



The Crane

Volume 54 Number 2 November December 2012

November and December Field Trips

Saturday, November 3, 8:00 a.m.

Hague Dairy: Meet Mike Manetz at the Tag Agency on NW 34th Street near US-441 to caravan to one of the county's best spots for sparrows, blackbirds, and raptors. Diff: 1

Saturday, November 10, 7:00 a.m.

Hamilton County mines: FULL DAY TRIP! Meet at the Tag Agency on NW 34th Street near US-441 and caravan to join trip leader Jerry Krummrich in White Springs. We'll explore a series of freshwater impoundments for ducks and other water birds, and look for sparrows in the fields and brushy margins. Diff: 2

Saturday, November 17, 6:30

Cedar Key: Meet Rex Rowan in the Target parking lot and carpool to Cedar Key. Cedar Key is a quintessential Florida 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

Sunday, November 25, 6:00

This is a newly offered trip to Circle B Bar Ranch in Polk County. Meet Bob Carroll in the Target parking lot to car pool down to where we will meet our guide, Cole Fredricks. Located on the north shore of Lake Hancock, this birding hot spot supports a tremendous bird population including wading birds, waterfowl, raptors, warblers, sparrows, and others. The diverse habitat includes oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp, and lake shore. Diff: 3

Sunday, December 1, 8:00 a.m.

La Chua Trail: Table your bias against sparrows and get a fresh start with Caleb Gordon at Paynes Prairie's La Chua Trail. Meet at the trailhead on Camp Ranch Road. La Chua is one of the area's best spots for close study of a variety of sparrows and other brush-loving birds as well as wintering flycatchers, raptors, waterfowl, and freshly-arrived Sandhill Cranes. Diff: 3

Sunday, December 16, SPECIAL EVENT

Christmas Bird Count. Contact John Hintermister (352-316-2396; jhintermister@gmail.com) to discuss details if you are interested in participating in this all-day event. Evening count-up and pizza party follows the all-day survey. Diff: 3

Saturday, January 5, 8:00

Meet Jerry Krummrich at Alligator Lake Park parking lot in Lake City (enter from SE Country Club Rd.) for a site that has often provided new and unique birds. Diff: 3.

Saturday, January 12 & 13, 8 am

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

Meet John Hintermister at the St. Marks visitor center (Saturday 8 am) for a trip to one of Florida's premier winter birding spots. Expect a large number and wide variety of birds on this field trip. Overnight option. Sunday's meeting time and location will be decided on Saturday. Call Wild Birds Unlimited [352-381-1997] to register. Limit 20 people. Diff: 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 AAS and fulfills stated objectives and goals of AAS. 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
Jan.-Feb. Crane:
Dec. 15th**



The Fall Migration Count occurs each year at roughly the mid-point of the migration season. Our count this year had only average results in numbers of species seen, but our warbler count was good, with 23 species recorded. Better yet was the participation. Sixty-seven birders joined in the effort, and I'd be

willing to bet that beats every other county in Florida!

The weeks following the count brought us some very interesting birds. Rex Rowan, John Hintermister, Jonathan Mays and I got a pretty serious consolation prize after getting rained out Sept. 18 at San Felasco/Progress Center. As we were leaving we spotted a Magnificent Frigatebird circling Lee Sink, the large pond along the entrance road. The following day at Bolen Bluff, Jonathan found both Canada and Golden-winged Warblers, highlighting a fourteen-warbler day. The day after that, John Martin and Adam Zions picked up a locally-rare Nashville Warbler at the foot of the bluff. While birding the San Felasco/Progress Center Sept. 28 Debbie Segal, Barbara Shea and I were treated to some great looks at another local rarity, a Black-billed Cuckoo.

There was something close to an *empidonax* riot lasting several days along Cone's Dike on the prairie basin. *Empidonax* is a genus of flycatchers, including four species here in the eastern U.S., that are look-alikes, and very difficult to identify unless calling. On Sept. 24 Rex Rowan spotted a little flycatcher that eventually called several times, identifying itself as an Alder Flycatcher. I was able to return and get a recording of it singing, confirming the ID. Incredibly, over the next few days a second Alder appeared. Bob Wallace came out to check the bird and, at another spot along the trail, found and photographed what he determined to be another "empid", a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Both of these are extremely rare in the county.

Despite these amazing sightings, birding remained sultry and difficult at times, with stubbornly high temperatures and humidity; and did I mention the mosquitoes? Finally Oct. 7 a cold front busted through the area, cooling us off and bringing some new birds. The following day John Hintermister, Steve Nesbitt, Jim Brady, Howard Adams, and Barbara Mollison covered Bolen Bluff and found a whopping 16 species of warblers, including Black-throated Green. I went out the next two mornings and got 16 species both days; in all, the combined total number of warblers seen at Bolen Bluff over a three-day period was 22 species.

Frank Goodwin and I headed out La Chua Trail Oct. 12 and were overwhelmed by the number of Sora Rails that were calling. John Hintermister visited there a few days (*continued on Page 8*)

Update on the Southeastern American Kestrel Monitoring Partnership

The Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) is a non-migratory falcon that has undergone a marked range contraction and population decline in recent decades throughout the southeastern United States. In 2009, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Fish and Wildlife Research Institute initiated a long-term program for monitoring and management of Southeastern American Kestrel populations in Florida. We have engaged dozens of cooperators, including biologists and land managers from FWC, Florida Forestry Service, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection, as well as several local Audubon chapters. Our partnership focuses on peninsular Florida, where we currently have more than 520 nest box locations in our database.

Disturbing population trends continue. Fewer kestrels occupy nest boxes in Florida each year, and the declines are most pronounced in sandhill habitats on public lands. Within counties in north central Florida, only 126 of 382 (33%) nest boxes were occupied by breeding kestrels in 2012, down from the previous year's occupancy rate of 38%.

In Alachua County, Bob Simons has been building and installing nest boxes for kestrels for several years, and we are now pleased to have him as a cooperator in the Southeastern American Kestrel Partnership. Bob is not able to monitor all of the nest boxes that he installs, so our project staff needs local volunteers. We found a good volunteer this year, Jennifer Staiger, who helped monitor 18 nest boxes along roadways and pastures on private lands in Alachua County. Five of those nest boxes were occupied by breeding Southeastern American Kestrels.

Consistent monitoring each year will be critical to assess the population status of this imperiled species. In addition, I am continuing to study kestrel-habitat relationships on public

and private lands. During 2012, we measured clutch size and fledgling weights at 141 nest boxes within a mosaic of different agricultural and sandhill habitats in Levy and Marion counties. Data from this project will shed light on what kinds of habitat and landscape features are most productive for Southeastern American Kestrels.

By Karl Miller (karl.miller@myfwc.com)

Upcoming Youth Birding Activities

Alachua Audubon is planning several youth birding activities for 2013. These activities will include instructions on basic birding skills and bird identification at natural areas around the county.

The Kid's Christmas Bird Count will be held in January (date to be announced). This event will be comprised of several age- and skill-level groups, with each group setting out to identify and count all the birds they can find. An Alachua Audubon team leader will accompany each group and will provide assistance and instruction with bird identification. Following a morning bird count, all groups will gather for lunch and compile the bird count data. Lunch will be provided by Alachua Audubon.

In February and March, a Brown-headed Nuthatch survey will be planned at Morningside Nature Center, and a Woodpecker identification workshop at Northeast Park. A new youth birding field trip at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park that will be led by Neil and Joan McLeod is also still in the planning stage.

All of these events are open to youths of any skill level. Alachua Audubon volunteers will teach basic birding skills, bird identification, and use of binoculars and field guides. If you would like to be added to our email notification list for these upcoming youth birding activities, please contact Emily Schwartz at emilysgfl@gmail.com. You will then be notified as soon as these events are scheduled. Also, stay tuned for the next Crane Newsletter, which will also provide details of these upcoming youth birding activities.

By 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 and wreaths this year as a 2012 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 just before we pick them up)
- 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 9th)
- Buying your tree sight-unseen
- Large size trees (>6'-7') are available in limited quantities – order early!

Tree and wreath pickup will be on December 2nd (time and location will be announced)

To order, please send an e-mail to alachuaaudubons@gmail.com with your choice and telephone number. If you don't have e-mail, please call Anne at 352-378-0505.

	4'-5'	5'-6'	6'-7'	7'-8'	8'-9'	9'-10'	18" wreath	\$35
							24" wreath	\$40
Fraser Fir	\$52	\$58	\$68	\$75	\$95	N/A		
Concolor Fir	N/A	\$58	\$66	\$75	\$88	\$116		
Balsam Fir	\$52	\$58	\$68	\$75	\$95	N/A		

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

**AAS CHRISTMAS TREE
Fundraiser 2012
FINAL CALL**

Last call to order your organically grown Christmas Tree and Wreath! The deadline to place your order is **November 9th**. Tree types, sizes, prices, and contact information are provide on page 4. Prices shown include tax.

This important Alachua Audubon fundraiser supports youth birding programs, local conservation efforts, and other bird-related activities.

The trees are comparably priced with other locally-available trees. However, our trees are fresher because they will be harvested just before our delivery date. Although the trees must be paid for in advance and are bought sight unseen, our customers' satisfaction has brought customers back year after year. Only trees 6-7 feet and smaller are now available.

Please consider buying a Christmas tree and/or wreath from AAS. And please tell your friends and family members! Thank you!!!!

Speakers Corner

Mark your calendars now! **Tuesday, Nov. 20, at 7:00 p.m.** at the Millhopper Library (3145 NW 43rd St.) The 172-mile Cross Florida Barge Canal was destined to be dug across the middle of Florida, from Yankeetown on the Gulf coast to the St. Johns River in Palatka. However, 50 years ago, Marjorie Carr, a Gainesville environmental activist, and other environmentalists, began raising questions regarding the devastating environmental impacts associated with digging the long canal. Consequently, they were instrumental in shutting down the boondoggle project, but not before about 1/3 of the canal had been dug. Local authors Steven Noll and David Tegeder, who wrote *Ditch of Dreams*, will discuss the ill fated canal and the ongoing controversy surrounding it.

**7th Annual Holiday Social
Friday, Dec. 7th; 6:30—9:00 pm
New Location!
1706 NW 17th Lane
Colony Park
Hostess: Lynn Rollins**

Come celebrate conservation, birds, and the holidays with the Alachua Audubon Society! This festive event will include hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and a silent auction—one of our important annual fund raising events. This year our holiday party will be held at Lynn Rollin's house in Colony Park subdivision, which backs up to Ring Park Nature Park. Colony Park is located on the north side of NW 16th Avenue about 1/2 mile west of NW 13th Street. Colony Park was constructed in an oval configuration and Lynn's house is located in the back right (northeast) corner of the subdivision. Look for our Alachua Audubon signs! Parking may be somewhat limited so consider carpooling with a friend.

Alachua Audubon will hold our annual Silent Auction at the Holiday Social and we are soliciting donations for the action. If you own a business, provide a service, create cool art, or have items to donate for the silent auction, please contact Debbie Segal (Debbie.segal@gmail.com; 352-514-0596) or Helen Warren (helenkwarren@cox.net; 352-214-7755). We are looking forward to seeing you at our upcoming Holiday Social!

Receive the Crane Electronically

Help Alachua Audubon reduce our costs of paper, printing, and mailing by receiving the Crane electronically. You will receive only one email per newsletter that will contain a link to the Alachua Audubon Website. To start receiving the Crane electronically, send an email to AAS-thecrane@att.net. In the subject line put the word Newsletter. And include your name and address.

Project Feederwatch

Do you like to watch birds at your feeders? Would you like to contribute to scientific knowledge about birds? Project Feederwatch may be for you. Project Feederwatch is a citizen science project sponsored by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada for the past 25 years. The protocol has participants identify the boundaries of their count site around their feeders and then between the second week in November and the first week in April, participants count the maximum number of each species that comes to the feeders over a two day period. Each two-day count period must be at least six days apart, so as long as you are in town, you count birds for the project once a week and then submit your counts onto the Project Feederwatch website along with information about the weather and the amount of time you spent counting birds.

I have been a participant for about 20 years and get a great deal of enjoyment from my involvement. It is very interesting to look back at my records over the 12 years I have lived in Gainesville and see the increase in the number of species I attract to my feeders as I've improved my yard and offered additional types of food to birds. I've learned that a key time to watch my feeders is at dusk. Often I will have as many as 20 cardinals come to my feeders at the same time. Brown Thrashers, Gray Catbirds, and Hermit Thrush often come to my bird bath at dusk for a bath. Daybreak is a good time to catch Ovenbirds or sparrows coming for a quick bite. Without the close attention I pay to my feeders during my count days I would not have learned of these consistent behaviors. If you are interested in learning more, go to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/index.html>. There is a small fee to participate (\$15 or \$12 if you are Lab member) to defray the cost of the materials that are mailed at the beginning of each season and to pay the salaries of the staff who coordinate the project.

By Anne Casella

Ready for an Adventure?

On September 22nd, I returned from the National Audubon Camp at Hog Island on coastal Maine. I was a camper in the program "*Living on the Wind: Fall Migration and Monhegan Island 2012*". This was a fantastic experience and I am urging you to think about attending an Audubon camp next summer. Different camp sessions are planned for families, teens, educators, and adult birders.

Scott Weidensaul, author of the Pulitzer nominated *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds*, was the camp director and instructor. It was thrilling to watch Scott band birds and prepare a bird skin for the camp museum. Another instructor was Stephen Kress, the ornithologist who brought puffins back to the Atlantic coast and created Project Puffin.

Boat trips to watch birds, an overnight trip to Monhegan Island (a famous artist colony) where we hiked up to the lighthouse in the dark to listen for bird migration, and lectures every evening were part of the fun.

A student, Steve Goodman, who was sponsored by Alachua Audubon, wrote in the last *Crane Newsletter* of his fine experience when he attended Teen Camp this summer. Steve commented on the wonderful meals. Fresh coffee cakes, clam chowder, and a lobster dinner all contributed to two extra pounds on my frame. The chef is a true marvel.

If the cost exceeds your budget consider volunteering as a kitchen helper or cleaner. Volunteers attend lectures and go birding on boat trips as space allows. The stunning beauty of the Maine coast and bays and living on an island surrounded by lobster buoys are experiences that will delight you. Next summer a new session is being planned for Art and Birding – nature writing, poetry, sketching. For more information go to www.audubon.org and click on Get Outdoors and then Hog Island Audubon Camp.

By Emily Schwartz



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Upcoming Christmas Bird Counts

Gainesville Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, Dec. 16—Those interested in attending this all-day event should contact John Hintermister (352-316-2396; jhintermister@gmail.com) or Howard Adams (352-665-3716; HOWARDPPSP@aol.com) by Dec. 8th

Friday, Dec. 14—Melrose; Contact Jim Swarr 352-475-1999

Tuesday, Dec. 18—Ichetucknee/Santa Fe/O'Leno; Contact: Ginger Morgan 386-497-4690

Thursday, Dec. 20—Hamilton County; Contact: Jerry Krummrich Krummrich@bellsouth.net

Thursday, Dec. 27—Cedar Key; Contact Ron Christen 850-567-0490



Photograph of Bob Simons and Debbie Segal installing a bluebird box in north Alachua County. Photograph taken by Erika Simons.

Around The County (continued from Page 2.)

later and estimated 125, a guess he considered conservative. Frank and I also found a Clay-colored Sparrow near the La Chua platform, along with a gorgeous Bobolink. Geoff Parks didn't have to go so far to see a Clay-colored Sparrow. He found one in his yard Oct. 13 feeding on plantings of a pretty native grass called coral foxtail. Another nice sparrow sighting was a Lark Sparrow seen and photographed Sept. 24 in Bob Wallace's yard near Alachua.

A Yellow-headed Blackbird or two shows up annually at the Hague Dairy, so after the cold front went through Rex Rowan and I decided to give the place a look. Though the numbers of cowbirds and other blackbirds was low, we did manage to find a near-adult Yellow-headed Blackbird among them. Hopefully by the time you receive this copy of the *Crane* there will be thousands of blackbirds at the dairy, along with a small assortment of hungry raptors. It will also be time to look for stray western flycatchers. This could be the year a Vermillion Flycatcher or a Say's Phoebe shows up; and keep your hummingbird feeders clean and full...you may experience the joy and excitement of attracting a Rufous, Black-chinned, or some hummingbird species rarer yet!

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through October 13, 2012

Fall Migration Count (Cont. from Page 12)

Warbler 1; Yellow Warbler 59; Chestnut-sided Warbler 8; Palm Warbler 4; Pine Warbler 55; Yellow-throated Warbler 58; Prairie Warbler 32; Yellow-breasted Chat 1; Eastern Towhee 70; Summer Tanager 55; Northern Cardinal 512; Blue Grosbeak 16; Indigo Bunting 12; Bobolink 20 (17 by predawn flight calls); Red-winged Blackbird 286; Eastern Meadowlark 7; Common Grackle 469; Boat-tailed Grackle 186; Brown-headed Cowbird 37; Baltimore Oriole 2; House Finch 5; and House Sparrow 5.

By Rex Rowan

Alachua Audubon Fieldtrips and Raptor Migration

If you have joined Alachua Audubon for any of our recent fieldtrips, you are one of the many who observed lots of exciting birds and visited gorgeous natural areas. Migrating raptors have been spotted during several of the fieldtrips. During the September 22nd fieldtrip led by John Hintermister to the Road to Nowhere and Hagen's Cove—remote areas along the Gulf Coast—several Merlins and a Peregrine Falcon were observed. Other highlights of that fieldtrip were a pair of Short-tailed Hawks, a Clay-colored Sparrow, and several Cliff Swallows.

On October 7th, John Hintermister led another exciting fieldtrip, this time to Guana-Tolomato-Matanzas (GTM) National Estuary Research Reserve on the Atlantic coast, just north of St. Augustine. This fieldtrip was designed especially to search for migrating raptors that fly south along the Atlantic coast. We met Diane Reed, coordinator of the Guana Reserve Hawkwatch program, at the hawk watching platform, a location where Diane monitors migrating raptors daily during fall migration from September 27th through October 12th. Together with Dianne and her volunteers and the 10 Alachua Audubon members, we spotted over 20 migrating Peregrine Falcons, 7 Merlins, and 5 Southeastern American Kestrels.

While the Guana Reserve offers a great location to search for migrating raptors along the north Florida Atlantic coast, Curry Hammock State Park in the middle keys provides a superb location to observe south-flying raptors in the Florida keys. The narrowing of the Florida peninsula into the Florida Keys concentrates large flights of migrating raptors en route to southern wintering grounds each fall. Hawkwatch International operates an annual fall migration raptor survey at Curry Hammock State Park along with help from many volunteers. This year a world record was set at Curry Hammock State Park—as of October 16th, 3,242 Peregrine Falcons had been tallied migrating south during the 2012 fall migration period. This represents the highest count for that species ever recorded during a single migration

season anywhere in the world! And there were 28 count days remaining when this world record was set. The highest single day tally this season at Curry Hammock State Park was 651 Peregrine Falcons, which also represents the highest documented single-day Peregrine migration count in the world. These numbers speak loudly for ongoing conservation and rehabilitation efforts for a species that was nearly extirpated throughout much of the continent just a few decades ago.

By Debra Segal



A banded Peregrine Falcon photographed during migration at Curry Hammock State Park. Photo by Ted Keyel.

Thank you, Thank you!!

Our greatest appreciation goes out to those sponsors who donated money to provide local school teachers with Audubon Adventures educational kits. These informative educational packages, developed by the National Audubon Society, teach elementary-aged children many facets of conservation. Our sincere thanks go to Carol Alderson, Mary Louise Brey, Jane Brockmann, Jeanne and Charles Earnest, S.P. and K.M. Eoff, Scott and Kirsten Flamand, Martha E. King, Mary Landsman, Barbra Larson, Catherine Lee, Kim Marie Lepore, Paul and Deanne Moler, Barbara Mollison, Barbara Muschlitz, Ann Fearney Paul, Sara and Warren Rice, Claire and Betty Schelske, Debra Segal, Dr. John Sharp, John Winn, and Marion Van Alstyne.

Buying into the “Blue Revolution”

Three months ago we were all very concerned—lakes were drying up, springs flows were at all-time lows, and there were places where you could hop across the mighty Suwannee River without getting your feet wet. We were painfully aware of the “drought”. But with rains came relief. In fact, not only were spring flows bouncing back, there seemed to be water everywhere. We felt reassured, that all was back to normal. But for many this has been a wake-up call.

Several years ago journalist (and Gainesville resident) Cynthia Barnett wrote a book called *Mirage – Florida and the Vanishing Waters of the Eastern United States*. It was a warning to Floridians that we should learn from the mistakes of others. The outlook? Grim, that is unless we were to stop abusing this life sustaining natural resource. The stories are compelling and the book is now used as a textbook in many college classrooms. But can an enlightened few forestall the impending crisis?

In her second book *Blue Revolution Unmaking America’s Water Crisis*, Cynthia again tells us stories and shares examples, this time giving us hope. Our culture, our habits, our traditions come from the abundance of water that once was. But just changing habits is not the answer. We need to seize the opportunity to prepare for the future. Cynthia proposes the following approaches for a water ethic:

1 - We value water, from appreciating local streams to pricing water right. There is no value until there is scarcity.

2 – We work together to use less and less water rather than fight each other to grab more and more. Stop pointing fingers. Agree that we all need to accept responsibility and do what we can. The utilities are our biggest water users yet we are the ones creating the demand.

3 - We try to keep water local.

4 – We avoid the two big mistakes of our history: overtapping aquifers and surface waters and over relying on costly fixes that bring unintended consequences to future generations.

5 – We leave as much water as is pru-

dently possible in nature – aquifers, wetlands, and rivers - so our children and grandchildren, with the benefit of time and evolving knowledge, can make their own decisions on water.

And I wholeheartedly agree! Here’s an example. Having already reduced my household water consumption well below the state-wide average I became obsessed with lowering my use and saved over 180 gallons last month alone. When my water bill arrived I was shocked at the savings, only 49 cents! That comes out to less than 1/3 of a penny per gallon. This exemplifies how water is not properly valued by our utilities.

But there is also good news. An article in a recent Suwannee River Water Management District newsletter described the success of their Mallory Swamp project. After 40 years of draining 30,000 acres of wetlands into the Steinhatchee and Suwannee Rivers 311 culverts and 57 ditch blocks were installed to repair natural drainage patterns. Wetlands restoration has turned a dry baked landscape into an important recharged area currently holding 10 billion gallons of water. The opportunities are there. We need to beat the drum.

Let me grab one final quote from Cynthia’s latest book: “*The water ethic begins with that one, brave steward. Then it spreads out into the community, building collective courage among citizens, business people, church members, political leaders. Just like the ripples of children playing in a wide, free river.*”

There is plenty of water for our needs and the environment. We must learn to live within our means. We all need to work together to conserve but beyond that we must effect change through our beliefs. What is an ethic? A set or system of moral principles, what is right. I hope you too will join the Blue Revolution!

By Jacqui Sulek

Due to the critical nature of our water resources, Alachua Audubon will feature regular water articles in the Crane Newsletter.

Florida Water and Land Conservation Amendment We Need Your Help!

Conservation groups and concerned citizens throughout Florida have launched a statewide, grassroots campaign to put the Water and Land Conservation Amendment on the November 2014 ballot. This important amendment will dedicate funding for water and land conservation management and restoration by amending the state constitution. According to Will Abberger, the campaign's chair, "*This could be the most significant vote in Florida for our environment in our lifetime.*" The funds would go towards:

- « Restoring, managing, and acquiring lands necessary to protect Florida's drinking water sources and protect the water quality in our rivers, lakes, and streams;
- « Improve fish and wildlife habitat, protect forests and wetlands, and restore conservation lands that are an important part of Florida's natural heritage, economy, and quality of life;
- « Manage existing state and local natural areas, parks, and trails for water supply, habitat, and recreation;
- « Protect our beaches and shores; and
- « Protect and restore the Everglades and other degraded natural systems and waterways

Audubon Florida, Trust for Public Land, Florida Wildlife Federation, and the Sierra Club represent a small fraction of the almost 100 organizations that are supporting and backing this important amendment. However, one million signatures will be needed to put this important measure on the ballot in 2014.

The amendment will not increase taxes, nor will it increase state spending. It simply will allocate a portion of the existing documentary stamp tax—which is paid when real estate is sold—to water and land conservation, management, and restoration. This is the same funding

source that the state has used for water and land conservation for the last two decades, however, since 2009, the Legislature has slashed funding for conservation programs by 97.5 percent.

Alachua Audubon is one of the many organizations backing this important amendment and we are working hard to help collect the one million signatures needed to put this important amendment on the 2014 ballot. **Will you help us protect Florida's waters and lands by signing the petition to place the Florida Water and Land Conservation Amendment on the 2014 ballot?**

Here's how you can help:

1. **Sign the petition!** Brasingtons Trail Shop at 2331 NW 13th Street in Gainesville is serving as the local distribution and collection hub for this petition drive. Stop by Brasingtons Trail Shop and sign the petition. *The only requirement for signing a petition is that the signer must be a registered voter anywhere in Florida.*
2. **Help us collect signatures on the petition!** Staff at Brasingtons Trail Shop will give you a packet of petitions. You can take the petitions to your coworkers, family, and friends and ask them to sign the petition. And any group activity that you attend will be a great opportunity to collect signatures on the petition. Once signed, you can simply mail the petitions back to the campaign headquarters in Tallahassee (the address is on the petition) or you can return the signed petitions to Brasingtons.
3. **Donate!** Make a financial contribution to the Legacy Campaign (non tax-deductible) to help pay for the cost of printing petition forms, organizing volunteers across the state, and running a successful statewide campaign.

More information on Florida's Water and Land Legacy Campaign can be obtained at www.FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org; campaign@FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org; or at 850-294-4656.

2012 Fall Migration Count

The Sep. 15th fall-migration count in Alachua County tallied 122 species and 10,896 individual birds. There were 65 observers in 23 parties, who put in 138 hours and 167 miles. Wow!

Water and marsh birds were low in number, perhaps because the local wetlands were dry during the spring and early summer and unsuitable for breeding. However very heavy rains since that time made the same wetlands unsuitable for migrating shorebirds. The wet weather produced lots of plump berries and greenery for insects to eat, which should have resulted in plenty of migrant warblers, thrushes, and Red-eyed Vireos. And in fact the migrant warblers were fairly numerous, 730 individual birds of 23 species; however 7 species accounted for 81%.

Eleven species of birds were noted by all 15 teams: Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, White-eyed Vireo, and Red-eyed Vireo. I'd expect to see Red-bellied Woodpecker and Northern Cardinal on this list, but each was missed by one team.

At the other end of the scale, 12 species were represented by a single individual: Mississippi Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Short-tailed Hawk, King Rail, dowitcher sp. Whip-poor-will, Northern Flicker, Cliff Swallow, Golden-winged Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Since this is a migration count, we concentrate on migrants rather than making a thorough survey of all the bird life in the county, but I was still surprised that we didn't tally Muscovy Duck, Wood Duck, White-winged Dove, Barn Owl, Brown-headed Nuthatch, or two migrants we usually find, Black-throated Blue Warbler and Scarlet Tanager. So here's the complete list in current AOU order: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck 29; Mottled Duck 16; Blue-winged Teal 93; Northern Bobwhite 2; Wild Turkey 32; Pied-billed Grebe 15; Wood Stork 2; Double-crested Cormorant 77; Anhinga 35; American Bittern

8; Great Blue Heron 26; Great Egret 74; Snowy Egret 66; Little Blue Heron 67; Tricolored Heron 17; Cattle Egret 2130; Green Heron 24; Black-crowned Night-Heron 6; White Ibis 151; Glossy Ibis 110; Black Vulture 77; Turkey Vulture 173; Osprey 6; Mississippi Kite 1; Bald Eagle 27; Northern Harrier 3; Sharp-shinned Hawk 1; Cooper's Hawk 4; Red-shouldered Hawk 71; Short-tailed Hawk 1; Red-tailed Hawk 7; King Rail 1; Common Gallinule 46; American Coot 2; Sandhill Crane 36; Killdeer 8; Spotted Sandpiper 2; Pectoral Sandpiper 5; dowitcher, sp. 1; Wilson's Snipe 5; Black Tern 37; Rock Pigeon 109; Eurasian Collared-Dove 10; Mourning Dove 177; Common Ground-Dove 9; Yellow-billed Cuckoo 23; Eastern Screech-Owl 2; Great Horned Owl 10; Barred Owl 24; Whip-poor-will 1; Chimney Swift 325; Ruby-throated Hummingbird 12; Belted Kingfisher 12; Red-headed Woodpecker 58; Red-bellied Woodpecker 216; Downy Woodpecker 141; Northern Flicker 1; Pileated Woodpecker 88; American Kestrel 9; Eastern Wood-Pewee 8; Acadian Flycatcher 66; Empidonax, sp. 9; Great Crested Flycatcher 11; Loggerhead Shrike 11; White-eyed Vireo 562; Yellow-throated Vireo; Red-eyed Vireo; Blue Jay 235; American Crow 170; Fish Crow 122; crow sp. 7; Tree Swallow 2; Bank Swallow 10; Cliff Swallow 1; Barn Swallow 89; Carolina Chickadee 149; Tufted Titmouse 358; Carolina Wren 392; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 200; Eastern Bluebird 43; Veery 943 (852 by predawn flight calls); Swainson's Thrush 29 (26 by predawn flight calls); Wood Thrush 30 (all by predawn flight calls); Gray Catbird 8; Northern Mockingbird 86; Brown Thrasher 23; European Starling 9; Ovenbird 121; Worm-eating Warbler 8; Louisiana Waterthrush 1; Northern Waterthrush 24; waterthrush, sp. 3; Golden-winged Warbler 1; Blue-winged Warbler 7; Black-and-white Warbler 23; Prothonotary Warbler 3; Tennessee Warbler 6; Kentucky Warbler 2; Common Yellowthroat 56; Hooded Warbler 15; American Redstart 83; Northern Parula 159; Magnolia Warbler 2; Blackburnian (*Continued on Page 8*)

Protect Our Native Ecosystems Report Invasive Animals

From pythons to tegus to lionfish, many of the invasive animals spreading throughout our state pose significant threats to native wildlife and ecosystems. As a network of citizens across the state with keen eyes and an appreciation of our most precious ecosystems, our Audubon members are perfectly-suited to assist Audubon's efforts as "eyes and ears" on the ground. Visit the website (<http://fl.audubon.org/invasive-species-task-force>) to learn how to easily identify and report non-native animals that you may see while out birding, visiting your favorite park, or even along highways or in your own community. Reporting only takes minutes online or using a simple smartphone app and can make a big difference to land managers who are trying to get a handle on these growing populations. You can also stay on top of invasive species news through the monthly 'Invader Updater' series on the Audubon Florida News Blog (<http://audubonoffloridanews.org/>). New invasive animals are continually appearing here in Florida, and it is up to us to help detect and report them before populations are out of control!

By Shawn E. Liston, Ph.D.
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Florida
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Community Calendar

November 1st—Sierra Club Meeting at 7:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville (4225 NW 34th St.). Jason Fults with Gainesville Loves Mountains will speak on a proposed citywide Energy Conservation Ordinance to help achieve an energy efficient community. The ordinance would apply to landlords and would be of particular benefit to residential and commercial renters.

November 15th—Native Plant Society meeting at 7 pm at the United Church of Gainesville (1624 NW 5th Ave.). Linda Hart will teach us how to make natural floral arrangements using native plants.

November 20th— Alachua Audubon Presentation at 7 pm at the Millhopper Library (3145 NW 43rd St.) Local authors Steven Noll and David Tegeder, who wrote *Ditch of Dreams*, will discuss the ill fated Cross Florida Barge Canal and the ongoing controversy surrounding it. (*More information on page 5*).

December 6th- Sierra Club Meeting at 7:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville (4225 NW 34th St.). Dr. Dwight Adams will speak on a proposed "Bottle Bill" (container deposit) in the state of Florida.



Photograph of Black and White Warbler taken by Erika Simons.

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The Crane
Nov.—Dec. 2012

We hope to see you at the Alachua Audubon Holiday Social on December 7th! New location this year at Colony Park. See page 5 for more details.

Have you signed the Florida Water and Land Legacy Campaign petition yet? See page 11 for more information on how each of us can play a small but important role in protecting our critical water and land areas.

Visit Alachua Audubon Society on Facebook at <http://tinyurl.com/alachuaaudubon> and click “like” and you will be kept up to date on field trips, events, and more!

Join Audubon!

To join Audubon on 3 levels (National, Florida, and Alachua), fill in application and mail to:

Paul Moler 7818 Highway 346 Archer, Florida 32618

Questions? Contact Paul 352-495-9419 or
paulmoler@bellsouth.net

Chapter E-18 New Membership Application **Not for renewals!**

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