

Apalachee Audubon

The Newsletter Of The Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

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November, 2004

One Birdsong, More Legacies

Eric Draper, President

When our family moved back to Tallahassee fourteen years ago, we took the kids to the places that would give them a sense of this wonderful region. Birdsong was our favorite and we can recollect the hayrides and hikes through the woods and fields. The wonderful dedication of the founders and volunteers allowed our family special experiences at a very special place.

It is with those memories in mind that I write this column to tie together a sense of place with the duty some people feel to preserve and share it. That is the underlying spirit of Audubon. It is the attitude that will determine if our community and region will be the kind of place where people share habitat with wildlife.

Call it the Red Hills, the Big Bend, Apalachee, the capitol region. The names don't matter but the sense of place does. Most people agree that there is something out of the ordinary about this area where coastal plains and piedmont merge. Even more remarkable is the willingness of some to take responsibility for making sure that others have a chance to enjoy more than malls and sporting events.

Places are altered for better or worse by the people who occupy and use them. Those of us living on and using this landscape now benefit or suffer from our predecessor's actions. The sense of place that led Ed and Betty Komerek to convert their farm to a sanctuary and education center by itself seems like an extraordinary act of service.

Yet the same attitude is apparent with the Lake Jackson Ecopassage Alliance, the volunteers at St. Marks Wildlife Refuge, the new "Think About Personal Pollution" program, Heart of the Earth, Apalachee Tortoise and other initiatives to educate and motivate people to protect the natural world. These groups and efforts are carried on by people committed to a legacy of conservation.

The diversity and energy of conservation activism is encouraging. Yet it runs headlong against another disturbing trend. As more people join us in this beautiful area, the local chamber and its economic development arm and some political leaders are pushing to radically reduce the environmental protections allowed by our current development rules. Apparently Tallahassee is too green to grow as fast as some builders want.

Will our sense of place and our willingness to take responsibility for our community be enough to buffer the change that comes with every new arrival? Apalachee Audubon is committed to encouraging the people and the attitude that can create a commitment to keeping the town green. We want more Komereks and we don't want Birdsong to be an island in a sea of houses.

If you are ready to take some responsibility for keeping this region special – there are leadership positions with Apalachee Audubon, the organizations listed above and others. Act now!

Program Highlight **Wednesday, Nov, 17th.**

Kathleen Brady, Executive Director of Birdsong Nature Center will discuss the history, current programs and future goals of Birdsong.

Birdsong Nature Center is an important resource for environmental education in North Florida and South Georgia. In addition, Birdsong provides an example of the important red hills ecosystem to the north of Tallahassee which is subject to increasing rates of fragmentation in the future.

Membership News

Karen Wensing, Membership Chair

Beginning in FY 2005 the AUDUBON magazine will return to a bi-monthly publication schedule. Members will once again receive six issues per membership year.

Good news for snowbirds or other dual household members. If you would like to have a summer/winter address split for delivery of Audubon publications, just call the membership chair for a copy of the ABON form. Dates can be customized for your needs and you may keep your membership in this chapter all year.

Membership meetings are free and open to the public, so feel free to invite your friends to any meetings you think might interest them. If YOUR friend decides to join during our meeting, the chapter will give the new member a bird-chiming clock (or alternate gift) and you will receive a membership pin. Board meetings are open to all chapter members. Meetings are normally held at 7 pm on the second Wednesday of the month at the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library.

Apalachee Audubon welcomes the following new members: Steven Byrd, William Carroll, Lynn Chang, James Cooper, Robert Crew, Nita Drewyor, Jennifer Hand, Scott Harrison, Gladys Hicks, Matthew Hill, Katharine Ler, Clifford Mayhall, Edith Murphy, Michael and Anita Nash, Claudia Nelson, Happy Parker, M.L. Ringelberg, Margaret Ronmald, M/M Scoll Shirley, Lillis Snyder, David Theriaque, Donna Tharpe, Marry Turner, Nicolas Wienderss and Yvonne Zola. In addition, Julie Brooks, W. Lewis, Linda Most, William Phelan and Elsie Stanton recently transferred into this chapter. We also thank those who have recently renewed their memberships.

If any member needs to report an address change or make any membership correction, it is easy to contact the national office by phone (1-800-274-4201) or email (chadd@audubon.org).

The Chapter newsletter, while an essential means of communication with our members, also represents a significant expense in our annual budget. The Board is exploring some possible economies. One thought is to distribute the newsletter electronically to those members who have email or Internet access. You can share your email address with us on the meeting sign-in log or when you next renew your membership. You can be assured that we will not share this information with any other entity. Paper distribution would continue for all who do not submit an email address.

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This newsletter is printed on partially recycled paper.



Mission

Statement

Protection of the environment through education, appreciation and conservation.

Please Let Us Know If You Are Interested In ...

Our Fieldtrip chair, Marvin Collins is considering two great events for early next year and he would like to know how many of you would be interested in them. If you are and/or have suggestions, please give Marvin a call at 224-9549. The proposed events are:

Overnight Field Trip, February 26 – 27th. To Paynes Prairie State Park which is just south of Gainesville. Current plans are to leave early Saturday morning and getting back into Tally sometime Sunday afternoon. We might stay in a nearby motel or possibly camp in the State Park where there are sites with drive in access. Please note that some of the nicest areas of the park will require hiking 2 - 5 miles or so. It isn't strenuous in terms of elevation gain and, hopefully, not buggy in February. We should see lots of Sandhill Cranes as well as bunches of other neat stuff. On my last visit this past July I finally saw the bison herd.

Beginning Birding Course, March. Two or three evening classes of about 2 hours each spaced over as many weeks plus two Saturday field trips. There will be a tuition fee. One field trip would probably be to a coastal or wetland area and the other to an upland forest. Would you rather have a single, long workshop instead of spreading it over several evenings? Again, call Marvin Collins at 224-9549.

Interesting News From Our Friends At Cairo High School

Last spring we had a very exciting presentation from the students of Jennifer Hand from Cairo HS. (Cairo, GA). These biology students and science club members conducted educational outreach programs concerning local environmental issues. They focused on the area's water quality issues including the concerns about Cairo's wastewater treatment facility and the degrading of the water quality of the Ochlockonee River.

This past week we got the following email from Jennifer.

"Hi everyone. I have some really exciting news and wanted to share it with you. I just found out last week that the environmental projects (St. Francis Wildlife Program, America Recycles Day Camp, and Water Quality Project) I did with my students earned them the Presidents Environmental Youth Award. They are the Region 4 National Winners and will be honored in Washington DC this spring...hopefully the President himself will present the students with the award. ... Many of you were very helpful and provided my students a lot of help and insight. I REALLY appreciate it and felt you should also celebrate YOUR efforts to help these kids. I really believe your help along with recognition is going to help increase their achievement. I also think it will help produce students who are environmental stewards! I have included a link to info about the award. Thanks again, Jennifer Hand"

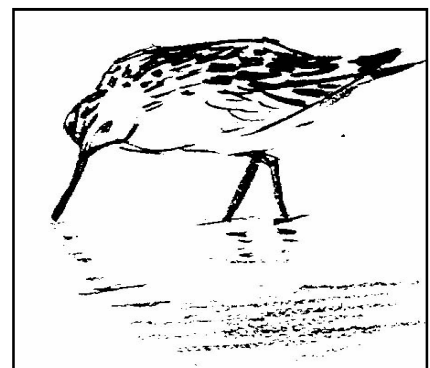
The link is <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/awards.html>



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Drawing by Kirsten Munson

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 United Church at 1834 Mahan Drive. Most evenings begin with an informal social at 7:00 p.m. followed by announcements and the program at 7:30. Unless otherwise stated, field trips 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 www.apalachee.org

Wednesday, November 17, Membership program. See page one.

Saturday, November 20, Field trip. Meet at Birdsong at 8:30 AM for a special birder-oriented tour of the grounds.

Saturday, January 15, Bird Walk. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Wachovia Bank for a casual morning bird-walk in the Tallahassee area.

Wednesday, January 26. Membership program. Bradley Smith, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Panama City office. Brad is a non-game biologist in the Florida Panhandle monitoring rooftop nesters, primarily Least Terns, and other important breeding colonies in the Bay County area.

Saturday, February 5, Fieldtrip. Bradley Smith will show us important bird areas around the St. Joseph State Park. This is one of his favorite areas and we should see good birds and other wildlife and match them to their habitat. To Carpool, meet at the Wachovia Bank on North Monroe (across from Fairgrounds) at 7:30 AM or the St. Joseph State Park Entrance on Cape San Blas at 9:30 AM.

Wednesday, February 23, Membership program. Pat Casselberry, former President of Citrus County Audubon, will discuss efforts to protect Florida's growing flock of migratory and resident Whooping Cranes.

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