a special way.

We are so proud of the men and women who have helped build the chapter over the last 50 years. Please stop by the Apalachee Audubon tent on "The Green" and pick up a name tag and say "Hello" and learn more about AAS history and our many activities. We are so happy that Audubon Florida Executive Director (and AAS Past-President!) Eric Draper will be joining us--you won't want to miss his midday welcome address on the Green. We hope you'll join us!

See www.wakullawildlifeFestival.com to learn more about this year's Wakulla Wildlife Festival. There will be lots of activities and entertainment for children and adults, crafts, music, delicious food and much more. You'll enjoy seeing all the great exhibits --- looking through the list of exhibitors you'll see it is a 'circle of our good friends' --- and, of course, there's the beauty of Wakulla Springs to enjoy. Register early for the Sunrise Serenity Cruise with Dana Bryan, the River Road Neo-tropical Birding Tour with Mark and Selena Kiser, and the Nature Photography Boat Tour with Nick Baldwin and Budd Titlow.

Watch for our special Apalachee Audubon 50th Anniversary Celebration newsletter in April!



Apalachee Audubon T-Shirt
 Shown by Kathleen Carr
 Photo by Nick Baldwin

Celebrate All Year Long In Your
Apalachee Audubon T-Shirt!

\$15 plus \$2.00 tax/handling for each t-shirt

Send your check made out to **Apalachee Audubon Society** to:

Apalachee Audubon Society

P. O. Box 1237

Tallahassee, FL. 32303

Please include your:

Name:

Address:

City:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

T-Shirt Size: Small Medium Large X-Large

For more information, please call (850) 459-2066 or (850) 385-5222.

Some Coming Birding Field Trips and Other Activities



Least Bittern
Courtesy of D. S. Kilby

Coming Field Trips By Helen King

We have some great field trips planned for you. We hope you will join us.

If you plan to attend any of these field trips, please contact me,
Helen King, at thekingsom@gmail.com, or call (850) 765-2488.

More March and April Field Trips will be announced soon!



Common Moorhen
Courtesy of D. S. Kilby

Saturday, April 18 - Wakulla Springs State - "Introduction to Birding" at the Wakulla Wildlife Festival

Stop by the Apalachee Audubon exhibit at the Wakulla Wildlife Festival, www.wakullawildlife festival.com, and learn more about birding! Helen King will lead a short introductory birding walk around the grounds near the Lodge, perfect for beginning birders and more experienced ones too. Learn some important tips about the best times to look for birds, easy ways to start learning to identify species, and some great ways to attract birds to your own backyard.

Sunday, April 26 - 8:30 to 10:30 am: "An Introduction to Birding at Wakulla Springs State Park"

Join Helen King as she leads an introductory birding walk at Wakulla Springs State Park geared just for those who have always wished to better know the birds around them by sight or by sound. As participants traverse the grounds surrounding the lodge and the park's administration building, Helen will help make it easier to recognize a few of the beautiful songbirds that can be found in your own backyard. As a bonus, you may even see some magnificent neo-tropical species migrating through. Please bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. Meet in the Wakulla Springs Lodge parking lot. Free with park admission. *Please call Wakulla Springs State Park at (850) 561-7286 to make your reservation.*

Please contact Helen if you plan to attend a field trip no later than 24 hours before each trip at thekingsom@gmail.com or call (850) 765-2488. For notification of coming field trips, subscribe to Apalachee Audubon's Google Groups email notification list available at www.apalachee.org.

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

Come bird with us!

Photo right – Saturday, January 31st field trip to Southwood - Budd Titlow talks to crowd.

Photo courtesy of Adrienne Rubl



St. Francis Wildlife Association

St. Francis Wildlife was founded in 1978 and ever since has been contributing to the community as a wildlife rehabilitation and educational organization. To learn more: www.stfranciswildlife.org.



Nick's Mr. Lucky

Celebrate Earth Week with St. Francis Wildlife Association on April 25!

Celebrate Earth Week with St. Francis Wildlife Association on **April 25th from 11 am- 4 pm** for an afternoon of wildlife! Enjoy 'wild' fun, live music and dancing, lunch by Kool Beanz Café, nature tours and activities for the whole family.

Where: **White Dog Plantation** (formerly Nicholson Farmhouse), 60 acres of beautifully restored, historic buildings, farmland and forest trails. White Dog Plantation is located at 200 Coca Cola Avenue, Havana, FL (on SR-12/Havana Highway). Please see www.whitedog.com for directions and more information.

All proceeds benefit local orphaned, injured, and sick wildlife at the St. Francis Wildlife rehabilitation center.

Tickets: \$25 for one, \$40 for two, teens \$5, 12 & under free. Tickets available at Native Nurseries, 1661 Centerville Rd, Tallahassee (cash or check) and online (PayPal) at www.stfranciswildlife.org. More details are online at www.stfranciswildlife.org.

St. Francis Wildlife - 5580 Salem Road, Quincy, FL 32352 - 850 627-4151



Speaker Series Programs Are FUN and EDUCATIONAL!

Photographs by Nick Baldwin



Photos from top left, clockwise:
Jan Bordon, Conservation Committee Co-Chair; Pam Flory, Hospitality Co-Chair; Fred Dietrich, September Speaker; Jim Cox, AAS Board Member, Program Chair, and January Speaker; Budd Titlow, AAS Vice-President; Ann Bruce, Wildlife-Friendly Yards Tour Co-Chair

Wakulla Springs State Park

Wakulla Springs State Park - 465 Wakulla Park Drive - Wakulla Springs, Florida 32327 - (850) 561-7286

For more information, visit <http://www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings/>



Historic Glass Bottom Boat Tour – Date: Saturday, March 7, 2015 from 10am–11am

Let your family experience living history as Park Ranger Don Gavin takes you back to the days when the Wakulla Spring was gin clear and the booming voices of glass bottom boat captains sang out across its waters. Don's first-person experience will bring to life the characters, the development, and the nuances of the traditional glass bottom boat tour. Even though the waters of the spring may be dark (greatly reducing visibility through the glass), Don's narrative will shed light on what used to be. *A rare opportunity not to be missed!* \$8 Adults (Ages 13 years old and up), \$5 Child (Ages 3-12). Tour space is limited. Please call 561-7286 to reserve your place. Meet at the Waterfront Visitors Center.



Morning Nature Walk - Date: Saturday, March 21, 2015 from 9:00am – 10:30am *Free with Park Admission*

Join a ranger-led trek through Wakulla Springs State Park's varying forest communities. Leaves are budding, dogwood's are blooming, and life is awakening in the park's forests. The habitat beckons. Let your guide make the most of your visit as he points out nature's nuances. Glean tidbits of park history and observe the nuances of nature with the aid of your guide. Arrive early and fuel up with breakfast in the historic Wakulla Springs Lodge prior to the walk. Space is limited. Please call 850-561-7286 to register.



Morning Songbird Walk - Date: Saturday, March 28, 2015 from 8:00am – 9:30am *Free with Park Admission*

Join this ranger-led early morning songbird walk to look and listen for the less seen but often numerous songsters that make the park's forests their haven. Search for new spring arrivals and be on the lookout for migrants passing through. Please bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. Space is limited and advance registration is required. Please call 850-561-7286 to make your reservation.

Check at <https://www.floridastateparks.org/park-events/Wakulla-Springs> for more coming events and information.

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge



1255 Lighthouse Road
St. Marks, Florida 32355

www.fws.gov/refuge/st_marks/



A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT
ALL YEAR LONG!



Lemoyne

CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

125 North Gadsden Street - Tallahassee, Florida 32301
850.222.8800 - www.lemoyne.org

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

For a schedule of activities or more information,
please see www.birdsongnaturecenter.org & Facebook
or call 229 377-4408 or 800-953-BIRD (2473)

Old Timey Plant Sale on March 21st - 9 am-1 pm!



Hairstreak Chapter

NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION



The Hairstreak Chapter of the
North American Butterfly Association
has a new website - <http://hairstreakchapter.weebly.com/>



Mission San Luis

2100 West Tennessee Street, Tallahassee

Mission San Luis is a pet-friendly site, so bring your companions and enjoy the beautiful park setting and living history programs. Please join us for these & other events at Mission San Luis. The Mission with its historic village is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$3 for seniors (65+); \$2 for children 6 to 17; and free for members, children under 6 and active duty military and their families. For more, please see www.missionsanluis.org or

Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park



Conserving The World's Largest
and Deepest Freshwater Spring

<http://wakullasprings.org/>



Lost Creek Forest



www.lostcreekforest.com



Apalachee Audubon Chapter Awards

Now is the time to nominate deserving individuals and businesses for our annual Apalachee Audubon Society Chapter Awards. For more information and a nomination form, visit our website:

<http://www.apalachee.org/aas/about/chapter-awards>

Workshops to Enjoy at

Native Nurseries

1661 Centerville Road, Tallahassee, FL 32308

Monday-Saturday, 8am-6pm

850-386-8882



Please see www.nativenurseries.com and
for more great workshops and information



ANNUAL HERBAL EVENT

Saturday March 21st 10am \$5.00 - Class size limited - Call 386-8882 to pre-register

Join professional herb grower, B O'Toole of O'Toole's Herb Farm, and Native Nurseries' Donna Legare to learn how to grow and enjoy herbs. They will discuss how to use herbs in cooking and how to incorporate them into the landscape. It will be fun and we will have a couple of herbal treats to sample.

HUMMINGBIRD HOMECOMING

Saturday March 28th 10am Free

Ruby-throated hummingbirds return from Central America around mid-March. Jody Walthall will explore the fascinating natural history of hummingbirds and teach you how to attract them to your yard.