



# The Crane

Volume 501 Number 1 August-September 2009

## September and early October AAS field trips

Welcome to the 2009-2010 Alachua Audubon Society field trip season. Please refer to the Yearbook (inserted in this issue) for the entire schedule.

**The Conservation Lands Education Program (CLEP) continues this season with a few new offerings among a total of 11 trips. In its entirety, the AAS field trip season consists of 42 trips and special events including overnights and cross-disciplinary trips.**

**Please note that sign up is required for some trips. Call Wild Birds Unlimited to sign up and for ore information about trips. (352) 381-1997.**

### **Saturday, September 19, All Day North American Migration Count**

Each fall near the peak of migration, birders spend a day in the field to take a snapshot of migration. If you think you might be suited for the NAMC call Mike Manetz to express your interest. 377-1683.

### **Sunday, September 20, 1:30 pm Cedar Key by Boat with Capt. Doug Maple Sign up required**

Shorebird intensive boat tour of Cedar Key's remote coastal marsh with Captain Doug Maple. Featuring Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Avocet, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew. Call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] to reserve a spot.

### **Saturday, September 26, 8:00 Barr Hammock—CLEP**

The majestic Barr Hammock land bridge between Ledwith and Levy Prairies acquired through funding by Alachua County Forever in 2006. Meet senior planners with the county's Department of Environmental Protection Michael Drummond and Steve Hofstetter at the Micanopy Chevron on 441 (across from Pearl Country Store). Difficulty: 2

### **Sunday, September 27, 8:00 Palm Point**

Meet Rex Rowan and Bob Carroll at Powers Park. Migratory birding at a local classic migrant trap. The edge of the cypress swamp can be an excellent place to observe migrant activity. Difficulty: 1

### **Saturday, October 3, 8:00 San Felasco Hammock—Millhopper**

Meet Steve Hofstetter at San Felasco trailhead on Millhopper Road. Don't forget the \$4/vehicle access fee. Meandering streams, sinkholes, ridges, and slopes set the stage for a very diverse bird habitat during fall migration's peak. Difficulty: 2

### **Sunday, October 4, 8:00 Chastain-Seay**

Meet Bob Carroll at the tag agency on NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street near Hwy. 441 and carpool to Chastain-Seay near Worthington Springs. Chastain-Seay is a riparian woodland park with boardwalks and trails on the upper Santa Fe river. Difficulty: 2

**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 the editor and fulfills stated objectives and goals of Alachua Audubon Society. 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  
Oct-Nov Crane:  
Sept 15<sup>th</sup>**

## **Around The County...**

**By Mike Manetz**

Alachua County birders faced down the heat, humidity, and general hum-drum summer birding doldrums to rack up a total of 112 species during the this year's June Challenge. That total was a little low compared to

previous June Challenges, but it certainly wasn't due to lack of effort. There seemed to be fewer lingering migrants at the beginning of the month than usual, and some normally difficult breeding birds, such as Hairy Woodpecker, Limpkin, and Broad-winged Hawk, were simply not around this year. No matter, as nineteen of Alachua County's finest posted results, and numerous others participated in their own way as well. Adam Kent, Barbara Shea and I were lucky to spot a very late **American Bittern** flying across the marsh at La Chua on opening day. Steven Goodman had a couple of goodies at Newnans early in the month, a **Forster's Tern** and a **Belted Kingfisher**. Adam Kent, Rex Rowan, and Matt Hafner found three **Brown Pelicans** June 14 at Lake Lochloosa. **Fulvous Whistling Duck**, **Gray Catbird**, and **Yellow-breasted Chat**, all "iffy" regulars, were discovered early in the month, and many challengers got to see them. At the end of the month Lloyd Davis and I made the death march out to San Felasco's Turkey Creek to check for **Wood Thrush** and found two males singing right where "the book" says they should be!

The winner for the single highest June total this year was Judy Bryan, with 106 species. Craig Parenteau finished a close second with 104 species. Congratulations to them and all who participated. This kind of effort really does help us better understand trends in the breeding and non-breeding distribution of birds in our county.

The early phase of fall migration is well under way. Back on July 8 John Hintermister reported our first transient, a **Spotted Sandpiper**, from Palm Point. While birding Loblolly Environmental Center July 13 I found our first fall warbler, a **Louisiana Waterthrush**; John reported our first **Black-and-white Warbler** July 21 at Gumroot Swamp, and I lucked into a very early **American Redstart** July 22 at Split Rock Conservation Area. On July 17 Howard Adams noted eight **Black Terns** crossing low over La Chua Trail. Rex Rowan picked up two at Newnans a couple of days later. By the time you read this copy of the Crane, Prairie and Yellow Warblers and Ovenbirds should have already checked in. Keep an eye out for some of the prizes of early fall, Golden-winged, Kentucky, and the in-

creasingly scarce Cerulean Warbler.

John Hintermister, Lloyd Davis, my wife Diana and I spent the middle part of June birding in beautiful Costa Rica. We had a fantastic time and saw nearly three hundred species. I would like to announce here that I am organizing a special trip to Costa Rica for as many as ten people next year, early-mid July. The tour will focus on birds, but will also emphasize conservation and sustainability efforts to preserve the biodiversity and habitats upon which birds depend. For example, we will be birding such legendary sites as La Selva, Volcan Poas National Park, and Rancho Naturalista, but we will also get a first-hand look at the National Institute of Biodiversity, tour organic farm projects at EARTH University, visit a bird-friendly shade-grown coffee farm, and learn about efforts to preserve Great Green Macaw habitat. Logistics will be handled by a very competent Costa Rican company with a strong dedication to conservation programs in their country. If you think you might be interested in a trip that combines great tropical birding with conservation education, feel free to contact me at 377-1683, or email at [mmanetz@yahoo.com](mailto:mmanetz@yahoo.com) for more information and a detailed itinerary.

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through July 26, 2009.

## Native Plant Sale

The best place in central Florida to find your native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and seeds is the Florida Native Plant Society Fall Plant Sale!

**Preview Sale**—Friday September 25, 4:30pm-6:30pm for Florida Native Plant Society and Friends of Nature Parks (FONP) members only. You can join either group at the sale.

**General Sale**—Saturday, September 26, 8:30am-12:30am (No admission cost at park)

**\*\*Remember cash and checks only!**

Saturday will feature other environmental booths, book sales, and wildflower walks. Members of FNPS will offer free and personalized advice for plant selection at the FNPS tent.

Morningside Nature Center, 3540 E. University Ave, Gainesville, FL

For full details see [www.natureoperations.org](http://www.natureoperations.org)

## Community Calendar

- ◆ **5 Sep** Sierra Club / Ardisia/ pull, San Felasco Hammock
- ◆ **23-27 Sep** Florida Keys Birding and Wildlife Festival, Marathon
- ◆ **25-26 Sep** Florida Native Plant Society Fall Plant Sale
- ◆ **25-27 Sep** Florida Regional North American Butterfly Association Meeting, Lake Wales
- ◆ **26 Sep** Marion County Springs Festival, Dunnellon
- ◆ **2-4 Oct** Florida Ornithological Society meeting, Gainesville
- ◆ **3 Oct** Sierra Club / Ardisia/ pull, San Felasco Hammock
- ◆ **10 Oct** Chinsegut Reptile and Amphibian Festival, Brooksville
- ◆ **17 Oct** Forgotten Coast Black Bear Festival, Carabelle
- ◆ **18-24 Oct** "Ding" Darling Days, Sanibel Island
- ◆ **23-24 Oct** Audubon of Florida Assembly, St. Petersburg

Audubon of Florida Assembly:

<http://audubonoffloridanews.org/?cat=35>

"Ding" Darling Days: <http://www.dingdarlingdays.com/>

Florida Keys Birding and Wildlife Festival:

<http://www.keysbirdingfest.org/>

Florida Native Plant Society

<http://www.natureoperations.org>

Florida Ornithological Society: <http://fosbirds.org/>

Florida Regional NABA Meeting:

<http://www.naba.org/chapters/florida/meeting.html>

Forgotten Coast Black Bear Festival:

<http://www.carrabelle.org/Default.aspx>

Marion County Springs Festival: <http://springsfest.org/>

Sierra Club: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/ssj/outings.htm>

Correction:

In the June-July 2009 issue of *The Crane*, the June Challenge article was written by Mary Landsman.

## Grey Day

By Sarah Eisenstadt

I don't know how to start the story, so I'll start with this: We were coming up the sidewalk from lunch when Daniele said "So what's that peeping I heard? I nearly stepped on it." I looked down and at first I didn't see anything, but then I saw through the camouflage brown feathers and there was a young bird. Our teacher, Mrs. Thomas, cautioned us that it was probably a young bird learning to fly and we should leave it alone. A few minutes later we left to go to Mrs. Geiger's class. When I arrived, Emma was telling Mrs. Geiger about the birds. Yes, apparently there were two birds out there. We went outside with Mrs. Geiger and one of the birds flew away. We set the other one back in its nest. Later, on our way back to Mrs. Thomas' class we saw that the bird was back on the ground again. Sana went to put it back in its nest and Mrs. Thomas asked Emma and me to help Sana use a chair to reach the nest. As we walked back into class, I thought I saw the bird fall out of the nest again.

It was another rainy day by the time my mom came to pick me up at dismissal. As soon as I saw my mom, I told her I had to check on a bird and I ran back to the school yard, leaving my mom to wonder what on Earth I was doing running around school in the rain. Sure enough the bird was on the ground again. It must have sensed me coming because as I neared it tried to fly off but did not get very far. I was able to catch it and then it simply sat perched on my finger and wouldn't leave. By then my mom came looking for me and, boy, was she astonished when she saw me with a bird on my finger. By this point, many other kids and some teachers had gathered around us. The bird got nervous and started to fly away again, but couldn't see very well (more on the cause of that later) and started flying into walls, a spider web, and then my mom's shirt. I don't think she liked that so much. She sure had a surprised look on her face! The bird fell to the floor and I scooped it up.

At this point Mrs. Howland brought us a box to put the bird in. I begged my mom to let us take care of it. She agreed to help me look for someplace that could take the bird. We called the Florida Wildlife Rescue

organization and our veterinarian. Eventually, we made plans to bring the bird to Animal Control. They were going to pass the bird on to the wildlife rescue organization. On the car ride I sang quietly to the bird. I think being in the dark box must have made it seem like nighttime to the bird. It was very quiet. I got a bit teary-eyed when we handed the bird over. I was attached already.

Later that night while we were eating dinner, someone from the Florida Wildlife Care organization called. They did indeed get the bird from Animal Control. It was a little house finch. It couldn't see very well because it had an eye infection. She told us that was a common problem for finches and it would be fine. I was so glad to know that "Grey Day" would be fine. That's what I named the bird: Grey Day.

Update: Today we found the other bird and kept it in a box in Mrs. Thomas' class. My mom gave me the strangest look when she came into class and heard peeping in the box. "Sarah, is that ANOTHER bird?," she asked. Back we went with another delivery for the Florida Wildlife Care organization.

Sarah Eisenstadt was a 4th grader at Talbot Elementary when she wrote this article.

## Donations needed for binoculars

Alachua Audubon is making a big push to get school-age kids and especially minority kids interested in nature and birding. Several different outreach programs are being planned, but the big obstacle is lack of optics.

We would like to start a fund to purchase a stock of inexpensive but effective binoculars to support these efforts. We already have identified sources that could give us a discount of as much as 50%, so we would be looking at around \$50 a pair. If you would like to make any donation toward this effort or even sponsor the purchase of a pair of binoculars please make a check payable to Alachua Audubon Society and send to our treasurer, Dotty Robbins, 25125 NW 210<sup>th</sup> Lane, High Springs, Florida, 32643. Kindly make a note that the donation is for kid's binoculars.





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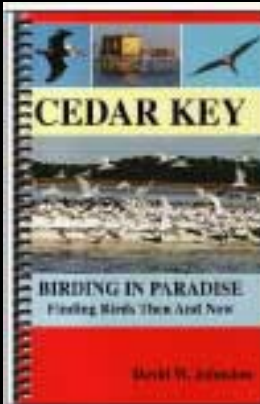
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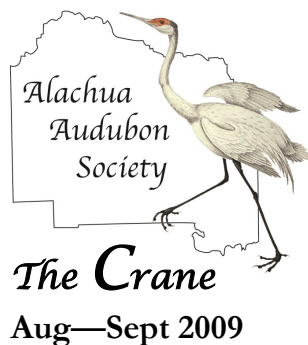


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## Could You Be A Sponsor?

The new school year is starting and teachers are again looking for sponsors to support the **Audubon Adventures** program. This kit of materials engages children in lessons about nature and the environment. To learn more about Audubon Adventures check out [www.audubon.org/educate/aa/](http://www.audubon.org/educate/aa/).

Sponsorship of an elementary school classroom costs \$46. Are you able to help? Please call Emily Schwartz at 372-0754 to sponsor a classroom.

## 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 495-9419 or paul-moler@bellsouth.net

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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