

# Apalachee Audubon

The Newsletter Of The Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

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## President's Column

### Annual Banquet Promises Inspiration and Recognition

Apalachee Audubon's Annual Banquet (*see time & location details below*) promises to be both inspiring and rewarding. The inspiration will come from Dr. Stuart Strahl, President of Audubon of Florida. Dr. Strahl was a pioneer in Latin American bird conservation and for the past decade has been a passionate leader for Everglades restoration. The rewards will be the recognition of those who have advanced conservation in our region or helped Apalachee Audubon fulfill its mission.

#### Special Conservation Awards

##### **Bruce Ritchie: Environmental Reporter, Tallahassee Democrat.**

Bruce can be counted on to research, report and write informative and interesting stories about major environmental issues in the Panhandle. His series on the St. Joe Company and his regular reporting on the Apalachicola River have served to keep readers of the *Tallahassee Democrat* informed about the most important conservation issues. Our award to Bruce is in part recognition that the *Democrat* has made a commitment to maintain a special environmental

reporter, a true service to our community.

##### **Apalachicola Bay and River Keepers (ABARK)**

This new group has made a big splash with their aggressive advocacy for their namesake. If there is a harder working group in Florida we would be surprised. ABARK leaders have been unabashed about twisting arms and bending ears among politicians and even fellow environmentalists to make their agenda the region's agenda.

#### Apalachee's Top Ten List

Last week we asked the overworked board of the Apalachee Audubon Society to list our accomplishments for the year. After a slow start a regular brag fest of activities and actions took place. Here is list of the top ten from the little group that could:

1. Published the region's first birding guide. (*See review inside.*)
2. Conducted field trips and programs reaching more than 500 people with messages about birds and conservation.
3. Helped organize the Wakulla Birding and Wildlife Festival.
4. Placed the Audubon Adventures curriculum in 54 area classrooms, providing over 1500 students an opportunity to learn about nature.
5. Coordinated the Christmas Birdcount in the Tallahassee area.
6. Participated in the ongoing visioning processes in Franklin and Wakulla Counties.

7. Provided leadership for the Pinhook-Osceola-Greater Okefenokee (POGO) Coalition to save the Southeast's last great wilderness.
8. Supported our allies working to protect and restore the Apalachicola River.
9. Participated in the Big Bend Environmental Forum.
10. Raised 1000s of dollars for environmental education.

Please join us for what promises to be a pleasant and rewarding evening.

#### **Program Highlight** **Thursday, May 22**

Annual Banquet at Wakulla Springs State Park. The reception will begin at 6:00 PM (cash bar) followed by dinner and the program at 7:00. (*Since this is a week night, the program will be finished by 8:30. See the program description above.*) Tickets for the dinner are \$20 and can be purchased by completing the attached card and mailing it with your check payable to Apalachee Audubon.

Dress is casual. For information call Larry Thompson or Bill Lowrie at 222-2473.

# Great Birding Spots in Wakulla, Leon and Franklin Counties

By Eric Draper, Conservation Chair

Okay, you would like make good use of the few precious hours of free time to get away and renew your contact with nature. You've got your binoculars, field guide and some companions and you are ready to go birding. What now? How do you choose the best places to see your favorite birds or those that have not yet made it onto your life list?

Thanks to an incredibly well organized and skillfully written book titled *Great Birding Spots in Wakulla, Leon and Franklin Counties*, birdwatching in the Tallahassee area just became much more accessible.

Have you ever seen a Red-cockaded Woodpecker? *Great Birding Spots* directs you to **Ochlockonee River State Park** where biologists have marked trees with RCW cavities. The section on this under-appreciated state park notes that you are most likely to see the woodpeckers at dawn or dusk and hints that Bachman's Sparrow and Henslow's Sparrow can be found

in winter months. Since these are three species I want to spend more time around, the guide has already been valuable to me.

Lets say songbirds are your thing but you don't have much time to drive. *Great Birding Spots* sends you three miles from downtown Tallahassee to the **Black Swamp Nature Preserve**. Depending on the season, you can find Song Sparrow and Swamp Sparrow or Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler and Prothonotary Warbler. Since this is on the way to the airport and very accessible, I'm going to catch a few warblers before my next morning flight.

This book is especially valuable for planning my trips to the coast. With it I know exactly where to go in **St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge** and on **St. George Island** to find Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel and Black Skimmer. I was also kind of surprised to learn that the Tallahassee sewage treatment plant can add a couple dozen birds to my list.

Along with descriptions of 27 destinations, *Great Birding Spots* has a complete list of Florida birds including, for migrants, their arrival and departure dates

See *Birding*, Page Three

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Mission  
Protection



Statement  
of the environment through education, appreciation and conservation.

## MEMBERSHIP AND HOSPITALITY REPORT

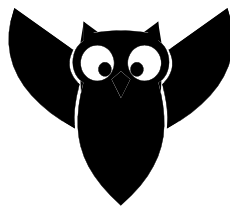
By Karen Wensing – Membership Chair

Our new meeting place, Fringe Benefits Management Company, offers a number of advantages including improved parking, security and accessibility. However, because of the building ban on food and drink in the meeting room, the board has decided to dispense with our usual refreshments during the 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. social time. We do have access to the vending machines in the adjacent staff room if anyone arrives in parched or famished. However, if you take advantage of this, please refrain from bringing these goodies into the meeting room. If you have any comments or suggestions to make about this new arrangement, please let any of the officers or board members know.

Welcome to the following new members of Apalachee Audubon: Anne Atkin, Joe Barnett, Dave & Lydia Burns, Peg & Joe Clabourn, Jeff Chantin, Mary Chenevert, Millicent Dillon, Dean Dugger, Peter A. Easton, Sue Edelson, Lois Etchells, J. S. Fain, Catherine Florko, Phil Francis, W. M. Hajdukiewicz, Don Hale, Michael & Sarah Hartley, Robert Juntunen, Hope Keating, Karolyn J. Kelly, M. Lazarakis-White, David Meslow, James Phillips, Keith Phillips, Patricia Pippenger, Lee Rustin, Wesley Carl Seay, Jean Sherrill, Gloria Simmons, Justin Stickler, Verona Swaim, Angie Waller, Barbara A. White, Kathy William, Dee Wilder, Helen B. Woodman and Rachelle A. Yerger. In addition, the following Audubon members have recently transferred into the Apalachee Chapter: Michele Beaudin, Larry N. Brown, Donna Legare, Lessie Lesley and Leigh Perkins, Sr.

Please let us know how Apalachee Audubon can serve you and how you would like to participate. Thanks, also, to all renewing members.

### Birding, From Page Two



to the area. There is also a chart of specialty species of Wakulla, Leon and Franklin Counties.

Reading through *Great Birding Spots* is like a trip down memory lane. I have been birding at a number of the recommended locations, and each carries special memories. These fall into the categories of nature discovery and social experience. For example, I recall seeing both Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites within minutes. More profound are the social and personal experiences.

I've had the pleasure of birding with and learning from several of the people who put this book together. One of the writers, Franklin County birding expert Jack Dozier, led my Birdathon a few years back. In *Great Birding Spots* he puts his vast knowledge of birding in the region to paper in easy to read context. Credit also goes to Julie Duggan for making this a much more substantial and interesting guide than one might expect from a local Audubon chapter. Chapter President Larry Thompson carried the torch for this project and pushed it through each step of its production. Larry's vision of more people watching birds in more places in the Tallahassee region is the real inspiration behind *Great Birding Spots*.

At ten dollars a copy, this book is a real bargain and the first printing should soon sell out. It is available in several local nature stores and garden shops including the visitor's center at St. Marks and Wakulla Springs State Park. Or it can be ordered by contacting Larry Thompson.

Members of the Draper family are hereby notified that *Great Birding Spots* will be the gift of choice this year as *Sibley's Guide to Birds* was last year. I am pleased to own a first printing and will be looking for autographs from Jack, Julie and Larry. We all owe them our gratitude for sharing their passion for birding and writing skills with the rest of us. And we can pay them back by making sure people get this book. *Buy it!*

*Monthly meetings, field trips, conservation activities and bird walks*

# **Audubon Calendar**

Monthly meetings are free and open to the public. They are held at the Fringe Benefits Management Company at 3101 Sessions Road. Most evenings begin with an informal social at 7:00 p.m., followed by the program at 7:30.

Unless otherwise stated, field trips will depart from the Wachovia Bank at 3400 S. Monroe Street (opposite the Fairgrounds). Note the time of departure in the description for each trip. For more info check out our web site at <http://www.apalachee.org/calendar.html>.

**Saturday, May 17** — Birdwalk. Join Marvin Collins for a visit to Birdsong Nature Center, a fascinating wildlife preserve. Meet at 9:00 AM at the entrance. There is a \$5 entry fee unless you are a member, well worth the experience of visiting this famous local landmark. Marvin will lead a birdwalk of approximately two hours and will finish at the famous bird viewing window in the main building. To get there, take Meridian Road north from Tallahassee and continue for four miles after crossing the Georgia state line. Look carefully for a small sign on the right side of the highway that says “BIRDSONG”.

**Thursday, May 22** – Apalachee Audubon Annual Banquet at Wakulla Springs with guest speaker Stuart Strahl, President of Audubon of Florida. Reception at 6:00 PM; Dinner at 7:00 PM. Details on front page.

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