

# The Crane

*Alachua Audubon Society*

*Volume 40 Number 10, May 1999*

---

## 8th AAS Spring Migration Count Produces 7 New Species

*by Barbara P. Muschlitz*

Saturday, 8 May, was a pleasant day to be out counting birds. As we started out about dawn, the temperature was a cool 61° and the high for the day was 87°, managing to stay under the terrible nineties. A light breeze was mostly from the west. For the first time, I suggested that Team Leaders might try sending me their results by e-mail. I continued counting birds until 5:30 p.m. and when I got on line a couple of hours later, I was delighted to find data for 3 teams!

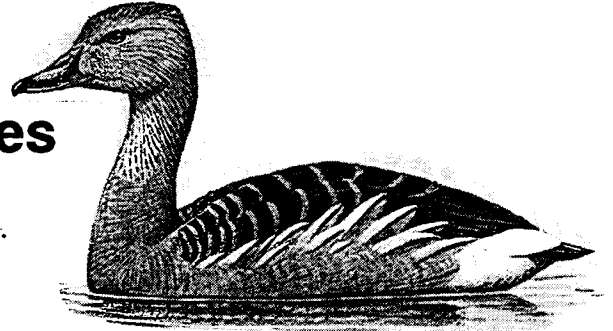
We first started doing the spring migration count in 1992, so this was the 8th year. As the years pass, it becomes harder to add new species, but we had 7 new ones this year! Three of those were birds that overwinter with us, lingering a little bit longer. Northern Harrier and Common Snipe were found on the prairie basin, and the House Wren was in the San Felasco. Black-bellied Whistling Ducks were counted by two groups, 12 by Tom Workman and Kelly McPherson on the N rim of Paynes Prairie and 3 by Mary Landsman and Pat Burns at Newnans Lake. Some of these birds had been seen occasionally since being found for our last Christmas Bird Count, so they weren't too much of a surprise. However, the 3 Fulvous Whistling Ducks, found by Rex Rowan and Jim & Susan Weimer from Cones Dike were totally unex-

pected. That group also

found a Western Kingbird, possibly blown in on the tail end of the storm, which passed through the previous day and earlier had spawned many tornadoes to our west. Another bird which may have blown in was the Merlin at the UF Dairy Farm at Hague. Merlins have been seen at the location in the past, but only during the winter.

The 129 species found by our 31 observers was only surpassed by the 135 species in 1992 when we had an incredible fall-out. That number may never be exceeded! Our 10,710 individuals was also beaten out only by 11,189 in 1992. Many of our new maxima were for water birds, including ducks and shore birds. Almost all the shore birds gave us new highs. Let me know if you have any possible explanations for that.

*See count results on Page 5*



**For Year-Round  
24-hour AAS Information:**  
**Call SunDial Bird Line: 335-3500, ext.**  
**BIRD (2473) for information on field trips,**  
**programs, where to see birds, and what's happen-**  
**ing in AAS.**

# Re- arranging Nature

by Rex Rowan



I don't know about you, but whenever a wooded lot gets bulldozed for a new Eckerd's or Publix, I think, "Now I won't have to drive so far for my cotton balls! What folly to mourn the passing of messy trees, loathsome insects, and birds muttering their gibberish! What are they, compared with Extra Convenience?"

Sadly, the small creatures evicted by the bulldozers cannot benefit from my enlightenment, or even from Extra Convenience. They're just casualties, and they either find a new home or perish. (I have always wondered about the arithmetic of this: do you think the deaths or displacement of the plants and animals are balanced out by the facts that the developer can now give his son a new car for a graduation present and that five new jobs are available? But that's not my point here.) Where do they go, these evicted animals? Some are hit by passing cars, some may starve when they can't find new habitat to support them. But others manage to shoehorn themselves into the surrounding area. Here they settle in among established territories, and begin to compete with resident animals for the local food supply—the population increases, but not the resources available to feed it.

On a small scale, there's something we can do about this. How many birds and insects live in your yard? How many bees and butterflies find their nectar in your flowerbed? How many birds eat your berries, or glean the insects off your trees? Your yard is a resource to them, and the richness of this resource is largely in your hands. More flowers in your garden, more fruiting and sheltering shrubs along the property lines, with leaf litter under the shrubs, more vines crawling up the trunks of more trees: you can increase the density of your yard's natural resources so that it will support more small animals. One or two dozen people doing that might even offset the woods lost to a Publix (though yards cannot support some forest species, they can support others). A certain amount of—I hate the word, but here it is—biomass is lost with each shopping center or drugstore; can we fill a certain number of Alachua Audubon members' yards with an equivalent amount of biomass, and thus mitigate such a development? It's sort of a rear-guard action, and not perfectly effective, but your yard might function as a tiny little wildlife refuge.

I should mention that City Commissioner Bruce Delaney has taken the initiative to improve Gainesville's Tree Ordinance, recommending that city plantings use native species that produce food for wildlife. This will also increase the density of natural resources, on a large scale.

Commissioner Delaney hopes to see this Tree Ordinance adopted by other cities and towns in the Southeast, and Alachua Audubon could accomplish no more valuable work than to help him achieve this goal.

More and more, the natural world will give way to the human. That's just the way it is. What we can save, we should save, but even what's been lost already—like our yards—can be improved. Need some suggestions? Write to Alachua Audubon at P.O. Box 140464, Gainesville, Florida, 32614-0464.

## Visit AAS Web Site:

<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud/aud.htm>

## Webmaster Wanted

AAS has had a web site for a couple of years but very much needs a volunteer to help keep it current! If you have talent and interests along those lines, please call David Wahl (336-6206) for more information.

## Workshop Notice

A Public Workshop is scheduled by the Florida Park Service for **June 10** at 7 p.m. at Fort White Elementary School, north of the traffic signal on SR 47 in Fort White. Discussion will be the revision of the management plan for Ichetucknee Springs State Park, including proposed development plans for the next five years. You are invited to attend.

## Next Crane in August

*The Crane's* summer "vacation" begins with this issue. There will be no AAS field trips or programs scheduled for the next two months; however, lots of activities are being planned for fall and winter.

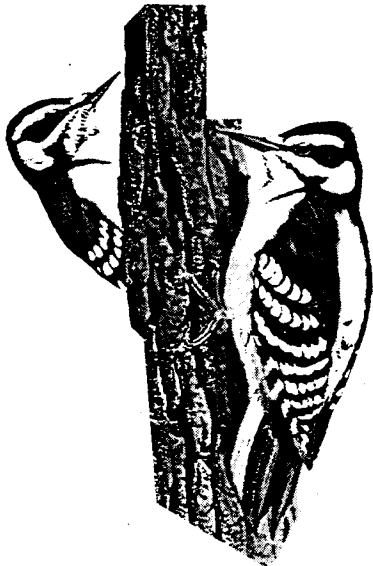
We thank the AAS sponsors for this year. Please read their messages to you on the last page and continue to support them.

Also, my thanks to all the people who have contributed articles to *The Crane* this past year. It's been a pleasure to complete another year as editor.

-Evelyn Perry, Editor, *The Crane*

*The Crane* is published monthly throughout the year except June and July. 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. Submissions to *The Crane* are welcomed, can be e-mailed or on disk or hard copy and must be received by **July 23** to be included in the August issue. Please limit each article to no more than two pages. Mail or bring your disk or hard copy to Evelyn Perry, The Branch Office, 519 NW 60th St., Suite A, G-ville 32607. Or fax to 331-2585. Or e-mail [evperry@aol.com](mailto:evperry@aol.com).

*The Crane* is printed on recycled paper.



# Hog Pond Trail

by John Winn

The Hog Pond trail begins at an old metal gate on the east side of Route C-337 in Goethe State Forest in Levy County (see directions below). We've been there on a couple of Alachua Audubon field trips. Dana Griffin led one in October, 1997, when we looked for fall wildflowers. That's a good time to go, but the pond was dried up almost completely. On another

trip the following spring after that winter's heavy El Niño rains, the pond was full and had a couple of Wood Ducks on it. So maybe the middle of winter when there might be more ducks around might be an especially good time to visit.

In any case, whenever you go, be on the lookout for Hairy Woodpeckers. Vic Doig, who is the wildlife biologist for Goethe State Forest, tells me that they seem to outnumber Downy Woodpeckers there. On the October field trip, I saw some in some dead pines just across 337, right where we parked our cars before setting off down the trail. Although one of the reasons the state purchased the land to become Goethe State Forest was for its Red-cockaded Woodpecker colonies, there aren't any active nest trees along this trail.

The trail is easy to follow, as it is an old woods road. It's about a half-mile through some sandhills to the pond. The trail goes around the pond, maybe another half-mile or so, and rejoins the main trail back to the gate. Mostly it's through a typical longleaf pine-turkey oak-wiregrass ecosystem. There's an abundance of Florida rosemary and occasionally some less common plants, such as coontie. When I was last there, in early April of this year, there were only a few wildflowers in bloom, the most noticeable being greeneyes, tread softly, and paw paw. Birds were also a bit scarce, as seems to me to be somewhat typical of pinelands, and we heard but never saw Great-crested Flycatchers, Summer Tanager, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Parula Warblers—nothing to get excited about. Some Pine Warblers, however, in their spring plumage of bright yellow, were a welcome sight, as were the many zebra swallowtail butterflies. Despite all the dry weather we've been having, there was still enough water in the pond to give it an expanse of several acres but this time no Wood Ducks or other birds of any sort.

The pond actually looks pretty shallow and may be on the verge of drying up if we don't get some rain soon. The fact that it does dry out from time to time may account for the abundance of biting flies. If you go at this time of year, you won't notice them when you start out on the

trail, but by the time you get near the pond, they will be quite aggravating. It's my understanding that they spend most of the year as aquatic larvae, and with no fish to eat them—since those could not have survived when the pond was dry—Hog Pond might better be named Fly Pond.

Walking the loop around the pond won't take much more than an hour, unless you dawdle, and the biting flies discourage that. So you might want to explore some more of Goethe State Forest. The sandhills in Hog Pond area are on the edge of the Brooksville Ridge and are somewhat atypical of the forest. Most of it is wetter with extensive pine flatwoods and cypress swamps. There is a lengthy system of horse trails, and although I haven't done so, I don't suppose there is any reason why you couldn't hike on them. From the Tidewater trailhead on Saddlepen Road, just a little north of the intersection of Routes 337 and 336, there's a two and a half mile loop that might be good for a morning's walk. There are several dirt roads through the interior of the forest which are open to vehicles, such as Gasline Road. And while a bit rough, they are passable, at least in dry weather. Side roads, closed to vehicles, offer chances to explore, and off Old Rock Road, you can find some Red-cockaded Woodpecker colonies.

*Directions: From Gainesville, take the Archer Road and go to Bronson. At the stoplight, turn left on Alternate 27, but stay on it for less than a half-mile before angling off to the right on Route C-337. The gate for the Hog Pond Trail will be on the left after 6.5 miles. There is no trail sign as such, but there is an information kiosk. The Hog Pond area was formerly closed to hunting but has now been designated as a small game area with a short season in early December.*

## AAS Nominating Committee

If you wish to nominate someone as an officer or director or are interested in volunteering yourself, please contact any of these people: Martha King, chairman (372-4149); Griselda Forbes (371-3124); Alice Tyler (528-3968); Paul Moler (459-9419); Howard Adams (373-4270).

## Welcome New Members!

Catherine Allison; Mildred Blank; Vickie Brooks; Bess Brose; Ron Chandler; Louis Clark; Florence Cline; Jean Cook; Wes Corbett; Richard W. Dixon; Luis Fernandez; Joy Frank; Mark D. Frank; Gordon T. Hagan; John B. Hall; Paul A. Hargrave; Mr/Mrs John Klauder; Patricia Lanzillotti; Laura Line; Matheson Historical Center; Vernon E. McWilliams; Hollister Peterson; Garry Prowe; Ullatner Richtner; Helen Rothschild; Shawn M. Royce; Wilma L. Schmucker; Heidi Stein; C. Welbourn; Kent Williges; Gabriela Wyss; Kathy Zimmerman.

## Around the County...

by Mike Manetz

This year's spring migration was one of the most interesting in recent memory. This was likely due to the unusual weather we experienced during the season. No less than three cold fronts and several days with more-or-less northerly winds not only increased the odds of actually seeing migrants, but also may have forced a few birds that normally cross the gulf to instead seek temporary refuge on the Florida peninsula. For instance, locations on the west coast such as Cedar Key and Ft. DeSoto witnessed a higher number of such birds as Nashville, Cerulean, Blue-winged, and Tennessee Warblers that are more typical of the Texas or Louisiana coast in the spring.

All this had an effect on Alachua County as well. This spring, while there were no tremendous fallouts, there seemed to be more days you could go out and see a number of migrant warblers. Outings that recorded greater than ten warbler species were not unusual. Most of these consisted of our typical spring migrants, including **Worm-eating**, **Black-throated Blue**, **American Redstart**, **Blackpoll**, and **Cape May Warblers**, but we had a few really unusual migrants as well. David Wahl, on March 31, checked his birdbath and found a **Nashville Warbler**. This represents the first Nashville ever recorded in the county during spring. On April 30, Jerry Krummerich discovered a female **Cerulean Warbler** at San Felasco Hammock. Ceruleans are typically spring migrants on the western gulf coast, and are considered accidental here. Another really rare migrant, the **Least Flycatcher**, was seen on two occasions. Rex Rowan, while showing some British birders around on April 11, found one at the Hague Dairy. Another was reported by Andy Kratter in late April along the Santa Fe River near Poe Springs.

May 1 was an unusual day for migrating swallows. Large numbers were seen at Bolen Bluff, Newnan's Lake, and at the various retention ponds around town. While most of these were the expected **Barn Swallows**, Dave Beatty and Tom Hctor reported some **Bank**, **Tree**, and **Cliff Swallows** among them at Newnan's. I happened to be checking the various retention ponds around town and found **Bank** and **Rough-winged** at both Chapman's and Post Office pond, and a **Cliff** at Home Depot Pond. **Cliff** and **Bank Swallows** are much more common in spring on the central gulf coast, and are rarely seen here. I can't remember when the last time was that five species of swallows were present in the county on the same day.

Chapman's Pond was attractive for shorebirds in early spring. In addition to the expected **Yellowlegs** and **Snipe**, the pond was utilized by rarer species, including **Pectoral and Stilt Sandpipers**, and **Black-necked Stilt**. On the first of April, I counted a high of 44 **Least** and 7 **Stilt Sandpipers**, but in following days the water level rose, driving off all but a few **Yellowlegs**. Shorebird activity then apparently shifted to the receding muddy edges on Payne's

Prairie Basin. It was there along Cone's Dike May 8 that Rex and Jim Weimer had a day that is the stuff of local legend. Not only did they have a nice assortment of shorebirds, including several **Solitary Sandpipers**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Least** and **Semi-palmated Sandpipers**, they also made the astounding discovery of 3 **Fulvous Whistling Ducks** and 4 **Black-necked Stilts**, along with a **Western Kingbird** thrown in for good measure. Stilts and Western Kingbirds are known to show up here occasionally, but Fulvous Whistling Duck is extremely rare in Alachua County. I checked the same magic spot the following day, and while I missed the Whistlers and the Kingbird, I was treated to more shorebirds, including great looks at **White-rumped Sandpipers** and a locally rare **Semi-palmated Plover**.

As our local breeding birds arrive we are always interested and concerned about those species that breed here only marginally or tentatively. Such birds include **Yellow-breasted Chat** and **Wood Thrush**. Gainesville is at the extreme edge of both species range. In past years, Chats nested on the basin along Bolen Bluff dike, but due to high water last year they were not seen. This year, with lower water, it was hoped they would return; but alas, none have been positively seen there. Wood Thrushes, however, are back. Susan Sommerville reported the return of a singing male behind her home along Rock Creek, and John Hintermister's team found two in San Felasco Hammock during the Spring Migration Count. A bird that has only nested here a few times here is **Black-necked Stilt**. With the several sightings throughout this spring it's not unreasonable to suspect they are nesting here this year. Lastly, **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** continue to be seen. Howard Adams reports them from LaChua Trail fairly regularly, with the latest sighting there on April 30. It's possible they are nesting in the woods somewhere along the north rim of the prairie.

By the time you receive this copy of *The Crane*, fall migration will be only two months away! By the middle of July someone will have reported a Louisiana Waterthrush at Newnan's Lake. Have a great summer, and see you out there.

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through May 9, 1999.



*There is nothing in which the birds differ more from man than the way in which they can build and yet leave a landscape as it was before.*

- Robert Lynd, Irish journalist

## NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT - SPRING, 8 MAY 1999

Observers: Dave Beatty, Pat Burns, Debbie DeLoach, Mark Dolan, John Ennis, Scott Flamand, Gordon Gottlieb, Mary Hart, Dale Henderson, Gerald Herr, John Hintermister, Tom Hootor, Grace Kiltie, Andy Kratter, Mary Landsman, Mike Manetz, Kelly McPherson, Michael Meisenberg, Barbara Muschlitz, David O'Neill, Craig Parenteau, Bryant Roberts, Ron Robinson, Rex Rowan, Terry Taylor, Tom Webber, Jim Weimer, Susan Weimer, John Winn, Mary Lou Winn, Tom Workman.

New Species are bold faced as are the new maximums. A T means previous high was matched.

Pied-billed Grebe	3	Lesser Yellowlegs	13	Eastern Bluebird	66
Dbl-cr Cormorant	67	Solitary Sandpiper	13	Wood Thrush	2
Anhinga	126	Spotted Sandpiper	6	Gray Catbird	10
Least Bittern	18	Semipalmated Sandpiper	27	Northern Mockingbird	211
Great Blue Heron	83	Least Sandpiper	44	Brown Thrasher	42
Great Egret	53	<b>Common Snipe</b>	2	Cedar Waxwing	83
Snowy Egret	89	Rock Dove	102	Loggerhead Shrike	23
Little Blue Heron	65	Eurasian Collared Dove	20	European Starling	80
Tricolored Heron	30	Mourning Dove	262	White-eyed Vireo	202
Cattle Egret	1743	Common Ground Dove	10	Ylw-throated Vireo	34
Green Heron	38	Ylw-billed Cuckoo	58	Red-eyed Vireo	156
Blk-cr Night-Heron	35	Eastern Screech	1	Northern Parula	338
Ylw-cr Night-Heron	1	Great Horned Owl	2	Cape May Warbler	1
White Ibis	145	Burrowing Owl	2	Blk-thr Blue Warbler	13
Glossy Ibis	34	Barred Owl	15	Ylw-throated Warbler	39
Wood Stork	15	Common Nighthawk	27	Pine Warbler	79
<b>Fulvous Whistling Duck</b>	3	Chuck-Will's-widow	20	Palm Warbler(western)	3
<b>Blk-bell. Whistl. Duck</b>	15	Chimney Swift	162	Blackpoll Warbler	9
Wood Duck	33	Ruby-throated H'bird	10	Black&White Warbler	2
Mottled Duck	26	Belted Kingfisher	1	American Redstart	80
Mallard	1	Red-headed Woodp.	59	Prothonotary Warbler	27
Blue-winged Teal	21	Red-bellied Woodp.	173	Ovenbird	1
Black Vulture	109	Downy Woodpecker	85	No. Waterthrush	3
Turkey Vulture	154	Northern Flicker	7	Common Yellowthroat	77
Osprey	53	Pileated Woodpecker	60	Hooded Warbler	12
Mississippi Kite	26	Eastern Wood Pewee	6	Summer Tanager	147
Bald Eagle	10	Acadian Flycatcher	34	Northern Cardinal	436
<b>Northern Harrier</b>	1	Gt Crested Flycatcher	304	Blue Grosbeak	22
Accipiter, sp.	1	<b>Western Kingbird</b>	1	Indigo Bunting	15
Red-shouldered Hawk	45	Eastern Kingbird	17	Eastern Towhee	162
Broad-winged Hawk	1	Purple Martin	102	Bachman's Sparrow	4
Red-tailed Hawk	14	N Rough-wngd Swallow	10	Bobolink	215
American Kestrel	8	Barn Swallow	23	Red-winged Blackbird	690
<b>Merlin</b>	1	Blue Jay	198	Eastern Meadowlark	24
Wild Turkey	11	American Crow	238	Boat-tailed Grackle	588
Northern Bobwhite	20	Fish Crow	46	Common Grackle	106
King Rail	3T	Crow, sp.	110	Brown-headed Cowbird	61
Purple Gallinule	13	Carolina Chickadee	104	Orchard Oriole	42
Common Moorhen	131	Tufted Titmouse	343	House Finch	33
American Coot	37	Brwn-headed Nuthatch	8	American Goldfinch	12
Limpkin	8	Carolina Wren	365	House Sparrow	56
Sandhill Crane	8	<b>House Wren</b>	1		
Killdeer	15	Marsh Wren	3	No. of Species	129
Black-necked Stilt	6	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	85	No. of Individuals	10710
Greater Yellowlegs	3				

## A Birding Trip to Cuba.....by Colin Bludau

In early April, I went to Cuba with a birding group, Eagle-Eye Tours, for a week of birding. I wanted to see the country as well as the interesting mixture of birds: about 24 endemic species, a number of near endemics, as well as more widespread West Indian species.

Quite a few gaps, some sizable, remain in overall knowledge of Cuba's birdlife. The taxonomy of species is in transition, with a number of Cuban subspecies proposed for or en route to distinct species status. Some species names I mention may be obsolete.

Cuba is not far away, but you can't get there from here. Our group met in Toronto for the flight over. After arrival, we had the guide services of Arturo Kirkconnell, a prominent naturalist. A local park ranger helped in locating species.

We were centered in western Cuba, on the Zapata Peninsula and the Bay of Pigs. Most nights we stayed at a beachfront resort located on one of the 2 invasion beaches used in the ill-fated invasion. The terrain was a surprise. It was 'limestone country' here, thin layers of soil overlaying oft-protruding pitted limestone. The famed Zapata Swamp is a wet prairie much like Payne's Prairie in parts. Other parts resembled the Everglades. Supposedly, some 17% of the country remains wooded. Large areas have been declared parks or natural reserves, but 'multi-user' harvesting of timber, wood for charcoal production, and plant materials for animal fodder seems frequent. Inevitable in an island nation with a weak economy, I suppose. Cuba's flora and fauna are under heavy pressure. Many species are in decline. (continued on next page)



### *Colin's trip to Cuba continued:*

Much of the time we were in areas of secondary forest and thick scrub, interspersed with small collections of rural homesteads occupied by subsistence farmers and livestock raisers. It was the dry season. Parts of this area are inundated seasonally. Livestock and fruit trees around the homesteads attracted Smooth-billed Ani, an often confusing mixture of Cuban Blackbird, Shiny Cowbird, Greater Antillean Grackle, and Tawny-winged Blackbird, parrots, woodpeckers, and other species. The grackle is shorter than ours and seems to have a more pronounced tail keel. Despite frequent searches, we missed the Cuban Parakeet, but did get several good looks at the Cuban Parrot, green with rosy chin and white forehead. Black-cowled Oriole was common in the palms. In the area woodlands, Cuban Trogon, the colorful national bird, Cuban Tody, an endearing little puffball, Great Lizard Cuckoo, Cuban Vireo, Cuban Pewee, and Cuban Emerald were seen almost daily. The first morning we found a nesting pair of Fernandina's Flicker, a large brown and black bird lacking the usual woodpecker red cap or nape. Cuban Green and West Indian Woodpecker were common. The latter resembles a color-enhanced Red-bellied on steroids. Yellow-headed Warbler, gray bodied with bright yellow heads, were common, too. We flushed a Cuban Pygmy Owl, very tame, which sat near the trail providing outstanding looks for 10 minutes. Later, another poked its head out of a woodpecker hole. Our guides located a Bare-legged Owl in a palm stump. Resembling somewhat a Burrowing Owl, it perched there for leisurely examination.

Harder to find was the tiny but colorful Cuban Grassquit, with its beautiful yellow, black, and white facial, throat, and breast markings. It took several visits to known haunts before we located some which weren't in flight.

The first afternoon found us at a cenote (sinkhole) swimming hole looking for Blue-headed Quail Dove. After a lengthy wait, two pair eventually came scuttling up through the dense scrub, providing wonderful close range looks at these beautiful ruddy-colored birds with stunning blue, black and white head markings. Cuba's 3 other Quail Dove species were less accommodating, but we did have a brief look at the Gray-headed as it crossed a dirt road.

Another afternoon took us to an area of canals for a rail search. In response to a taped call, a Spotted Rail appeared, offering good looks at this dark, spotted bird with greenish bill. Neither of our Cuban guides had ever seen this species. A Zapata Rail called three times in response to the tape. We didn't see this almost flightless species, but few birders have ever even heard it. Seen here, too, were King Rail, Least Bittern, and several Red-shouldered Blackbird, about identical to the Red-wing but a separate species. Also in the Zapata Swamp, a morning walk along a dirt track through reed and shrub areas produced Zapata Wren, a large wren which doesn't fly much, and Zapata Sparrow, a large handsome sparrow with yellow underparts. We were fortunate to get within 15 feet of both.

For a semi-tropical island, Cuba has few hummingbird species—just 2 plus migrating Ruby-throats. But one is the world's smallest bird, the two and a quarter inch male Bee Hummingbird, of which we had several excellent sightings. The male's penchant for perching at the top of bare branches

makes it easier to locate, but even experienced birders looking for it can overlook that tiny lump on a high-up branch.

I was surprised by the scarcity of raptors. A Crested Caracara, 2 Broad-wings, an Osprey, an overhead pass of the endemic accipiter Gundlach's Hawk, a Merlin, and frequent Kestrel were not much for six days in the field. The Cuban race of Kestrel seems much more falcon-like in behavior than ours. On the final day, en route to the departure airfield, we saw some birds circling over a brush fire—controlled burning is widespread in Cuba—and stopped. It seemed a routine sighting of 3 Mississippi Kite, but this species is not listed as even accidental or vagrant in Cuba, according to our several different field guides.

I had hoped to see some of the Caribbean species that occasionally wander to Florida so appreciated looks at La Sagra's Flycatcher, Zenaida Dove, Yellow-faced Grassquit, and Western Stripe-headed Tanager. Some species common in Gainesville were widespread there, too. Northern Mockingbird, Mourning Dove, Common Ground Dove, and Turkey Vulture were everywhere. To my surprise, we saw no Black Vulture.

I'm not much of a warbler person. For me, they're hard to find. This trip offered great looks at some migrants wintering there, many at distances of less than ten feet—American Redstart, Black-throated Blue, Ovenbird, Black-throated Green, Bay breasted, Magnolia.

One evening we stayed out in one of the little village areas for night birds. A dozen Antillean Nighthawk flew over, but with the aid of a taped call and sharp-eyed villagers, we located the real prize—several Greater Antillean Nightjar perched roadside. We got within 15 feet of them.

Other species seen during our daily rambles included Cuban Crow, Loggerhead and Gray Kingbirds, Black-whiskered Vireo, White-crowned Pigeon, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Cuban race of Northern Flicker, nighttime Barn and Stygian Owls, and the very common Red-legged Thrush, a handsome slaty-gray bird with red eye-ring and legs.

On our last birding day, we headed to the cooler mountains of La Guira National Park west of Havana in Pinar del Rio province. Here pine forests cap the 800 meter peaks. We easily found a target species, the somewhat drab, flycatcher-like Cuban Solitaire, whose song has been described as flute-like and ethereal. Don't ask me, since I can't hear most bird song. My look at the Olive-capped Warblers was too backlit; others did better. Arturo found a Stygian Owl perched high in a pine. After we'd seen our fill, he wandered over and examined the droppings below. Among the contents was an intact skull of a fruit-eating bat. We also had excellent looks here at the handsome blue and black Red-legged Honeycreeper, Cave Swallow, the black Cuban Bullfinch, and later, flying Antillean Palm Swift, and the following morning, Cuban Martin around the cathedral in Old Havana.

Right now it's a bit pricey to visit Cuba, but if things ever open up there, it'll be a natural destination for Florida birders. Just an hour's flight from anywhere in the state. Some economic trickle-down from visiting birders to rural folk would provide badly needed financial incentive to preserve birds and animals. As advertised, much of the Cuban infrastructure is run-down and shabby, but I was impressed by the resourcefulness and good nature of the people. A sense of community is still very strong there.



## Alachua Audubon Society Officers and Chairpersons of Standing Committees, 1999-2000

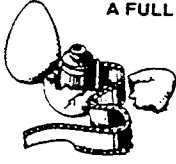
President.....Rex Rowan 371-9296  
Vice-President.....Tom Webber 392-1721  
Secretary.....David Wahl 336-6206  
Treasurer.....John Winn 468-1669  
Membership.....Paul Moler 495-9419  
Programs.....John Winn 468-1669

Field Trips.....Mike Manetz 377-1683  
Education.....Susan Sommerville 378-2808  
Conservation Chair.....John Winn 468-1669  
Birding Classes.....Kathy Haines 372-8942  
Festival Coordr.....Scott Flamand 331-0035  
Publicity.....Karl Miller 377-5940

*The Crane* Editor...Evelyn Perry 331-2223  
*Crane* Circulation...Margaret Green 378-3314  
Assisting in *The Crane* circulation duties:  
Jean Dorney, Alice Tyler, Pat Burns,  
Nancy Oakes.

## S P O N S O R S

**LIGHT-WORK LABS**  
A FULL SERVICE PHOTOGRAPHIC LAB



**376-9745**  
509 N.W. 10th Avenue  
Corner of NW 6th Street & NW 10th Avenue

WHEN QUALITY IS IMPORTANT

CHICAGO STYLE  
**Leonardo's**  
PIZZA  
IN A PAN


**\$1.00 OFF ANY PIZZA**  
(Worth \$2.00 Off on Sat. & Sun.)

4131 N.W. 16th Blvd. (Millhopper Square) 376-2001

Science best-sellers. We're tracking magazine lists and web sites to provide you with information about books on science that are selling well in this country and abroad.

**GOERINGS BOOK STORE**  
We've been selling books in Gainesville for 27 years. We know our market.  
UNIVERSITY & THIRTEENTH • OPEN SUNDAY TO 5:00

**Adventure Outpost**



outfitters & Guide Service

Eco - Tours  
Rentals / Sales  
Kayaks / Canoes  
outdoor Gear  
Trip Planning Facility  
Books - Topo Maps - Charts

Lars Andersen  
Patsy Bass  
315 NW Santa Fe Blvd (St 44)  
(904) 454-0611

**Visit  
FREE!! LEAFS**

A longleaf pine restoration project open to the public.  
2 miles south of Waldo on CR 1471.  
Call 468-1669 for detailed directions.

Longleaf Ecology and Forestry Society



## FLORA & FAUNA BOOKS

Saturdays 10 AM - 1 PM Since 1987 NATURE WORLD  
4460 SW 35th Terrace, #305, Gainesville, FL 32608 (352) 335-5011

Yes, right in Gainesville is one of the largest selections of natural history books in America! 100s of books on birds, mammals, insects, plants, gardening, travel - 100 categories in total - plus maps, space posters, astronomy books; history books now, too! Worldwide selection! Visit us Saturdays or send order message!

Always 10% off! On-line catalog: [www.flbooks.com](http://www.flbooks.com)  
(take 34th St. south, right on 42nd Ave., to 35th Terr., left to circle & 305)

**\$1 donated to  
AAS for each  
box sold!**

**Karen and Jim's  
Bird Nesting Boxes**

\*Titmouse \*Bluebird  
\*Flycatcher \*Flicker/Woodpecker  
\*Screech Owl/Kestrel \*Special orders welcome

Karen Ausley and Jim Ahlers  
124 Vause Lake Road, Hawthorne, FL 32640  
(352) 372-2571 days (352) 546-3560 nights

*Give something back - create a little habitat!*



**Conveniently  
Located!**

*We're as close as your telephone.*

**For FREE Pick-Up & Delivery  
or  
Custom-Copy Consulting**

*Give Us A Call!*

**RENAISSANCE  
PRINTING**

CAMPUS 1702 W. University Ave. Gainesville, FL 32603 (352) 372-4669 • FAX 375-4071  
WEST 3741 W. University Ave. Gainesville, FL 32607 (352) 377-5441 • FAX 371-9748  
MILLHOPPER 4100 N.W. 16th Blvd. Gainesville, FL 32605 (352) 372-2233 • FAX 372-3435



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

Nonprofit Organization  
U. S. Postage Paid  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
Permit No. 18

*The Crane*

May 1999

### Join Audubon

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

Paul Moler, 7818 Highway 346, Archer, Florida 32618

Check the level of membership desired and enclose your check payable to:

National Audubon Society

If you have any questions, call Paul at 495-9419.

*NEW MEMBERS ONLY*

*NOT FOR RENEWALS*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please check level of membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ Basic \$35      \_\_\_\_\_ Senior \$15      \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ **INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP \$20**

\_\_\_\_\_ **TWO YEARS \$30**