

The Crane

Volume 61 Number 6 July–August 2020

Message From The President

Alachua Audubon Society is embarking on several new and exciting initiatives in 2020/2021 as well as expanding our successful existing programs. After almost a year of planning, AAS board members Jonathan Varol and Dr. Katie Sieving have established a **bird banding lab** at Alachua Conservation Trust's Prairie Creek Lodge property. The necessary banding permits have been received, new nets and equipment have been purchased, and some initial bird banding occurred in early 2020 before the field work was shut down by COVID-19. The purpose of the bird banding lab is to help educate and train students and other participants on the scientific methods of capturing, banding, and tracking birds.

The Alachua Audubon **college internship program** has been extremely successful and, despite a truncated spring internship schedule (due to the pandemic), six college interns gained valuable career experience by participating in a multitude of projects. Those projects included monitoring spring migration of Common Loons, netting and banding birds at the AAS bird banding lab, leading family bird walks, constructing, installing, and monitoring kestrel nest boxes, and tagging Snail Kites. We will again host a fall and spring internship program and compile a list of exciting projects for the new interns.

Four high school seniors were awarded the **John Hintermister Memorial High School Scholarship program** in memory of John Hintermister, who was a charter member and long-time volunteer of AAS and a huge supporter of high school programs. We plan to advertise this high school scholarship program more widely this year in hopes of attracting even more applicants and to promote an interest in conservation.

AAS hopes to resume our weekend field trips this fall. Field trips will adhere to any county safety guidelines regarding COVID-19 protocols, as well as any AAS protocols. Given the potential for changes to the county protocols, field trips, safety guidelines, and any updates to field trips will be posted on the [AAS website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

As a local stakeholder and partner with **Sweetwater Wetlands Park**, AAS has made multiple contributions to the park that facilitate the education and enjoyment of birds. Our newest projects with the park will be purchasing a large white-board map so rangers and visitors can label specific locations where target species have been observed, designing and constructing educational signs for the overlook structures in Cells 2 and 3, and purchasing a collection of binoculars for the rangers to use when their educational tours resume.

GRU has embarked on the initial design of a new treatment wetland and has invited AAS to be a stakeholder and provide input on the public use facilities.

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Alachua Audubon Society's mission is to foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, to protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, and to promote sustainable use of natural resources.

Submissions to *The Crane* are welcomed. Deadline for the Sept–Oct issue: August 15th

Content of *The Crane* fulfills the stated objectives and goals of the Alachua Audubon Society. Annual subscription to *The Crane* is included in National Audubon and/or Alachua Audubon membership. Please see the back page for more information.

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

back-to-back, forcing large numbers of migrants to remain grounded in our woodlands and yards for extended periods of time. One peak day

was April 25th when at *minimum* forty-seven Blackpoll and forty-three Cape May Warblers were tallied at various locations around the county, and there were so many Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at backyard feeders it was difficult to keep count of them all! Several consecutive days of winds shifting variably from northwest to



Blackpoll Warbler. Photo by Mike Manetz.

northeast resulted in extraordinary numbers of some warbler species we either don't usually see in spring or expect only in small numbers. These included an unprecedented twelve Magnolia Warblers, eleven Black-throated Green Warblers, six Yellow Warblers, and four each of Bay-breasted and Blue-winged Warblers, all appearing in glorious spring plumage. Less colorful but more astonishing was the total of twenty-two Veerys when usually the mention of more than one or two in spring would raise eyebrows. Others in the seldom-seen department included a Swainson's Warbler recorded singing April 25th at Sweetwater Wetlands Park (SWP) by Chris and Marie Chappell, and a very rare Connecticut Warbler discovered May 11th at Morningside Nature Center by David Alvarez. Adding to the unusual nature of this spring's migration was the appearance of two species never before recorded here in spring: Adam Zions photographed a Black-billed Cuckoo April 25th at Split Rock Park, and Caroline Poli found a Golden-winged Warbler May 4th at Bivens Rim Conservation Area.

There were large concentrations of migrant shorebirds too, but unfortunately most of these were in fairly inaccessible locations on Paynes Prairie basin, and too distant to inspect in detail. But smaller contingents were often visible from SWP and included at times over a hundred Least Sandpipers and token numbers of Semipalmated Plovers, Semipalmated and White-rumped Sandpipers. Tim Hardin managed to

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Alachua Audubon Honors Black Birdwatchers Week

For most of us, natural spaces are a source of comfort and refuge. But for people of color—especially Black Americans—wilderness spaces can be treacherous. Historically, they’ve been the site of lynchings. And black people today are still treated with suspicion and hostility even in popular and well-visited natural areas.

New York Audubon board member Christian Cooper experienced this in a frightening way. While looking for migrant warblers in Central Park in May, he politely requested a fellow park visitor to follow park regulations and leash her dog. The dog owner responded with an angry tirade and a falsified police report that a large African American male was threatening her life. Fortunately, he had the presence of mind to document the encounter on video and leave the area before the police arrived.

His video of the encounter went viral. Birders take care of their own, and by the end of the day, National Audubon and numerous other organizations were speaking out not just on Cooper’s behalf, but on behalf of all black birders and nature lovers. By the end of the week, a group of black birders and wildlife scholars had organized Black Birders Week, a series of live online talks and social media initiatives to introduce black birders to each other and to the rest of the birding community, and to start serious conversations about the barriers black nature lovers face and how to correct them.

As a person of color and AAS board member, I strongly believe Alachua Audubon needs to be part of this conversation. While I’ve NEVER been made to feel unwelcome or disrespected at any of our events, I’ve always been aware that I stand out. Being often the only non-white face in a group of 30 or 40 people seems odd, given Gainesville’s diversity and the friendliness of our members. I can’t help thinking that a lot of people who’d love our activities are missing out, for reasons we’re only now starting to identify.

So when TV20 News contacted fellow board member Tim Hardin for our chapter’s thoughts on Black Birders Week, we asked Duncan Kabinu, a proud black birder, entrepreneur, and accomplished nature photographer, to share his thoughts. Among his insights (and those of other participants in Black Birders Week programs) are these:

Black birders may feel unsafe in certain spaces that white birders take for granted, such as on private properties or in predominantly white neighborhoods. Being mistaken for a prowler—or worse, being wrongly arrested for being one—is a very real concern.

Being the only one of your kind in a group can be an intimidating barrier to entry for many would-be black birders. It may take only one pioneer to assure others that a group is welcoming and safe.

Duncan has kindly volunteered to be that ambassador for Gainesville’s birding community.

No one likes being treated as a curiosity. Black birders love birds for the same reasons as everyone else, and want to participate in birding trips and other activities for the same reasons too. Talk to the black birders you meet the same way you talk to any of your other birder friends—you may have more in common than you think.

Another idea raised during the week’s discussions was offering free bird walks in black neighborhoods to make it easy and comfortable for locals to participate. Here in Gainesville, many of our best birding hotspots—the parks around Newnans Lake, Morningside Nature Center, and La Chua Trail—are in the heart of historically black East Gainesville. While AAS field trips have always been free and open to everyone, it’s time we became more proactive in welcoming the residents of the neighborhoods we’ve explored and enjoyed for so long.



By Felicia Lee

The 17th Annual June Challenge

The 2020 June Challenge was ... well, I'll defer to Mitch Walters, who posted this on the Alachua County Birding Facebook page: "The year 2020 hasn't been the best year, in fact, it's been the literal worst. But June 2020 was arguably the best month of birding I've ever experienced in my six or seven years in Gainesville. It's been so much fun participating in the June Challenge, not only because of all the birds I've seen, but also because of all the lovely people I've connected with along the way. Whether it's sloggng through 200 yards of wet, gator-growling prairie to see a Yellow-breasted Chat or spotlighting four different species of owl one evening at La Chua, it's been quite the adventure and the perfect escape from all the craziness enveloping our country. Congrats to the winners and thank you ALL for making this month a bright spot in a year full of darkness. Stay safe and keep birding!"

Possibly because it offered an enjoyable alternative to the COVID-19 lockdown, this year's June Challenge seemed to inspire extra enthusiasm. We had 51 participants, the most ever, and nearly half of them saw 100 or more species. Our two winners, Tim Hardin and Jacob Ewert, aimed at setting a new record. They would have done it, too, if Mother Nature had cooperated, if there'd been a tropical storm to blow in a few more coastal species or a drought that encouraged shorebirds to linger. As it was, they saw 124 species, which amounted to 97% of the cumulative total reported during the month. Chris Cattau was just a few steps behind them with 121 species, which would have been the winning total during thirteen of the sixteen previous Challenges. We had only two entries from younger birders this year, from Nora Parks-Church and Owen Parks-Church (who are obviously being raised right!), so they're the winners in the Youth part of the contest. All five winners will receive gift certificates, and Tim and Jacob will each get to take home the June Challenge trophy for half of the coming year.



Tied for first place, winners Tim Hardin (left) and Jacob Ewert take home stained glass art-work skillfully created and graciously donated by Stephanie Haas and Jeffrey Hillman.

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Great-Crested Flycatcher collecting horsehair for nesting. Photo by Tina Greenberg.



Killdeer on eggs at Sweetwater Wetlands June 9th. Photo by Danny Shehee.

The 17th Annual June Challenge

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Black-necked Stilt at Cones Dike June 13th.
Photo by Mitch Walters.



Yellow-breasted Chat at Cones Dike June 12th.
Photo by Tim Hardin.

Our Challengers found 128 species of birds, including a few late spring migrants (including American Redstart and Bank Swallow on June 3rd), the earliest southbound Louisiana Waterthrush ever recorded in the county on June 19th, and a selection of coastal strays, including two different Brown Pelicans and Caspian, Forster's, and Sandwich Terns. Our only Big Misses this time were Hairy Woodpecker, which is always hard to find, and Wood Thrush, which hasn't been recorded on the Challenge since 2012 and may no longer be resident in Alachua County.

Here's the complete list of participants and their totals:

Jacob Ewert 124; Tim Hardin 124; Chris Cattau 121; Ben Fick 113; Marie Zeglen 113; Jason O'Connor 112; Tina Greenberg 111; Jerry Pruitt 111; Darrell Hartman 110; Sue Hartman 110; Mitch Walters 110; Anne Casella 109; Rex Rowan 109; Howard Adams 107; Craig Parenteau 107; Ship Mallard 104; Bob Carroll 103; Ben Ewing 103; Sam Ewing 103; Danny Shehee 103; Pratibha Singh 102; Phil Laipis 101; Alicia Conrad 100; Christopher Esposito 100; Erin Kalinowski 99; Cat Lippi 99; Rob Norton 96; Barbara Woodmansee 96; Becky Enneis 95; Frank Goodwin 91; Matt Bruce 90; Debbie Segal 90; Carol Ward 88; Dean Ewing 87; Brad Hall 86; Barbara Shea 85; Paul Kroeger 84; Tom Wronski 83; Min Zhao 83; John Martin 82; Bob Knight 80; Austin Gregg 77; Geoff Parks 67; Jennifer Donsky 66; Glenn Israel 62; Emily Schwartz 59; Nora Parks-Church 52; Owen Parks-Church 43; Bill Enneis 42; Sue Ann Enneis 42; Jon Graham 42.



King Rail at Sweetwater Wetlands Park June 1st.
Photo by Jerry Pruitt.

By Rex Rowan

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AAS June Challengers Share Highlights

Participants in the June Challenge kindly submitted some of their highlights and photographs~

My first ever June Challenge was such an incredible opportunity! Between seeing a rare Broad-winged Hawk the moment I stepped out of the car and spending a total of almost 7 hours looking for a Cooper's Hawk at Depot Park, I never knew this bird scavenger hunt would be such an emotional rollercoaster – a rollercoaster that would take me to all four corners of Alachua County to places *literally* “off the beaten path”.

The best parts of the June Challenge were meeting all the amazing Alachua

County birders and being #junechallenge birding buddies with Tim Hardin! We always had better luck whenever we birded together. I also owe a HUGE thank you to Rex Rowan for being the best June Challenge leader I have ever had. His story-filled emails kept the Challenge fun and exciting and reading them always put a smile on my face.

It was exhausting. It was rewarding. It was one of the best experiences I've had during my time in Gainesville.

Jacob Ewert

Drama at Watermelon Pond

My husband Marc and I spent a morning at Watermelon Pond the first week of June, hoping to find some less common birds that might be there. We were thrilled to see Northern Flicker and American Kestrel early on, and then we wandered along the edge of a field full of wildflowers and butterflies. An Eastern Kingbird appeared on a dead tree and soon after, a second one appeared nearby. Both birds were agitated and called frequently as we approached. As we neared a young oak tree along the trail, we saw why. Four newly fledged young Kingbirds were sitting all in a row



Loggerhead Shrike at Depot Park. Photo by Jacob Ewert.

on a branch, calling to their parents. We hurried on so as not to bother them.

And then it poured, and we stood in the rain until the sun came back out. We continued around the field to look for the Orchard Oriole that never appeared. I saw a very wet Red-shouldered Hawk land on the top of a dead tree in the middle of the field. While we watched it preen, here came the Kingbirds in a beeline toward the tree. The hawk was facing away from them and never saw what hit him. One of the kingbirds landed right on the hawk's neck and without letting go, tore him up all the way across the field until we lost them in the trees. *My camera was at home to prevent me from being distracted by butterflies!*

Barbara Woodmansee

One of my most challenging birds this June was the Northern Flicker. I could not find it in the usual spots from last year's locations. And of course, I didn't go with Rex when he went on the Watermelon Pond Trail and found one. After the walk, I was told the bird was in the distance. Since I was tired from all the walking and looking for birds, I decided to ride my bicycle on the Watermelon Pond Trail. The website said bicycles are allowed. Yeah, they can be used but ...

I began with the bicycle in the trail underneath the trees. It was my first time on that trail. It was a cool (for June), gorgeous, low humidity morning and many birds were singing. It's the kind of day when you love being a birder – until I got to an intersection and continued west and found deep sand. Another June Challenge! So I had to walk the bike but I found the bird. It was not a great glimpse, but it was the Northern Flicker. My *fourth try* to get the bird.

Tina Greenberg

I've been birding for a few years now in Alachua County, but this was my first time participating in the June Challenge. My highlight of the Challenge happened during the kickoff at the Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve when a Chuck-will's-widow flew right by us and perched on a snag across the road in response to a recording. Of course, I had heard Chuck-will's-widows before, but that being my first time seeing the cryptic bird, I was just thrilled. The same morning at Longleaf

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AAS June Challengers Share Highlights

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we also saw Common Nighthawks as well as a Brown-headed Nuthatch, which were both life birds for me!

On the morning of the 24th, I went back out to the Creek Sink Trail at San Felasco Hammock for a second attempt at relocating the Louisiana Waterthrush found by Trina Anderson on the 19th. I got to the area where it had been found previously and scanned the water's edge for the warbler. Nothing. I continued to follow the trail around the sink until a small bird suddenly flew onto some dense vegetation on the water. It wasn't long before the tail-bobbing bird revealed itself. I watched the beautiful Louisiana Waterthrush as it foraged around the



Louisiana Waterthrush. Photo by Benjamin Fick.

sink and eventually made its way to only some ten feet away from me! I got some awesome pictures and it was a very memorable experience.

What I love so much about doing the June Challenge is that every species—even the really common ones—warrants some amount of excitement and appreciation as you add another species onto your list. I want to thank Rex for organizing the Challenge. I definitely wouldn't have seen as many species (and had nearly as much fun) if not for his, and everybody else's, help. I had a great time this year, and I hope to continue taking on the June Challenge for years to come!

Benjamin Fick

Out looking for birds needed which included Bald Eagle. Was having lunch in Micanopy eating outside on the porch with binoculars and camera on table. I hear a Bald Eagle calling. I run off the porch to try and locate it with no luck; this happened 3 times. It finally occurred to me why I could not find it. I listened closely the third

time to locate the bird better. Turns out it was a Mockingbird giving a great imitation!

Danny Shehee

For anyone in need of a little enticement before consciously deciding to spend a month tromping around the wilds of Florida just as spring migration ends and the season for storms, mosquitoes and sweltering heat begins, the June Challenge provides a perfect excuse to get outside and explore. One thing I love about the Challenge is that it often leads us off the beaten path. This year, the most rewarding trek for me was venturing out along the southern rim of Paynes Prairie where, after meandering through a sea of rain-drenched, 7-foot-high dog fennel that slowly gave way to a nearly impenetrable blackberry-infused scrub thicket, I eventually came across a Yellow-breasted Chat (a bird that's been absent from our Challenge checklists since 2017). I was thrilled about hearing its song on the Prairie again and, to a lesser extent, finding a much easier route back to the Bolen Bluff Trail.

Another great thing about the June Challenge is that each species carries equal weight, reminding us birders to stop and appreciate those birds that otherwise might not get a second thought. That goes not only for the most common breeding species in the county but also for the less common birds that may often get ignored. A prime example of the latter is the lowly retention-pond Mallard, which turned out to be somewhat of a rarity this year after the residents of the Home Depot Retention Pond (and others) disappeared during the dry spell this Spring. I spent one rainy morning near the beginning of June driving by nearly two dozen ponds around town before finally encountering an ABA-countable Mallard on NW 24th Blvd., which turned out to be the one and only Mallard I'd see during the Challenge.

While birds may provide the impetus for June outings, it's often other experiences that make the most lasting impression. My most memorable trips from this year will certainly include being stranded during an incredibly intense lightning storm while on the back side of Levy Prairie at sunset after a failed search for Pied-billed Grebe and Yellow-crowned Night-

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AAS June Challengers Share Highlights

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Heron. Another will definitely be a leisurely Father's Day canoe ride on Newnans Lake with the family. We never found the Short-tailed Hawk I thought I had seen from across the lake a few days before, but we did enjoy watching Prothonotary Warblers singing in the flooded cypress, as well as a Bald Eagle and Osprey catching fish. However, my daughter's favorite "find" of the day was, unequivocally, the recently reopened playground at Owens-Illinois Park, a true rarity in the county since the COVID-19 outbreak. There were also many memorable wildlife encounters of the non-avian variety, some pleasant: standing among a slow moving herd of over 30 bison as they grazed along the Cones Dike Trail on the evening of the 1st; and others not so pleasant: hearing a strange loud noise behind me while walking out from Sparrow Alley the following day and nearly *jumping out of my pants* when I turned around to see that just three feet away was a huge Eastern Diamondback rattlesnake coiled in striking position with its head raised and tail rattling fiercely. Yep, another fun and exciting June indeed!

Chris Cattau

Ocala's Treatment Wetland to Open this Fall

Known officially as the Ocala Wetland Recharge Park, Ocala's constructed treatment wetland is set to open its gates this fall. Like Sweetwater Wetlands Park in Gainesville, Ocala's Recharge Park will remove nitrogen and other pollutants from the City of Ocala's treated wastewater by flowing the water through three constructed wetland cells that will be vegetated with native emergent wetland plants. But unlike Sweetwater, which is a flow-through wetland, the Ocala Recharge Park will infiltrate the polished water into the ground, where the cleansed water will percolate through the soil and recharge the Floridan Aquifer. Various public use facilities, such as two miles of trails, a boardwalk over the wetland ponds, educational signs, and benches are being constructed at the new wetlands. The City hopes to eventually build an educational center at the site. The Marion County Audubon Society is donating Purple Martin and Eastern Bluebird nest boxes and will lead regular bird walks at the wetlands. The Alachua Audubon Society received special permission to lead a field trip to the wetland this past spring, and hopes to lead annual field trips to this exciting new birding hotspot. The Ocala Wetland Groundwater Recharge Park is located at 2201 NW 21st Street in Ocala. More information can be found [here](http://www.ocalafl.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=6960) or by visiting www.ocalafl.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=6960.

By Debbie Segal

Send in your Favorite Field Trips!



A note from Barbara Shea, Field Trip Committee Chair, to all AAS members:

It would be great to hear from you about your favorite places to go to on AAS Field Trips. Please send me your favorite locations with first and second picks or a short wish list. *No promises!* Please send responses to **Barbara Shea** <brbrbrsh@gmail.com> with "Field Trip Favorites" in the subject line by July 20th for consideration in our planning. Thanks!

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Message From The President

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If the initial design proves feasible and the project moves forward, this new wetland will be located next to the Diamond Sports Facility on Parker Road on the west side of Gainesville. The wetland will be designed to receive reclaimed water from GRU's Kanapaha Water Reclamation Facility and then infiltrate the high-quality, low-nutrient water into the ground where it will recharge the Floridan Aquifer. GRU staff will be delivering an evening PowerPoint presentation, possibly to be viewed through Zoom, to AAS members this fall. More details about the new wetland and the fall presentation will be available in an upcoming newsletter. For more information about the wetland visit www.gru.com/rechargewetland.

AAS hopes to emulate a very successful **backpack library lending program** that Palm Beach Audubon implemented and has since expanded. AAS would purchase and furnish backpacks with binoculars, bird books, and other bird-related educational items to be available for checkout from Alachua County libraries. We hope to explore this proposal with librarians when the libraries fully reopen.

Purple Martins (PUMA) have successfully nested at the Lake City Treatment Wetlands thanks to a joint project between AAS and Four Rivers Audubon. In January 2019, AAS and Four Rivers Audubon purchased and installed PUMA nesting gourds. Soon after the gourds were installed, a colony of PUMAs nested in them. The colony increased substantially in 2020 and eggs and/or young were present in almost all 20 gourds. Based on the success of this project, AAS and Four Rivers Audubon will again team together to purchase another PUMA nesting gourd system and install it next to the existing gourds in early 2021. Although the Lake City Treatment Wetland is not open to the public, the City staff members open the wetland for an AAS field trip each winter and for the Christmas Bird Count in December.

The Alachua Conservation Trust invited AAS to be partners on a **Grassland Bird Habitat Restoration Project**. AAS will assist with baseline and post-restoration bird surveys on ACT's Fox Pen site in eastern Alachua County. We will also contribute to some of the restoration activities such as collecting seed from a recently burned donor site and promoting the benefits of controlled burns for grassland bird species at local festivals.

Like other organizations, AAS is cautiously optimistic that we can implement our many upcoming **field trips and outings**. The format for our bird walks will definitely change and require certain safety protocols for attending. Look for more information in the September/October issue of *The Crane* newsletter.

The Alachua Audubon Society is an all-volunteer organization. You do not need to be a member to participate in any of our activities, but your membership enables us to offer more to the community and makes us stronger in our efforts to promote conservation initiatives in Alachua County. If you are not a member, please consider joining the Alachua Audubon Society.

Debbie Segal

Hi fellow bird lovers,

I have learned (from an unfortunate occurrence) how to provide nesting habitat for Common Nighthawks. It turns out they like to nest in newly burned pine forest. A contractor let a fire get loose and roar across a forty acre, five-year-old longleaf pine plantation on my land in Suwannee County. Within one week, we had a nesting nighthawk on the ground in the middle of the burned area. Some weeks later, we found two eggs that appeared to have hatched normally.

Bob Simons

Editor's Note: Do not try this at home.



Help Sought for Roadkill Survey

Alachua County is home to an abundant amount of wildlife. Our research group hopes to gain a better understanding of how wildlife-vehicle collisions affect these animals within our community. While the overall goal of this project is to study automobile and fatal wildlife interactions in Alachua County, this project will also provide a new way to assess the overall health of these wild animals. Ultimately, this project will aid in the identification of roadkill hotspots and determine the incidence of zoonotic disease in roadkill animals. In order to make this project successful, we need the public’s assistance in identifying incidents of roadkill throughout Alachua County.

We are asking for your help to identify and document cases of roadkill. We are interested in any amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal you can find, regardless of if you can identify the exact species or not. Although we are asking for multiple pieces of information from each event, we are most interested in the species of animal, the location of the animal, and a photo of the animal. *We cannot stress enough that your safety is most important to us and we do not want you to take any unnecessary risks to photograph the roadkill.* In these instances, we implore you to submit your encounter without a photograph along with any other relevant information you can provide. Results of our research will be periodically updated as a map on our website. Visit the [Roadkill Survey](#) website for full details. For more information please contact:

Dr. Adam W. Stern

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Around the County

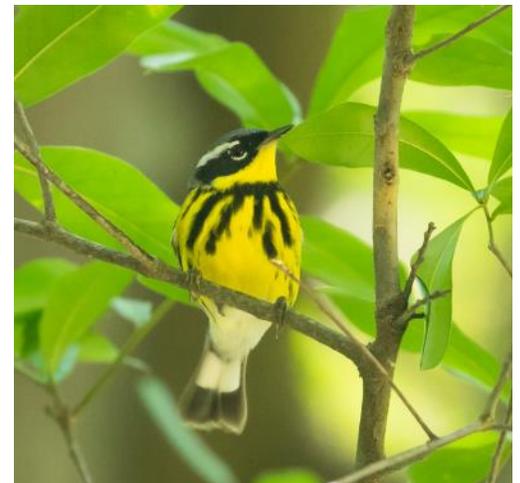
(Continued from Page 2)

scope out a Wilson's Phalarope there April 15th, and a Western Sandpiper (rare inland) was present for a few days as well. Adam and Gina Kent noted the brief appearance of a Sanderling May 3rd at Newnans Lake near the Windsor boat ramp. Like Western Sandpiper, Sanderling is a strongly coastal species and is rarely seen here. Patrick Fuller, while driving on CR 325 April 20th, spotted six Upland Sandpipers along the grassy shoulder of the road. The birds had apparently landed there momentarily to wait out a passing storm. This was only the second sighting of “Uppies” in the county since 2006.

Several interesting terns visited the area this spring. Royal Terns were seen repeatedly at SWP in mid-April, with a high of twelve noted by David Alvarez April 18th. A pair of Caspian Terns were spotted there as well. A major front passing through April 24th spurred several birders to check the big lakes for anything unusual that might blow in. Debbie Segal and Bill Pirzer were rewarded with a Royal Tern *and* a Black Skimmer at Newnans Lake. The Skimmer later made a pass over SWP, and a Sandwich Tern was seen the following day at Bivens Arm Lake. Jonathan Mays and Ellen Robertson spotted a pair of Gull-billed Terns at La Chua Trail the evening of May 29th, which was unfortunately just a tad too early for the June Challenge.

Speaking of the June Challenge, a summary and list of winners can be found elsewhere in *The Crane*. Meanwhile, as you are perusing the pages of this issue, the first Louisiana Waterthrushes will be arriving to herald the beginning of *fall* migration, so there really is no rest for the weary birder. See you out there!

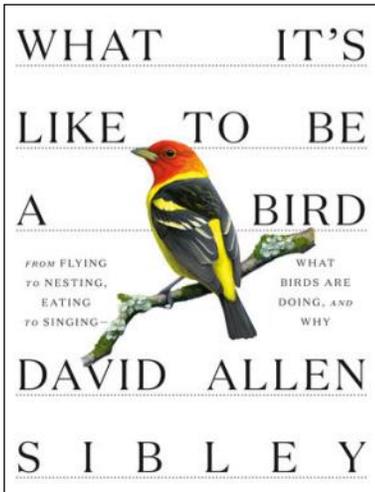
Thanks to all those who shared their sightings through May 31st, 2020.



Magnolia Warbler. Photo by Mitch Walters.

By Mike Manetz

NEW BOOK! What It's Like to be a Bird



From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Singing—What Birds are Doing, and Why by David Allen Sibley.

“Can birds smell?’ ‘Is this the same cardinal that was at my feeder last year?’ ‘Do robins ‘hear’ worms?’ In *What It’s Like to Be a Bird*, David Sibley answers the most frequently asked questions about the birds we see most often. This special, large-format volume is geared as much to non-birders as it is to the out-and-out obsessed, covering more than two hundred species and including more than 330 new illustrations by the author. While its focus is on familiar backyard birds—blue jays, nuthatches, chickadees—it also examines certain species that can be fairly easily observed, such as the seashore-dwelling Atlantic puffin. David Sibley’s exacting artwork and wide-ranging expertise bring observed behaviors vividly to life. (For most species, the primary illustration is reproduced life-sized.) And while the text is aimed at

adults—including fascinating new scientific research on the myriad ways birds have adapted to environmental changes—it is non-technical, making it the perfect opportunity for adults to share their love of birds with young children, who will enjoy the large, full-color illustrations of birds in action.” ([Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)) “Sibley’s main aim is to ignite appreciation of the varied North American birds we may encounter in our backyards and nearby parks. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, right now many of us yearn for greater connection to nature close to home, so the book’s timing couldn’t be more perfect. The volume’s organization — ‘each essay focuses on one particular detail of bird biology’—means it’s equally rewarding to dip in here or there, or just read straight through.” ([NPR.org](https://www.npr.org)) Available from multiple booksellers.



Ring-necked Duck and Purple Gallinule at Cones Dike June 5th. Photo by Phil Laipis.



Bachman's Sparrow-at Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve June 17th. Photo by Frank Goodwin .



WILDLIFE ALERT

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

Young Swallow-tailed Kite Rescue



Based on this photo, Gina Kent estimated the fledgling to be about 32 days old.

Photo by Kathleen Pagan.

the exhausted bird and take it to the University of Florida Vet School for evaluation. The bird was ultimately pronounced healthy and released to Leslie Straub of Florida Wildlife Care who released the bird at the site where it was found. Adult Swallow-tailed Kites spend most of their time in the air. According to Gina Kent of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute, a fallen fledgling would typically hop to a branch where it could work its way up high enough to be fed by its parents, who will not feed it on the ground. We were happy to assist with its rescue and can only hope that it is now soaring somewhere overhead.

One late May morning, I was alerted to a “hawk” on the ground by John Asfour (one of our newsletter advertisers – see The Philosophy Store ad on [page 6](#)). Living close by, I arrived in just a few minutes and found that the “hawk” was, in fact, a young Swallow-tailed Kite! A nest was visible atop a very tall pine tree in the neighborhood and the adult birds were soaring and calling overhead. I learned that the bird had been on the ground for a few hours. Thankfully no predators were around. I called Jonathan Varol who also lives close by and, at the suggestion of Nan Soistman of Sunrise Wildlife Care, he was able to capture



Jonathan Varol with the captured kite.

Photo by Karen Brown.

By Karen Brown

Editor’s Note: Always contact a permitted wildlife rehabilitator when encountering injured or displaced wildlife. Florida Wildlife Care (352-371-4400) and Sunrise Wildlife Rehabilitation (352-222-2239) are in Alachua County.



Indigo Bunting at Bolens Bluff June 2nd.

Photo by Danny Shehee.



Orchard Oriole at Cones Dike June 13th.

Photo by Mitch Walters.

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The Crane
July – August 2020

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Please send any questions to
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