



# The Crane

Volume 55 Number 1 September—October 2013

## September and October Field Trips

*Included in this Crane Newsletter is the Yearbook—a listing of all planned Alachua Audubon field trips for the 2013/2014 season. The Yearbook is also available to download on the Alachua Audubon Website.*

**Sunday, September 8, 2:45 pm**

**Cedar Key by boat with Tidewater Tours**

**(Sign up required)** Meet Alachua Audubon Vice President, Scott Flamand, for a boat tour of Cedar Key's remote coastal marsh with Tidewater Tours. Emphasis will be on shorebirds, gulls, terns, and other coastal species—seen at fairly close range. Cost is reduced to \$25 per person for the boat ride. Call Wild Birds Unlimited (352-381-1997) to reserve a spot on the boat and to find out the meeting location. Space is limited. Difficulty: 1

**Saturday, September 14, 8:00 a.m.**

**San Felasco Hammock – Millhopper Road**

Meet trip leader Steve Hofstetter at San Felasco's Millhopper Road parking lot (\$4.00 per vehicle parking fee). Sandhills, forested streams, & meandering slopes set the stage for the diversity of birds we hope to find. Difficulty: 2

**Sunday, September 15, 8 a.m.**

**Barr Hammock—CLEP**

Meet Michael Drummond of the county's EPD at the Chevron in Micanopy on US-441 and carpool to Barr Hammock. The majestic Barr Hammock forms a land bridge between Ledwith and Levy Prairies, and is a county jewel that provides habitat for a wide diversity

of upland and wetland species. Difficulty: 2

**Saturday, September 21, All Day**  
**North American Migration Count**

Each fall near the peak of migration birders all across the continent spend a day in the field to take a snapshot of the fall migration. If you can identify most migrants and you'd like to help with the Alachua County count, please contact Mike Manetz at [mmanetz@yahoo.com](mailto:mmanetz@yahoo.com) or 377-1683. Difficulty: 3

**Saturday, September 28, 6:30 a.m.**

**Road to Nowhere and Hagen's Cove**

Meet trip leader, John Hintermister, at the Tag Agency and carpool to the Big Bend Wildlife Management Area for a full day of birding. The first destination will be the Road to Nowhere—a 12-mile road that traverses salt marsh, coastal hammocks, pine, and oak stands. A large diversity of birds can often be seen along this remote road. The next stop will be Hagen's Cove, where shorebirds, wading birds (including Reddish Egrets), and migrant landbirds can all be observed. Bring water, bug repellent, and lunch. Diff: 2

**Sunday, September 29, 8:00 a.m.**

**O'Leno State Park**

Phil Laipis will lead us through this beautiful park on the Santa Fe River in search of warblers, tanagers, and other fall migrants. Meet at the Winn-Dixie parking lot north of the traffic light on US-441 in High Springs, and carpool to O'Leno State Park. Admission \$5.00 per vehicle. Difficulty: 2 (continued on page 8)

**Trip Difficulty 1:** Trip within easy access to the vehicle and/or level terrain one mile or less **2:** May involve uneven terrain one to two miles **3:** May involve elevation change, uneven terrain, and/or greater than two miles

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*The Alachua Audubon Society's mission is to foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, to protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, and to promote sustainable use of natural resources.*

Content of **The Crane** is the sole responsibility of AAS and fulfills stated objectives and goals of AAS. Annual subscription to **The Crane** is included in AAS dues. Non-Audubon members may subscribe to **The Crane** for \$8 annually. All checks for subscriptions or changes of address should be mailed to Paul Moler, Membership Chairman: see back page for address. Submissions to **The Crane** are welcomed. **The Crane** is printed on recycled paper.

**Deadline for  
Nov-Dec Crane:  
Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>**



Ya gotta' love fall migration. The distant calls of thrushes passing over in the night, the sight of the first Rose-breasted Grosbeak at the feeder, the pleasure of watching a Scarlet Tanager picking creeper berries in the canopy, all make fall migration the high point of the birding year. Best of all are the warblers.

From the first Prairie Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush of July to the last Bay-breasted Warbler of October, I want to see every one of them! And they sure start coming through early. Jonathan Mays found our first returning Prairie Warblers July 9, appropriately, on Payne's Prairie. John Hintermister recorded our first Black-and-white Warbler July 12 at Newnan's Lake. Our first Louisiana Waterthrush and American Redstart were also at Newnan's on the 28th of July. The following day at Newnan's John, with Rex Rowan, spotted several Yellow Warblers, and on the last day of July our first fall Worm-eating Warbler was seen at Levy Lake. Cerulean Warblers are another early arrival, and because they are so difficult to find they are one of the most prized birds of fall. That makes it all the more remarkable that for the second year in a row one has been found in the yard of Gina and Adam Kent. It was spotted August 14 while Adam was hosting a small group of lucky (and extremely good) birders.

Shorebirds start coming through surprisingly early too. Rex and I joined Dean and Sam Ewing for a survey of Watermelon Pond July 12 when we watched two shorebirds drop in along the muddy edge of a pond...our first Greater Yellowlegs and Least Sandpiper of the season. We were also treated to a brief look at a fly-by Black Tern. Heavy rains through late July raised water levels too high for shorebirds at most traditional places like Newnan's Lake and Paynes Prairie, but a newly harvested cornfield at the dairy flooded just enough to attract a good assortment. I checked there on July 27 and found small numbers of Least, Spotted, Solitary and Pectoral Sandpipers, along with a couple dozen Black-bellied Whistling Ducks and dozens of wading birds. Rex Rowan visited there July 29 and noted a similar assortment of birds, but more importantly, he discovered a dark-phase Short-tailed Hawk. On August 4, Sue Killeen came to the dairy hoping to find the hawk, and did, plus a bonus: a Wilson's Phalarope! That evening while looking for the phalarope, Sam Ewing picked out a locally-rare Semi-palmated Plover hiding amongst the flock; and on the following day while searching for the phalarope John Hintermister and I discovered another local rarity, a Short-billed Dowitcher.

By the time this issue of the Crane reaches you Veerys should be just arriving. Our "early" warblers will (*continued on Page 4*)

## Loblolly Woods

Alachua Audubon Society strongly supports public and private policies that promote the conservation of sensitive lands for wildlife, recreation, and education. Our chapter uses many city and county parks for year-round birding excursions and field trips. Therefore, Alachua Audubon Society strongly opposes the surplus sale or transfer of any part of Loblolly Woods to private interests.

Citizens of Gainesville have shown their support in public elections for the purchase of conservation lands. The City has done an admirable job of acquiring, managing, and making available for public use many local greenway spaces. The expectation is that these conservation lands will be protected for future generations to enjoy as we enjoy them today.

In light of the current proposal from Nathan Collier to purchase a portion of the Loblolly Woods for his private use, Alachua Audubon is concerned that the city appears to lack a clear process for evaluating this type of proposal. At a minimum, the city should adopt a policy that ensures that properties are ranked with significant ecological or recreational value. And areas that have a high ranking should never be considered as surplus.

We feel that Loblolly Woods has several significant features that support a high ranking for ecologically sensitive lands. The wetlands that make up part of this parcel serve a priceless role in the natural distribution of water on the urban landscape. This wetland area supports listed and rare flora and fauna species including *Trillium maculatum*, and the globally rare Florida spiny-pod (*Matelea floridana*) and Godfrey's Privet (*Forestiera godfreyi*). Deer are seen in these woods and there is evidence of otters as well. And countless people have enjoyed these woods over the many years that it has been in public ownership.

Because of the importance of parks to the surrounding neighborhoods, the city should ensure that affected neighbors are properly notified

and given the opportunity to comment whenever a proposal of this type is considered. We encourage a process with greater transparency and public notice than what has been reported in the process initiated by Nathan Collier.

For these reasons, the Alachua Audubon Society objects to the city of Gainesville's continued consideration of Nathan Collier's offer to purchase part of Loblolly Woods. It is clear that this part of the park has significant ecological value, and is well used and valued by the community.

Citizens of Gainesville and Alachua County have shown over and over that we value local green spaces and conservation land. We hope that the City Commission will recognize the importance of our wild spaces to the community, and reject Mr. Collier's proposal. Our conservation lands mean too much to be sacrificed to the desires of one influential and wealthy citizen.

Helen Warren, President, AAS  
and the Board of AAS

## AAS's Backyard Birding Tour February 8, 2014 *Hold the Date!*

- « See colorful winter birds such as orioles, goldfinches, and many others in backyard settings
- « Learn techniques to attract birds to your backyard
- « Learn what food and plants will increase bird activity

Would you like to offer your yard for this upcoming Backyard Birding Tour, or do you know someone who is quite successful at attracting birds to their backyard?

To discuss offering a yard for the tour, or for more details, please contact Ron Robinson at 352-332-4867 or [gonebirden@cox.net](mailto:gonebirden@cox.net).

## There's No Water Like Sweetwater...

The rains of recent weeks have provided the prairie with a much needed soaking. Water levels are up on the prairie basin, and in the surrounding lakes, creeks and streams that make up parts of the Paynes Prairie watershed. As always, we remember that the most important part of managing a wetland ecosystem like the prairie basin is getting the water right. Over the past several months we have been moving closer to that goal at Paynes Prairie.

Most of you are already familiar with the Sweetwater Branch/Paynes Prairie Sheetflow Restoration Project. This exciting, collaborative project is playing a major role in restoring the hydrology on the north side of Paynes Prairie. Additional benefits include improving the quality of water that is discharged from the Main Street Wastewater Treatment Plant by directing the water through a 125-acre enhancement wetland, and sheetflowing the cleaner water to 1,300 acres of basin marsh wetlands that have been starved for water since 1937 when construction of the Sweetwater Canal and Dike began under the Camp Family Ranch operations.

The official groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013, but in reality, construction began in 2012. For the past several months, construction crews and managers, and staff from the City of Gainesville, GRU, and others have worked diligently to clear and shape the footprint of the enhancement wetland. From idea on paper to reality on the ground, the scale of land clearing, earthmoving, engineering, grant writing, permitting, and paperwork involved in constructing a 125 acre wetland is massive. And, those of you familiar with Sweetwater Branch know that its stream flow ranges from a steady baseline during dry periods to flash flood after large rainfall events. There have been rainy days where the deluge of water coming into the construction site from Sweetwater Branch has overwhelmed the construction crews' efforts, eroding weeks of hard work on the ground, damaging carefully sculpted contours in the deep water cells, and making the site just too wet for much of

the heavy equipment to work.

Despite these challenges, The Sediment Basin and Wetland Cell 3 are nearly completed, and clearing is well underway on Cell 2. Clearing for Cell 1 cannot begin until Cell 3 has been planted with wetland plants and is operating by filtering the water from Sweetwater Branch before it is released onto the prairie basin. (See photos on Page 5)

For visitors to the La Chua Trail, construction activities along the Sweetwater Canal and dike could begin as soon as October, 2013. Current project scheduling forecasts removal of Sweetwater Dike and infill of Sweetwater Canal occurring in January, 2014.

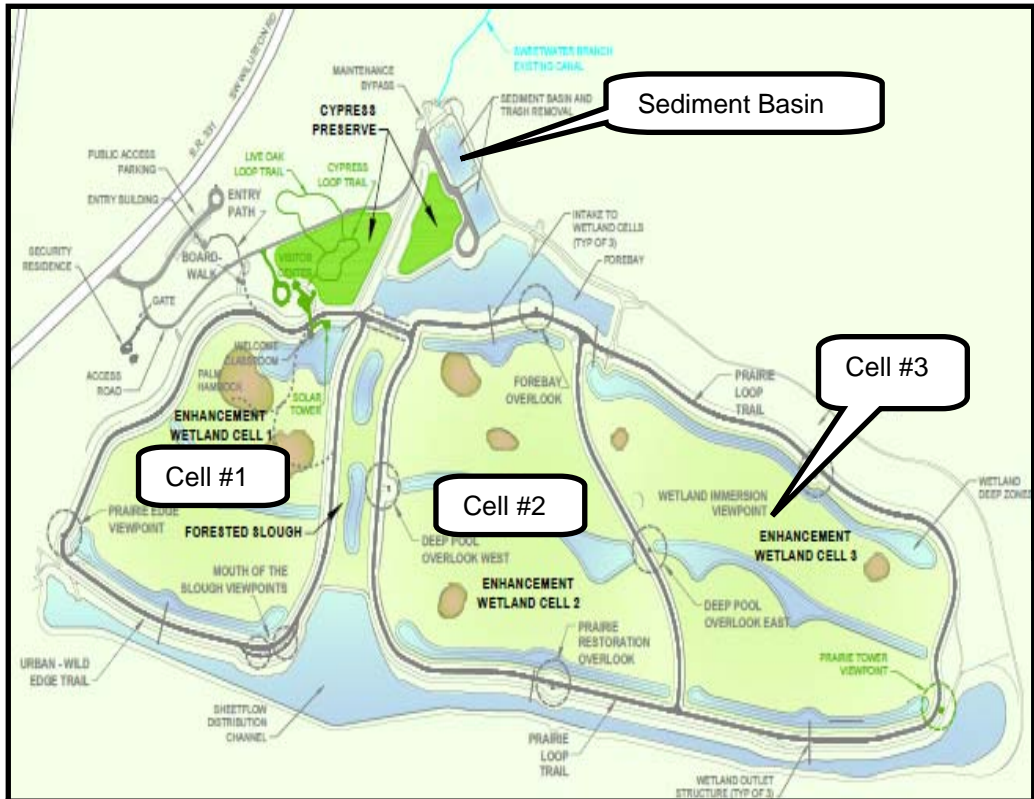
On a personal note, participating in the project as an observer and representative of the Park Service has been extremely educational. The art and science of constructing engineered wetlands is very different from that of managing a natural wetland ecosystem. My hat goes off to the engineers, construction managers, and others involved in moving this critical project forward.

Andi Christman, Park Biologist

## Around the County (*continued from page 2*)

still be here, along with incoming Kentucky and Blue-winged Warblers. It will also be time to start gearing up for the annual North American Fall Migration Count. If you are above beginner level at birding, or are experienced but new to the area, please consider joining us September 21 for this event. It's a day you would want to be out birding anyway! Contact me at [mmanetz@yahoo.com](mailto:mmanetz@yahoo.com) or at 352 377-1683.

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through August 16, 2013



Design schematic of the Sweetwater Branch Enhancement Wetland. (Can you see the shape of an alligator head?) Drawing courtesy of Gainesville Regional Utilities.



Work completed as of 7/22/13 on the Sweetwater Branch Sheet-flow Wetland. Aerial courtesy of [www.aerophoto.com](http://www.aerophoto.com) and Wharton Smith Construction Group, Inc.

## AAS Birding Programs

**October 10th—Birding Highlights in Costa Rica;** Mike Manetz will present some of the birding highlights of his last several Birds and Conservation tours in Costa Rica. Also featuring the fabulous photography of Diana Manetz. Join us for a social at 6:30 pm and the program at 7:00 at the Tower Road Library.

**November 20—Ecology and Conservation Status of the Threatened Southeastern American Kestrel;** Dr. Karl Miller will discuss the ecology, distribution, and population status of the Southeastern American Kestrel, sharing information obtained from nearly a decade of research and monitoring. The Southeastern American Kestrel is a non-migratory subspecies of falcon and one of Florida's most imperiled birds. Karl will share the latest updates on FWC's kestrel nest-box monitoring partnership and a statewide management plan for kestrels. Millhopper Library at 7:00 p.m.

## Birding Classes Offered

Santa Fe College's (SFC) Community Education Program in collaboration with The Alachua Audubon Society (AAS) is offering two bird identification courses this fall. The first class will be four consecutive Saturday field trips to local birding hot-spots. This class will be held from 8 to 10 am beginning Oct. 26th and will be led by a local birding expert. Cost for this four day class is \$49.

A one-day bird identification class— *Birds of Cedar Key*—will be offered on December 7th from 8 am to 1 pm. This field trip is designed to learn shore-birds, wading birds, and inland birds around the lovely community of Cedar Key. Cost for this one day class is \$35.

These classes are designed to benefit both beginning and more advanced birders. We will visit local natural areas to identify birds in their native habitat. Registration is through SFC and runs from October 9th through October 23rd. For more information and registration go online to SFC Community Education or call (352) 395-5193. These courses continue to receive great reviews, so register early as they fill quickly. Hope to see you in class. These courses generate revenue for Alachua Audubon Society.

Barbara Fennelly, Class Coordinator

## Calling Young Birders

**Sunday, September 29, 9am**

Young birders are invited to join Steven Goodman and other Alachua Audubon volunteers for a youth birding event on the west shore of Newman's Lake at Powers Park. This area provides easy viewing opportunities of large birds in and around the lake, and smaller birds along the wooded edges. Alachua Audubon will provide binoculars for young birders and basic instructions on bird identification. An adult to supervise your young birder is required. Please RSVP to Emily Schwartz at [emilysgfl@gmail.com](mailto:emilysgfl@gmail.com)

**November 2nd—Marks the first Family Birding Outing at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park.**  
*See page 12 for more details.*

## Don't miss the 2013 Audubon Assembly Boots on the Ground October 25-26 in Palm Harbor, Florida

The 2013 Audubon Assembly is a celebration of the people who put their "boots on the ground" for conservation. Get inspired and get involved in citizen science, habitat stewardship, and grassroots advocacy. Florida's signature conservation event brings together representatives of Audubon's 35,000 members and 44 chapters with conservation leaders, scientists, educators and policy makers. Through nature-inspired walking workshops, inspiring speakers, and thought-provoking learning sessions, Audubon plans to join together people of all ages and backgrounds in our common interest of protecting Florida's remarkable natural resources.

This year's event is being held at the beautiful Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Palm Harbor, Florida – about 30 minutes from downtown Tampa. Please note, hotel reservations must be made separately. Early-bird tickets and hotel rooms are going fast, learn more and reserve your spot today: <http://bit.ly/AudubonAssembly2013>

For more information, contact Jonathan Webber at [jwebber@audubon.org](mailto:jwebber@audubon.org)



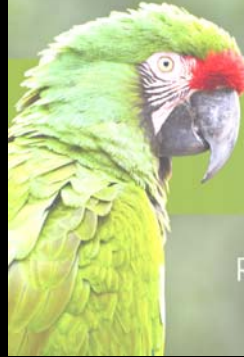
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*(Field Trips continued from Page 1)*

**Saturday, October 5, 7:30 a.m.**

**Powers Park and Palm Point**

This field trip will provide migratory birding at a classic local migrant trap. The big oaks and lakeshore cypresses in the park, and hardwoods along Lakeshore Drive can be excellent places to observe migrant activity. Meet trip leader Barbara Shea at Powers Park to check the trees along the boat channel and scan the lake from the fishing pier before proceeding to Palm Point. Difficulty: 1

**Sunday, October 6, 6:30 a.m.**

**Guana-Tolomato-Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve**

Peregrine Falcons migrate down the Atlantic Coast in fall, usually peaking in early October. Meet trip leader John Hintermister at Powers Park and carpool to the hawk-watching platform at the north end of the park in hopes of seeing Peregrines, then walk a woodland trail in search of fall warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, and thrushes. Bring water and bug repellent. Lunch will be at Caps on the Inland Waterway. Diff: 2

**Saturday, October 12, 8:00 a.m.**

**San Felasco Hammock – Progress Center**

Meet trip leader Mike Meisenburg at the tag agency (NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street just south of US-441) and carpool together. Admission fee \$4.00 per vehicle. We'll cover a variety of habitats in this walk, including marsh, field, habitat edges, deciduous forest, and Celson Creek. Difficulty: 2

**Sunday, October 13, 8:00 a.m.**

**Bolen Bluff Trail**

Meet trip leader Jonathan Mays at the trailhead on US-441 at the south rim of Paynes Prairie. Bolen Bluff is one of Gainesville's perennial favorite birding locations, especially during the peak of songbird migration. Difficulty: 2

**Saturday, October 19, 8 a.m.**

**Levy Lake Preserve**

Meet field trip leader Adam Zions for birding at Alachua County's newest Public Use Natural

Area. The 5,700-acre preserve of marsh and wet prairie provides excellent opportunities to see a wide variety of birds. To reach the trailhead, drive south on US-441 from GNV. Just before Micanopy and across from Lake Wauberg, turn right on Wacahoota Road. Go roughly 1 mile and turn left on SE 11th Dr. Continue south on SE 11th Dr. to the preserve trailhead and parking area. Difficulty: 3+

**Sunday, October 20, 6:30 a.m.**

**Lower Suwannee River National Wildlife Refuge**

Meet trip leader John Hintermister at the Target parking lot (on Archer Road) for a full day of birding at several locations within the Lower Suwannee River NWR. Likely stops will be Shired Island, Dixie Mainland, Fishbone Creek, and Salt Creek. A large diversity of shorebirds, waders, and migrant songbirds are likely to be spotted. Bring water, lunch, and bug repellent. Difficulty: 2

**Saturday, October 26, 8 a.m.**

**La Chua Trail**

Meet trip leader, Adam Kent, at the trailhead on Camp Ranch Road. La Chua Trail on the northeast side of Paynes Prairie is one of the area's best spots for birding. Among other birds, we'll search for flycatchers, raptors, warblers, and newly-arrived sparrows. Difficulty: 3.

**Saturday, November 2, 8:00 a.m.**

**Hague Dairy**

Meet Rex Rowan at the Tag Agency on NW 34th Street near US-441 to caravan to one of the county's best spots for sparrows, blackbirds, and raptors. Difficulty: 1

**Saturday, November 9, 7:00 a.m.**

**Hamilton County Mines—Full Day Trip**

Meet at the Tag Agency on NW 34th Street near US-441 and caravan to White Springs to join Jerry Krummrich. We'll explore freshwater impoundments for ducks and other water birds, and look for sparrows in the fields and brushy margins. Difficulty: 2



## AAS CHRISTMAS TREE Fundraiser 2013

Due to the large number of volunteers needed and the hectic schedules during the holiday season, the Alachua Audubon Society has decided not to pursue a Christmas **T**ree fundraiser this year. Instead, we are reaching out to our membership for donations and for assistance with our many planned programs—youth birding activities, backyard birding tour, holiday social and silent auction, participation at local festivals, and our 43 upcoming field trips.

Because these activities take both volunteers and funding, Alachua Audubon will be soliciting donations and volunteer participation from our membership to help us take on these many exciting programs and projects. You will be contacted by mail and asked if you can spare a few dollars and/or a few hours of your time for the benefit of Alachua Audubon.

*We sincerely appreciate your membership and value any participation that you can provide.*

### Help AAS Save \$\$s, Trees, and Fossil Fuels

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## Scrub-Jay Monitoring Program In the Ocala National Forest

Two dozen biologists and volunteers participated in the Florida Scrub-Jay monitoring program in Ocala National Forest (ONF) this summer. ONF is believed to support the largest scrub-jay population in the state. However, population estimates have been based on limited data, often collected opportunistically, and previous monitoring efforts have been short-term in nature. Therefore, the impacts of forestry practices on scrub-jays in this crucial population remain uncertain, and have been the subject of much debate. In 2012, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission initiated a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and citizen and student volunteers to conduct a rigorous post-reproductive survey during June-July. We plan to continue the ONF annual monitoring program and incorporate graduate student research projects where appropriate.

Volunteers are needed during the non-breeding season to assist with the Florida Scrub-Jay monitoring program. We will be trap taming and banding scrub-jays at ONF beginning in November and could use a few dedicated volunteers to help get birds accustomed to bait and to traps prior to banding. Please contact Dr. Karl E. Miller at [karl.miller@myfwc.com](mailto:karl.miller@myfwc.com) or [352-334-4215](tel:352-334-4215). *(Photo of nestling scrub-jays close to fledging. Photo taken by Kristin Cattrano).*



## Is a Sustainable Floridan Aquifer in Florida's Future?

The Floridan Aquifer is a natural wonder. Spanning more than 100,000 square miles, twice the size of Florida, and underlying portions of four states, the Floridan Aquifer is arguably the largest aquifer in the world. A large volume of this aquifer is filled with saltwater, a remnant of the last time the peninsula was submerged under the sea. During the past 35,000 years, the upper portion of the Floridan Aquifer has filled with freshwater. Before modern development and the invention of pumped wells, this natural underground reservoir continuously overflowed through more than 1,000 artesian springs.

Interconnected like a large plumbing system of natural conduits, the Floridan Aquifer flows from areas of high recharge to areas of high discharge. Almost anywhere in North Florida it is possible to insert a pipe into the ground, and for a nominal price, extract a seemingly endless supply of fresh water. More than one million wells now puncture this aquifer, causing reduced aquifer levels and diminished spring flows.

While other areas of the U.S. typically rely on surface waters (rivers, lakes, and reservoirs) for potable water, groundwater is conveniently located almost everywhere in Florida, resulting in its use for over 90% of our freshwater needs. But this groundwater is a shared and finite resource.

Like other plentiful renewable resources, groundwater appeared to be unlimited when the human population was smaller. Not anymore. We have had ample warnings that we could deplete our underground aquifer and destroy our springs if we continue to pump at unsustainable levels. Salt water intrusion was the first sign of disaster along our densely-developed coastlines. Precipitous declines in the state's aquifers—exceeding more than 60 to 100 feet in Duval, Polk, and Hillsborough counties—were apparent more than 50 years ago. And aquifer declines result in the loss of large springs, reduced stream flows, increased sinkhole formation, and desiccation of wetlands and lakes.

uifer declines result in the loss of large springs, reduced stream flows, increased sinkhole formation, and desiccation of wetlands and lakes.

The first Florida "Water Wars" were fought more than 25 years ago in the Tampa area, resulting in the first substantial cut in allowable groundwater pumping in the history of the State. Since that time, water supply plans suggest the likelihood of impending groundwater shortages and the effects of over-pumping on natural aquatic resources. And the visible effects of over-pumping are self evident to anyone who lives on or near a lake, river, or stream. Nevertheless, our water managers foolishly continue to allow additional wells to be installed and more groundwater to be pumped.

The proposed Adena Springs Ranch will occupy 20,000 acres in Marion County and plans to use groundwater to grow grass for a year-round population of 15,000 cattle. Adena Ranch officials originally requested a consumptive use permit for more than 13 million gallons of water per day, which created a fire-storm of public outrage. Due largely to the vocal opposition for such a large water grab (more water than that used by the City of Ocala), Adena reduced their water request to 5.3 million gallons. The St. Johns River Water Management District will likely make a final decision on this application within the next few months. Adena's permit and the hundreds of others that will be issued by the water management districts in the next year will further deplete flows in the area's springs, rivers, streams, and lakes. The combined flow decline in North Florida's artesian springs is already on the order of about 2 billion gallons per day due to groundwater pumping. And aquifer levels continue to fall.

Faced by the accelerating and harmful consequences of excessive water withdrawals, "Water War II" has started in Florida. The troops in this popular uprising—folks like you and me—are observing the damage to our ecological resources and its effects on our fish and wildlife. We are educating ourselves about the causes and effects of over-pumping, and demanding

*(continued on page 11)*

enforcement of the environmental laws and rules that were intended to prevent our precious aquatic resources from drying up and being polluted. If your vision is for a sustainable level of fresh and abundant water, then speak up and support the groups that are fighting for a sustainable water future.

By Bob Knight  
Director, Howard T. Odum Florida Springs  
Institute

### Alachua Audubon Reaches Legacy Campaign Milestone

Congratulations to the Alachua Audubon Society for being one of the first Florida Audubon chapters to achieve All-American Status for the Water and Land Legacy Campaign! Not only have we collected over 5,000 signed petitions since the beginning of the campaign, but we have turned in over 1,000 signed petitions between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Alachua Audubon will receive a \$500 gift for having achieved the All-American goal. Our efforts have helped keep the campaign momentum going through the doldrums of summer and reaffirm that Audubon volunteers are a force and continue to lead for protection of our natural resources.

### Birding Events Planned for April Earth Day Celebration

Alachua Audubon wants YOU to be an advocate for migratory birds. We will be sponsoring family events **April 18-20, 2014**. *Mark your calendars now for these upcoming events.* Gainesville Birding and Nature Festival and the Museum of Natural History Earth Day Celebration!

## Community Calendar

**Oct. 26th—Lubee Bat Conservancy 7th Annual Bat Festival**, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. 1309 NW 192nd Ave. View giant fruit bats and learn how bats benefit ecosystems worldwide. Free activities, exhibits, and presentations. The Conservancy is not open to the general public on a regular basis so this event offers a rare opportunity to see unusual bats. *Visit Alachua Audubon's booth at the Bat Festival.*

**September 28-Florida Friendly Landscape and Garden Tour**, 8:30 am to 1 pm. The event starts at the Senior Recreation Center, 5701 NW 34th Street, Gainesville, beginning with a gardening talk and onsite tour. Participants will then tour local landscapes. Maps and tour packets will be provided. Pre-registration recommended [352-337-6290](tel:352-337-6290). There is no charge for this event. Guided by Alachua County Master Gardener volunteers. Presented by the UF/IFAS Alachua County Extension Office.

**Oct. 5th and 6th—Florida Native Plant Society Fall Native Plant Sale at Morningside Nature Center**, Native plants, wildflower seeds, nature books, and botanical art. Friday from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. for members of FL Native Plant Society, or Friends of Nature Parks, or those joining one of these groups. Saturday from 8:30 to 12:30 is open to the public. More information at 352-334-3326 or [www.natureoperations.org](http://www.natureoperations.org)



**FARM TO FORK**

*A Gala Featuring Celebrity Chefs and Local Food*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013 SANTA FE RIVER RANCH  
HOSTED BY: CONSERVATION TRUST FOR FLORIDA

[www.santaferiverranch.com](http://www.santaferiverranch.com) • [www.conserveflorida.org](http://www.conserveflorida.org)

# **Family Birding**

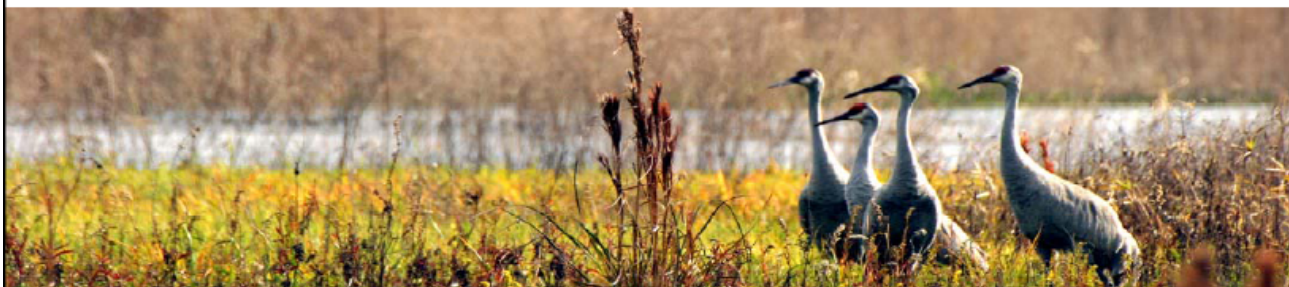
at  
**Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park**

Join us for birding fun the 1st Saturday of every month  
November through April.  
Children must be accompanied by an adult. No pets please.  
9am—11am unless otherwise noted

-  **November 2, 2013:** Introduction to Birding  
Meet at Visitor Center
-  **December 7, 2013:** Bird Habitat  
Meet at Lake Wauberg parking area near boat ramp
-  **January 4, 2014:** Cranes and Winter Birds on Prairie  
Meet at La Chua Trail parking lot
-  **February 1, 2014:** Identifying Birds and their Songs  
Meet at Visitor Center
-  **March 1, 2014:** Attracting Birds to your Backyard  
Meet at Lake Wauberg parking area near boat ramp
-  **April 5, 2014:** 9 am—12 pm Bird Migration and Checklists  
Meet at La Chua Trail parking lot

**DATES AND MEETING PLACE SUBJECT TO CHANGE—PLEASE REGISTER**

**Call Visitor Center open 9am—4pm daily  
(352) 466-4100  
to register for individual sessions**



## Paynes Prairie Management Plan

Public meetings were held on July 15 and 16, 2013, to discuss the proposed 10-year plan for managing Paynes Prairie State Preserve. Alachua Audubon is a recognized stakeholder, and consequently, participated in discussions involving the updated management plan. The Paynes Prairie Management Plan contains detailed descriptions of the natural plant communities, describes the natural forces that influence these communities (such as fire and water), and discusses how park staff plans to implement management activities. Also included in the management plan are water inflows from the Sweetwater Branch Sheetflow Wetland and Prairie Creek. These two water sources represent the most important water sources to the prairie.

Alachua Audubon's stakeholder involvement with the Paynes Prairie Management Plan dates back to 1970. We have consistently advocated that the prairie/marsh ecosystem on the basin be managed to maintain this ecosystem in a healthy biological state. We have advocated for more extensive and frequent use of fire and for greater water level fluctuations to achieve the goal of a healthy and diverse basin marsh ecosystem. However, because the prairie/marsh ecosystem continues to transition to a shrubby wetland community, Alachua Audubon is now advocating for implementing additional management tools to supplement the controlled burns and flooding, in order to fight the woody plant invasion that is adversely affecting thousands of acres of prairie marsh vegetation. We are advocating for more aggressive use of mechanical removal of shrubs, mowing, and the use of herbicides to address this problem, in addition to using fire and water.

County Commissioners Robert Hutchinson attended the July 15th public meeting, while Mike Byerly attended the July 16th meeting. Both commissioners recognize the unique treasure that Paynes Prairie provides

to Alachua County, and both commissioners offered their political support to park staff regarding management activities.

By Bob Simons



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## Captain Doug's TIDE WATER TOURS

from Cedar Key

**For the ultimate birding experience by boat to remote coastal marshes or near shore islands.**

**Charter only.**

**Call or check our website:**

**352-543-9523**



## Scenic Highway 2013 Photo Contest

Old Florida Heritage Highway PO Box 724 Micanopy, FL 32667

### 2nd Annual Photo Contest

All photos must be taken from the public right-of-way on the Old Florida Heritage Highway spur and loop roads. They must be submitted electronically according to contest guidelines. Contest winners may have their photos published in OFHH promotional materials. Official contest guidelines and entry forms can be found online at [www.scenicus441.com](http://www.scenicus441.com) and submittals are due by **October 1st, 2013**.

Contest winners will be announced and displayed at the Micanopy Fall Harvest Festival October 26th and 27th, 2013. Additional display of photos will occur at several locations throughout the county on a rotating basis.

Prizes will be awarded to the **top 3** winning submissions!

Find us on Facebook!!  
contact: [floridaheritagehighway@gmail.com](mailto:floridaheritagehighway@gmail.com)



Alachua Audubon Society  
P. O. Box 140464  
Gainesville, Florida 32614-0464

Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Gainesville Florida 32601  
Permit No. 18



*The Crane*  
Sept.—Oct. 2013

Visit Alachua Audubon Society on Facebook at <http://tinyurl.com/alachuaaudubon> and click “like” and you will be kept up to date on field trips, events, and more!

**Join Audubon!**

To join Audubon on 3 levels (National, Florida, and Alachua), fill in application and mail to:

Paul Moler 7818 Highway 346 Archer, Florida 32618

Questions? Contact Paul (352) 495-9419 or paulmoler@bellsouth.net

**Chapter E-18 New Membership Application**  
**Not for renewals!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check level of membership:  
 Introductory \$20.00     Basic \$35.00

Make check payable to National Audubon Society

—————OR—————

Alachua Audubon Chapter only \$10.00  
(Does not include National and Florida Audubon membership)

Make check payable to Alachua Audubon Society