



The Crane

Volume 57 Number 5 May-June 2016

May Field Trips and Programs

These are the last Audubon-sponsored fieldtrips of the season. Field trips will resume in September.

Saturday, April 30, 6:00 a.m.

Jacksonville: Meet trip leader Rex Rowan at the Exchange Publix at NW 13th St. and 39th Ave. to car-pool to Jacksonville, where we'll look for shorebirds, gulls, and terns, all in their breeding plumage, at Huguenot Park (entry fee \$4 per vehicle + \$1 for each additional person), and migrant songbirds, including Painted Buntings, at Ft. George Island. Difficulty: 3

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

Powers Park and Palm Point: Meet trip leader Barbara Shea at Powers Park to check for migrants in the trees along the boat channel and to scan the lake from the fishing pier. Then we'll travel to nearby Palm Point to search for more migrants like American Redstart, Cape May and Blackpoll Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. Difficulty: 1

Saturday, May 7, 8:00 a.m.

Loblolly Greenway: Meet Sam Ewing, one of Alachua County's top youth birders, at Loblolly Woods Nature Park for a walk through the forest that borders Hogtown Creek. We'll be looking for spring migrants as well as locally-nesting species like Red-eyed Vireo, Barred Owl, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Difficulty: 1

Sunday, May 8, 8:00 a.m.

Sweetwater Wetlands Park: Join trip leader Debbie Segal for a birding stroll at Gainesville's newest birding

hotspot, a site that has already logged over 180 bird species! We'll search for wetland birds like Least Bittern, Purple Gallinule, and Limpkin in the treatment wetlands and forest-dwelling birds in the cypress preserve. Entry fee \$5 per vehicle. Bring sunscreen and water. Difficulty: 3

Saturday, May 14, 8:00 a.m.

Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve (CLEP*): Meet trip leader Michael Drummond at the Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve on CR 325. We'll hope to see Bachman's Sparrow, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-headed Woodpecker, and others, but they won't be our primary quarry; we'll be looking at everything – trees, wildflowers, insects, reptiles, whatever we find. Directions: east on Hawthorne Rd. to CR 325, right on CR 325 for 2.3 miles. Bring bug spray, sunscreen, and water. Difficulty: 3

Sunday, May 15, Time: 7:30

Breeding Bird Atlas Field Trip: Meet at Powers Park and learn about the breeding birds of Alachua County with Adam Kent by participating in a fun breeding bird atlas-style field trip. We'll focus on bird behaviors such as territoriality and courtship that indicate potential breeding. Come and open your mind to a new perspective on bird watching! Difficulty: 2

Continued on Page 5

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

Alachua Audubon Officers &
Chairpersons of
Standing Committees

President	Anne Casella	352-378-0505
Vice President.....	Scott Flamand	352-665-7020
Secretary.....	Felicia Lee	714-791-8855
Treasurer	Trina Anderson	352-363-6810
Membership.....	Paul Moler	352-495-9419
Field Trips.....	John Hintermister	352-316-2396
Education	Emily Schwartz	352-372-0754
Bird Classes.....	Charlene Leonard	352-226-1214
Festivals	Barbara Shea	352-472-4650
Conservation.....	Bob Simons	352-372-7646
Crane Editor	Debbie Segal	352-514-0596
Submittals	debbie.segal @gmail.com	
Advertising	Debbie Segal	352-514-0596
Website	Rex Rowan	352-371-9296
Yearbook	Bob Carroll	352-372-6698
Crane Circulation ...	Erika and Bob Simons, Paul Moler, and other volunteers	
AAS Website.....	www.alachuaudubon.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 sustainable use of natural resources.

Content of *The Crane* is the sole responsibility of the editor and fulfills stated objectives and goals of Alachua Audubon Society. Annual subscription to *The Crane* is included in National Audubon dues. See back page for subscription information. Submissions to *The Crane* are welcomed.

**Deadline for
July-Aug Crane:
June 15th**



March is usually a waiting game. By then, most wintering rarities have already been discovered and focus shifts to checking off our returning neotropical breeders and migrants. However, this March almost exploded with interesting late-winter strays that kept birders on the run throughout the entire month.

First was the appearance (or re-appearance) of a Western Tanager March 3rd in the yard of Jack and Mary Lynch in High Springs, who graciously allowed birders access to their yard to view this beauty. Another showed up April 9th in Sarah Reynierson's yard west of Tower Road, and with one reported earlier by Bryan Tarbox, there were at least three Western Tanagers in the county this winter.

Sam Ewing was perusing daily eBird reports from March 6th and noticed one report from an out-of-town birder visiting La Chua trail that included a photo incorrectly identifying a bird as an Orange-crowned Warbler. Sam noted the photo was actually of a Bell's Vireo, and represented only the second record of that species in the county! Rex Rowan and I ran out to La Chua having no idea where to look for the bird (the basin's a big place!), but eventually set our sights up the power line along Sparrow Alley where we heard (but did not see) a very secretive vireo emitting a scolding call that sounded suspiciously like Bell's Vireo. The following day several birders converged on that spot, and bingo...the bird was positively seen!

Andy Kratter regularly traverses the rail trail as it passes the Depot Road ponds and has found several rarities along that route in the past (Western Kingbird, Dickcissel). He found another while passing March 9th when a Lark Sparrow popped up along a fence line near the ponds. The bird remained in that general area for at least a couple of days. The unprecedented number of Nashville Warblers wintering or passing through continued to grow. John Hintermister had one visiting his yard March 5-10th, Anne Casella noticed one at her birdbath March 27th, and Andy Kratter had one singing in his yard April 9th. Including the ones seen this winter, that made a mind-blowing minimum of seven Nashville Warblers this season! I don't think we've ever had more than one in a single year, and many years we've missed them entirely. White-faced Ibis have become more regular here over the last several winters, but we nearly missed them this year until Trina Anderson picked one out of a flock of Glossy Ibis March 24th at Chapman's Pond.

Arguably the most exciting bird to appear so far this year was a male Snail Kite first discovered March 20th at Sweetwater Wetlands Park by Lloyd Davis. This was only the third confirmed record for the county, and the first here in ten years. (Continued on Page 5)

K K
I O
D R
Z' N
E
R

Drawing by
Andre Frattino



Kids Seeing Birds!!

The Audubon Youth Birding program provides opportunities for children to learn about birds. On February 28th, three families enjoyed good weather and great birding at Sweetwater Wetlands Park, while learning about ducks and waterfowl. **TIP** for parents and grandparents: Sweetwater Wetlands Park is a tremendous place to introduce kids to birding. By walking along a raised berm, kids can look down into the wetland where they are able to spot many birds.

A new program was introduced on April 17th thanks to Adam Kent who suggested Urban Birding. Five families strolled around the Thomas Center and Duck Pond area of downtown Gainesville in search of birds. Although the weather was windy, we saw many fine birds. An eight year old bird lover, Isa, spotted a stunning American Goldfinch that the adults had not noticed!

Birds seen downtown included Northern Cardinal, Downy Woodpecker, Mourning Dove, Turkey Vulture, Tufted Titmouse, Blue Jay, Northern Mockingbird, Carolina Chickadee, Carolina Wren, Great Crested Flycatcher, Cedar Waxwing, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Crow, Anhinga, American Goldfinch, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Chimney Swift, Osprey, Sandhill Crane (flying), and Red-shouldered Hawk. Many thanks to the Audubon volunteers—Sharon Kuchinski, Ted and Steven Goodman, and Adam Kent.

By Emily Schwartz

Family Nature Walk

Join Alachua Audubon on Sunday, May 15th from 9 to 11 am for a **Woodpecker Walk**, our last youth outing this season. Perhaps you would like to bring a grandchild or a neighborhood youth. We will enjoy a walk in the park and look for four species of woodpeckers along with other birds. Meet at **Northeast Park**, which is on the south side of NE 16th Avenue about one block east of Main Street. Look for us near the tennis courts. If you will notify us that you are coming at audubonyouthbirding@gmail.com we will reserve some loaner binoculars for you.

Questions? Call 352-372-0754

By Emily Schwartz

Youth Birding Competition

Again this year, two of Alachua Audubon's local youths - Steven Goodman and Sam Ewing - will participate in the Georgia Youth Birding Competition. The competition begins at 5 pm on Friday, April 22nd and ends the following day at 5 pm. The goal is to see or hear as many species as possible, in the state of Georgia during that 24-hour time frame, which coincides with the peak of spring migration. One of the many challenges will be planning a route that will cover the widest range of habitats within the state of Georgia. Ted Goodman, Dean Ewing, and Adam Kent will chaperone the young men. Alachua Audubon helps sponsor their expenses as they take part in this challenging activity.

Designated as Team Florida Scrub Jay, Steven Goodman and Sam Ewing won the competition last year by tallying a whooping 167 species and setting a new record for the Georgia Youth Birding Competition.

Good luck Steven and Sam!

Summer Classic – The June Challenge!

The Thirteenth Annual June Challenge will run from June 1st through June 30th. The Challenge is a friendly competition originated by Alachua Audubon's Becky Enneis in 2004 in order to get us outside where we belong. That's the actual point of it – to get us outside, looking at nature – but the rationale of the Challenge is for you to see as many species of birds in Alachua County as you can during the month of June. It's a competition because the desire to win, or at least beat your last year's total, will motivate you to go birding, but we don't take that aspect of it too seriously.

June is a month that most birders spend indoors, and consequently it's largely terra incognita as far as bird movements are concerned. In 2004, the first year we did it, we were amazed to find several locally-rare tern species on Newnans Lake, and in 2006 we found a Snail Kite on Paynes Prairie; obviously we wouldn't have known about any of those birds if we'd stayed inside. Who knows what might be out there this year? If you're interested in joining us, here are the rules: (1) Only birds seen in Alachua County during the month of June may be counted. (Those of you living in other counties are encouraged to do June Challenges there, too, and to report the results to me at the email address below when it's over. You folks in Gilchrist, Marion, and Columbia may find yourselves discovering new birding spots.) (2) Heard birds do not count; you've got to actually *see* those Chuck-will's-widows and Eastern Screech-Owls. (3) You are free to put Muscovy Ducks, retention-pond Mallards, and Whooping Cranes on your list. (4) Email your list to me by midnight on Thursday, June 30th. We'll have a party within a day or two afterward, to hand out prizes and have a good time.

That's simple, isn't it? Now here are a few tips: Do as much birding as possible during the first few days of the month. You're more likely to see lingering spring migrants that way.

Purple Martins, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and Orchard Orioles may complete their nesting and leave before the month's end, so get them early too. But don't neglect the last few days of the month either, because they've produced early fall-migrant Louisiana Waterthrushes, Black-and-white Warblers, and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs.

Make several visits to Newnans Lake and other large bodies of water to scan for gulls, terns, and pelicans, which may come and go on a daily basis. Go to Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve for Bachman's Sparrows and San Felasco Hammock for Hooded Warblers. And this will be the first June Challenge during which Sweetwater Wetlands Park will be open seven days a week. No telling what birding treasures it might produce. There are over 100 species possible here in June. The first and last few hours of daylight are best. Birds tend to sing early in the morning.

Good luck to all of you who decide to join us! In the spirit of good sportsmanship, let me know (rexrowan@gmail.com) when you see an unexpected bird so I can pass the word. Don't keep it a secret – as I say, it's a *friendly* competition, based on our shared enthusiasm for birding rather than a desire to come in first.

And of course follow the progress of the Challenge at <http://www.alachuaudubon.org/bird-reports/>

By Rex Rowan

Receive The Crane Electronically

Help us save money and trees by receiving *The Crane* electronically. Simply send an email to AAS-thecrane@att.net Please include your name and address.

Field Trips (continued from Page 1)

Saturday, May 21

Wildflowers of Jennings State Forest

This field trip has been cancelled.

Wednesday, June 1, 6:15 am

June Challenge Kick-off: Meet Rex Rowan in the parking corral of the Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve (on CR 325 2.3 miles south of Hawthorne Rd.) to kick off The June Challenge. We'll try to find Common Nighthawk and Bachman's Sparrow at Longleaf. Next we'll go to Windsor to scope Newnans Lake for Bald Eagles and Laughing Gulls. If time allows we'll also visit Powers Park and Palm Point for additional views of Newnans Lake and possibly some late migrants. Our last stop will be La Chua Trail (\$4 per vehicle entry fee) to search for Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Chat, Orchard Oriole, King Rail, Least Bittern, and Purple Gallinule. We'll be done by lunchtime with 40-50 species on our June Challenge lists. Difficulty: 3

**The Conservation Lands Educational Program (CLEP) is designed to bring attention to local land conservation efforts. These trips are conducted on properties purchased to protect natural resources and will be led by a representative who will discuss ecological features and history. CLEP trips will be educational experiences, so the emphasis will be on much more than birding.*

Reserve a Party Box!

REDUCE – Everyone knows the 3 Rs – reduce, reuse, recycle. Alachua Audubon can help you reduce waste paper by reusing! We have created a “party box” – two Tupperware bins with hard plastic plates and platters, glass drinking glasses, and silverware. It is perfect for your picnic or patio party. Use of the party box is environmentally sound.

If you would like to borrow the party box for your next event (should be enough for a casual party for up to 16 people), please contact Emily Schwartz at emilysgfl@gmail.com to reserve the party boxes. They are free of charge but must be returned clean.

Photograph of White-eyed Vireo sitting on a nest.
Photo taken by Don Monroe.

Around the County (Continued from Page 2)

Even more unusual was that this was an adult bird present during what would generally be considered breeding season. At one point the bird was photographed carrying a stick, which would normally confirm nesting behavior; however, with no female present, this was probably just wishful thinking on Mr. Kite's part. The closest breeding sites for Snail Kite are down in central Florida but the birds can wander widely, and the abundance of apple snails at Sweetwater make it likely we will see this species again. Another rare sighting at Sweetwater was a pair of Caspian Terns reported April 9th by Glenn Israel.

Most of our neotropical migrants and breeding birds arrived more or less on schedule but we did have some notably early birds. John Hintermister's Worm-eating Warbler March 29 at San Felasco Hammock beat the early record, as did two Blackpoll Warblers: one at San Felasco Hammock April 3rd seen by Felicia Lee and another on UF campus on the 5th reported by Matt O' Sullivan.

By the time this issue of the Crane reaches your inbox or mailbox spring migration will be in full bloom. American Redstarts, Cape May, Blackpoll, and Black-throated Blue Warblers should be fairly common in woodlands, along with flocks of cheery Bobolinks, which are usually seen in marshes with lots of seeding cutgrass. Less common but possible are Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrush, and maybe, if you are very, very lucky... a Connecticut Warbler will cross your path!

Thanks to those who shared their sightings through April 12, 2016.



BLUE Highway
a pizzeria
Eat well, live well...

Tioga • Micanopy • Ocala • www.BlueHighwayPizza.com

"A critical link in the Costa Rican Bird Route" - costaricanbirdroute.com

SELVA VERDE
LODGE & RAINFOREST RESERVE
Sarapiquí, Costa Rica

Rated 4.5 out of 5 on Tripadvisor

www.selvaverde.com | 800-451-7111

Optics for the Tropics, Inc

CAN TAKE YOU TO CUBA
5TH ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST SEPT 11-17, 2016
\$1500 INCL'DS AIRFARE FROM TAMPA
ALL MEALS, TRANSPORT, LODGING, FIELD TRIPS
JONI@OPTICSFORTHETROPICS.ORG

KESTREL
ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Native plant restoration
Biological Monitoring
Invasive/exotic plant surveys & control
Tree surveys & hazard tree evaluation

Erick D. Smith Michael Meisenburg
erick@kestreleco.com michael@kestreleco.com
(352) 380-0648 (352) 339-0701
Certified Arborist FL 5376A www.kestreleco.com

Wild Birds Unlimited®
Your Backyard Birdfeeding Specialist®

Birdseed • Feeders • Nesting Boxes • Nature Gifts • Optics

4215 NW 16th Blvd Gainesville
352-381-1997
gainesville.wbu.com
gainesvillewbu@hotmail.com

Mon-Sat 10-6 Sun 11-4

HOLBROOK
TRAVEL

SINCE 1974

BIRDING & NATURE TOURS
LATIN AMERICA, EASTERN AFRICA AND BEYOND

holbrooktravel.com | 800-451-7111 |

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

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery

The green burial option for people and pets that preserves and restores land, protects water and air, and allows for meaningful ceremonies.

www.conservationburialinc.org
352-317-7307

**Alachua Audubon Society
P. O. Box 140464
Gainesville, Florida 32614-0464**

**Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Gainesville Florida 32601
Permit No. 18**



The Crane
May-June 2016

**Like us on Facebook and
Check Out Our Revised Website**

Visit us at alachuaaudubon.org and peruse the wealth of information posted there, such as up-to-date local birding reports, a schedule of field trips, programs, and classes, a list of Alachua County's best birding sites, a history of birding in Alachua County, info on caring for injured birds, lists of other wildlife that occur in Alachua County, a page of links to other birding and conservation websites, and much more.

Join Audubon!

To join Audubon on 3 levels (National, Florida, and Alachua), fill in application and mail to:
Paul Moler 7818 SW Co Rd 346 Archer, Florida 32618
Questions? Contact Paul 352-495-9419 or
paulmoler@bellsouth.net

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

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Please check level of membership:

Basic \$35.00

Introductory \$20.00

Make check payable to National Audubon Society
OR

Alachua Audubon Chapter ONLY Membership \$10.00
Make checks payable to Alachua Audubon Society
(Receive The Crane but no National or State Publication)