



# The Crane

Volume 67 Number 1 September–October 2025

## FIELD TRIPS

### AUGUST

#### UF/IFAS "Hague" Dairy Unit Field Trip

Saturday, August 23, 2025 • 7:00 – 10:00am  
13200 NW 59th Drive, Gainesville

Join Alachua Audubon Society to kick off the first fall weekend field trip of 2025! Meet field trip leader Tim Hardin at Hague Dairy in the designated grassy parking area near the classroom (exact location via [Google Maps](#) on the western side of the complex, demarcated with a sign labeled "Classroom parking," right across from the painted sign of a gator milking a cow (only in Gainesville!))

We will focus on early migrant songbirds that will become scarce in subsequent months of fall migration such as Yellow Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and Bank Swallow. Last year's trip had a wide assortment of shorebirds, including Western Sandpiper, though sightings will be dependent on lagoon conditions. See our trip report on eBird at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S192588714>

Trip participants are asked to respect and defer to the workers and cows in an effort to maintain our amicable relationship with the dairy staff.

Difficulty: 2, but variable based on rain, some uneven terrain, potential for extreme heat and sun exposure since there are no shade trees. There are good paths throughout. Since this is an active farm, there can be strong smells in some areas.

#### Chapman's Pond and Nature Trails

Saturday, August 30, 2025 • 7:00 – 10:00am  
7100 SW 41st Pl, Gainesville

Meet Ben Fick in the grassy parking across from the GRU – Kanapaha Water Reclamation Facility that

supplies the ponds with reclaimed water. See the map [here](#); the parking is marked with a star.

Named after Frank M. Chapman, an ornithologist who surveyed species in the area and who created the Christmas Bird Count, 228 species have now been found at this location. We will follow the trails in search of migrant warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. Historically, this has been a good location for the rare Canada Warbler.

Want to learn more about Frank M. Chapman? You can read Rex Rowan's article on "[A History of Birding in Alachua County](#)" on our website.

Difficulty: 2 (greater than one mile)

#### 83rd St Bike Trails

Sunday, August 31, 2025 • 7:30 – 10:30am  
29°41'35.5"N 82°26'10.1"W

Parking is available in the old Shands at Vista lot near the intersection of NW 89th Blvd and NW 90th Blvd. Meet trip leader Renee Slaw at the trail access at the northwest corner of the parking lot.

Several species of vireo and warbler are likely, such as the Red-eyed Vireo and Hooded Warbler. Hopeful targets are migrating warblers and thrushes. Veery, Kentucky Warblers, and Worm-eating Warblers have

#### Inside this issue:

|                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Evening Programs                      | p. 5 |
| Birding Class Open; Hawkwatch Program | p. 6 |
| Proposed Development at Four Creeks   | p. 7 |
| Two Chapters—Two PUMA Colonies        | p. 8 |
| Festivals! Need volunteers!           | p. 9 |

been sighted in years past.

Mosquitos are anticipated; ticks possible.

Difficulty: 2 (approximately 3 miles round trip), some elevation change and some roots. The trail is almost entirely shaded.

## SEPTEMBER

### **Palm Point Park**

Saturday, September 13, 2025 • 8:00 – 11:00am  
7401 Lake Shore Dr, Gainesville

Park in the Palm Point Park parking lot or on the shoulder of Lake Shore Dr. This will be a group led trip to look for migrant warblers and flycatchers in the live oaks, sweetgums, sugarberry, and cypress trees at the park and then along Lake Shore Drive.

Depending on bird activity at Palm Point, we may continue on to nearby Powers Park to bird along the canal and pier at the south end of the lake.

Difficulty: 1, less than a mile, dirt covered paths.

### **Bolen Bluff Trail**

Sunday, September 14, 2025 • 8:00 – 11:00am  
Micanopy

Meet Maggie Paxson in the trailhead parking lot. off 441 south of Gainesville.

With over 230 unique species on its observations list, Bolen Bluff is a local birding highlight regardless of the time of year. Located on the southern rim of Payne's Prairie, this mostly flat trail starts in a wooded upland area, rambles along the basin rim of the prairie, and eventually descends into the basin towards a raised observation tower.

We'll hike the entirety of the woodland loop as well as the first quarter mile of the basin trail for a round-trip total of approximately 2.5 miles. Ground is mostly flat with some slight changes in elevation, with a well-trodden trail that is also frequented by deer, bison, and wild horses. Target species include migrant warblers; thrushes such as Veery, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked; and other migrant passerines such as Scarlet Tanagers and Bobolinks.

Difficulty: 3, due to distance and some uneven terrain including a fair number of roots.

**Bird Ramble—Prairie Creek Preserve at Alachua Conservation Trust**, Thursday, September 18, 2025 • 8:30 – 11:00 am

Bird rambles are easier, more leisurely outings than our more energetic weekend fare. We typically walk one mile or less and stay on wide paths and even terrain. This will be a group led trip from Prairie Creek Lodge at the Alachua Conservation Trust property (7204 SE County Road 234, Gainesville). Once you turn into the entrance, follow signs to the lodge and meet at the parking area at 8:30 AM. We will take the Lodge Trail (green) that passes by the AAS Native Plant Garden and Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery, and proceed to the Kathy Cantwell Trail (blue) (see link to map below). We will return the way we came so stay as long or as briefly as you want.

This trip will give us a chance to see the garden, the conservation cemetery, and birds we encounter along the way. The trail is usually dry but it gets wetter as we get farther in. This may determine our turnaround point but please wear appropriate shoes. Mosquitoes may be out so plan accordingly. More information, including a trail map, is available [here](#). There is no need to register.

Difficulty 1: flat easy trails.

### **Natural Area Teaching Laboratory (NATL)**

Sunday, September 21, 2025 • 8:00 – 11:00am  
3215 Hull Rd, Gainesville

Park at the museum at 3215 Hull Rd where you will meet trip leaders Christine Zamora and John McVay, then walk over to the trails of NATL on Natural Area Drive. 17 different species of warblers have been reported here in the month of September. We'll be searching the hackberry trees whose feeding aphids might attract them. Pine and Prairie Warblers are expected. We will be walking the Old Field Trail and some of the Hammock Trail along the west side of the Upland Pine Trail. The SEEP trail will be dependent on water levels.

Difficulty 1: up to a mile.

## OCTOBER

### **The Big Sit**

Saturday, October 4, 2025 • 6:45am – 5:00pm

What is a "Big Sit"? It's a birding event where teams try to see how many species they can spot from one small area in one day. Believe it or not, there is actually a formal event called "The Big Sit!" We will do this AAS-style.

We will have four "Sit" spots:

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1. Tusca-willa Preserve – near Micanopy (Leader: Adam Kent): Free parking on north side of Tusca-willa Rd. Walk the trail south to the platform.

2. Sweetwater Wetlands Park (Leaders: TBD): The count area will be under the pavilion at SWP. There is a parking fee (\$5) – use the Honor Box or pay using the Passport App. Park opens at 7am.

3. Palm Point Park - Lakeshore drive (Leader: Gina Kent): walk to the picnic table overlooking the lake. Plenty of parking along road in the grass if lot is full.

4. Lake Alice Conservation Area overlook, on UF campus (Leader: TBD GREBE and Maggie Paxson). Access through the University Gardens depending on timing of the Gator football game.

Teams will start birding at 6:45 am and continue until 5:00 pm, except for Sweetwater Wetlands Park which opens at 7 am. eBird lists will be tallied in hourly intervals.

What to expect: This event is open to everybody, including beginning birders and those who don't have binoculars. Spotting scopes will be available at Tusca-willa and Palm Point. Loaner binoculars will be available at some locations. Parking is available at all sites, but accessible restrooms and water fountains are only at Sweetwater Wetlands Park. Come and go as you please and feel free to visit all four sites during the day or camp out for the entirety.

Make sure to bring coffee/snacks/lunch and drinks for the day. A camp chair will also be useful and anything you need to protect yourself from heat, sun, and insects to make your stay comfortable.

Let's see what birds are using or flying over ONE (or four) spots over an entire day! This is smack in the middle of migration. Excellent raptor migration time, especially for peregrine falcons. The sky is the limit!

Let's share our stories afterwards! **We will meet at Depot Park on south Main Street at 5:30 p.m.** to share a beverage, grab some food at Goldie's or bring your own, and talk about the amazing day.

**San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park – Yellow Trail.** Saturday, October 19, 2025 • 8:00 – 11:00am, 11101 Millhopper Rd, Gainesville

Meet trip leader Tim Hardin at the San Felasco State Park Moonshine Creek parking area for a fall migration birding walk: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/ErEaP7RQyQddZRdp7>

We'll cross the street to hike the Spring Grove Loop (Yellow) Trail and search for late fall migrants,

including Bay-breasted Warblers and Gray-cheeked Thrush. Carpool if possible as parking at this location can spill into the street.

Fee: pay \$2-\$4 at the park or [online](#). You can also use your Florida State Parks annual entrance pass.

Difficulty: 3 - 4 miles round trip with some significant changes in elevation (for Florida).

### **Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park**

Saturday, October 25, 2025 • 8:00 – 10:00am  
4732 Millhopper Rd, Gainesville

Meet trip leader Christine Zamora in the parking lot of Devil's Millhopper at 8 a.m. for an accessible and inclusive bird walk. October 20-26 is Birdability Week and Christine will be leading a walk at one of the locations she has made a Birdability Site Review for. What does that mean? This location has some features of an accessible trail and creating a review helps people to know whether it's a trail they can or want to try.

Devil's Millhopper was one of the first field trip locations of Alachua Audubon Society in 1960! Part of the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail network, 68 species have been found during the month of October. This includes fifteen species of warblers and four species of thrush.

The trail starts at the parking lot, where we will follow it along the rim of the 120 feet deep sinkhole. Learn more about trail conditions and the park below. Beginning or new birders are welcome to join.

Fee: pay \$2-\$4 at the park or [online](#). You can also use your Florida State Parks annual entrance pass.

Trail description: Total distance of .75 mile. The trail is paved for a distance of about 0.17 miles. The remainder of the path is crushed rock which then transitions to hard packed soil, following a lollipop route around the rim of the sinkhole, with a distance of 0.57 miles. Please be advised, there are a few sections where roots are persistent on the trail. Benches are found along the path at frequent intervals. Accessible bathrooms are located at the beginning of the trail. This walk will not involve going down the stairs (232 steps) but anyone who is interested can do so on their own.

Search "Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park" on the [Birdability Location Explorer](#) to read Christine's Birdability Site Review.

Learn more about Birdability [here](#).

## NOVEMBER

### **Blackadder Brewery Kickoff Event: Cofrin Nature Park Field Trip**

Saturday, November 1, 2025 • 10:30am – 12:00pm  
4810 NW 8th Ave, Gainesville

Join trip leader Taylor Zeglam at the trail entrance near the playground for our first November field trip in partnership with Blackadder Brewery, who is sponsoring AAS as their nonprofit charity this month! After the walk, we'll continue the celebration with a casual meet-up at Blackadder.

This site, once a horse farm, is steadily returning to a mesic hammock habitat, rich with deciduous trees along a creek and surrounding seepage wetlands. A memorial garden near the entrance showcases a variety of native plants, including Florida anise, firebush, tropical sage, and beautyberry. It has been a favorite hotspot for fall migration this season—don't miss the chance to explore it!

Difficulty: 1 (easy). About 0.5 miles, unpaved trail, shady, with little to no elevation change.

### **Tour the Museum Bird Collection with Dr. Kratter: AAS MEMBERS ONLY event; sign-up required.**

Saturday, November 8, 2025 • 1:00 – 2:30pm and 3:00 – 4:30pm

Ornithologist Dr. Andy Kratter's specialties includes bird classification, taxonomy and nomenclature. This collection of ~3,000 species may be the fifth largest in the world and includes extinct rarities such as the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Dusky Seaside Sparrow, Passenger Pigeon, and Carolina Parakeet. The tour may be general or focused on groups, such as fall warblers or Empidonax flycatchers.

Participation limit: 8 per session. This is a MEMBERS ONLY event – National or Alachua Audubon Society membership required. You may join Alachua Audubon Society [here](#).

Information on how to sign up will be posted on the Alachua Audubon Society [Facebook](#) page.

### **Let's go birding together at Depot Park**

Saturday, November 15, 2025 • 5:00 – 6:30pm  
Cade Museum For Creativity & Invention

Alachua Audubon is proud to offer our second annual beginner and family-friendly guided birding walk in celebration of Pride (rescheduled from Pride Month due to rain). Join trip leader Maggie Paxson at the

sidewalk roundabout of the Cade Museum (between the parking and the lake). We'll take a casual stroll through the Depot Park around the lake looking for birds, alligators, and other wildlife while talking about the history of Depot Park and how it contributes to downtown storm water management.

While this is a walk celebrating LGBTQ+ pride, affirming individuals of all identities are welcome. Loaner binoculars will be available.

**SAVE THE DATE for the following events:** Stay tuned for more details to come on Alachua Audubon Society's website and social media.

Saturday, September 20, Marion Audubon. Marjorie A. Hoy Memorial Park at **Orange Lake Overlook**.

Sunday, September 27, Tim Hardin. **Ravine Gardens State Park** in Palatka. Meet at 8 am.

Saturday, October 11, Tonya Becker. Day trip at **Guana River Wildlife Management Area**.

Sunday, October 26. **Fox Pen Preserve** in partnership with Alachua Conservation Trust. We anticipate use of the EcoRover, an all-terrain wheelchair. Meet at 8 a.m.

October TBD Felicia Lee. **La Chua Trail**.

### **Save the Dates for the 2025 Christmas Bird Counts**

Gainesville CBC – Sunday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>  
Ichetucknee – Santa Fe – O'Leno CBC – Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>  
Lake City CBC – Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>  
Melrose CBC – Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>

To learn more about the Christmas Bird Count, visit our website [here](#).

### **Important News**

Alachua Audubon is proud to share our newly written Code of Conduct, created to foster a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment for all. This policy outlines expected conduct at field trips, meetings, and events and establishes a process to submit reports of misconduct to ensure everyone can enjoy and learn together. You can view the full Code of Conduct on our website [here](#).

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## EVENING PROGRAMS

### *Love your Birds – Where Science and Conservation meet Art* with Elizabeth Filippelli

Thursday, September 18, 2025, 6:45 – 8:15 pm at Cypress and Grove Brewing, 1001 NW 4th St, Gainesville

Engage in a lively science-based program with Elizabeth Filippelli of the Duval Audubon Society. She is currently serving as Co-Lead of the Northeast Florida Lights Out Program. Elizabeth will present a program on what you can do to save our migrating birds and our local bird population. Learn about the perils of artificial light pollution and how reflective glass is impacting our migrating birds. It's a little bit of science, conservation and art. Learn what you can do to support Light's Out and take action at your own home. Elizabeth's work with Lights Out North Florida (LONF) focuses on building partnerships with City of Jacksonville leaders, Jacksonville Jaguars and major businesses in Downtown Jacksonville to spread awareness of the perils to birds of artificial light pollution and reflective glass and how to fix it. Recent successes include the very first Lights Out North Florida Proclamation encouraging homeowners and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights at night. The Jacksonville Jaguars joined the program by turning off Dalys Place Amphitheater lights at night from 11 pm – 6 am – everyday.

### *Acoustic niche partitioning of pineland bird communities across a latitudinal gradient in Florida* with Mitch Walters

Thursday, October 23, 2025, 6:45 – 8:15 pm at  
Cypress and Grove Brewing, 1001 NW 4th St, Gainesville

Whether you're a feisty Carolina Wren warbling in a forest patch or a mighty Sandhill Crane calling across a wetland prairie, acoustic communication is critical to every bird's survival and reproduction. To succeed, bird species must develop ways to effectively transmit their signals to receivers while reducing acoustic competition. My PhD research at the University of Florida explored several hypotheses for song evolution in birds and examined how human disturbance affects vocal communication in bird communities across the Sunshine State.



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SCAN TO SIGN UP

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## Birding Class Offered



Develop your skills in identifying the birds in our region. Whether you are a beginner or have some experience in birding, *Introduction to Birds and Birding* will increase your knowledge.

Santa Fe College Community Education in partnership with Alachua Audubon is offering this bird watching course on Saturday mornings from September 20 to October 11. The course consists of 4 field trips to local natural areas, guided by experienced birders. Field trips begin at 8:30 AM and last 2-2.5 hours.

Register online at the Santa Fe College Community Education website. For assistance, call 352-395-5193 and mention the course name above. Course Fee: \$49.00. Bring binoculars; they are essential for birding. Please register early as this class fills quickly.

There will also be a course from November 1-22. Register here for the November course.

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## Florida Keys Hawkwatch

Florida Keys Hawkwatch (FKH), based in Curry Hammock State Park, has been dedicated to counting hawks during fall migration since 1999. As the only active hawkwatch in the southeastern United States, FKH plays a vital role in monitoring hawk migration through the Florida peninsula—a key gateway to the Caribbean and tropics. This location is globally significant, hosting the world's largest annual flights of Peregrine Falcons and the second-largest Swallow-tailed Kite migration, surpassed only by Bocas Ridge Hawkwatch in northeastern Panama. FKH is entirely volunteer driven, with no employees or hidden overhead costs. Donations are needed and go directly to supporting volunteer accommodations, small stipends for expenses, wireless hotspot fees for field data reporting, and the printing of educational brochures for visitors.

For 25 years, FKH has remained the only active hawkwatch in the region and continues its important mission as the migration gateway to the Caribbean and tropics. Each fall, the Florida Keys witness incredible migration events. The annual average of Peregrine Falcons passing through is 3,400—the highest in the world—while Swallow-tailed Kite counts reached 5,106 in the 2024 season, second only to Bocas Ridge globally.

Monitoring efforts extend to all migratory species observed from the hawkwatch platform at Curry Hammock State Park and through daily Morning Flight counts at Long Key State Park. Since 2023, migration data for all species has been recorded in real time, allowing people to follow the migration from home. Summaries of this data are available on [Trektellen.org](https://trektellen.org) and serve as a resource for land managers and researchers who wish to analyze land use by species of special interest. This program represents the longest-running migration monitoring project in Florida.

### Accessing Migration Data

Hawkwatch data: [trektellen.org/count/view/3668/20250818](https://trektellen.org/count/view/3668/20250818)

Morning Flight data: [trektellen.org/count/view/3682/20250817](https://trektellen.org/count/view/3682/20250817)

### How to Support Florida Keys Hawkwatch

Alachua Audubon has pledged a donation to support FKH's ongoing work. Anyone interested in contributing may donate by sending checks to: "Florida Keys Audubon, Florida Keys Hawkwatch, 1307 Eliza Street, Key West, FL 33040" (please note "Florida Keys Hawkwatch" on the check) or by visiting the [website](#) and following the "Donate" links.

## Proposed Development at Four Creeks Preserve

Located in north Gainesville, Four Creeks Preserve stretches from NW 43<sup>rd</sup> Street north and eastward to Highway 441. Jointly owned and managed by Alachua County and the City of Gainesville, this 715-acre preserve consists of mixed forested uplands interspersed with low lying wetlands. The property contributes to the flow of four creek systems: Turkey Creek, Blues Creek, Possum Creek, and Hogtown Creek. Currently, two walk-up trail heads – at Highway 441 and NW 37<sup>th</sup> Street – allow visitors to access the preserve and its 2.5-mile walking trail.

Development on an 8-acre tract located on the west side of Four Creeks Preserve and on the east side of NW 43<sup>rd</sup> Street is proposed that will enhance both public use access to this expansive preserve as well as consolidate and improve operations efficiency for Land Conservation staff. The County proposes to construct a new trail head access point along with a small parking lot and restroom facilities. Currently, there is no public parking at this large preserve so access is limited to those who can walk or bike to either of the two existing trailheads. These new public use facilities will greatly increase access to this expansive preserve.

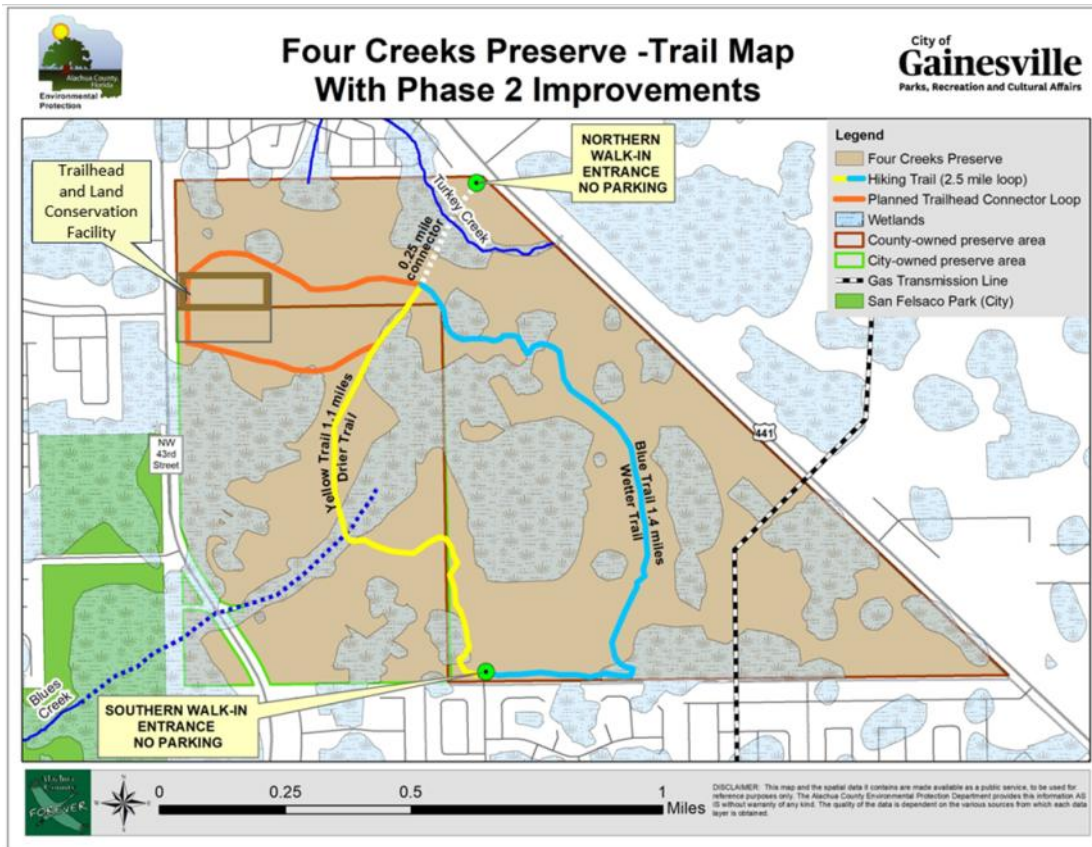
Alachua County also proposes to construct a Land Conservation field office and equipment storage facility where county staff who manage and protect over 36,000 acres of conservation land at 30 preserves within Alachua County can store their equipment, tools, supplies, vehicles, and tractors. Their management activities are complex and include prescribed fires, exotic species removal, maintenance of public use trails, educational signage, and many other tasks. This facility will also house the county arborist and tree planting program.

Land Conservation staff manage environmental preserves throughout the county including Mill Creek Preserve in Alachua, Watermelon Pond south of Newberry, Barr Hammock in Micanopy, Lake Alto in Waldo, Lochloosa Slough in Hawthorne, Black Lake Preserve in Melrose, and many others. Currently, their vehicles and equipment are stored in multiple locations, which hinders their efficiency in conservation land management as well as land acquisition. The County Environmental Protection Department has needed a centrally located site to house staff and equipment, which will greatly facilitate management of the 30 county-owned preserves.

Alachua Audubon supports the County in the construction of these new public use facilities at Four Creeks

Preserve as well as a Land Conservation field office and equipment storage facility. By co-locating a new trailhead, restrooms and parking, with the office and equipment facility, both the users of the preserve as well as county staff who strive to manage and preserve Alachua County's environmental gems will benefit. With new parking options, Alachua Audubon foresees offering field trips at this local preserve.

By Debbie Segal



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## Florida Audubon Chapters Establish Two Martin Breeding Colonies

The Cities of Gainesville and Lake City, in north-central Florida were faced with the need to dispose of treated wastewater in a manner that would not pollute downstream water bodies, so they designed an innovative system of expansive marshes to remove harmful nutrients and pollutants from the city's wastewater. These biological systems, called "Treatment Wetlands", mimic nature's ability to cleanse the water. While the two treatment wetlands – Sweetwater Wetlands Park and Lake City Treatment Wetland – remove hundreds of pounds of nitrogen and other pollutants from the incoming water, these important water cleansing processes are largely imperceptible. What is noticeable is the multitude of birds – wading birds, waterfowl, raptors, songbirds, blackbirds, and many others that forage and nest around the wetlands.

Two local Audubon chapters recognized the potential nesting opportunities for Purple Martins at these expansive marshes and partnered with City staff at both facilities to install nesting gourds soon after the wetlands were built. In January 2018, volunteers with the Alachua Audubon Society and Four Rivers Audubon installed the first gourd system at the Lake City Wetlands, and within four months all six gourds were occupied by martins. Over the next four years three more gourd systems were installed, and during the 2024 nesting season, Alachua and Four Rivers Audubon celebrated almost 200 Purple Martin nestlings at the Lake City Treatment Wetlands.



*One of the four Purple Martin nesting gourd sets at the Lake City Treatment Wetland.  
Photo by Tedd Greenwald.*

Purple Martins were not as quick to inhabit the gourds at Sweetwater Wetlands Park, perhaps because of the high recreational use at this very popular nature park. But in 2024, full occupancy of all seven gourds was finally achieved. Installation of a second gourd system is planned before the start of the 2025 nesting season in an effort to continue the growth of this Purple Martin colony.\*

Both of these nesting colonies provide superb educational opportunities and in turn, inspire volunteers to advocate for the conservation of Purple Martins. Members from both Audubon chapters installed the gourd systems, clean and maintain the gourds each winter, and monitor the nest sites each spring. Newsletter articles describing these conservation efforts reach over 1,000 members of the combined Audubon chapters. An untold number of birders and nonbirders alike, including those on the weekly Audubon-led bird walks have been enthralled by the active martin colony at Sweetwater Wetlands Park. And in an effort to recruit more Purple Martin landlords, Alachua Audubon sponsored a field trip to another nearby martin colony where the participants learned about the conservation of Purple Martins. This hands-on field trip provided an opportunity to lower and monitor the nesting gourds, observe the newly hatched nestlings, and to appreciate the efforts necessary to host a colony of nesting martins.



*The Purple Martin nesting gourd set at Sweetwater Wetlands Park in Gainesville. Photo by Winnie Lante .*

Both Audubon chapters continue to prioritize the conservation of Purple Martins by expanding the nest colonies, providing volunteer opportunities, and sharing the story so more Audubon members can advocate for and contribute to the nesting success of this charismatic species.

By Debbie Segal

\*A second gourd system was installed prior to the 2025 nesting season.

Reprinted with permission; *The Purple Martin Update*, a quarterly magazine of the [Purple Martin Conservation Association](#) .

## Festivals are Coming!

Happy Fall Migration! I hope everyone is enjoying the birds as we approach cooler weather. As summer ends, we're gearing up for our season of festivals and events, and AAS needs volunteers to share our love for birds at three upcoming festivals.

A short, optional training session via Zoom will be offered for anyone interested in learning more about staffing the booth. You will also be paired with an experienced volunteer. Volunteering at these events involves distributing educational materials, running games for kids, talking to community members about our organization, and helping with setup and takedown of the booth. It's a great opportunity to meet fellow birders and introduce others to something we all cherish! Volunteering also means free admission to the event.

The flyer contains all the essential information for signing up to help at the AAS booth. Shifts range from two to three hours, but you are welcome to sign up for multiple shifts if you wish.

Additionally, we're excited to introduce a new perk: our **Volunteer Prize Drawing!** For every hour you volunteer for AAS, your name will be entered into a drawing for prizes at our Holiday Social in December.

Thank you so much for your support! We couldn't do it without you!

Ellen Frattino

## Volunteers Needed for Fall Festival Booth Duty!

Join the Alachua Audubon Society in spreading the love for birds and nature by volunteering at our chapter's booth at fall festivals! We need enthusiastic members like you to help engage with the community, share information, and represent our local chapter.

### How to Sign Up?

Use the QR codes below to easily sign up for a shift that fits your schedule. Just **scan or click**, select your preferred time, and you're all set!



### Fall Events and Festivals



#### Alachua County Fall Horticultural Expo

Saturday, October 18, 9AM – 4PM, in Newberry, FL. This event features plants and plant related vendors, food trucks, exhibits, forestry displays & a Kids Zone!



#### Lubee Bat Festival

Saturday, October 25, 10:00AM – 5:00PM, at the Lubee Bat Conservancy in Gainesville. Join for a day filled with thrilling, captivating exhibits, and unforgettable experiences for the whole family. And of course, the world's largest bats!



#### REI Community Day

Saturday, November 8th, 11AM-5PM, at REI in Butler Plaza. This event is a great opportunity to connect with people interested in outdoor recreation and to share how our organization promotes conservation and fosters a love for birds.

Thank you for supporting our chapter and helping to make a difference.  
See you at the booth this fall!

### Optional Training

We will be hosting an optional training session for volunteers before the first festival event. This training will cover everything you need to know about volunteering at the booth, including tips on engaging with visitors and sharing our mission. Details on the training session will be provided once you sign up!



### Volunteer Perks

For every hour you volunteer, you'll earn a ticket for our prize drawing at the AAS Holiday Social in December. The more you volunteer, the better your chances of winning!

Please contact Ellen Frattino (efrattino@gmail.com) with any questions.

## Annual Lubee Bat Festival

Lubee Bat Conservancy is excited to welcome you to our 21st Annual Florida Bat Festival to be held Saturday, October 25, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Come celebrate with us as we continue to spread bat conservation awareness and enjoy all the batty festivities! Our family-friendly festival promises to be another fun-filled event this year. There will also be a beer garden for a separate admission.

### ADMISSION/DONATION:

\$5 AGES 5-12 | \$10 AGES 13 & up

KIDS 4 AND UNDER FREE

1309 NW 192 Ave, Gainesville



Lubee Bat Conservancy is an international non-profit organization dedicated to saving bats and their habitats through research, conservation, and education, with a focus on children and community engagement.

DISCOVER **200** ALACHUA COUNTY BICENTENNIAL 1824-2024

GAINESVILLE GARDEN CLUB 1924

UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

**Fall Horticultural Expo & Plant Market**  
**October 18, 2025**

Alachua County Agriculture & Equestrian Center  
 23100 W Newberry Road

**Create Your Best Fall Garden!**

**9 AM to 4 PM**  
**Free Entry & Parking**  
**Over 75 Vendors**  
**Wildflower Seeds**  
**Bugs, Birds & More**  
**KIDS ZONE**  
**4-H Horsey Tack Sale**  
**Demonstrations**  
**Food Trucks**

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**Jennifer Jewell**  
 Host of "Cultivating Place"  
 a Nationally Syndicated  
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**KING**  
 INSURANCE PARTNER

**WHERE THE WILD THINGS GROW 2025**

[www.ggcf.org/horticulture-expo](http://www.ggcf.org/horticulture-expo)

Funded in part by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County  
 An Equal Opportunity Institution

## Blackadder Brewery

Blackadder Brewery will be partnering with Alachua Audubon as their nonprofit charity for the month of November!

Join us for special events including:

- Trivia Night – Tuesday, November 5, with 10% of draft sales benefiting AAS.
- Charity Bingo Night – Wednesday, November 20.
- Bird Walk at Cofrin Park Saturday, November 1 at 10:30 am, followed by a meet-up at the brewery.

618-A NW 60th Street  
 Gainesville, FL 352.339.0324

## Great Florida Birding & Wildlife Trail—Update!

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has launched the newly redesigned [Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail website!](#) With over 500 birding and wildlife viewing locations across the state, this major update makes it easier than ever for birders and wildlife viewers to explore Florida's natural wonders. What's new?

### Interactive "Find a Site" Map

Easily discover wildlife hotspots by entering a location or selecting Florida's favorite birds, activities and amenities.

**Beginner-Friendly Resources:** New sections offer tips for those just getting started with birding and wildlife watching.

**Florida's Birds and Wildlife Highlights:** Explore the species and ecosystems that make Florida unique.

Start exploring today at [FloridaBirdingTrail.com](http://FloridaBirdingTrail.com)

A LITTLE BIRDIE SAYS:

★ **New Website** ★

**Great Florida Birding & Wildlife Trail**  
**May 2025**



- ★ Interactive Location Finder
- ★ Wildlife Watching 101
- ★ Birding Trail Locations
- ★ Kite Tales News Features
- ★ Upcoming Events
- ★ Birding Trail Store

[FloridaBirdingTrail.com](http://FloridaBirdingTrail.com)

Sweetwater Wetlands Park &  
Alachua Audubon Society

Present

**Wednesday Bird  
Walks at the Wetlands**



**When:** Every Wednesday @ 8:30 am  
from September - May

**Where:** Sweetwater Wetlands Park -  
Entrance Pavilion

Walks are free with park admission fee (\$5/vehicle)  
Bring water, binoculars, sunscreen, and walking shoes



## Florida Young Birders Club



The Florida Young Birders Club is welcoming people ages 9 - 17 in Florida who have an interest in birds or birding. We have active chapters in Tampa Bay, Orlando, and St. Augustine plus new chapters forming in Sarasota, Charlotte Harbor and Gainesville.

### Our club offers:

- Unique field outings
- Monthly virtual guest speaker events
- A chance to communicate with other young birders in a secure space
- Member discount on Vortex optics



Scan the code  
to join!





## BORROW A BIRDING KIT!

Spot eagles, cranes, and wrens with a Birding Kit created by your library and the Alachua Audubon Society.

**Each backpack contains:**

- Binoculars
- Local resource guide
- Birding field guide book



Reserve a kit online for pick up at your preferred library branch. Kits check out for 14 days.

[www.aclib.us/birdingkits](http://www.aclib.us/birdingkits)

## Monthly Birds and Brews

The AAS Birds and Brews event continues to be popular with both new and experienced birders. Meet the first Sunday afternoon of the month at First Magnitude Brewery, 1220 SE Veitch St. Arrive early as parking can be scarce. There will be an Alachua Audubon table set up and **loaner binoculars will be available**. It is a lovely time of day for a leisurely stroll around the Depot Park ponds to look for birds. Then we'll return to First Magnitude for an optional brew and conversation.

*All birding skill levels are welcome!*

Next event: Sunday, September 7th, at 5:45 pm





Native plant restoration  
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Erick D. Smith

[erick@kestreleco.com](mailto:erick@kestreleco.com)

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Mon-Sat 10-6 Sun 11-4



Tioga • Micanopy • Ocala • [www.BlueHighwayPizza.com](http://www.BlueHighwayPizza.com)

Check out the Paynes Prairie Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society [here](#). Meetings take place on third Wednesdays – September through May (excluding December) – 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at 4225 NW 34th Street, Gainesville in Phillips Hall. The public is welcome to attend. Join their chapter to attend monthly field trips.



**Boutique Lodging & Events  
in Historic Gainesville**

625 E UNIVERSITY AVE 352•373•6760

La China Cottage, Jimmy Ho Photography



[SWEETWATERINN.COM](http://SWEETWATERINN.COM)

Special thanks to Cypress & Grove Brewing Company for the complementary use of their event space (*and extraordinary beer!*)

Check them out at  
1001 NW 4th Street  
in Gainesville!

Hours:

Mon-Sat: 2-10

Sunday: 2-8

Billiards, food trucks, indoor and outdoor seating.



## TIDE WATER TOURS

**from Cedar Key**

**For the ultimate birding experience  
by boat to remote coastal marshes or  
near shore islands**

**Call or check out our website:**

**352-543-9523**

**[tidewatertours.com](http://tidewatertours.com)**

[selvaverde.com](http://selvaverde.com)



**EXPLORE Selva Verde Lodge & Reserve**

*500 acres of vibrant tropical nature  
in the heart of Sarapiquí, Costa Rica!*

## Join Alachua Audubon!

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

### Gift Memberships Available!

#### Annual Membership Levels

Choosing a higher level provides additional support for our conservation & education efforts.

|                                      |      |            |         |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------|---------|
| Student                              | \$10 | Individual | \$25    |
| Family                               | \$35 | Limpkin    | \$50    |
| Purple Gallinule                     |      |            | \$100   |
| Swallow-tailed Kite                  |      |            | \$250   |
| Sandhill Crane                       |      |            | \$500   |
| Whooping Crane (lifetime membership) |      |            | \$1,000 |

Sliding scale memberships welcome. Send what you can afford.

*Donations are always appreciated! Donate [HERE](#).*

*Join online with PayPal at [AlachuaAudubon.org/join/](https://AlachuaAudubon.org/join/) or send your application (print from the website) and check payable to **Alachua Audubon Society** to PO Box 140464, Gainesville, FL 32614-0464. Include your name, address and 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 this area, you are automatically a member of AAS.

To join National Audubon, please go to [AlachuaAudubon.org/Join/](https://AlachuaAudubon.org/Join/) where you will be directed to their membership page.

Your introductory membership amount 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*.

To **renew** your National membership, click [here](#).

Please send any membership questions to [AlachuaAudubonMembership@gmail.com](mailto:AlachuaAudubonMembership@gmail.com)

Alachua Audubon offers all our neighbors respect, inclusion, and opportunities to participate and be heard in our organization. Please read the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement on our website [here](#). Comments and suggestions are welcomed.

*Alachua Audubon is a 501(c)3 organization. A copy of our official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800-435-7352) or visiting their [website](#). The state registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.*

## Alachua Audubon Society Board of Directors

### Officers:

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**Tim Hardin**, Vice President  
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**Glenn Israel**, Evening Programs  
**Maggie Paxson**, GREBES, Young Birders Club  
**Christine Zamora**, Conservation, Purple Martin Program  
**Eli Redstone**, Conservation  
**Jon Graham**, Finance, Proposals, Festivals

AAS Website [AlachuaAudubon.org](https://AlachuaAudubon.org)  
Facebook [facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon/](https://facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon/)  
Instagram [@alachuaaudubon](https://@alachuaaudubon)  
Contact us at [contact@AlachuaAudubon.org](mailto:contact@AlachuaAudubon.org)

*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 the sustainable use of natural resources.*

Alachua Audubon Society, Inc. is one of more than 40 Audubon chapters in Florida and is chartered by the National Audubon Society and Audubon Florida.

Submissions to ***The Crane*** are welcomed.  
Deadline for the Nov – Dec issue: October 15th.  
For advertising information, contact the editor at [Contact@AlachuaAudubon.org](mailto:Contact@AlachuaAudubon.org)