



The Crane

Alachua Audubon Society

WINTER FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, December 12, 8:00 AM
San Felasco Hammock North
Progress Park

Meet trip leader and sparrow expert Adam Kent at the tag agency on NW 34th Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors). Don't forget the **\$2.00/vehicle access fee**. Last winter, the Progress Park entrance of San Felasco Hammock was the area's biggest surprise when several area birders happened across large diverse flocks of sparrows including Henslow's and LeConte's sparrows. You'll canvas the grassy areas for those and other sparrow species like Vesper's, Song, White-throated, Swamp, and Savannah. Trip difficulty: 2

Sunday, December 19, ALL DAY
Christmas Bird Count

Join Alachua Audubon for its greatest tradition. The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) gives us a snapshot of the area's bird activity. CBC data has been collected since 1900 and has been an invaluable tool in understanding the status and distribution of bird species. The

CBC is a lot of fun and a lot of work. Audubon is seeking new participants but the CBC is not for everybody. To learn how you can participate, please call event coordinator John Hintermister at 386-462-1109. Trip difficulty: 3

Sat-Sun, January 8-9, 8:00 AM
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

Meet leader John Hintermister at the refuge visitor center at 8:00 AM on Saturday (west on US-98, left onto CR-59 at Newport, continue to the pay station and the visitor center just beyond). This trip is always one of the highlights of the year. In winter the refuge's impoundments provide food and shelter to flocks of ducks and other water birds. We'll also look for sparrows, wrens, and other winter visitors. On the second day of this trip we usually focus on tracking down birds in other parts of the Panhandle, so prepare for a true birding adventure. If you're staying over, an inexpensive motel is the Oaks in Panacea [850-984-5370]. To put your name on the ride board, please call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997].

(Continued on page 3)



Alachua Audubon Society Website

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.

(Continued from page 1)

**Saturday, January 15, 7:00 AM
Alligator Lake**

Alligator Lake was one of Jerry Krummrich's best kept secrets until a White-faced Ibis turned up there during an Audubon field trip in 2003. Alligator Lake is about 1000 acres of lakes and marshes with an upland interior. It is an old farm which has many miles of dikes to walk on and obtain excellent views of waterbirds, raptors, and land birds in trees lining the dikes surrounding the marshes. Receding high water should provide a diversity of habitat types for a diversity of bird species. Meet an Audubon representative at the Tag Agency on NW 34th St. (across from ABC) and carpool to Lake City where we'll meet up with Jerry. Trip difficulty: 2

**Saturday, January 22, 8:00 AM
Persimmon Point Sparrow Walk**

Limited to 12 participants - Please call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] to make a reservation. Persimmon Point is the jewel of the prairie for sparrow enthusiasts. The grassland and field edges are some of the area's best spots for habitat specialists such as Henslow's, LeConte's, and Grasshopper Sparrows. This trip involves a fairly long walk and a bit of weedy bushwhacking. Participants will need to meet trip leader Howard Adams at the District II Headquarters at 8:00 AM as the gates will close when the field trip be-

gins. Trip difficulty: 3

**Saturday, January 29, 6:30 a.m.
Ft. Clinch/Hugenot Park**

Meet trip leader Rex Rowan in the parking lot of the Publix at NW 13th St. and NW 39th Ave. to caravan to Ft. Clinch. At Ft. Clinch and Hugenot Park, we will look for a variety of gulls, shore birds, raptors, and seabirds. Highlights of recent trips include Purple Sandpiper, Northern Gannet, and a Black-legged Kittiwake. The pier at Ft. Clinch can often be quite cold and windy, so dress accordingly. Bring a lunch and some water, as this trip will extend into late morning to early afternoon. For directions to Ft. Clinch or to put your name on the ride board, please call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997]. Trip difficulty: 2

Sunday, February 6, 7:00 AM

Ocklawaha Prairie and Emerald Marsh

Explore vestigial meanders of the Ocklawaha River in two little-known but resource rich Water Management District lands in Marion County. With special access privileges, we'll drive parts of the levee at Ocklawaha scanning for ducks, raptors, and sparrows. At Emerald Marsh, we'll enjoy the newly established wildlife drive and explore various sparrow fields around the area. Meet trip leader Bubba Scales at Kash n Karry at 2002 SW 34th St. Bring a lunch or some money for lunch at the Dam Diner. Trip difficulty: 3

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.

Rally for the Ocklawaha River:

Come for Field Trips, Parties, and Tree Planting!

By Karen Ahlers



The Rally for the Ocklawaha River, sponsored by the Putnam County Environmental Council, Inc. (PCEC) is a weekend full of great field trips, a big party and the beginning of "The People's Restoration." In short, it's an opportunity for you, your friends and family to have fun and make a difference in the ongoing struggle to restore the Ocklawaha River.

Here in Putnam County, almost daily we deal with the controversy in our backyard - the dammed Ocklawaha River and the resulting Rodman Reservoir. While we understand the apprehension of local officials and the business community that fear a negative economic impact if the river is restored, PCEC has planned a fun-filled weekend event to demonstrate the positive impacts of nature-based tourism that will result from a restored river.

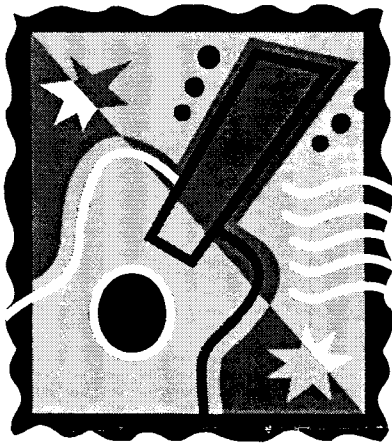
To make this successful, we need you! We are asking supporters from across the state to come to Putnam County February 19-20, 2005 (President's Day weekend). We've created 50+ outings to satisfy a wide variety of interests and have enlisted the help of some of the best trip leaders in north central Florida including Rex Rowan, Bob Simons, Karen Garren, and Lars Anderson. Great birders, botanists, naturalists, outfitters, and artists will be on hand to show you

what makes this area so special. Come and enjoy the field trips and tours and please, spend a little money! We're asking participants to buy gas, eat at local restaurants, do a little shopping, or stay a night or two. We're asking you to be obvious: strap your canoes to the roof, wear your binocs 'round your neck, in other words, be conspicuous eco-tourists. PCEC will provide you with Ocklawaha restoration calling cards to leave everywhere you go and be sure to ask for and save your receipts.

Both Saturday and Sunday, you'll have the opportunity to participate in the kick-off of PCEC's "The People's Restoration" by helping us plant trees. Almost one square mile of the Ocala National Forest is flooded by Rodman Reservoir. Those lands will be exposed during this time due to a periodic drawdown for aquatic plant control and we've arranged with the US Forest Service to take this opportunity to begin the reforestation process. We'll provide the native trees and tools.

On Saturday night at 7:00 pm, join us at Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka for a free, music- and fun-filled pep Rally for the River with live music by Florida's Trouba-

dor Dale Crider and other well known Florida folk musicians. Renowned Florida author Al Burt will be our featured guest and cheerleaders from Florida's leading conservation groups (including Charles Lee from Audubon of Florida) will be on stage to encourage us all to achieve our goal of removing Rodman Dam and restoring the Ocklawaha River.



Remember those receipts you were asked to save? Bring them to the pep rally so we can tally them up for our report back to local officials. ***THIS IS A CRITICAL PART OF OUR STRATEGY!*** Concern over the local economy is one of the main reasons proponents of Rodman cite for keeping the Ocklawaha River dammed. We need your help to demonstrate that there is more to nature-based tourism than bass fishing.

Your participation will support restoration efforts by:

- demonstrating the economic impact of nature-based tourism on the local economy;
- dispelling the myth that this is a local issue and proving that the Ocklawaha River is an important resource for all Flo-

ridians;

- reinvigorating activists and thanking those who have fought this battle for decades;
- giving legislators the evidence of public support needed to fight this battle in Tallahassee and Washington;
- educating and motivating activists state-wide; and
- strengthening local supporters who have no representation in Tallahassee on this issue.

PCEC works closely with Florida Defenders of the Environment, the leader of the fight to first save, and now restore the Ocklawaha. For more information on the river, this event, FDE, and PCEC, including downloadable Rally for the River brochures and field trip, restaurant, and accommodations lists go to www.fladefenders.org/events.

We need a big crowd to make this work and are counting on the support of like-minded folks that are equally frustrated over the decades we've spent working on this issue.

Hope to hear from you soon!

For more information go to www.fladefenders.org/events or contact Karen Ahlers, Putnam County Environmental Council, (352) 546-3560 or PCRiverRally@hotmail.com

Mark Your Calendar!
Rally for the
Ocklawaha River
February 19-20, 2005



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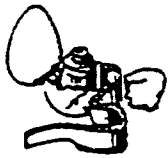
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Alachua Audubon Society
P. O. Box 140464
Gainesville, Florida 32614-0464

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Chapter E-18

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