



The Crane

Volume 62 Number 1 Sept–Oct 2020

Message From The President

The Sept/Oct issue of *The Crane* is usually one of our most exciting in that we typically advertise the new lineup of fall field trips after the long summer lull. Unfortunately, due to current restrictions with regard to the coronavirus, we are again compelled to cancel our field trips for the fall and offer our evening programs remotely through Zoom.

Fall is one of the most exciting and anticipated seasons for birders as it provides an opportunity to glimpse many northern birds as they pass through on their marathon flight to south and central America. Warblers, thrushes, grosbeaks, swallows, shorebirds, raptors all wing their way through Alachua County, often pausing to rest and replenish their energy reserves. Although AAS has temporarily halted our volunteer-led bird walks, we encourage you to watch the trees, brush, and sky for these northern visitors.

Alachua County is a very active birding community and as eBird indicates, many birders are out every day searching for birds and tallying their sightings in the eBird database. If you are not familiar with eBird, I encourage you to open the free program. To learn more about Alachua County birding, click on the Explore tab at the top of the [eBird home page](#), then click on Explore Regions, and type in Alachua. When you select Alachua County you will see a rich database of local bird observations – species, quantity, location, date, and birder. Click on the date and you can view the entire eBird checklist that the birder submitted. And click on the map in the upper right corner and you will see all of the local birding hotspots color-coded by their richness of birds.

To keep birders informed on where specific birds are being observed, AAS board member, Tim Hardin, began producing weekly videos of local bird observations. Tim shares his knowledge and bubbling enthusiasm for birds

by posting a video on the AAS Facebook page every Thursday so birders can plan their weekend of bird outings based on these current observations.

AAS kicked off our evening speaker program on August 24th with a zoom presentation on Birding Basics. This initial program was a huge success thanks largely to our very knowledgeable and entertaining speaker, Adam Kent, and the AAS program committee – Emily Schwartz, Tim Hardin, and Felicia Lee. We plan to continue monthly speaker programs throughout the fall. The September speaker will be a special Florida-wide program sponsored by Venice Audubon and Audubon Florida and will feature the popular and engaging Doug Tallamy, who will speak on Birds and Native Plants. More information on registering for this September 22nd presentation can be found in this newsletter

AAS is in the process of advertising for fall college interns and we hope to select several enthusiastic students within the next several weeks. The selected interns will have the opportunity to mist net and band birds at AAS's new Prairie Creek Bird Banding Station. Many thanks to Dr. Katie Sieving and Jonathan Varol who have worked tirelessly over the last year to make the bird banding station a reality by

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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.

Submissions to *The Crane* are welcomed. Deadline for the Nov–Dec issue: October 15th

Content of *The Crane* fulfills the stated objectives and goals of the Alachua Audubon Society. Annual subscription to *The Crane* is included in National Audubon and/or Alachua Audubon membership. Please see the back page for more information. Additional advertisers are welcome. Please contact the editor for more information at karenpbrown1953@gmail.com

**Around
The County...
By Mike Manetz**

It may still feel like summer to us but according to the birds, fall has been underway for quite some time. Our first returning warbler was a Louisiana Water-thrush found by Trina Anderson at San Felasco Hammock way back on June 19th. By early July several other “Louisianas” had been reported, and Black-and-white Warblers were beginning to

appear. Rex Rowan scored our first Prairie Warbler and American Redstart July 24th at Palm Point. Rex and I lucked into an early Kentucky Warbler at Poe Springs Park August 1st, and Tim Hardin found another August 10th at San Felasco Hammock. Sam and Ben Ewing checked off our first fall Worm-eating Warbler August 8th at Palm Point, and the following day Adam Zions reported our first returning Ovenbird at Chapmans Pond. The best bird of the early fall period was a Black-billed Cuckoo reported August 9th from Bolen Bluff by Barbara Shea. Not only is Black-billed Cuckoo a rare migrant, it's usually not expected here until October.

Finding migrant shorebirds continued to pose a challenge due to lack of habitat. As water levels on Paynes Prairie receded, aggressive vegetation lost no time in covering up exposed edges. Area retention ponds were the only places to find shorebirds in any variety, and the most productive were the Butler Plaza ponds where small numbers of Pectoral, Least, Spotted, and Solitary Sandpipers, a single Stilt Sandpiper, and a few Yellowlegs had been recorded by mid-August. The boat ramp at Powers Park is not exactly a shorebird hotspot but Glenn Israel found a fairly rare Western Sandpiper picking around the muddy edge there August 16th. In fact, the 16th was a pretty interesting day at Powers Park. In addition to the Western Sandpiper, a half-dozen Black Terns, a Cliff Swallow, and a Short-tailed Hawk were also spotted, much to the credit of Tim Hardin who was first to report the latter three species.

Local birders had low expectations for stray coastal birds showing up here as tropical storm Isaias passed off the east coast August 3rd, but

those who dutifully made their way to Palm Point Park at Newnans Lake that morning “just to check” were rewarded with a spectacular flock of twenty-five Common Terns sailing past



Swallow-tailed Kite. Photo by Tina Greenberg.

Continued on page 11

Audubon Florida's EagleWatch Program

Based at Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, Audubon Florida's EagleWatch Program is a statewide network of community science volunteers who monitor Bald Eagle nests from October to May. EagleWatch provides valuable information on nesting activity and the current trends of the Bald Eagle population in Florida that is used by both the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enhance their conservation and law enforcement efforts. Audubon EagleWatch is seeking volunteers to monitor Bald Eagle nests for the 2020-2021 breeding season. Training is required for new volunteers. If you are interested, please plan to attend one of the following new volunteer trainings. Click on your preferred date to register.

[Saturday Sept 5th 10am-12pm](#)

[Sunday Sept 13th 2-4pm](#)

[Saturday Sept 19th 10am-12pm](#)

[Saturday Sept 26th 10am-12pm](#)

[Sunday Oct 4th, 2-4pm](#)

For more information about the program, visit the [website](http://cbop.audubon.org/conservation/about-eaglewatch-program) at cbop.audubon.org/conservation/about-eaglewatch-program or contact Shawnlei Breeding, EagleWatch Program Manager, at eaglewatch@audubon.org or 407-644-0190.



Adult Bald Eagle and eaglet in nest. Photo by John Horton. Used with permission.

The Audubon EagleWatch Program has over 400 dedicated volunteers currently monitoring more than 800 eagle nests in Florida. As one of the premier community science programs in Florida, EagleWatch works to protect approximately 40% of the state's nesting pairs.

SPEAKER'S CORNER — September Program An Online Presentation by Doug Tallamy

The Venice Audubon chapter will present an online evening with Doug Tallamy, nationally known author and speaker, on September 22nd at 6 p.m.. The title of his presentation is, "A Guide to Restore the Little Things that Run the World." Alachua Audubon members may register for this event through Audubon Florida. Doug Tallamy is a professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, and the author of the highly recommended books, *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope*. Taken from Dr. Tallamy's [website](#):

"The Problem: We have destroyed natural habitat in so many places that local extinction is rampant and global extinction accelerating. This is a growing problem for humanity because it is the plants and animals around us that produce the life support we all depend on. Every time a species is lost from an ecosystem, that ecosystem is less able to support us.

The Solution: We must abandon the notion that humans and nature cannot live together. Though vital as short-term refuges, nature preserves are not large enough to be meeting our ecological needs so we must restore the natural world where we live, work and play. Because 85% of the U.S. is privately owned, our private properties are an opportunity for long-term conservation if we design them to meet the needs of life around us."

To register for this online talk, click [here](#) or go to <https://act.audubon.org/a/presentation-doug-tallamy> Then be sure to save the date on your calendar, SEPTEMBER 22, 6:00 P.M.

Attuned to loons: Birders track an obscure Florida flyway

An hour after sunrise, Andrew Kratter stands in the dew-soaked grass of an East Gainesville graveyard, watching the sky for what looks like a bowling pin with wings – the common loon, *Gavia immer*. Kratter, manager of the Florida Museum of Natural History’s ornithology collection, has scouted for loons every morning from mid-March to mid-April for nearly two decades. It requires a sharp eye: The seabirds streak overhead at about 60 miles an hour on their spring migration from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean.

“Most of the time I’m seeing them up to a mile away, and I only have a couple seconds to identify them,” he says. “But they’re so distinctive, and there’s only one species of loon flying, so it works out pretty well.”

Gainesville is the midpoint of a little-known loon flight corridor discovered by Kratter, thanks to a tip from local birder Rex Rowan. Each spring, loons that overwinter in the Gulf leave Cedar Key at dawn and fly northeast over the state to Jacksonville Beach, a trip that takes a couple of hours. From there, they likely join northbound loons that trace the Atlantic coastline as they head to breeding grounds in eastern Canada, Kratter says. “There’s one.” He points to a speck in the pale sky.

Even at this distance, one can make out the loon’s distinctive breeding plumage – a jet-black cap and striped collar set off by a long white belly. Jutting beyond its tail is a pair of large feet, propellers for diving and maneuvering underwater. A 4-foot wingspan powers the loon’s swift, shallow flight.

As Kratter raises his binoculars, birders at eight other stations across the county follow suit. In seasons past, he largely counted loons alone, his faithful dogs by his side – first, Ani the black Lab and now collie-husky mix Newman. Other watchers occasionally emailed tallies of loons they’d seen from backyards or parks.

But this year, a grant from the Duke Energy Foundation’s Powerful Communities: Nature initiative enabled Kratter to recruit and train a team of citizen scientists, including University of Florida students, to carry out an organized census of Florida’s migratory loons. A second group, led by longtime loon researcher Paul Spitzer, records loons flying over St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, south of Tallahassee, on another flyway that leads to Minnesota, Michigan and central Canada.

Conserving a North American icon

Tracking the migration can provide insights into potential threats to loon populations, Kratter says. Loons were the third most common bird species to wash ashore in the wake of the BP oil spill in April 2010, which likely caught younger loons that had not yet migrated or would have spent the summer in the Gulf.

“Something like that can have devastating effects,” Kratter says. “Tens of thousands of loons spend the winter on the Gulf of Mexico.”

An additional hazard is rising sea temperatures, which could reduce fish stocks, making the Gulf less habitable for wintering loons.

Previously, scientists focused mainly on threats to loons at their breeding grounds. The [2016 State of North America’s Birds](#) report listed common loons as a species of moderate conservation concern. They need clean, unpolluted waters and little to no human disturbance to breed, making them an indicator species – a living barometer of an area’s environmental health.

Over-development of shorelines, which are crucial nesting sites, led to plummeting loon numbers in the 1970s, and while populations have generally rebounded, some scientists think the species may never return to its historic levels. Loons also face threats from acid rain and mercury pollution, lead poisoning from ingesting fishing sinker weights and biotoxins such as botulism, introduced to the Great Lakes by invasive zebra and quagga mussels.

Research such as Kratter’s can add to what scientists know about the birds’ behavior, with the goal of

preventing *G. immer* from becoming the next monarch butterfly, a once-common North American species now imperiled by habitat loss and human activities.

“Conservation of migrant birds requires analyzing threats across an entire year of comings and goings,” Kratter says. “The discovery of a previously unknown migration route used by thousands of common loons, but constrained in time and space, creates an opportunity to better monitor this iconic species.”

Loons find a Florida shortcut

Kratter didn’t become a loon specialist until Rowan alerted him to the local passers-by in 2000. “I was like, ‘What? Loons in Gainesville?’” Kratter says. “I went out a few mornings after his email, and sure enough, I saw some loons flying. We didn’t even know they migrated across Florida.”

The reason for his surprise was that loons limit their flight over land. They need wide expanses of open water for resting, feeding and taxiing into flight. Their big, back-set feet make them ungainly walkers, and loons that touch down on dry land risk getting grounded. Better-studied loon migratory pathways take them along coastlines or over chains of lakes where they can stop to forage. Why would they cross Florida?

When Kratter studied the state’s geography, however, it suddenly made sense. The loons’ pathway takes them over North Florida’s narrowest point, where the Gulf Coast pinches in between the bulges of Big Bend to the north and Tampa Bay to the south. The flyway is no accident: It’s a strategic navigational choice over one of the shortest possible overland routes, a distance of about 122 miles.

“They’re taking advantage of this smaller width of the peninsula and crossing to the Atlantic,” Kratter says. “From the Atlantic, they can go all the way north to Canada, if they want, and not have to fly over land.”

Still, Kratter sometimes witnesses a loon that has changed its mind mid-route and is beating its way back west. “They’re making flight decisions about whether they feel good about doing this overland flight, which is a very stressful time,” he says. “But Gainesville is pretty much halfway, so it’s like swimming halfway across a river and saying, ‘I’m not going to make it. I better go back.’”

With additional birders posted around the county, Kratter has started picking up on more nuanced flight patterns that were impossible to spot alone. “It’s not just a random 20-mile-wide expressway with loons patchily distributed across it,” he says. “There are streams and actually big differences between different stations depending on the day. We can start to put these variations in the context of what’s happening with the weather and how the loons are responding.”

The extra eyes have also enabled Kratter to get a more accurate sense of loon numbers, he says. On March 31, the birders tallied 325 loons, a new single-day record, and by the end of the migration, they had counted 2,190, smashing the previous seasonal best of 895. Kratter says the spike doesn’t necessarily mean loon populations are booming. Still, there are more loons than he thought there were. “The high number of loons indicates that this migratory pathway is even more important than I had imagined.



The Common Loon, Gavia immer.
Photo courtesy of John Picken, CC BY-SA 2.0

by Natalie van Hoose, Florida Museum, Research News,
[Florida Museum of Natural History website](#). July 15, 2020. Reprinted with permission.
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The John Hintermister High School Scholarship Program

To encourage youth activities consistent with the Alachua Audubon Society mission, AAS is pleased to announce the availability of scholarships (\$300) to Alachua County high school seniors who demonstrate an interest in wildlife or conservation. The expenditure of scholarship funds is not limited to academics and may be used however the student wishes. The number of awards may vary annually.

The award will be based upon the following criteria:

- Keen interest in the environment, nature, and/or conservation
- Involvement in extracurricular environmental/nature activities
- Academic record
- Teacher/counselor recommendation.

To be considered for a scholarship, an applicant must:

1. Be a resident of Alachua County
2. Be a student at the 12th grade level
3. Be in good academic standing.



To learn more about the program and to apply online, go to www.alachuaaudubon.org/scholarship/. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2021. Scholarships will be awarded in April 2021.

Good Things to Watch

At this time when many of us are staying in or missing our usual weekend activities, one recommendation is to explore the vast array of YouTube videos provided by Cornell Lab of Ornithology. One video I recently enjoyed was [Izembek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkBbA7iJN8g&t=37s). Izembek is an isolated National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. View this video (just over 13 minutes) and enjoy some beautiful photography of a rarely visited site.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkBbA7iJN8g&t=37s>

Submitted by Emily Schwartz

In that same vein, I viewed [St. Matthew Island Alaska Expedition](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I08pNQsesS0), also from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Just under 10 minutes, this program highlights the endemic Pribilof Rock Sandpiper and McKay's Bunting and the changing Arctic on this remote Alaskan island. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I08pNQsesS0>

Submitted by Karen Brown



New Local Birding Resources

Local birder Howard Adams has spent at least part of his Covid-19 sequestration putting together a great resource for Alachua County birders. His [Map of Alachua County Birding Sites](#) lays out most (if not all) major birding sites in our home county. Check it out and fill in those missing locales on your birding site checklist.

You can also find it in its permanent home on our [Local Birding Information](#) page under the Local Birding Resources tab on the homepage at AlachuaAudubon.org.

Submitted by Michael Brock.

Live Broadcast – Weekly Alachua County Birding Updates

Local birder extraordinaire Tim Hardin is posting live weekly birding broadcasts on Thursdays at 6:30 PM on the [AAS Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon) at <https://www.facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon>. Tune in for news and notes on local birding highlights, events, occurrences, opportunities, and more!



College Internships Available!

Do you want to help dedicated conservationists *do something for nature*? Seeking *real world experiences with nature enthusiasts of all ages*? Are you interested in conservation and knowledgeable or enthusiastic about birds? Alachua Audubon seeks individuals interested in conservation, education, NGO administration, fund-raising and other functions of AAS. Interns must be currently matriculated college students in good academic standing and be able to contribute a minimum of 5 hours per week (including weekends) for at least 12 weeks during a regular academic term. Intern opportunities we anticipate, as Covid restrictions allow, in 2020 and 2021 include educational materials (graphic arts), organizing and hosting guest speakers, mist netting & bird banding training with a focus on educational functions, and strategic social media. Interns may accrue academic credit if arranged by their institution.

Applications are due by **September 8, 2020 5 P.M.** Find full instructions on the AlachuaAudubon.org website under the College Internship tab.

October Program - A Fight Against Time

Nordmann's Greenshank is one of the most endangered shorebirds on our planet. Listen to Philipp Maleko tell of his adventures in Eastern Russia wading through bog and forest to study this rare bird with a Russian ornithologist.

This will be an online Zoom meeting. Watch for time and date to be announced on the [Alachua Audubon Facebook](#) page and the Alachua Audubon website,alachuaudubon.org.



Nordmann's Greenshank. Photo by Jason Thompson. Creative Commons-A 2.0

AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT



Townsend's Warbler by ATM.

bringing color and beauty to neglected areas his art will inspire active participation in improving the environment. "People stop me and say thank you and how much they appreciate it," he says of the murals. "It makes me feel I'm doing something really valuable."

117 murals have been created so far; 83 are viewable on the website at <https://www.audubon.org/amp> together with additional information about the birds and the artists.

The [Audubon Mural Project](#) is a collaboration between the National Audubon Society and Gitler & ___ Gallery [sic] to create murals of climate-threatened birds throughout John James Audubon's old Harlem based neighborhood in New York City. The project is inspired by the legacy of the great American bird artist and pioneering ornithologist and is energized by Audubon's groundbreaking report "Survival by Degrees." The project commissions artists to paint murals to call attention to climate change, and it has been widely covered in the media, including [The New York Times](#).

About this Artist: London-based street artist [ATM](#) [sic] specializes in painting endangered birds, including several for the Audubon Mural Project. He hopes that by

Front Yard Birds

Our backyard birds have provided good company during this stay-home, pandemic time. I was grateful to be entertained by red-bellied woodpeckers nesting in a pine snag and wrens nesting in our potted plants. We had downy woodpeckers visiting the suet, and cardinals, chickadees and titmice calling and feeding at the seed feeders. I decided to set up a feeder by the street so that our neighbors, who seemed to be wandering the streets in increasing numbers, could also enjoy the birdlife.

Near the feeder I posted a sign: “Can you see me?” It depicted 6 common birds you could see around the feeder and yard. I was inspired to make the sign by several neighbors who had created scavenger hunts to help entertain families as they strolled outside. Why not have them look for the real magic in our yards – beautiful birds?!

The sign also had a conservation message about the importance of our healthy tree canopy. With all the rapid development in recent years and uninformed proposals to encourage more buildings in neighborhoods, it is always useful to be reminded that we need to appreciate and protect our natural world.

The sign and feeder generated a lot of fun conversations with neighbors – what birds they had seen and strange calls they had heard. One family was thrilled to see a red-shouldered hawk perched on the feeder (they nest in our neighborhood). Another reported their kids were going to study nesting cardinals in their own yard for a science project.

I made the poster as a PowerPoint slide and sent it as a PDF to a local copy shop to print and laminate (\$36 for a 22 x 24-inch sign). I mounted it on the back of an old campaign sign. I'd be happy to share the PDF and PowerPoint with anyone who would like to print their own sign or make their own poster with different birds.

Happy front yard birding!



Susan Jacobson (jacobson@ufl.edu)

Preventing Window Collisions

Birds constantly face threats to their survival, both in the air and on the ground. A fatal obstacle that people often do not consider is collision with windows. Ornithologists consider window collisions to be the second largest cause of bird mortality after habitat loss, causing *millions* of deaths yearly just in the United States.

Most deaths from window collisions occur during spring and fall migration. Birds cannot distinguish a reflection of trees in a window from real trees and try to fly through the seemingly open space, only to be stunned or killed. **Something can be done** – one simply needs to break up the reflection every 4 inches.

Follow these links for suggestions on how to prevent bird collisions. They range from simple, inexpensive Do It Yourself projects to affordable and attractive window treatments you can purchase.

- [Acopian BirdSavers](#)
- [Stop Birds Hitting Windows](#)
- [Glass Collision Solutions](#)

Learn more on the AAS website [here](#).



Audubon Florida Virtual Assembly 2020
Reimagining Audubon Florida: A Call for Inclusive Conservation
October 19-24, 2020



*Painted Bunting. Photo: Lillian Beasley/
Audubon Photography Awards*

Join Audubon Florida virtually for Florida's premier conservation event, when grassroots leaders from around the state connect with Audubon's professional staff and partners to grow their knowledge and skills to protect Florida's precious natural resources.

This year's virtual event will include learning sessions, panel discussions, a chapter celebration, and field trips via video with a theme of inclusive conservation. The Keynote Presentation by J. Drew Lanham, author, poet, and wildlife biologist, will tie it all together.

Find the Schedule of Events [here](#) or visit <https://fl.audubon.org/about-us/audubon-assembly>.

Registration opens September 1st.

Message From The President

(Continued from Page 1)

securing a location, facilities, equipment, training, and permits, and who were also instrumental in developing the AAS college internship program, which is integral to the banding station. Once we have a full season of banding under our belts and can resume leading field trips, we plan to offer educational outreach events at the new bird banding station.

Alachua Audubon Society was invited by two land conservation programs – Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) and Tall Timbers – to partner on their Cornell eBird grant proposals. And both trusts were awarded a grant. ACT kicked off their grasslands restoration project by having AAS volunteers conduct a 2-day baseline bird survey at the Fox Pen property in eastern Alachua County. The next step with that project will be conducting restoration activities such as spreading native grassland seed after the property is burned. Tall Timbers' project will be training landowners and implementing eBird surveys on privately-owned conservation land, and AAS volunteers will participate in these eBird surveys.

Alachua Audubon voted to fund the purchase of 15 sets of binoculars for the City of Gainesville to use when they lead nature walks at Sweetwater Wetlands Park. We will purchase and donate the binoculars as soon as the City is able to resume their ranger-led nature programs.

The fascinating life of birds can be observed in our yards, neighborhood parks, nature preserves, and in almost every green space. Although COVID has curtailed our group outings, I encourage you to keep your binoculars close at hand and see which fall migrants you can spot. Perhaps you will glimpse a Blackburnian Warbler, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, or one of the many other lovely visitors as they pass through Alachua County on their journey southward.

Debbie Segal

Around the County

(Continued from Page 2)



Swallow-tailed Kites. Photo by Adam Kent.

the point. Common Terns are rare inland, and were last seen here September 11th, 2018 when Hurricane Michael blew a few our way.

Swallow-tailed Kites are known to form large pre-migratory communal roosts after nesting and fledging their young. This usually occurs in mid to late July, at which time they can also be seen in numbers foraging for insects over large agricultural fields. Tina Greenberg and Steve Johnson reported such a flock July 18th over a

watermelon field between Newberry and High Springs. Over the next few days several birders ventured out to observe the spectacle of nearly two hundred Swallow-tailed Kites soaring, swirling, and diving in acrobatic pursuit of winged prey. Kite researcher Gina Kent enthusiastically likened it to watching “a snow-globe” of kites!

By the time this issue of *The Crane* reaches your inbox or mailbox, we will be entering the great “middle period” of fall migration. Warblers arriving around the beginning of September include Blue- and Golden-winged, Chestnut-sided, and Blackburnian Warblers. At the same time, rarer species such as Swainson's and Canada Warblers will at least become possible. Veerys will be arriving as well, along with swelling numbers of Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos. By mid-September Tennessee, Magnolia, and Black-throated Blue Warblers should start to appear, along with our first Swainson's Thrushes and Scarlet Tanagers. Fall migration is a grand avian parade and the best way to see it is to get outside. I hope to see you out there!

Thanks to those who braved the summer swelter and shared their sightings through August 16th, 2020.

By Mike Manetz

How Many Feathers Does a Songbird Have?

According to David Sibley's book, *What It's Like to be a Bird*, “Small songbirds generally have about two thousand feathers, fewer in summer and more in winter. Larger birds like crows mostly have larger feathers, not more. Water birds have a lot more feathers, particularly on the parts that are in contact with water.” “A tundra swan holds the record for the most feathers ever counted on an individual bird – just over twenty-five thousand, with 80% of those on the head and neck.”

Editor



Suspect a crime against Florida's birds, fish, wildlife or natural resources? See an injured animal? Report incidents to FWC's [Wildlife Alert Reward Program](#) online or call 888-404-3922. From your cell phone call *FWC or #FWC, or send a message to Tip@MyFWC.com. Learn more at [MyFWC/contact/wildlife-alert](#).

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The Crane
September – October 2020

Join Alachua Audubon! Membership Application

Benefits of membership include expert-led field trips, programs for adults and youth, *The Crane* bi-monthly newsletter, conservation advocacy with local & state legislators, & more.

Gift Memberships Available!

Annual Membership Levels

Choosing a higher level provides additional support for our local chapter.

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| Family | \$30 | Limpkin | \$50 |
| Purple Gallinule | | | \$100 |
| Swallow-tailed Kite | | | \$250 |
| Sandhill Crane | | | \$500 |
| Whooping Crane* | | | \$1,000 |

(*bestows lifetime membership)

Join online with PayPal

www.alachuaaudubon.org/membership/
or send your application and check payable to
Alachua Audubon Society
to: PO Box 140464, Gainesville, FL 32614-0464

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

The Crane is distributed via email. Your email address will not be shared with other organizations.

Alachua Audubon (AAS) is an official chapter of **National Audubon** and **Audubon Florida**. If you belong to National Audubon and live in our area, you are automatically a member of AAS.

To join National Audubon, please go to AlachuaAudubon.org/Membership where you will be directed to their membership page.

Alachua Audubon is a 501(c)3 organization.

Audubon Membership Explained

To join Audubon at the local level, please visit the AAS website where you may use PayPal to pay by credit card. You may also complete the membership form to the left, or print a form at AlachuaAudubon.org/Membership. Choose the membership level that is appropriate for you. Mail the completed form with your check, payable to **Alachua Audubon Society**, to the address provided.

To join Audubon at the National level, go to AlachuaAudubon.org/Membership where you will be directed to the NAS membership page. Your introductory membership will be credited to our local chapter and you will become an annual member of the **National Audubon Society**, **Audubon Florida** and **Alachua Audubon**, with one-year subscriptions to **National Audubon** magazine, **Audubon Florida Naturalist** magazine, and Alachua Audubon's bi-monthly newsletter, *The Crane*.

Please send any questions to
AlachuaAudubonMembership@gmail.com