



The Crane

Volume 51 Number 4 February – March 2010

February and March Field Trips

Saturday/Sunday , February 6 & 7

Tall Timbers Research Station Sparrow Banding

Call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] for details or to make a reservation. Overnight Saturday in TTRS' comfy bunkhouse and leave early the next morning for a day of birding in The Wade Tract, a 200-acre stand of old growth longleaf pine. Jim Cox and Adam Kent will be the lead.

Saturday, February 13, 8 am

Persimmon Point

Persimmon Point is a jewel for sparrow enthusiasts and access is strictly limited. Call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] for details or to make a reservation.

Sunday, February 14, 8 am

Kanapaha Prairie

Meet trip leader Rex Rowan in the Target parking lot at 8am. The Kanapaha Prairie is an 804-acre ex-pasture dotted with marshy ponds and ringed with huge live oaks. It is home to the county's second largest flock of Sandhill Cranes. Numerous other birds enjoy its open space as well, notably Eastern Meadowlark, Killdeer, and American Kestrels, as well as waterfowl and shore-birds. It is normally off limits to the public but AAS has special permission for this trip. Difficulty: 2

Saturday, February 21, 7 am

Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area

The Wildlife Drive weaves around a patchwork of

hammocks and through freshwater marshes. Pick out ducks, wading birds, and more among the coots. Meet Bubba Scales at Sweetbay/FL Bookstore II at 2002 SW 34th St. Bring a lunch and prepare for a full day in the field. Difficulty: 2

Saturday, February 27, 8 am

Tusawilla Prairie - CLEP

In 2006, Alachua Conservation Trust acquired this 379 acre tract beside Tusawilla Prairie near Micanopy and it is now open to the public. Meet ACT land manager Ivor Kincaide in the Sweetbay parking lot (2003 SW 34th St.) for an interpretive tour of this historic property. Diff: 2

Saturday, March 6, 8 am

Prairie Creek — CLEP

Nearly two miles of trail course through a beautiful hardwood forest in the floodplain of Prairie Creek near Rochelle. Join Alachua Conservation Trust land manager Ivor Kincaide at Powers Park. Difficulty: 2

Saturday, March 20, 8 am

Lower Hogtown Creek Greenway — CLEP

Hold line for description
Hold line for description
Hold line for description

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/

Alachua Audubon Officers & Chairpersons of Standing Committees

President	Helen Warren	214-7755
Vice President.....	Scott Flamand	665-7020
Secretary.....	Anne Casella	378-0505
Treasurer	Dotty Robbins	386 454-8087
Membership	Paul Moler	495-9419
Field Trips	Bubba Scales	381-1997
Education	Emily Schwartz	372-0754
Birding Classes.....	Kathy Haines	372-8942
Festivals	Helen Warren	214-7755
Conservation.....	Adam Kent	314-609-5513
Crane Editor.....	Debbie Segal	386-418-8391
Submittals: dsegal@wetlandsolutionsinc.com		
Advertising.....	Cecelia Lockwood	281-7659
	Ivor Kincaid	377-6253
Historian	Martha King	372-4149
Website	Rex Rowan	371-9296
Yearbook	Bob Carroll	372-6698
Crane Circulation	Erica and Bob Simons, Paul Moler, and other volunteers	
AAS Website.....	www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud	

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 fulfils 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 Apr/May Crane:
Mar. 15th**

Around The County... By Mike Manetz

Alachua County birders take their Christmas Bird Count pretty seriously. Most territories are scouted well in advance so that no rare birds are overlooked, and routes are continuously tweaked to maximize efficiency and adjust for changing conditions. Usually all this preparatory work results in the discovery and "staking out" of at least a few rare or unusual species. This year, scouting reports uncovered distressingly little out of the ordinary, so we were expecting uninspired results on

count day; however, in the end, we were able to pull some birds out of the hat...in fact, a hundred and fifty-one of them, which is the second highest species count for us on record. Goodies included a couple of **Greater Scaup**, four **Dunlin**, one each of **Least Flycatcher**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Rusty Blackbird**, and, most exciting of all, a first-ever Alachua County record **Cave Swallow**, which was seen by a team on La Chua trail.

There were some interesting sightings in the days after the count, mostly from La Chua trail. There, on January 2, Caleb Gordon found a **Stilt Sandpiper**. Stilt Sandpipers are sometimes seen in spring and fall here, but almost never in winter. Adam Kent went out the next day and found an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** and relocated the Christmas Count Dunlins. The real blockbuster, though, was a **Crested Caracara** first spotted January 13 by Rex and Sarah Rowan, and seen by many others the following day. There have been only five other reports of Caracara in the county, with the nearest breeding population down in central Florida. They are fond of carrion, so presumably this individual was attracted by the grand buffet of countless fish and frogs killed off by the hard freezes earlier in the month.

A flock of approximately 100 **American White Pelicans** chose to winter here, and spent time moving between the prairie basin, Lake Wauburg, Newnans Lake, and Biven's Arm. A few **Whooping Cranes** were also present. At least one has several leg bands and a transmitter, so they were likely progeny of the Project Migration program to steer young whoopers in the right direction, so to speak. They were reported many times at both the prairie and at the UF Beef Teaching Unit on Williston Road.

We usually get at least a few lingering warblers on the Count, but, aside from an astonishing number of 8 **Northern Waterthrushes**, stray warblers were fairly absent; however, in the days following the count, there were a couple of interesting reports. On January 5 Laura Levin was surprised to find an adult male **American Redstart** snuggled in for a night on her porch! When she checked the next morning the bird was still there, but quickly departed. Linda Terry, who maintains the hummingbird feeders at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, reported a **Wilson's Warbler** there. This is at least the 5th year in a row that a Wilson's Warbler has wintered at the gardens.

It will be discussed thoroughly elsewhere in this or a future issue of *The Crane*, but it's hard to say enough about the Christmas Bird Count for Kids organized by Alachua Audubon. I had the pleasure of leading a group of my students from Lincoln Middle. Also participating was a large contingent from Expressions Charter School, a few from other area elementary and middle schools, and even a couple of high school students. Despite near freezing temperatures the enthusiasm level was high, and it was heartening to see so many young people exhibiting that level of interest in birds and bird watching. As attendee Chip Deutch put it, "this is the future of bird watching in Alachua County". (Continued on Page 4).

Volunteers fan-out-for-bird-count

Gainesville's 2009 Christmas Bird Count

Early and before dawn on a bitterly cold Sunday morning a hundred intrepid volunteers dispersed throughout a 15-mile diameter circle centered at the heart of Paynes Prairie for the 110th annual Christmas Bird Count. The Gainesville count sponsored by Alachua Audubon Society was held on December 20th and is just one of many counts world-wide that take place between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5. This annual event had its beginning in 1900 on Christmas Day when ornithologist Frank Chapman chose to celebrate Christmas by counting birds rather than shooting birds. Today this annual event hosted by National Audubon Society and its chapters has the task of identifying and tallying all the birds within the specified count circles.

The Gainesville Count Circle is divided into eleven areas with a team of individuals who are knowledgeable in the identification of birds by sight and call. Most of this year's volunteers were local but others joined us from as far away as Texas, Iowa, and Virginia.

Around dusk the teams converged at the Civitan Regional Blood Center for the well deserved count up dinner. After dinner the teams tallied their number of individual birds, number of man hours, distance traveled, and then entered the information into the database. Results of the count were displayed on a large screen and were compared to previous bird counts so the annual species trends could be observed. The Alachua bird data is then compiled with other count circles from the Arctic to Antarctica.

Last year (2008) was an exceptionally great year for Gainesville with a record high of 159 species and a spectacular number of Sandhill Cranes at Paynes Prairie. This year (2009) we counted 151 species of birds along with a few high count records of individual species. New bird species were also added to the count circle database. Some of the rare sightings were nearly 100 American White Pelicans on Lake Wauberg, two Cave Swallows flying by La Chua trail and two Whooping Cranes in Alachua Lake.

Howard Adams



Thanks to the Many CBC Volunteers

Many volunteers contributed countless hours to make the Christmas Bird Count a success and Alachua Audubon wishes to thank the 100+ people who braved the freezing temperatures, long hours, and challenging field conditions to contribute the data needed to better understand our regional and national bird populations. A special thanks goes to the organizers—John Hintermister and Howard Adams—who began preparations well in advance of the CBC and reviewed and submitted data to National Audubon after the count had concluded. Special thanks also goes to John Martin, the keeper and operator of the database; Greselda Forbes who ensures that pizza, beer, and other beverages are at the evening count-up; Frank Mead, our chapter historian who continues to document each CBC, and Bruce Haguewood for arranging our evening count-up room at the Civitan Regional Blood Center. Eleven people served as count circle teams leaders and their time spent preparing and organizing for the CBC is appreciated. Those team leaders included Howard Adams, Craig Parenteau, Mike Manetz, Mary Landsman, Grace Kiltie, Dan Pearson, Rex Rowan, Scott Robinson, Pat Burns, Geoffrey Parks, and Andy Kratter. Extra thanks goes to Mary Landsman for hosting a reporter and photographer from the Gainesville Sun during the CBC. (Did you see the newspaper article that ran in the Sun the following day? To see the article go to <http://www.gainesville.com/article/20091221/ARTICLES/912211000/1105/NEWS?Title=Bird-watch->

A New Christmas Bird Count

The inaugural Ichetucknee / Santa Fe / O'Leno Christmas Bird Count, held on December 22nd was a great success. Four teams covered Ichetucknee Springs State Park, O'Leno State Park, pasture and agricultural fields north of Fort White, and numerous conservation lands along the Santa Fe River. The count had 32 participants, including 9 from Alachua Audubon and 8 from Four Rivers Audubon. Staff assistance was provided by the FL Park Service and FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Afterwards, 28 folks joined in for a data summary and follow-up session. In total, 86 species were observed with an overall 6,489 birds. Notable birds included a dark-eyed junco (photographed) and a merlin. Special thanks to John Martin who compiled the count data. Coordinating assistance was provided by team leaders Craig Parenteau, Jerry Krummrich, and Jacqui Sulek. We appreciate the enthusiasm received by all Alachua Audubon members, especially count insight from John Hintermister. Mark your calendars for the Tuesday before Christmas 2010 (gives you a day to rest up from the Gainesville Count!). We will see you then! Thank you to all volunteers!!

Ginger Morgan

President's Report

Our Alachua Audubon Society chapter was born 50 years ago in January 1960. During this 50 years there have been many issues for members to rally around. The demise of the **Cross Florida Barge Canal** and development of **The Defenders of the Environment** may be associated with membership involvement during the mid-century. More recently our members have helped establish political policy which supports the purchase of lands in conservation with **Florida Forever** and **Alachua County Forever**.

As a group of birders, we have contributed to extensive data records of bird activity with Christmas Bird Counts, Fall and Spring Migratory Bird counts, and many individual reports that have become part of the county bird record. The use of Ebird to report bird sightings to The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has become an invaluable tool for citizen science.

We have the wit and wisdom of Rex Rowan who has become the local historian on bird sightings and contributes updates on sightings through his list service. He and Mike Manetz have provided the community with ***A Birdwatcher's Guide to Alachua County, Florida***.

We have reached out to the youth of this community through the efforts of Emily Schwartz with **Audubon Adventures** in the elementary grades; worked with local boy scouts on basics of birding and building nest boxes; and made classroom presentations with Adam Kent's **Bird Detective**. Sometimes the process for organizing an event seems as slow as molasses but when we get a group together and see the parents, students, and volunteers having fun and showing their 'ahha' moments, one knows that there was success! Our second **Christmas Bird Count for Kids**, held on January 6th, was one of those celebrations.

Someday, someone will look back and say "Fifty years, that was just the beginning!" For now, let's keep our heads up and enjoy the outdoors and the beauty of the natural world. Let us take pride in what we can do to respect the relationship of all of life from the

(Continued from Page 2)

We still have a few spaces left on the Birds and Conservation tour of Costa Rica in mid-July. It will be plenty hot in Gainesville by then, but right now it's hard to stop thinking about warm sunshine and cool tropical birds! If you have any interest in going with us please contact me at mmanetz@yahoo.com and check out the website for the trip at <http://greenmagicman.tripod.com> Thanks to those who shared their sightings through January 14, 2010

Holiday Recap and a Time for Thanks

Seems while I am still trying to catch up with 2009 2010 has rolled in. Before we get too far into the new year I want to say "Thank You" to those who contributed their time, money, and effort to benefit our chapter and our membership. We just had a very successful season with the sale of Christmas trees and the annual Holiday Social. While I can't list all of those with the space here there are certainly some who deserve an honorable mention. Thank you Stacy Porvasnik for organizing the Christmas tree orders and to the team of Michael Meisenburg and Andrew Howard who picked up the freshly cut trees and delivered them to Gainesville. We appreciate the use of the space at Greenery Square, which is provided from Dorn's Liquors and Wine Warehouse for our distribution site. The sale of trees provided us with an income of \$2600

For the Holiday Social, Wild Birds Unlimited graciously opened their doors and moved their shelves to accommodate the silent auction, Barb Kerkhoff and her harp, and all those who came out to play and bid on items. Day Bennett, Joni Ellis and Stacy Porvasnik lead the team for collecting more than ninety items from more than thirty individuals and businesses. The proceeds from the bidding brought in more than \$1600. Thank you again to all of those who have so graciously contributed to our local Audubon society.

Helen Warren

Alachua Audubon Board of Directors

It is time to look for the nominations to our slate for 2010-2011 Officers and members to the BOD. The elections are usually held at the 'End of the Year Potluck and Elections' social during the month of April. Details will be forthcoming in the next Crane newsletter.

All the current officers have agreed to remain in their current roles, which are: President- Helen Warren, Vice President- Scott Flamand, Secretary- Anne Cassella, and Treasurer- Dotty Robbins. Positions for members to the BOD are typically on a rotating 3-year cycle, although they can elect to continue serving after their 3-year period expires. Our existing 15-member board includes Joni Ellis, Adam Kent, Mike Manetz, Stacie Porvasnik, Emily Schwartz, Caleb Gordon, Steve Hofstetter, Phil Laipis, Cecelia Lockwood, Rex Rowan, Mike Drummond, Kathy Haines, Ivor Kincaid, Geoff Parks, and Bob Simons. BOD meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Mill Pond Clubhouse. Please contact Helen Warren at helenkwarren@cox.net with the subject "AAS BOD nominations" with nominations or questions.

The City of Gainesville's Nature Operations Division is soliciting help with bird surveys in City nature parks.

Brown-headed Nuthatch

Morningside Nature Center is one of the few locations in the county where this species is found, but little is known about the size of the Morningside population. By observing these birds during their breeding period, we hope to get a better idea of the number of breeding groups in the park. We are looking for birders who can identify this species by sight and sound, and preferably who can visit the park more than once in February to look for nuthatch nest-building or breeding activity.

Rusty Blackbird

Drastic range-wide declines in this species have led the Rusty Blackbird Working Group to coordinate the 2nd Annual Rusty Blackbird Blitz (<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/rubl-survey-2010>), from January 30 to February 15, to locate areas used by this species during the winter. Several potentially suitable areas occur in City nature parks, and we'd like to enlist the help of birders to survey these sites.

If you are interested in either of these opportunities, contact Geoff Parks at parksgr@cityofgainesville.org

13th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count



The National Audubon Society and The Cornell Lab of Ornithology have developed a family-friendly program to collect bird data from your backyard and encourages individuals from all across the continent to participate. This is available for people of all ages and skill level and for students of all grade levels. Individuals can work alone, in groups, or with parents or teachers. Check out www.birdcount.org for full details, information, and forms and to view maps showing real time data. You can even download photos of your birds or bird count-

Want to Serve on an Audubon Committee?

Existing Alachua Audubon Committees include Education, Conservation, Special Events, Field Trips, Holiday Social, and Crane Circulation. Please contact Helen Warren at helenkwarren@cox.net if you would like to assist with a committee.

Climate Change—Let Your Voice Be Heard

The bills for climate change have gone through many iterations and adjustments and now it is crucial to have your voice heard by your senators and congressional representatives in DC and Tallahassee. Please go to the National Audubon Society website (<http://www.audubon.org/>) and click on the *Issues and Action* button; then check out their info on Climate Change. You can sign up for electronic Audubon Alerts and receive direct contacts to your legislative representatives. You can also read material to become better informed on the science behind the policies and bills. After you have seen the conservation material you can peruse the other cool stuff on the website.

Signatures Needed for Airboat Curfew Petition

The citizen action group, Quiet Lakes of Alachua County, is gathering signatures on a petition to place a night time airboat curfew [referendum](#) on the Nov. 2010 ballot. The excessive noise inherent to the operation of airboats disturbs wildlife and adversely impacts nearby residents and other users of the waterways.

According to Steve Nesbitt, a retired FWCC wildlife biologist, airboat noise can be detrimental to wildlife, specifically colonial nesting birds like herons, egrets, storks, and [sandhill cranes](#). [Alachua County is home to large populations of non-migratory and over wintering cranes which roost and nest in dense marshes or lake edges](#). Nesbitt's research shows that noise disturbance may result in nest abandonment, reduced egg viability or nestling survival. He goes on to say, "as you consider the pros and cons of a curfew on airboat use, the impacts of nocturnal disturbance by airboats on the diversity of wildlife living in the wetlands of Alachua County should not be ignored."

This is not an anti-hunting issue. As a lifelong hunter, I can personally say that the majority of the hunting on Alachua County lakes is done without airboats.

You can phone, email or write to request a copy or copies of the petition to sign and return. We need your help to get 11,000 petitions by May 1. Bill Halback, Chairman

Contact: Quiet Lakes of Alachua County
PO Box 333
Evinston, FL 32633
Email QuietLakes@gru.net
Phone 352-466-0066

Community Calendar

- « Feb 6 Wildlife Heritage and Outdoors Festival, St. Marks NWR http://www.fws.gov/refuges/SpecialEvents/FWS_SpecialEvents_DisplayDetails.cfm?ID=1404
- « Feb 6 Sierra Club Ardisia pull, San Felasco Hammock. <http://florida.sierraclub.org/ssj/outings.htm>
- « Feb 7-13 Cedar Key Stargazing Party, 12231 SW 166th Ct. Cedar Key <http://www.cedarkeyguide.com/contact.php#current>
- « Feb 13 Paynes Prairie Stargazing Feb 16 Florida Native Plant Society local meeting, 7:30 p.m. <http://www.fnps.org/pages/chapters/chapterpg.php?keyword=PaynesPrairie>
- « 16 Feb Florida Springs Rally in Tallahassee. The message will be "Real Legislative Protection of our Springs in 2010" floridasprings@comcast.net
- « Mar 6 Sierra Club Ardisia pull, San Felasco Hammock
- « Mar 16 Florida Native Plant Society local meeting, 7:30 p.m
- « Mar 19-20 Wakulla Wildlife Festival, Wakulla Springs SP <http://www.wakullawildlifefestival.org/>

Special Alachua Audubon Events!

Saturday, February 13, 4 pm at Tower Road Library. Adam Kent speaks on *Technology and Birds* using the Ebird reporting program. Ebird was created by Cornell University Ornithology and National Audubon and allows birders to report sightings, keep records, and contribute to an international bird database.

Thursday March 4, 7 pm at Tower Road Library. Wet your appetite with a talk on *Edible Wild Plants of Florida* presented by the entertaining Dr. Dana Griffin.

Saturday, April 17, 2 pm at the Tower Road Library. Michael Drummond will share hints on *Nature Photography for Beginners: Ideas to Improve Your Images Photography*.

The above programs will be held in the Tower Road Library.

MICANOPY ANIMAL HOSPITAL



Medical, Surgical and Dental Services
Molly Pearson, DVM

Lori Wendland, DVM Joan McKinney, DVM
306 NE Highway 441, Micanopy, FL 32667
www.micanopyanimalhospital.com 352-466-



HELEN WARREN
REALTOR®

ERA Trend Realty
 4141 NW 37th Place, Suite A
 Gainesville, FL 32606

(352) 377-6666 Office
 (352) 378-2470 Fax
 (352) 214-7755 Cell
 E-Mail: hwarren@eratrend.com
 Website: www.eratrend.com



Wild Birds Unlimited®

Your Backyard Birdfeeding Specialist®

Birdseed • Feeders • Nesting Boxes • Nature Gifts • Optics

4215 NW 16th Blvd Gainesville
 352-381-1997

gainesville.wbu.com
 gainesvillewbu@hotmail.com

Mon-Sat 10-6 Sun 12-5



RENAISSANCE PRINTING

serving your printing needs since 1972



- DocuTech Digital Copies • Express Fax • Digital Color Copies
- Custom Finishing • Desktop Publishing • Offset Printing
- Fast Professional Service • Free Pick-up & Delivery

4130 N.W. 16th Blvd.
 Gainesville, FL 32605
 (352) 372-2233 • FAX 372-3435



Eat Well, Live Well...

Check us out. A short ride down
 Highway 441, just south of the
 yellow flashing light, in Micanopy.
 For some of the finest food you'll
 find anywhere.

Open **Tue-Sat 11:30-9:00,**
Sun 12-8:00 / (352) 466-0062

*"The calzones will make all of
 your wildest dreams come true!"*
 -REX ROWAN

- Hand-crafted brick-oven
 pizza & calzones
- Gorgeous salads
- Gourmet sandwiches
- Home-made desserts
- A fine selection of beers,
 wines & sodas



HIPPODROME THEATRE



DEFIANCE

by John Patrick Shanley, the author of
 DOUBT and winner of the Academy
 Award, the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony
 Award.

It's 1971 and at North Carolina's Camp
 Lejeune two officers are on a collision
 course over race, women and the high
 cost of doing the right thing.

"Spellbinding" (The Wall Street Journal)

On stage February 24-March 21

25 SE 2nd Place, Gainesville
(352) 375-HIPP | thehipp.org



Invasive Plant Surveys & Control
 Natural Area Restoration
 Tree Evaluations & Surveys

Michael Meisenburg

(352) 339-0701

michael@kestreleco.com

Licensed Commercial Pesticide Applicator
 Natural Areas & Aquatic Categories

Erick D. Smith

(352) 380-0648

erick@kestreleco.com

ISA Certified Arborist
 Licensed Commercial Pesticide Applicator
 Natural Areas & ROW Categories

P.O. Box 12417
 Gainesville, FL 32604
 Fax: (866) 653-1311
 www.kestreleco.com

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
tidewatertours.com

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



The Crane

Oct-Nov 2008

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Gainesville Florida 32601
Permit No. COZE18OZ

4th Annual Holiday Social

December 11, 6:30pm

In addition to having an evening of fun, this is one of our big fund raisers thru the silent auction. If you own a business, provide a service, create cool art or have items to donate for the silent auction, please contact Stacy Porvasnik, 352-359-7441 or Helen Warren, 352-214-7755.



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
paulmoler@bellsouth.net

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

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Please check level of membership:

£ Basic \$35.00 £ Senior \$15.00 £ Student \$15.00