



# The Crane

*Alachua Audubon Society*

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## FALL FIELD TRIPS



**Saturday, October 15, 8:00 AM**  
**Split Rock Nature Park**

Thanks to field trip leader and City of Gainesville Nature Operations Division associate Geoff Parks, Alachua Audubon members will have a special opportunity to explore this yet-to-be-opened city nature park. Decades ago, Split Rock was once a remote hang-out for residents who wanted to get away from town. Now, town is much closer to Split Rock but the park's dense forest and limited access still provide a retreat for a few lucky birders. Trip difficulty: 2

**Sunday, October 16, 8:00 AM**  
**Bolen Bluff**

Many local birders spend several days a week during migration at Bolen Bluff. So, why shouldn't Alachua Audubon have a second field trip there? The forested prairie rim can be a true "migrant trap" as birds fly south across the prairie. In mid-October, the prairie basin should be good for a few early wintering sparrows. Meet your field trip leader at the trailhead on the east side of US Highway 441 on the south rim of Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park (4.3 miles south of Williston Road). Trip difficulty: 2

**Saturday, October 22, 7:00 AM**  
**Cedar Key**

Meet trip leader Rex Rowan in the parking lot (SW corner) of the Target on Archer Road just east of I-75. Cedar Key is a quintessential Florida birding destination where birders can often view flocks of shorebirds over one shoulder and flocks of songbirds over the other. A diversity of habitat and the timing of this trip make for a great opportunity to see migration across many families and orders of birds. Participants may want to stay in Cedar Key for lunch and then bird more afterward. Trip difficulty: 2

*More Fall Field Trips...*

*(Continued on page 3)*

### **Trip Difficulty**

1) =Most of trip is within easy access to the vehicle and/or walking on level terrain one mile or less.

2) =Trip may involve walking on uneven terrain over one to two (1-2) miles.

3) =Trip may involve elevation change, uneven terrain, and or distances greater than 2 miles.



## **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**

When the morning temperature dips below 70°F for the first time in months and the peak of passerine migration is rustling the canopy above the paths of Alachua County's warbler hotspots, you're skipping breakfast to see what's new at a retention pond in a peanut field near Alachua. Few of us would have been so willing to forgo such a morning looking for warblers except that Pat Burns reported two locally rare shorebirds from the Dollar General (DG) retention ponds on September 5 - a **Sanderling** and a **Western Sandpiper**. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, Steven Collins observed four **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** and Bob Wallace found a **Willet** and two **White-rumped Sandpipers**. On the next morning, Bob and Pat Burns identified two among the flock of shorebirds as **Baird's Sandpipers**, an Alachua County first. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, Angela Luzader found an **American Golden-Plover**. The day before, Angela had photographed a

juvenile **Lark Sparrow** atop a car parked on the peanut field access road. Bob Wallace also found an interesting duck at the DG ponds that looked every bit like a Cinnamon Teal except for a couple of features, including iris color, that led a waterfowl biologist with expertise in the species to conclude that this bird was a **hybrid Cinnamon/Blue-winged Teal**.

Elsewhere migration has been unhurried save three early county records: **Rufous Hummingbird** from Hilda Bellot's NW Gainesville yard on August 14; a **Chestnut-sided Warbler** from Ron Robinson's yard on the 19<sup>th</sup>; a **Scarlet Tanager** in Alachua on September 3; and, remarkably, an **American Robin** in Mike Manetz' NW Gainesville yard on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Pat Burns found the fall's only **Cerulean Warbler** to date at Loblolly Environmental Center on the 9<sup>th</sup>.



The pace of migratory movement might have hastened on the 24<sup>th</sup> with Andy Kratter's report of 14 warbler species, including five

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 Submissions: howardppsp@aol.com  
 Historian ..... Martha King 352 372-4149  
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Assisting with Crane circulation: Alice Tyler, Pat Burns, Nancy Oakes

*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.*

(Continued from page 1)

**Sunday, October 23, 8:00 AM**

**Cofrin Nature Park**

The natural beauty of many of Gainesville's residential communities is attributable to the mesic hardwood hammocks in which they are located. Recently, the City of Gainesville created Cofrin Nature Park to preserve some 70 acres of land, mostly mesic hammock, in Northwest Gainesville. Join Steve Hofstetter at Cofrin Nature Park for a little late-season migratory birding and a short history on the acquisition of the park. Trip difficulty: 1

**Saturday, October 29, 8:00 AM**

**Hague Dairy**

If you don't mind the irony that one of Alachua County's best hot spots for wintering birds is also one of its smelliest, then pile on to this trip. Meet field trip leader Mike Manetz at the Tag Agency on NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors) and caravan to the dairy. Hague Dairy is locally famous for large flocks of sparrows (recently producing rarities such as Lincoln's and Lark Sparrows), consistent passerine activity in the adjacent woodlands, and shorebird activity in the dairy ponds. Trip difficulty: 1

**Saturday, November 5, 8:00 AM**

**Cone's Dike via Camp Canal**

**Limited to 15 participants** - Please call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] to make a reservation. Meet at Bolen Bluff trailhead on the east side of Hwy 441 on the south rim of Paynes Prairie (4.3 miles south of Williston Road). Trip leader Mike Manetz will escort the group to a restricted area which we will use by special permission. There, you'll bird a resource rich section of Cone's Dike Trail that often produces a good

diversity of sparrows and an occasional fall rarity such as Least Flycatcher. Trip difficulty: 3

**Saturday, November 12, 8:00 AM**

**Hamilton County Mines**

**NOTE: This is a FULL DAY trip.**

Meet trip leader Jerry Krummrich at the tag agency on NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors). These flooded phosphate mines attract many species of waterfowl such as Ruddy Duck, Gadwall, American Widgeon, and Northern Pintail. In recent years, field trip participants have also found Horned Grebes and flocks of shorebirds such as Long-billed Dowitcher and Stilt Sandpiper. The brush along the pond margins usually holds a good variety of sparrows and other passerines. Bring a lunch and plenty of water. Trip difficulty: 3

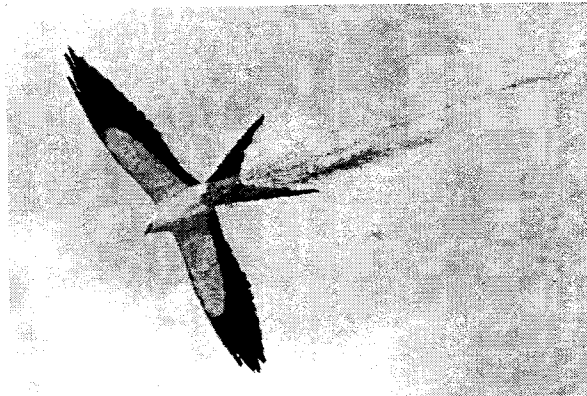
(Continued on page 5)



**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.



***"Breeding biology, migration, and survival of the Swallow-tailed Kite: The annual cycle of a species of critical conservation concern".***

Join Alachua Audubon Society and Dr. Ken Meyer for our first program of the 2005-06 season. Dr. Meyer is a Courtesy Associate Professor in the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, and Executive Director of the nonprofit Avian Research and Conservation Institute, here in Gainesville. He is also the world's leading authority on swallow-tailed kites; truly one of our most spectacular raptors. Come early and get a good seat, as Dr. Meyer is an excellent speaker and he always draws a good crowd. The program will on Saturday, October 22, 05, at the Millhopper Library at 2 PM.

## Bird Watching Mini-Course Coming Soon!



Alachua Audubon instructors are planning a short course in bird watching with four field trips designed to further your skills in identifying local and visiting birds. Classes will be on Nov. 12th, 19th, 26th and Dec. 3rd of 2005. Students that are 18 years and older are eligible. The cost will be \$25. If you would like to register or need more information please call Kathy Haines at (352) 372-8942.

(Continued from page 2)

**Tennessee Warblers**, from Bolen Bluff. On the same day, Pat Burns observed a **Painted Bunting** near the picnic table at Loblolly.

Thank you to all who submitted reports through September 24.

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### Saturday, November 19, 8:00 AM La Chua Trail

Meet at DEP District HQ: going east on University Avenue, cross Waldo Road, turn right onto SE 15<sup>th</sup> Street, and proceed 2½ miles. When the road turns left, keep going straight across the 3-way intersection, through the gate, and down the road to the parking lot. **Be on time! When the ranger shuts the gate, there's no way in.** La Chua Trail may be Alachua County's premier perennial winter hot-spot for sparrows and raptors. From the diverse forest of the prairie margin to the grassy and often wet prairie flatland, this hike offers an opportunity to see it all. Meet your Audubon guide at the entrance to the park district headquarters and La Chua Trail head. Trip difficulty: 2

### Saturday, December 3, 8:00 AM San Felasco Hammock North – Progress Park

Meet trip leader Mike Manetz at the tag agency on NW 34<sup>th</sup> Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors). Don't forget the **\$2.00/vehicle access fee**. The grassy fields of the Progress Park entrance of San Felasco Hammock can host diverse flocks of sparrows including Grasshopper, Vesper's, Song, White-throated, Swamp, and Savannah. You'll also search the forested areas for wintering woodland species. Trip difficulty: 2

### Saturday, December 10, 8:00 AM Chapman's Pond

There are few better places in the area to make very careful observations of ducks and wading birds than Chapman's Pond. Spotting scope views of birds are the norm from the observation area. Shorebirds are often spotted along the edge of the pond and warblers and sparrows are usually a bonus. Chapman's Pond has been one of Ron Robinson's special projects! Meet him at the Home Depot on Tower Rd. about 0.3 miles south of Newberry Rd and enjoy an informative trip. Trip difficulty: 1



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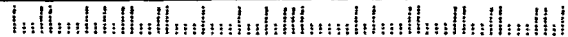
Florida Panhandle Birding & Wildflower	Oct. 7-9, 05	Port St. Joe, FL
Florida Ornithological Society Meeting	Oct. 14-16, 05	Mt. Dora/Lake Apopka, FL
Alabama Coastal Birdfest 2005	Oct. 20-23, 05	Faulkner State C. College, Fairhope, AL
Audubon Assembly	Oct. 20-22, 05	Cocoa Beach, FL
Christmas Bird Count	Dec. 18, 05	Gainesville, FL
Big O Birding Festival	Jan. 27-29, 06	Glades Co., FL
Rally for the River	Feb. 18-19, 06	Putnam County, FL
AAS Spring Picnic Dinner	April 26, 06	Gainesville, FL

Alachua Audubon Society  
P. O. Box 140464  
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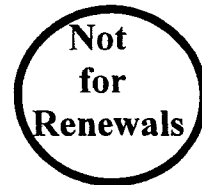
To join Audubon on 3 levels (National, Florida, and Alachua), fill in this application and mail to:  
Paul Moler, 7818 Highway 346, Archer, Florida 32618

Please enclose your check payable to:

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If you have any questions, contact Paul  
at 495-9419 or [pmoler@worldnet.att.net](mailto:pmoler@worldnet.att.net)

Chapter E-18



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