Volume 31 Trambel 2 October Trovember

October and November Field Trips

Saturday, October 3, 8:00 am San Felasco Hammock—Millhopper Road:

Meet Steve Hofstetter at San Felasco trailhead on Millhopper Road just east of I-75. **\$2.00/vehicle access fee**. San Felasco's meandering streams, sinkholes, ridges, and slopes provide a very diverse bird habitat for many species of passerine birds. Diff: 2

Sunday, October 4, 8:00 am

Chastain-Seay: Meet Bob Carroll at the tag agency on NW 34th St just south of US-441 (across from ABC Liquors) and carpool to Chastain-Seay near Worthington Springs. Chastain-Seay is a riparian woodland park with boardwalks and trails on the upper Santa Fe River. Diff: 2

Saturday, October 10, 8:00 AM

Paynes Prairie—Main Entrance: Meet Caleb Gordon at the main entrance near Micanopy for a tour of the deep, rich, hardwood habitats on the southern prairie bluff. **\$4.00/vehicle entry fee.** Diff: 1

Sunday, October 11, 8:00 AM

O'Leno State Park: Meet John Hintermister in the parking lot of Winn-Dixie on the east side of Hwy 441 in High Springs and carpool from there. \$4.00/vehicle entry fee. Explore the mixed hardwood river banks to the sand pine upland for passerine migrants at the beginning of fall migration's peak. Diff: 2

Saturday, October 17, 8:00 AM Bolen Bluff Trail; Meet Mike Meisenburg at the Bo-

len Bluff trailhead (east side of 441 on the south rim of the prairie). Bolen Bluff is one of Gainesville's perennial favorite birding locations, especially during the peak of songbird migration. Diff: 2

Sunday, October 18, 8:00 AM

Upper Hogtown Creek—CLEP trip: Meet Nature Operations Habitat Specialist Geoff Parks at the tag agency on NW 34th Street just south of US-441 (across from the old ABC Liquors). Diff: 2

Saturday, October 24, 8:00 AM

Split Rock Park: Meet Bob Carroll at Sweetbay at 2002 SW 34th St. and caravan to Split Rock. Split Rock's dense forest and limited access provide a retreat for nature enthusiasts. Diff: 2.

Saturday, October 31, 8:00 AM

Hague Dairy: Meet Mike Manetz at the Tag Agency on NW 34th St. near Hwy 441 and caravan to one of the county's best spots for migrant sparrows. Diff: 1

Saturday, November 7, 8:00 AM

Cones Dike via Camps Canal: Access a remote eastern section of Paynes Prairie by special permission. This seldom seen part of the prairie frequently has flocks of sparrows along the dike and flocks of wading birds and ducks on the prairie. Meet Mike Manetz at Powers Park and carpool to the entrance near Micanopy. Diff: 2

Field trips continued on page 3

Trip Difficulty 1: Trip within easy access to the vehicle and/or level terrain one mile or less **2**: May involve uneven terrain one to two miles **3**: May involve elevation change, uneven terrain, and/or greater than two miles

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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.

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 *The Crane* is printed on recycled paper.

Deadline for Dec-Jan Crane: Nov 15th



The early stages of fall migration developed with a healthy mix of the expected and the unexpected. Ovenbirds, Kentucky and Chestnut-sided Warblers and Northern Waterthrushes were all seen before the end of August. With our first reported Blue-winged Warbler, spotted at Bolen Bluff by Howard Ad-

ams and Barbara Mollison on the 30th, eighteen warbler species had been accounted for during the month. At the time of this writing there were no reports of Cerulean or Golden-wing, but a locally-rare Swainson's Warbler I lucked into August 8 at San Felasco Progress Center made up for that. By early September some birders were reporting ten warbler species days, and the Cellon Creek loop at Progress Center seemed to have the hot hand. That's where Grace Kiltie had a ten-warbler day Sept. 3, with her list including Kentucky and Blue-winged Warblers. Grace was also fairly certain she had a Short-tailed Hawk that morning. Geoff Parks, Rex Rowan and I checked in there Sept. 8, and by the time we checked out we had found 15 warbler species. Rex also pointed out a female Painted Bunting for us. Interestingly, John Martin had a Painted Bunting in his yard the same day. By early September several birders were reporting the return of Baltimore Orioles to their yards, and Ron Robinson had a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers around his property in the northwest part of the county. Ron has had sporadic appearances of Hairys at his place for at least a few years.

One of the most outstanding sightings came from Newnans Lake. Bob Knight, Debbie Segal, and Bob Simons were canoeing on the lake when Bob Knight spotted a **Ruddy Turnstone**. Representing an almost exclusively coastal species, this was only the second individual ever reported in the county. Fortunately it stayed around long enough to be photographed, thus making it our first documented turnstone. If that was not enough, Bob, Debbie, and Bob also saw what they believed was a Short-tailed Hawk over the lake.

The weekend before the Fall Migration Count was promising and productive. At Bolen Bluff, Andy Kratter had the first fall **Blackburnian**, **Magnolia**, and **Palm Warblers**, plus an astonishing 29 **Yellow Warblers**! Rex, Becky Enneis, and Bob Carroll also had a Blackburnian at the Progress Center, and later they spotted a **Merlin** near the Dollar General ponds south of Alachua.

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through September 15, 2009.

October and November Fieldtrips (continued)

Saturday, November 11, 7:00 AM Hamilton County Mines: FULL DAY TRIP! Meet

an Audubon co-leader at the Tag Agency on NW 34th St. near Hwy 441 and caravan to meet Jerry Krummrich in White Springs. Explore a series of freshwater impoundments for ducks and their margins for sparrows. Diff: 2

Saturday, November 21, 8:00 AM Lake Tuscawilla Preserve—CLEP trip: In 2006,

Alachua Conservation Trust acquired this 379 acre tract beside Tuscawilla Prairie near Micanopy. Meet Ivor Kincaid in the Sweetbay parking lot (2003 SW 34th St.) and carpool to Tuscawilla Prairie. Sparrows were abundant last year. Diff: 1

Sunday, November 22, 6:30 AM

Cedar Key: Meet Rex Rowan in the Target parking lot. Cedar Key is a quintessential FL birding destination where birders can often view shorebirds over one shoulder and songbirds over the other. Participants may want to stay in Cedar Key for lunch. Diff: 2

Saturday, November 28, 9:00 AM LEAFS—CLEP trip

Meet John Winn at the entrance to Austin Cary Forest (on the east side of Waldo Road about 6 miles north of the Gainesville airport) and drive to LEAFS. LEAFS is a land trust near Waldo which maintains two longleaf pine restoration projects. Both tracts have interpretive trails showing the use of ecologically beneficial methods for reforestation and management. The objective is to establish a fully functioning longleaf pine ecosystem while still allowing small landowners to produce income from timber sales. Diff: 2

President's Report

Fall comes with a gentle change of colors, almost quietly, until the call of the cranes break through the morning chatter of cardinals and wrens to announce the coming of cooler weather. The return of the cranes is reason to dance and to call out to our neighbors to get outside, to listen and look to the skies. With the arrival of the cranes we are awakened to the seasonal migration of life. There is nothing subtle in the arrival of this big bird with its honking call and V formation filling the sky. Our days will be marked with the punctuation of the morning and evening calls as flocks of cranes move from an evening roost to daytime feeding grounds and back to the evening roost. Again on a quieter note, our parks and yards are busy with the smaller birds of migration. Some pass through on their way to warmer places and some linger here for the winter. What is harder to see or appreciate is the presence of food sources that become available as these birds arrive. Whether it is berries or bugs, paths of migration overlap with the availability of food; a pattern of life that has been duplicated over the centuries with a level of predictability that these little birds depend on.

National Audubon has celebrated more than 100 years of conservation. Our local chapter, Alachua Audubon, will be celebrating its 50th year in 2010. In the last 100 years we have seen a change in the number of species making the annual migrations. With the efforts of several organizations we have been able to secure and protect nesting and feeding areas. In the process of protecting birds and other wildlife, we have changed the direction of fashion and the use of harmful chemicals. We have created safer environments for wildlife. But there is still much to be done. Join us for an Audubon fieldtrip, walk to a local park, or take a long moment to stop, look, and listen to the natural and real world that surrounds you. Let your voice be heard, be a part of the democracy. Demand a healthy environment. There is so much that can be done—find what works for you.

Helen Warren





WILL YOU BE BUYING A CHRISTMAS TREE OR WREATH THIS YEAR?

THEN PLEASE CONSIDER BUYING ONE FROM

ALACHUA AUDUBON SOCIETY

AAS is selling Christmas trees this year as a fundraiser and we need support from the citizens of Alachua County!

Benefits:

- Organically grown (no fertilizers, no pesticides)
- Fresher than most other trees (trees will be cut 12/5)
- Competitively-priced (and probably cheaper than most other trees)
- You will support a local non-profit environmental organization

Drawbacks:

- Trees must be ordered and paid for ahead of time (by November 14th)
- Buy your tree sight-unseen

Tree and wreath pickup place, date, and time TBA

To order, please send an e-mail to slporvas@gmail.com with your choice and telephone number. If you don't have e-mail, telephone 352-359-7441.

	4'-5' 5	'-6' 6'-7'	7'-8'	8'-9'	9'-10'	18"	\$34
						wreath	
Douglas Fir	\$41 \$	45 \$52	\$56	\$66	\$96	24"	\$40
						wreath	
Grand Fir	\$49 \$	556 \$64	\$73	N/A	N/A		
Fraser Fir	\$51 \$	58 \$66	\$75	\$87	\$115		
Concolor Fir	\$51 \$	558 \$66	\$75	\$87	\$115		

To view the trees and the farm, go to www.swva.net/tbd

AAS Christmas Tree Fund Raiser

As fall approaches, the AAS is planning our 4th Annual Christmas Tree sale. It may be early to talk about the holidays but we need orders by **November 14.** Prices are the same as last year.

The Clover Hollow Christmas Tree farm is a 90-acre, organic farm that is run by the environmentally friendly owners Tom Brobson and David Brady. To view the trees and the farm, go to www.swva.net/tbd. The trees are comparably priced with other locally-available trees, but not as expensive as many of the parking lot venders. Our trees are fresher because they are harvested in December, just before our delivery date. Although the trees must be paid for in advance and are bought sight unseen, our customers' satisfaction has brought them back three years in a row. Please buy a Christmas tree and/or wreath from AAS and please share this info with your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Tree pick-up will be **Dec. 6**.

Who Is This?

In 1920 an 11 year old boy joined the Jr. Audubon Club, a program of the National Association of Audubon Societies, which was being formed by his teacher, Miss Hornbeck. He signed an oath to "learn all he could about the wild birds and to be kind to them and protect them." He paid 10 cents to become an Audubon member and received a set of color bird pictures and informational materials. Who was this? Why, Roger Tory Peterson!

Alachua Audubon thanks the following sponsors who are providing Audubon materials for children in local classrooms this school year: Paul Moler, Helen Warren, Carol Alderson, Ann Fearney Paul, Jane Brockman, K.M. and S.P. Eoff, Tom Carr, Susan S. Rout, Mary Louise Brey, Martha Fearney Pilcher, Alice M. Tyler, Barbara Mollison, Karen Johnson, Claire and Betty Schelske, John R. Sharp, John Winn, Bud and Barbara Muschlitz, Mary Lou Eitzman,

Martha E. King, Mary Landsman, Barbra Larson, and Phil Laipis. Thank you for encouraging our future Roger Tory Pedersons! Please call Emily Schwartz at 372-0754 to sponsor a class.

Teaching the Audubon Program

How do you keep 15 first graders focused and quiet? Introduce them to birding, give them binoculars, and take them bird watching. I adopted "The Naturalist" program at Expressions Learning Arts Academy Charter School. My 1st graders began learning to identify birds on the first day of school and will have learned 20 birds by sight and song by the end of the school year. Our school is close to Paynes Prairie and backs up to woods. Eyes and ears are open during recess and throughout the school day.

How do you get the attention of 86 elementary students? Invite Alachua Audubon member, Adam Kent, to present a birding presentation. Mr. Kent engaged our students on learning about birds and how to imitate calls of the Mourning Dove and Barred Owl. Mr. Kent then provided the school with a spotting scope, which has allowed the students to bird watch in a whole new way. Their very first experience with the scope was watching fledgling Summer Tanagers.

How do you bring nature, ecology, and conservation education into the classroom? Support the Audubon Adventure program. The Audubon Adventure program is a classroom resource for educators and a great addition to the classroom curriculum. My first graders are an example of Audubon Adventure in action! By Sharon Kuchinski

Could You Be A Sponsor?

The new school year is starting and teachers are again looking for sponsors to support the **Audubon Adventures** program. This kit of materials engages children in lessons about nature and the environment. To learn more about Audubon Adventures www.audubon.org/educate/aa/.

Sponsorship of an elementary school class-room costs \$46. Are you able to help? Please call Emily Schwartz at 372-0754 to sponsor a classroom.

Community Calendar

- « 3 Oct Sierra Club Fall Cleanup of Lakeshore Dr.; http:\\florida sierraclub.org/ss/outings.htm
- « 10 Oct FL Bat Festival; www.lubee.org/Florida-Annual-Bat-Festival.html
- « 20 Oct FL Native Plant Society local meeting; www.fnps.org/pages/chapters/chapterpg.p ho?keyword=PaynesPrairie
- « 23-24 Oct Audubon of Florida Assembly, St. Petersburg; http://audubonoffloridanews.org/?cat=3
- « 24 Oct Monarch Butterfly Festival, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge; www.fws.gov/refuges/SpecialEvents/FWS SpecialEvents DisplayDetailscfm?D=1403
- Nov Sierra Club Ardisia pull, San Felasco Hammock
- « 17 Nov FL Native Plant Society local meeting;

Sunday, December 20 — All Day Christmas Bird Count

Those interested in attending should contact John Hintermister at (352-316-2396 jhintermister@gmail.com) or Howard Adams (352-665-3716 HOWARDPPSP@ aol.com) by Dec. 16th.

Community Calendar

2-4 Oct Florida Ornithological Society meeting to be hosted in Gainesville by Alachua Audubon Society. Many local fieldtrips and AAS member Rex Rowan will be a Friday evening speaker. http://fosbirds.org/

24 Oct The Alachua Astronomy Club will hold a star gazing fundraising party at the Dudley Farm. Telescopes will be available. Adults \$5 Kids free. Parking 5:30—7:00; Star Gazing 7:30—10:00. Please park before 7:00. Dudley Farm is located in Newberry (7.5 miles west of GNV I-75 exit 387). www.floridastars.org

21 Nov. Bird Feeder Cleaning Event

to Benefit Alachua Audubon Society. AAS and Wild Birds Unlimited have teamed up for this fundraiser event. 10 am—3 pm. Bring your dirty bird feeders to WBU to be cleaned. \$3-\$5/feeder donation. Volunteers needed, please call WBU at 381-1997 or email Bubba Scales at fodderwing@bellsouth.net

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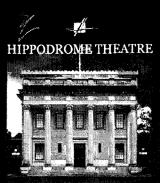


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ga Oromili

The Eagle Trees (By Tracy Schumer)

There are three tall oak snags standing in the center of our two ponds. Another homeowner would have had those unsightly dead trees taken down but not me, not ever! My husband was hesitant at first, the storms of 2004 had proven to be the last straw for this small group of water-logged Live Oaks, and once dead, they looked rather ugly to him but relentless campaigning on my part saved the dead oaks. Over the past five years, those "dead" trees have hosted an amazing array of life including: two successful Great Blue Heron nests, numerous Wood Ducks and Whistling Ducks have found suitable cavities for their nests, countless overnight rest stops for flocks of Ibis, Egrets, and Wood Storks, and a sound fishing platform for our local Ospreys, Kingfishers, and Bald Eagles.

It's been a treat to have so many birds visiting. We've restocked the ponds three times to keep native fish plentiful for Raptors, Kingfishers, and Waders and we built a nesting stand for the Ospreys. But by far our most impressive residents are the Bald Eagles. A breeding pair have been regular visitors for several years. It's wonderful when they bring each season's new youngsters in for the first time. We've dubbed our snags "The Eagle Trees" in honor of this productive couple. During the winter season, there have been up to five Bald Eagles of varying ages in those dead snags.

In May of this year, a very special Eagle arrived on our pond; one I had never seen before. A fully colored adult, she looked out of sorts at first. It was as if she wasn't quite sure how to be an eagle. On her left leg she sported an aluminum leg band with a long catalog number stamped into it. She spent the next several days sitting on the same branch of one of the snags staring into the water- just looking and getting thinner and thinner. I checked on her several times a day. The next morning, there she would be, still sitting in the same spot on that same branch. After watching her for over a

week, I was more than a little concerned but helpless to do anything to help. Then one morning, I watched as she leapt from her branch and dove into the pond. She came up with a medium sized Blue-Gill and immediately returned to her spot on her branch, clutching her prize, she ate it so quickly I hardly was able to identify her catch. Since that day, she has fished with a renewed and robust passion. I see her nearly everyday, on her favorite branch of the eagle trees, usually devouring a fish. Most evenings, I can see her through my scope feasting on her twilight catch. I managed to capture her on video the other day, and posted the video to YouTube (see link below). I feel it is so important to let the Audobon community know that their efforts to rescue and rehabilitate birds is worthwhile and successful! Without the perseverance of dedicated volunteers, these birds would have no chance at all. See her here: http://www.voutube.com/ watch?v=0oPwlynCd3U (For banded eagle info call 800-327-BAND (2263)).



We are still looking for folks interested in the Birds and Conservation trip to Costa Rica in July. The trip will focus on Costa Rica's fabulous birds, but will also look at conservation efforts in the country. I know July seems a long way off, but if you think you might be interested, please call or email Mike Manetz for more information. mmanetz@yahoo.com 377-1683

IN A PUFFIN STATE OF MIND

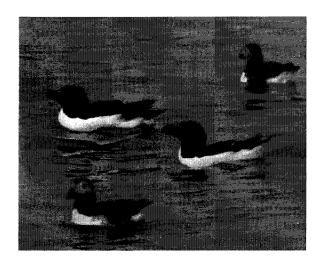
(By Dana & Nancy Griffin)

Fog can play havoc with birding. It not only contracts and distorts the birder's field of view, it can also do funny things with sounds. And if there is anyplace in the U.S. where the phrase "fog-bound coast" seems to apply in spades, it is where we recently found ourselves. We were headed out into the Atlantic from Jonesport, Maine. Our hope was to reach Machias-Seal Island which lies some 26 miles out in the Gulf of Maine. Getting there required expert navigation which fortunately our captain seemed to have in abundance (he's been making this same trip for many years). When we arrived at the desired spot, we were told, there was an excellent chance we'd see Atlantic Puffins plus an assortment of other birds. We'd come mainly to see the puffins, so anything else thrown in would be just fine with us.

Suddenly, the sound of beating wings sent half of the group of 15 birders to the starboard side, the other half to port. Port side won. A flock of Common Eiders, perhaps a hundred in all, was making tracks, but evidently this wasn't a serious panic. The birds soon settled down a hundred yards out from the boat. A spectacular bird, the Common Eider. It's the largest duck in North America with a preference for mussels harvested from the sea floor. The mollusks are swallowed whole, the shells crushed in the bird's stomach and then excreted. Ouch!

On we went. The morning sun nibbled at the fog and in a little over an hour the first sighting of the island was announced. The sea was too angry to permit a landing by dingy, but the waters around the island were alive with birds. You'd have thought we'd crashed some kind of avian party. Puffins? They were here in the hundreds. Puffins mate while floating on the sea, and some of that was going on. Intermixed with the amorous puffins were Razorbills, Common Murres and Black Guillemots. Arctic Terns and Herring Gulls patrolled overhead. The central figure in this show is un-

doubtedly the Atlantic Puffin, a bird with a history as problematic as any. Ravaging by feather, meat and egg hunters during the late 19th century brought puffin numbers along Maine's coastline to near zero. But Congress moved itself to pass the Lacey Act in 1900, providing critical protection to puffins and many other species. Since those dark days the puffin has regained much of the ground lost to human greed. In fact, today one could say many Mainers exist in a puffin state of mind. At least, they look to the Atlantic Puffin to provide their livelihood. Whether working as tour operators, crafters and vendors of puffin memorabilia or researchers existing on grants and donations, these folks hope the puffin continues to be an iconic presence on some of Maine's many offshore islands. But the puffin is still a bird requiring protection. Trouble is now coming in the form of lowered populations of food fish and increased predation by Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls. More gulls than ever are surviving thanks to landfills and the bycatch generated by commercial fishing. Unlike puffins, that are rather specialized as to their food requirements, gulls are generalists and can scrounge a meal from the most unlikely places. The result is more survival among gulls. One estimate has it that some 20,000 gulls are now nesting on Maine's many islands. More gulls means more predation on puffins, especially on eggs and chicks. For more information and some astonishing facts about the Atlantic Puffin go to projectpuffin.org



Alachua Audubon Society P. O. Box 140464 Gainesville, Florida 32614-0464 Non-profit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Gainesville Florida 32601 Permit No. 18



The Crane
Oct-Nov 2009

Mark your Calendar

4th Annual Holiday Social

Dec. 11 at Wild Birds Unlimited

In addition to having an evening of fun, this is also one of our big fund raisers thru the silent auction. If you own a business, provide a service, create cool art, or have items to donate for the silent auction, please contact Stacy Porvasnik, 352-359-7441; or Helen Warren, 352-214-7755.

More info in the next Crane

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Questions? Contact Paul 495-9419 or paulmoler@bellsouth.net

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