

Volume 41 Number 3, October 1999



Double Feature Presentation - October 16

• Time: 2 p.m.

• Place: Millhopper Branch Library - 3145 NW 43rd Street

Joining us from National Audubon's Washington office is Alix Davidson, Heritage Forests Coordinator. She will be speaking on "Protecting Wild Areas in Our National Forests." The NAS Heritage Forests Campaign is aimed at permanently protecting the remaining roadless areas in the national forests, especially those of 1,000 acres and larger. Serving as important wildlife habitat, these areas are often threatened by logging, mining, and other destructive activities. Alix will tell us about what the Heritage Forests Campaign is doing, both across the country and here in Florida, as well as how you can help.

Also speaking to us will be Dr. Katie Sieving, Assistant Professor, UF Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. Her topic is "In the Footsteps of Darwin: Endemic Rainforest Birds in Southern Chile."

When we think of Darwin and birds, what comes to mind are the Galapagos finches. But on his voyage on the "Beagle" in 1834, Darwin encountered hundreds of birds new to him. Writing in his journal about a perky Chilean bird, he said, "It is called Tapaculo, or 'cover your posterior'; and well does the shameless little bird deserve its name; for it carries its tail more than erect, that is, inclined backward toward its head."

Although intrigued by the thrush-like birds with an in-your-face attitude, he went on to say that he found their dense forest home to be dark and forbidding and their role in nature to be unimportant in the grand scheme of things. But that was 150 years ago. Katie says, "My colleagues and I have taken another look at Darwin's odd little birds, the forests they inhabit, and the people that shape the landscape they inhabit, and we beg to differ with our esteemed predecessor. The tapaculos are an important indicator of the health of the south-temperate rainforest."

Katie goes on to point out that although tapaculos are increasingly threatened by rainforest destruction, on the island of Chiloe they have adjusted well (so far) to human activity. The farmers on the island have created a patchwork of forest and field, but the birds have persisted. Katie will discuss the research that explains how that occurs.

Please join us for these two informative presentations.

AAS Calendar

⇒ Saturday, October 9, 8:00 a.m. Bolen Bluff Trail

Meet at the Bolen Bluff parking lot, on US-441 4.3 miles south of Williston Road (SR-331). Bryant Roberts will lead this Confusing Fall Warbler walk. Depending on the weather, a dozen or more warbler species are possible, among them Tennessee, Magnolia, Chestnutsided, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, and even Bay-breasted. Scarlet Tanagers, thrushes, and Rosebreasted Grosbeaks have been known to put in the occasional appearance as well. This is often a very productive trip.

⇒ Wednesday, October 13, 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting

All AAS members and the public are invited to attend monthly board meetings. Location: Conference Room of the Florida Museum of Natural History, UF campus.

⇒ Saturday, October 16, 2:00 p.m. Double Feature Program

Details on front page.

⇒ Saturday, October 30, 6:30 a.m. Cedar Key

Meet in the Target parking lot on Archer Road (SR-24) just east of I-75. At the tail end of fall migration, birds are beginning to settle into their winter grounds. We'll look for ducks and other water birds, shorebirds (inc. American Oystercatcher, Whimbrel, American Avocet, and Marbled Godwit), and raptors, and pay our customary visit to the Florida Scrub-Jays. If our luck is very good, we may find a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, or White-winged Dove pausing on its migration to South Florida.

→ Sunday, November 7, 7:30 a.m. Hague Dairy

Meet at the tag agency, on SR-121 (NW 34th Street) just south of US-441 – near the Highway Patrol station. Michael Meisenburg will be our trip leader. Early November is usually a good time to look for ducks in Alachua County, and we're hoping for a few on the dairy's ponds – Redheads or Ruddy Ducks would be nice. Many of our winter birds will be arriving, notably American Pipits, Palm Warblers, and a variety of sparrows. Meadowlarks and Bluebirds are usually in good supply, as are hawks. And, depending on the weather, there's always the chance of a Yellow-headed Blackbird among the cowbird flocks.

National Wildlife Refuge Week October 10-16



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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 happening in AAS.

Visit AAS Web Site: http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud

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 October 29 to be included in the November/December 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, Gainesville 32607.

Or fax to 331-2585. Or e-mail evperry@aol.com.

The Crane is printed on recycled paper.

Change of Address

by Rex Rowan

Next time you're surfing the Net, take a look at Alachua Audubon's new web site. Its address – www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud – is only slightly different from the previous one, but it's got a new look and a lot more information.

Though some sections are yet to be unveiled, we've already expanded our links to other bird and conservation sites, posted our activities schedule, and added checklists of Alachua County's birds, reptiles, and mammals, as well as information on when and where to look for birds in the Gainesville area. The "Unusual Sightings" column reports rare and interesting finds as well as seasonal comings and goings.

We had little expectation of success when we advertised for a volunteer to create a new web page last spring, so it was a pleasant surprise when Lynn Badger called and told me she'd created a site for her business (www.dogwoodpark.com - consider this a plug). Would

I like her to create one for AAS? I went to her site, gaped in amazement, and called back with alacrity. She's done just as splendid a job for us, and we are grateful for her willingness, industry, and imagination.

David Wahl met with me at the beginning of this project to sketch its outlines. He spent hours at the computer, culling ideas from dozens of local Audubon web sites, and put together the links page. Just as we thank Lynn for the form of the new site, so we thank David for the content. When the last byte is in place, I think it will prove to be one of the best local Audubon sites anywhere.



Thanks to all of you who have responded and are supporting the *Audubon Adventures* program again this year. Because of your generosity, teachers in 49 third, fourth, and fifth-grade classrooms will be able to provide *Audubon Adventures* to approximately 1,470 students! Each classroom enrolled will receive student newsletters covering four new topics and a Teacher Resource Manual. This year's topics are: "Alaska," "People & Wildlife Sharing the Earth," The Everglades," and "Forests."

Environmental concerns are a critical part of planning the future of North Florida, and educating today's youngsters can help all of us make better decisions. *Audubon Adventures* helps provide a solid foundation and kindles a life-long interest in wildlife in many students.

Listed below are the 1999-2000 sponsors who marked 'Yes' to having their names printed in The Crane:

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The greatest threat to our birds today is no longer the man with the gun, but the man with the bulldozer and dump truck..

- Henry Hill Collins, Jr. - 20th century American naturalist

Caterpillar Farming

by Rebecca Odom

When I asked my friend Annie if she would like to see my caterpillars, she said she wasn't interested in "caterpillar farming." I replied that I am trying to put something of beauty and value back into the environment.

The caterpillars are just one phase of the processes of metamorphosis that results in the beautiful creatures that hold so much fascination for me. I spent hours poring over information in books, and more hours in garden centers selecting nectar and larval host plants that would attract butterflies to my backyard garden.

I was filled with curiosity while watching the female Eastern Black Swallowtail as she deposited, with a sticky glue-like substance, her tiny, round, yellow eggs to the fragile leaves on my two dill plants and even more so when, after five days, the plants were covered with tiny black caterpillars. A day or so later, these little munchers had a distinct yellow saddle across the center of their backs, and I noticed whole sections of dill leaves disappearing. Another two days, another instar (skin shedding) and the caterpillars emerged with beautiful black, yellow and green skin coloring, and when touched they extended from their heads orangecolored protrusions, called osmeterium, which emit a foul odor used for protection. When these caterpillars topped out at around two-inches in length and crawled off to pupate, my dill plants were topless, poking from the ground on scraggly stems.

From the nineteen caterpillars that managed to evade predators, I found five of their chrysalises. About ten days later on a warm sunny morning, I witnessed their emergence as they pumped fluid into their shrunken wings and floated off like miniature black and yellow kites. All of these transformations were completed in about four weeks time.

I decided, while observing Gulf Fritillary and Zebra Longwing females depositing eggs on my passion flower vines, that I would snip the portions containing four yellow eggs from each species, place them in bud vases with water, and bring them into my screened porch to allow them to hatch free from predation. Wasp and tiny flies will parasitize the caterpillars and eggs, and lizards will take advantage of the neat little package of protein that a chrysalis provides.

The fritillary's eggs hatched in five days producing tiny caterpillars covered with stiff black spines that looked like a hairbrush. I was intrigued to observe them devouring these spines after each instar, as they do their egg cases after hatching.

When these burnt-orange colored, spiny caterpillars reached an inch in length, I transferred them back outside to the passion flower vines. Three of them disappeared within a few days. The largest one grew to be two-inches and would shortly have crawled off to pupate, but a titmouse plucked it off and flew to a tree branch swinging the limp caterpillar from its beak, then dropped it. To my human way of thinking, this was a senseless waste as this caterpillar is distasteful because of toxins in the passion flower plants it feeds on. I concluded this was an inexperienced titmouse.

The longwing's four tiny bronze-colored caterpillars lived only two days after hatching. All of the yellow oval-shaped eggs and hatchlings on the outside vines disappeared. As a result this phase of the metamorphosis of the lovely black butterfly with the horizontal yellow wing stripes remains a mystery to me.

As the winter season ushers in its bleakness, with the butterfly overwintering in its chrysalis and the moth cloistered in its cocoon, I can visualize the fragile beauty of the zebras, tigers, spicebush, palamedes, and the giant swallowtails, along with ruby-throated hummingbirds flitting from flower to flower. I can vividly recall my delight as a black and orange viceroy came to imbibe moisture from my stepping stone, and a diana wafted in to perch near my shoulder as I clipped dead blooms from the buddleia. I can spend my winter months reflecting on the butter-

flies that survived, passing on their genes. With the songs of birds and the rhythm of cicadas still ringing in my ears, I have assurance that, once again, I can plan for a new season the garden that sustains life for all these wondrous creatures.

Editor's Note: This is Mrs. Odom's first article submitted to The Crane. She took up her new hobby over the summer out of love for birds and butterflies and plans to continue to try to attract more butterfly species to her yard. Mrs. Odom moved to Gainesville in 1995 and has been on AAS field trips and is taking birding classes at SFCC. We thank her for sharing her experiences with

New AAS Members for September

Bruce Cornely Donna Homewood Bruce Mastron Margaret Sung Mrs. Sidney Curtis Randolph Kaufman June Owen Kenneth Weeks

Donald Dugger Douglas Levey Margie Simons Brigitte Gottwald Tom Logan Nina Steffee

Around the County...

by Mike Manetz

Once again pelted by rain, dogged by mosquitos, plagued with terrible back-lighting, over forty undaunted birders took to the field on September 18 and completed another successful Fall North American Migration Count. Final tallies are listed on the next page, but I will share some highlights. Twenty-four warbler species were counted. This included no really rare species, but no expected species were missed. Outstanding numbers include at least 5 Golden-winged Warblers and over 30 Magnolia Warblers. The prairie basin team led by Howard Adams and the City Parks team both scored late Louisiana Waterthrushes, and Craig Parenteau had a Black-throated Green Warbler at River Rise State Park. I half expected Northern Waterthrush to be a little more scarce than usual, but the Micanopy team of Carmine Lanciani and Grace Kiltie alone counted 20, which is usually about what we get for the entire count. The big miss on count day was Worm-eating Warbler. Wormies were scarce in the weeks leading up to the count, but because we usually average about twenty of them per count, I prematurely included the species in my preliminary warbler total. Interestingly, some folks from Jacksonville visiting for the F.O.S. conference remarked that Worm-eating Warblers were uncharacteristically common in their neck of the woods this fall. Perhaps all the tropical activity leading up to count day had an effect on their normal migration path.

We found all the thrushes that we had a right to expect, including a Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Scarlet Tanagers seemed to be present in larger numbers than is usual. A few oddities were reported as well. A Northern Shoveler, seen previously at the Hague Dairy, was still present for the count, along with a Forster's Tern. Eighty-nine terns were seen at Newnan's Lake but could not be identified to species due to rain and distance. Other unexpected birds included a Painted Bunting, three Merlins, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak (early), and 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

Fall migration prior to the count was rather dull, with 10-warbler-species days being the exception

rather than the norm; however, there was a smattering of interesting sightings. Rex Rowan, on Oct. 31, found another Canada Warbler at Bolen Bluff. This was his second of the fall. Even more interesting was the one, possibly two, Philadelphia Vireo(s) Andy Kratter found in his yard Sept. 3. Philadelphia Vireos are very rare here in the fall, as their migration route tends to be more westerly. The date of Andy's sightings is significant also, being the second earliest report of that species in Florida. Another very early bird was a selasphorus hummingbird, most likely a Rufous, reported Sept. 1 visiting the feeder of Leecia Price on Wacahoota Road.

I checked San Felasco Hammock on Labor Day, and though warblers were rather scarce, I counted 26 Veeries. The Hammock is known as a haven for thrushes in the fall, but the real treat was that at least one bird was singing. The Veery song is one of the finest in North America, and this was the first time I ever heard one here during migration.

Hurricane Floyd presented an opportunity to hunt locally for coastal species that might have been tossed inland by the storm. John Hintermister, Howard Adams, and I spent the better part of Sept. 15 checking Newnan's, Orange, and Lochloosa lakes. We started off early with a Roseate Spoonbill at Newnan's but saw nothing of interest until we walked LaChua trail at mid-day, when three Sooty Terns passed overhead and banked briefly before disappearing on the prevailing wind. South of us, on Lake Weir, Earl Scales reported a mother lode of terns, including dozens of Sooties. Forster's, Black, and several of the larger Royal/Caspian variety. Speaking of terns, Rex and John, along with Greg McDermott, had a pair of Caspian Terns fly over Bolen Bluff on Sept. 21. Both the Caspians and the Sooties were first records for Paynes Prairie State Preserve. Also at Bolen Bluff, Pat Burns reported a Yellow-breasted Chat Sept. 23 along the first section of the dike. Interestingly, this is the same area where Chats were suspected of breeding during the summers of 95-97.

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through Sept. 23, 1999.

North American Fall Migration Count, Alachua County 18 September, 1999

Count Participants (team leaders underlined)

Howard Adams, Dave Beatty, Ed Bonahue, Judy Bryan, Renee Burns, Allison Cole, Sam Cole, John Davis, Lloyd Davis, Melissa Eckman, Alice Farkash, Mary Hart, Jerry Herr, John Hintermister, Joshua Hintermister, Tom Hoctor, Greg Jones, Grace Kiltie, Andy Kratter, Carmine Lanciani, Mary Landsman, Mike Manetz, Ashley Manetz, John Martin, Greg McDermott, Michael Meisenberg, Mike Milleson, Karl Miller, Don Morrow, Barbara Muschlitz, Craig Parenteau, Andy Prather, Bryant Roberts, Rex Rowan, Lenny Santisteban, Katie Sieving, Joan Stephens, Terry Taylor, Markus Tellkamp, Linda Terry, David Wahl, Tom Webber, John Winn.

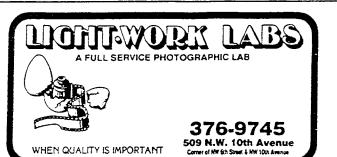
Pied-billed Grebe	48	Rock Dove	112	White-eyed Vireo 438
Dbl-cr Cormorant	113	Eur. Collared Dove	26	White-eyed Vireo 438 Yellow-throated Vireo 17
Anhinga	149	Mourning Dove	335	Red-eyed Vireo 212
Least Bittern	1	Common Ground-Dove		Blue-winged Warbler 17
Great Blue Heron	84	Yel-billed Cuckoo	21	Golden-winged Warbler 6
Great Egret	114	Eastern Screech-Owl	7	Tennessee Warbler 12
Snowy Egret	33	Great Horned Owl	4	No. Parula 166
Little Blue Heron	87	Barred Owl	15	Yellow Warbler 24
Tricolored Heron	28	Common Nighthawk	3	Chestnut-sided Warbler 21
Cattle Egret	995	Chuck-will's-widow	4	Magnolia Warbler 33
Green Heron	35	Chimney Swift	272	Blk-thr. Blue Warbler 5
Blk-cr Night-Heron	5	Ruby-thr. Hummngbrd	35	Black-thr Green Warbler 1
White Ibis	660	Belted Kingfisher	37	Blackburnian Warbler 2
Glossy Ibis	109	Red-headed Wdpcker	63	Yellow-thr. Warbler 35
Wood Stork	110	Red-bell. Woodpecker	192	Pine Warbler 74
Wood Duck	95	Downy Woodpecker	147	Prairie Warbler 15
Mottled Duck	30	Northern Flicker	8	Palm Warbler 15
Blue-winged Teal	145	Pileated Woodpecker	76	Cerulean Warbler 1
Northern Shoveler	1	Eastern Wood-Pewee	11	B&W Warbler 57
Black Vulture	59	Acadian Flycatcher	68	Am. Redstart 94
Turkey Vulture	236	Empidonax, sp	22	Prothonotary Warbler 8
Osprey	21	Gr Crested Flyctchr	5	Ovenbird 90
N. Harrier	1	Eastern Kingbird	4	No. Watherthrush 41
Bald Eagle	19	Purple Martin	i	Louisiana Waterthrush 2
Cooper's Hawk	5	Tree Swallow	4	Kentucky Warbler 2
Red-shouldered Hawk	54	Barn Swallow	73	Comm. Yellowthroat 210
Red-tailed Hawk	2	Blue Jay	259	Hooded Warbler 19
American Kestrel	21	American Crow	352	Summer Tanager 87
Merlin	3	Fish Crow	58	Scarlet Tanager 10
Wild Turkey	6	Crow, sp.	249	No. Cardinal 536
N. Bobwhite	9	Carolina Chickadee	80	Blue Grosbeak 3
Sora	1	Tufted Titmouse	343	Indigo Bunting 19
Purple Gallinule	10	Brown-hded Nuthatch	12	Painted Bunting 1
Common Moorhen	101	Carolina Wren	411	Eastern Towhee 68
American Coot	7	Ruby-crwned Kinglet	2	Red-wngd Blackbird 1134
Limpkin	2	Blue-gr Gnatcatcher	299	Bobolink 5
Sandhill Crane	37	Eastern Bluebird	54	Boat-tailed Grackle 419
Killdeer	15	Veery	88	Common Grackle 426
Lesser Yellowlegs	31	Swainson's Thrush	13	Brwn-headed Cowbird 140
Solitary Sandpiper	3	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	Baltimore Oriole 8
Spotted Sandpiper	1	Wood Thrush	2	House Finch 180
Least Sandpiper	2	No. Mockingbird	146	House Sparrow 146
Pectoral Sandpiper	4	Brown Thrasher	39	
Dowitcher sp.	5	Gray Catbird	6	134 Species
Common Snipe	25	Loggerhead Shrike	23	12,461 Individuals
Forster's Tern	1	European Starling	73	,
Black Tern	8	- 0	•	

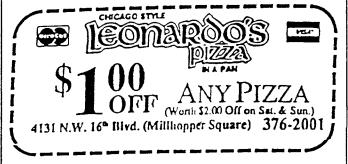
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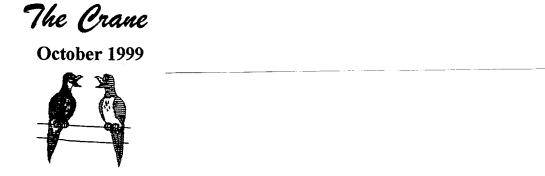
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