



# The Crane

*Alachua Audubon Society*

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## EARLY FALL FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, September 18**

**Migratory Bird Count – SPECIAL EVENT**

See article on page 2.

**Sunday, September 19, 8:00 AM**

**Lake Alice**

Join field trip leader John Winn and AAS president Scott Flamand in the Lake Alice parking lot on Museum Road on the UF campus. Lake Alice is one of urban Gainesville's most convenient birding spots. With boardwalks and trails under the dense hardwood canopy, and lakeside observation points, a birding trip to Lake Alice can produce a great variety of species, especially when songbirds are migrating south. Trip difficulty: 1

**Saturday, September 25, 8:00 AM**

**O'Leno State Park**

Meet in the parking lot of the Winn-Dixie on the east side of Hwy 441 in High Springs and prepare to carpool from there. Don't forget the **\$4.00/vehicle entry fee**. John Hintermister will lead yet another quest for migrants in one of the state's most enchanting natural areas.

Participants will explore several ecosystems from the mixed hardwood river banks near where the Santa Fe River sinks below the surface to the sand pine scrub of the uplands. Last year's trip to O'Leno produced great numbers of migratory birds including more than a dozen species of warbler but especially Red-eyed Vireos and Veeries. Trip difficulty: 2

**Sunday, September 26, 8:00 AM**

**San Felasco Hammock – Main Loop**

Meet trip leader Steve Hofstetter at San Felasco trailhead on Millhopper Road just east of I-75. Don't forget the **\$2.00/vehicle access fee**. San Felasco's meandering streams, sinkholes, ridges, and slopes set the stage for a very diverse bird habitat. During migration, many species of passerine bird can be found foraging for fuel throughout the hammock. Last fall, San Felasco Hammock was the area's migratory hotspot turning in the fall where birders saw record numbers of Kentucky Warbler and heard the fluting, ethereal song of the Veery. Trip difficulty: 2

*(Continued on page 5)*



**Alachua Audubon Society Website**

**[www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud)**

Add it to your favorites and visit us for all the latest updates and/or changes for field trips and programs, as well as information on good birding spots in the area.

# *Around The County...*

*By Bubba Scales*

There is a new item in the serious birder's quiver of gear – a lawn chair. For the last spring or two, Andy Kratter and Rex Rowan have been spending mornings in their lawn chairs watching the sky for northerly-bound migratory Common Loons. On March 29, Andy counted 28 Common Loons within an hour or two and on March 31, he observed one Red-throated Loon, only the third ever reported in Alachua County.

Jim Weimer and Michael Drummond each had a Pine Siskin visit their feeders this spring, Jim's on March 29 and Michael's on April 18. Four days later, on the evening of April 22, Mike Manetz found Alachua County's first ever Horned Lark singing at Hague Dairy. On the same day, Martha Walsh-McGehee got a glimpse of what she felt was a Canada Warbler in her Alachua birdbath. It would have been the county's first ever spring report of that species. Just two days later, Linda Hensley re-

ported extensive observations of an adult male Canada Warbler at Bolen Bluff. Her definitive observation is a first spring record for the county and gives credence to Martha's painfully short looks as the county's *probable* first spring record.

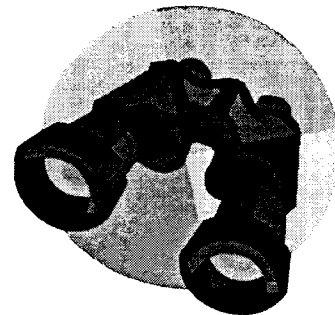
About the time that many birders capitulate to the summer heat, Becky Enneis employed an old trick to invigorate area birders with new energy to face it. She challenged us to find as many species of birds in the month of June as possible. It didn't hurt that her suggestion came on June 2, the same day that a Black-throated Blue Warbler showed up in Rex Rowan's NE Gainesville birdbath and that only three days later Becky and Rex found a group of four Gull-billed Terns surface-dipping at Newnan's Lake and a Limpkin at Palm Point. The Black-throated Blue was Alachua County's latest ever. Only four Gull-billed Terns have previously been reported in the county and Limpkins have been quite scarce since a recent drought dried up so much of their local habitat.

Fittingly, Becky's 100 species tally for the month won her a share of first place with Bob Carroll who also observed 100 species. Collectively, area birders reported 109 species during the June Challenge. That's a bit better than the average June in Alachua County per-

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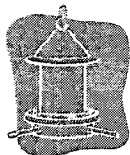
## *North American Fall Migration Count*

“Calling all good birders...this year's Fall count is scheduled for Saturday, September 18th. The event usually marks the beginning of prime-time warbler migration, so you would probably be out birding that day anyway! Participation by experienced birders is preferred to insure accuracy, but we usually have some space for enthusiastic birders at least above the beginner skill level. If interested in participating, call Mike Manetz 377-1683.”



# Programs

This seasons tentative schedule of programs Saturday at 2 P.M. at the Millhopper Branch Library—3145 NW 43rd Street. More details to follow in *the Crane*.



October 9th, 2004

**“Feeding Our Feather Friends”** by Bubba Scales of Wild Birds Unlimited, will discuss feeding birds, seed preference and types of feeders.

January 15th, 2005

**“Landscaping Your Yard for Wildlife”**

Lacy Holtzworth, landscape architect, will discuss using native plants, design techniques, and seasonal food supplies wildlife.



February 19th, 2005

**“Home Sweet Home”** Florida Wildlife Care and Boards and Gourds to discuss the “ins and outs” of successful nest boxes.

March, 2005

**“Backyard Insects”** Attracting and recognizing beneficial insects in your own backyard.

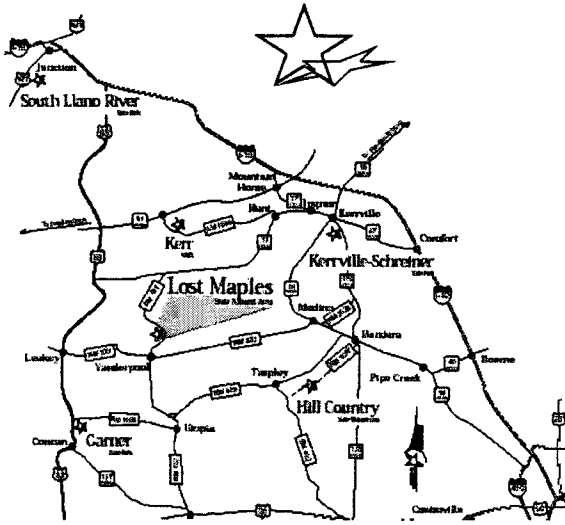


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*The Alachua Audubon Society’s mission is to foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, to protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, and to promote sustainable use of natural resources.*

## BIRDING AT LOST MAPLES



*By Dana & Nancy Griffin*

It began more than 65 million years ago, the slow work of the Sabinal River. Now, as we peered down from a high bluff, we could gaze upon the river's handiwork. Over this considerable period of time the flowing water has eroded a channel more than 200 feet down from where it began, etching its way through thick layers of Cretaceous limestone. Two and a half days west of Gainesville lie the upper reaches of the Sabinal River, a place any serious birder has to visit at least once. We were here, completing the required pilgrimage. Fortunately, the river's headwaters and surrounding bluffs have been acquired by the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, affording a measure of protection to one of the premier sites for glimpsing a Golden-cheeked Warbler. But Lost Maples State Natural Area offers birding delights beyond one admittedly beautiful species of warbler.

It was mid June and, as we paid the entrance fee at the park's visitor's check-in station, our attention was directed toward the feeders out back. Black-chinned Hummingbirds were jostling for a turn at the sugar water dispenser. On a nearby platform feeder House Finches and Western Scrub Jays grabbed sunflower seeds. With their departure came a Black Crested Titmouse. On the ground below the feeder two Inca Doves walked about cleaning up the fallen seeds spilled by active feeders above. They were soon joined

by a Spotted Towhee. Things seemed to be getting off to a good start. But we came to try and see the park's signature bird. "Hike up East Trail," advised one of the check-in staff. "Check the cedars above the ponds and keep your ears open!" The ponds, as we discovered, are two elongated stretches of the river, made considerably deeper than the swifter river by the installation of a couple of low rock dams. So, here we were, hiding behind a sycamore, scanning the opposite bank with our field glasses. A bobbing tail caught our attention. The bird, a Louisiana Waterthrush, was making its way up stream, checking the moist sand of a narrow shoreline. Then, slightly further up stream, we saw them – a pair of Green Kingfishers! Why this bird doesn't constantly fall forward onto its huge beak only the bird would know. Kenn Kaufman describes the Green Kingfisher as a sparrow sized bird with the bill of a heron. Be that as it may, the male we had in view seemed to have no trouble spearing a small fish after launching himself, beak and all, from his low perch. We wondered whether the fry of the endangered Guadalupe Bass often wind up as kingfisher food. Signs along the river state the policy quite clearly. Anglers must release Guadalupe immediately back into the water. Presumably, the state of Texas realizes that kingfishers do not read!

So, on we trudged, taking a steep rocky trail leading up above the ponds. Yellow-throated Vireos and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers moved furtively through the trailside trees. Then, at a narrow break in the cedar forest, we heard the unmistakable buzzy notes of a warbler. It took a bit of searching, but in time we spotted the author, a beautiful male Golden-cheeked Warbler, singing and gleaning, unaware, most assuredly, of the precarious state of his species. Destruction of habitat on the wintering tropical grounds and clearing for cedar stands in Central Texas, have combined to threaten the future of this stunning member of the warbler tribe. It was a satisfying, if melancholy, finish to our brief visit to Lost Maples, one of the truly wonderful spots in the Lone Star state. Should you be thinking of a trip to the area, here is how to get in touch (phone 512-389-8900 or 830-966-3413) or [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us).

(Continued from page 1)

## Early Fall Field Trips

**Saturday, October 2, 6:00 AM**  
**Guana River State Park**

Meet trip leader John Hintermister at the tag agency on NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors) or at the Vilano Boat Ramp at 8:00 AM.

This trip offers an opportunity to watch peregrine falcons fly along the coast on their migration route and to visit with some local birders who maintain vigil there during falcon migration. The coastal maritime hammock along Guana River can also be very productive for migrating passerine birds. This trip officially ends at noon but some may stay to have lunch in town and to bird in the afternoon. Trip difficulty: 3



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Bird Feeder Cleaning Benefit

Sept. 11, 04

Wild Birds Unlimited  
Gainesville, Florida

### 15th Annual Fall Native Plant Sale

Sept. 17-18, 04

Morningside Nature Center  
Gainesville, Florida

### Florida Birding Nature Festival

October 7-10, 04

St. Petersburg, Florida

### 3rd Annual Migratory Bird Festival

October 16, 04

Silver River State Park  
Silver Springs, Florida

### 8th Annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival

November 17-21, 04

Brevard Community College  
Titusville, Florida

(Continued from page 2)

haps because of several other rarities that turned up during the month. Specifically, Becky and Bob discovered a Gray Kingbird, the county's 10<sup>th</sup> ever, between Archer and Newberry on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Geoff Parks reported a Broad-winged Hawk near the Loblolly Environmental Center on the 26<sup>th</sup> (they bred there two summers ago) and Becky and Bob found a Blue-winged Teal at Chapman's Pond on the 30<sup>th</sup>; an early record or did it "over summer?" The previous early Blue-winged Teal for Alachua County was August 5!

Becky might have been the busiest birder in town this summer but Joni Ellis, JulieAnne Tabone, and Brenna Daniels were undoubtedly the luckiest. On July 21, they were driving back toward Gainesville on State Road 26 near Newberry when they happened upon a flock of some 200 Swallow-tailed Kites foraging low in a planted pine forest.

Mike Manetz found a Kentucky Warbler along Cellon Creek in San Felasco's Progress Park on July 26. That's Alachua County's earliest for that species by nearly two weeks. Pat Burns has sent in several other warbler sightings recently including the season's first Worm-eating Warbler from Loblolly Environmental Center on August 3 and a would-be first Kentucky Warbler in the same place on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Alachua Audubon Society's field trip season kicks off right in the middle of the flux of migratory songbirds. The first few trips emphasize some of our best migration hotspots. The next issue of *Around the County* should be peppered with observations from these field trips.

Thanks to all who sent in reports through August 9.

# Audubon **ADVENTURES**

The start of the school year means it's time for sponsors of Audubon Adventures to send in their checks for this year. If you have been a sponsor in past years, you know how important this program is to children. For some, it's the first exposure they have to learning about the environment, wild birds and other animals. Who knows? In one of those classrooms you sponsor there may be a future ornithologist who one day can say, "I became interested in birds back in elementary school from a publication called *Audubon Adventures*."

The Audubon Adventures program is aimed at third, fourth, and fifth grade classrooms. Each sponsored class receives four sets of newsletters, one for each student, filled with information and learning activities. There is also a video and a teacher's manual with additional information and activities on environmental topics.

Please complete the form (or reproduce it) and mail it with your check for \$42 payable to Alachua Audubon Society for each classroom you wish to sponsor.

Please make checks payable to Alachua Audubon Society and mail to:

**Emily Schwartz**  
Education Chairperson  
211 NW 48 Boulevard  
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You may list me as a sponsor in *The Crane*. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_



## Monthly Board Meetings

Alachua Audubon Society Board of Directors meets at 6:30 PM on the second Wednesday of each month. All members are welcome to attend. Meetings this year will be held at the clubhouse for Mill Pond, 401 NW 48th Boulevard, across from Gainesville Health & Fitness Center on Newberry Road.

*The Crane* is published six times during the year. 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. Please limit each article to no more than two pages per issue. *The Crane* is printed on recycled paper.

☞ **Next Crane Deadline September 19** ☞

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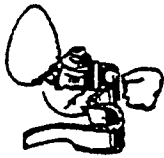
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**Sept.—2004**

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## **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

Please enclose your check payable to:

National Audubon Society

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



Chapter E-18

New Membership Application

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