

# Apalachee Audubon Society

#### www.apalachee.org

Apalachee Audubon Society Mission Statement: Protection of the environment through education, appreciation, and conservation.

#### **Speaker Series**

Free and open to the public.

Social begins at 7 pm with meeting at 7:30 pm (unless otherwise noted). Located at the historic Amtrak Station, 918 Railroad Ave., Tallahassee, FL. Map on page 8. For more information, call (850)510-4877 or visit: www.apalachee.org

"The Magic and Migrations of St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge" by Robin Will

Thursday, Nov. 17, 2011



There will not be a December Speaker Series program.

#### **Inside This Issue**

Page 3

President's Message

Operation Migration	Page 2
Stamps Help Eagles	Page 2
Field Trip Photos	Page 3
Plant a Tree	
for the Holidays	Page 3
Field Trip Information	Page 4
Coastal Cleanup Day	Page 4
Project FeederWatch	Page 4
Our Floridan Aquifer	Page 5
Go Green Field Trip &	
Monarch Festival	Page 7

November Program - Thursday, Nov. 17, 2011 Social at 7 pm - Program at 7:30 pm 918 Railroad Avenue

#### The Magic and Migrations of St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge by Robin Will



To Tallahassee's south, St. Marks NWR hugs the coast of Apalachee Bay, protecting a vital expanse of wildlife habitat. In the last few years, use of the Refuge as a destination for Operation Migration's whooping crane flock has brought St. Marks into the public spotlight for its importance to whooping crane migrations. However, long before the spectacle of ultralights and cranes, this local jewel was understood to be a vital link in habitat and migrations that span a hemisphere. Join Supervisory Refuge Ranger Robin Will as she shares her perspectives on the miracles of migration, viewed through the lens of this remarkable refuge. With more than 30 years at St. Marks NWR, Robin will make a St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge devotee of all comers!

#### Birding Monterey Bay and Yosemite National Park by Bill Phelan

After you've birded Florida and Texas for years and still have gaps in your ABA life list, it's time to bird California. An easy way to do this is to attend the Monterey Bay Birding Festival, as

California, as you know, has more birds than any other state. Monterey Bay, with its deep underwater canyon that yields nutrients for fish and sea life, has been described as one of the five most productive areas for wildlife on the planet. And Central California has a variety of habitats including mountains, valleys and coast. So Monterey Bay and Central California have it all.







Clockwise from top: Black Oystercatcher, Heermann's Gull, & Brandt's Cormorant. Photos by Bill Phelan.

**Weather:** Temperate. Cool in AM. High temps: 70's on the water; 90's in Valley; 70's-80's in Sierras and at coast. And I found no mosquitos!!

Habitats include: Coastal mountains and wetlands (Elkhorn Slough the most prominent); dry grasslands and irrigated agriculture in central valley; redwood forests and dry grassy mountains inland; forested mountains and wet meadows in Sierra Nevada.

**Birds include:** Pelagic birds, sometimes seen from shore; coastal birds, some in greater numbers than I am used to (like 30 Whimbrels on a single beach); unique woodpeckers and owls in forested mountains; northern birds during fall migration; and California specialties (e.g. Wrentit, Yellow-billed Magpie, Heermann's Gull, and those birds named for California: e.g. quail, gull, thrasher, and towhee.)

Continued on page 6

#### Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. 2011 - 2012 Officers & Directors

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Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc. (AAS) is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

This newsletter is published 6 times a year by Apalachee Audubon Society on recycled paper. ©2011 Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.



## Injured Eagles Need Your Used Postage Stamps!

Yes, it's true! The Audubon Center for Injured Birds of Prey (located at Maitland, Florida) collects used postage stamps and sells them to wholesalers for sale to collectors all over the world. All you have to do is cut postage stamps from your mail, leaving at least 1/4 inch of paper all around the stamp. (Or just bring the envelope and I will trim them.) Any postage stamp is useful—big, small, U.S., foreign—any postage stamp! There will be a box to collect them at Audubon meetings. If you have a lot of stamps, you can call to arrange for a pickup. We appreciate your help. If you have questions or want to arrange for a pickup, please call Eileen Boutelle at (850) 656-3346.

#### Join National Audubon Society and Apalachee Audubon!

For just \$20 a year you, a friend, or loved one can be a member of both National Audubon and our local Apalachee Audubon chapter!

Membership includes *Audubon*, our bimonthly flagship publication. Each issue of this award-winning publication features beautiful photography and engaging journalism. Our Apalachee Audubon chapter newsletter will keep you informed of local and statewide Audubon and other nature-related events and will share birding and conservation information and news.

You can pay for membership using a credit card by calling Audubon's toll free membership number. (*Please mention our chapter ID*, **E19**, for AAS to get full credit for a new membership).

1-800-274-4201

If you prefer to pay by check for an annual membership, send your \$20 check made payable to National Audubon Society (*please add Apalachee Audubon's chapter ID*, *E19*) and mail to:

National Audubon Society PO Box 422246 Palm Coast, FL 32142-2246

Allow 4-6 weeks for the arrival of your first issue of *Audubon*. The cost of membership is tax deductible except for \$7.50 (which is allocated to *Audubon* magazine).

# Operation Migration Update by Kathleen Carr

Photo: Courtesy of St. Marks NWR.

The Class of 2011 is in the air!

They began their migration south on October 9, although some of the chicks had to be crated and driven to their first stopover. They should be

driven to their first stopover. They should be arriving at St. Marks sometime in December or January. Unfortunately, one of the birds went missing during a flight on October 21, and as of October 24 has not yet been located. For updates see <a href="https://www.operationmigration.org">www.operationmigration.org</a>.



The Operation Migration team really needs your financial support. You can help by sponsoring a mile, or a portion of a mile, or through the **Give a WHOOP!** campaign, where you can donate in \$10 increments: <a href="http://www.operationmigration.org/GAW2011landingpage.html">http://www.operationmigration.org/GAW2011landingpage.html</a>





# President's Message by Julie Wraithmell

The crisp evenings of late have some already thinking of the holidays, but for Auduboners, this is the season of the Christmas Bird Count. Begun in 1900 by the American ornithologist Frank Chapman, it was his answer to the 19th century Christmas tradition of the "side hunt." In the side hunt, participants competed for how many individual birds they could shoot for the sheer joy of killing them. Chapman's answer to that wasteful tradition was an annual survey—the Christmas Bird Count—in which volunteer participants fan out across a 15-mile diameter circle to count and identify as many birds as they can in a day. While Chapman's 1900 count began with a modest handful of birders and count circles, today the event spans the Western Hemisphere. The geographic breadth and length of the resulting dataset has allowed Audubon to demonstrate, for example, that in the last 35 years, wintering ranges for many North American birds have shifted north, correlated to warmer mean January temperatures (evidence of the effects of climate change). Christmas Bird Count data have been used to document declines in species to earn them Endangered Status protections. And the event has become a hallmark of our organization.

Here in Apalachee Audubon's region, we are fortunate to enjoy four long-standing Christmas Bird Counts, coordinated by three dedicated and generous volunteer "compilers." In its way, Christmas Bird Count is the heart of what Audubon is about: volunteers and citizen scientists, using their love of birds to document their populations, and give us an annual snapshot of our community and our world.

Anyone can participate for \$5—which covers the printing of the nationwide results posted to every participant in the spring. In the rush and pressure of the holiday season, take some time for yourself... and the birds. Contact the coordinator of the count below that interests you most and get involved. Frank Chapman would want you to!

Date	Location Name	Coordinator	Email	Phone
17-Dec	St. Marks	Jim Cox	Jim@ttrs.org	850 942-2489 (h)
28-Dec	Port St. Joe	Alan Knothe	<u>aknothe@audubon.org</u>	850 200-6279 (w)
29-Dec	Apalachicola Bay	Alan Knothe	aknothe@audubon.org	850 200-6279 (w)
1-Jan	Tallahassee	Marvin Collins	mcollins@nettally.com	850 224-9549 (h)



These were taken during the Apalachee Audubon Gadsden County field trip.







# Plant a Tree for the Holidays by Donna Legare

Late fall and winter are the ideal seasons for planting trees in Tallahassee. Trees will use the winter season to establish new roots and will be ready for spring growth. They will establish with less water when planted while dormant.

There are many trees from which to choose. Consider the soil conditions, lighting and whether there are wires overhead. For instance, if you are planting in a low spot that collects water, you might consider a bald cypress or red maple. If your soil is sandy, perhaps a longleaf pine would be suitable. If you want to plant a tree to attract hummingbirds, then you might try a red buckeye or silverbell. If you are interested in wildlife, plant native trees since they support native insect life that is the base of the food chain.



Welcome Frog & Peace Lilies at Native Nurseries.

The most common planting error we have observed over the years is planting the tree too deeply, which will kill it slowly. It is important to dig shallow and wide, positioning the uppermost root slightly above the ground. Refer to Planting and Establishing Trees (The Ten Steps to Proper Tree Planting) by Ed Gilman and Laura Sadowski at <a href="http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/documents/EP314.pdf">http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/documents/EP314.pdf</a>

If you do not have room in your own yard, consider planting a tree at a local park or school yard or participating in a community tree planting on Arbor Day. Trees have a way of marking time. You can look back and say, "I planted that cypress tree in 1985 to mark the birth of my first child. Look how big it is now that she is 26 years old!"

Donna Legare is co-owner of Native Nurseries and Chair of the Betton Hills Neighborhood Association annual Arbor Day. http://www.nativenurseries.com/index.html & http://www.mybettonhills.org/Default.aspx

### Field Trip Report

September – October 2011 by Andy Wraithmell



Say's Phoebe by Carol Miller

Five field trips took place during September and October. Many thanks to our 6 leaders and the 45 members who participated in at least one of our field trips during this period. Apalachee Audubon visited St Marks NWR, Elinor-Klapp Phipps Park, St Joe Peninsula State Park, Lake Seminole and Phipps Point Preserve. Our field trip participants got to see some wonderful birds, including Say's Phoebe, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Avocet, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Piping Plover, and Snowy Plover. We have several trips organized for November/December to Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail, Tall Timbers, Ochlockonee River State Park, Panacea and Wakulla Beach.

Please email the field trip coordinator, Andy Wraithmell, at <u>Apalachee audubon tours@hotmail.com</u> to receive information on how and when to register a place on a future field trip. *Pre-registration for all Apalachee Audubon field trips is required.* 

#### Field Trips for November/December

November 5 <sup>th</sup>	Lake Lafayette	Mark & Selena Kiser
November 10 <sup>th</sup>	Tall Timbers	Elliot Schunke
November 19th	Ochlockonee River SP	Greg Kaufmann
December 17th	Panacea (evening)	Andy Wraithmell
December 30th	Wakulla Beach	Jim Stevenson

Pre-registration required for all AAS field trips. Please email field trip coordinator Andy Wraithmell for information on how and when to register for AAS field trips: Apalachee audubon tours@hotmail.com We are always looking for experienced birders who would like to be an AAS Field Trip Leader. Please email Andy if you are interested in being a field trip leader on a future AAS field trip.

#### 2011 International Coastal Cleanup Day



Apalachee Audubon Association members and friends participated in the 2011 Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, September 17th, and received attractive commemorative tees and a picnic lunch at the Wakulla County Park afterwards. In addition to participating in the Coastal Cleanup for ten years, for the past five years Melissa Forehand has led our group on a morning clean-up of Bottoms Road

Harvey Goldman & Melissa Forehand

in Wakulla County. Melissa notes that each year the area is a little cleaner than the year before, but there is always a lot of trash to pick up--beer cans, cigarette butts, shoes, bobbers, and worm containers. Bottoms Road borders on the St. Mark's Wildlife Refuge. The marshes were a serene setting for the Audubon trash collectors. This year Elizabeth Platt spotted several roseate spoonbills as she toiled.

## Project FeederWatch by Fran Rutkovsky

This fall marks the 25th year of Project FeederWatch. This is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders in yards, nature centers, and other locations in North America. The data that volunteer participants submit help scientists track movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends. The 2011-12 season of PFW begins November 12 and runs through April 6.

This is a fun endeavor, easy to do, and helps you learn more about the birds that frequent the feeders in your own yard. Participants keep track of birds that come to feeders/birdbaths/fruiting trees & shrubs within a count area on designated days. The details and instructions, along with photos and data from past years, are available on the Project FeederWatch web site. AAS member, Glenda Simmons, has had many of her photographs published in the PFW materials. Fran Rutkovsky is also a long time feederwatcher.

Project FeederWatch is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/index.html



This photo by AAS member Glenda Simmons was featured in the 2010-2011 FeederWatch calendar.





#### The Floridan Aquifer, Ours to Protect and Preserve by Seán E. McGlynn, PhD

The Floridan Aquifer is one of the most productive aquifers in the world. It delivers over 5 billion gallons of water each day. The Floridan Aquifer quenches the thirst of forty million people. For most of these people it is their only source of water. Their future depends on its bounty. The Floridan Aquifer flows under more than 100,000 square miles, portions of four states (Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida). The Floridan Aquifer is composed of limestone and dolomite, and it thickens as it flows south. In Georgia it is 250 feet thick and expands to over 3000 feet in south Florida. The water quality and quantity in the Floridan Aquifer are increasingly threatened.

Contamination is evident in our springs. Excessive levels of nitrogen from waste water (spray fields, biosolids and point source discharges), septic tanks and fertilizers (domestic and agricultural) as well as livestock cause excessive growth of aquatic plants. Invasive exotic plants like Hydrilla verticillata and matt forming cyanobacteria, Lyngbya wollei are choking the springs. These invasive plants alter the native habitat and cause significant problems with the biota. Nutrient levels in Wakulla Springs are significantly higher than acceptable background levels. The springs on the Suwannee River have even higher nutrient levels than Wakulla Springs. Contamination is showing up in our water supply. Nutrients, petroleum hydrocarbons, pesticides, herbicides, metals, and other contaminants have been found in various drinking waters drawn from the Floridan Aquifer.

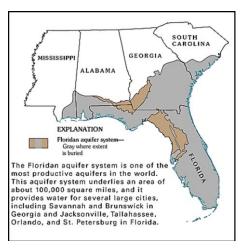
In addition to chemical contamination, physical problems exist. Declining groundwater levels, saltwater intrusion and inadequate supplies of local groundwater occur. Private and public users withdraw significant volumes of water. Excessive withdrawal causes suction and forms a 'cone of depression' in the surface of the aquifer. If this is near the ocean, it will suck salt water into the aquifer. When this is near local lakes, streams, and springs it can cause them to run dry.

The Floridan Aquifer is the source of countless springs, and the most famous is Wakulla Springs (300 million gallons per day). This is dwarfed by the largest spring in Florida, Spring Creek (2003 billion gallons per day). But Spring Creek no longer flows regularly and it often sucks a vortex of briny sea water into its caverns. The locals never catch fresh water fish, like largemouth bass anymore. They catch marine fish. Boats are fowled with barnacles and other marine life, which never happened when fresh water flowed from the spring.

In Georgia, when people think of springs, they think of Radium Springs, Georgia's largest natural spring, and one of the state's 7 Natural Wonders. It used to have a discharge of about 100 million gallons of water per day. The waters were consistently 68 degrees and contained traces of the radioactive radium. Radium Springs has experienced irregular flow for the past 10 years.

The southeastern United States, and the recharge area for the Floridan Aquifer, particularly in Georgia, has been experiencing drought conditions regularly for the past 10 years. Experts predict that these drought conditions will continue. Is this due to climate change and will it persist? Current data indicates that the ongoing drought in Georgia is already depleting water levels in the Floridan Aquifer. In some areas stream flow is depressed during the summer by irrigation. Permitted groundwater withdrawals in this region for agriculture are significant. These documented withdrawals total almost 3.9 billion gallons per day which is 78 % of the reported discharge of the Floridan Aquifer.

There are many imperiled springs associated with the Floridan Aquifer. For the last 60 years, Polk County's Kissengen Springs has been too dry for a swim. In Hamilton County, the spring in White Springs, which was also a spa and resort, dried in the early '70s. This was a first-magnitude spring. The Fenholloway Springs, in Taylor County, was bottled as "Fenholloway Water" from 1930 to 1954. It has dried up. Another Taylor County spring, called Hampton Springs, was once home to a resort with 60 guest rooms (a favorite retreat for Al Capone). This spring rarely flows now. Continued on page 6



Floridan Aquifer System - USGS - August 2005



Above: The Wakulla River, long known for its crystal clear water. Below: Wakulla Springs' popular Diving Platform. Photos by Lou Kellenberger. http://LouKellenbergerPhotography.zenfolio.com



Students from the Magnolia School canoe up the St. Marks to enjoy the tranquility of Horn Springs.

Photo by Sean McGlynn.



Convict Spring (Lafayette County), Hornsby Spring (Alachua County) and Royal Spring (Suwannee County) are all dry. Worthington Springs (Union County), once known for a walled resort where women gathered for special "ladies only" swims, is a small, stagnant caldron of algae. Few ladies or gentlemen ever venture there. Experts predict that the Suwannee Springs, the site of a beautiful spring house built of local limestone in the 1800s, will be next. At these sites Floridians are dedicating markers to springs that are no more.

Public awareness of the stresses to our aquifer needs to increase. Many Florida residents still believe the aquifer is pure, and that its waters are thousands of years old, derived from snow melt in the Appalachian Mountains and purified by flowing through the aquifer for millennia. That is just not quite true. A significant portion of the water in the aquifer is recharge water, only a few weeks or days old. Drought, contamination, increased consumption, and decreased recharge increase the stress on the aquifer. Can the Floridan Aquifer give us billions of gallons of water each day and continually replenish itself? What are the dangers of it drying up? What is being done to find alternative sources of water?

We are losing springs, lakes and creeks. Salt water is creeping up under the land. No water source will last forever. Our weather patterns may change. There is currently adequate groundwater in the Floridan Aquifer, but nothing will last forever. We need to use it wisely and conserve its integrity, both chemically and physically, so we can support future growth and assure adequate water supplies for the future.

This is the second in a series, beginning in the Sept.-Oct. 2011 AAS newsletter.



Kissengen Springs, Polk County, USGS file photo, 2006



Close-up of vortex, Spring Creek, Wakulla County. Photo by Sean McGlynn 2007

#### Continued from page 1 - Birding Monterey Bay and Yosemite National Park by Bill Phelan

Many birds look familiar to us but have a twist: Black Oystercatcher, Black Turnstone, Western Gull (similar to Greater Black-backed), Oak Titmouse, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Tricolored Blackbird. Elegant Terns look similar to Royal Terns but have narrower (more elegant?) bills. I found 31 life birds, and had great looks at 8 birds that I had seen only fleetingly in other states. The first 8 lifers (including the Gulls, Wrentit, Chickadee, etc.) were at Elkhorn Slough and Kirby Park where I birded before the festival, using John Kemper's *Birding Northern California*. The pelagic trip, on Shearwater Journeys, yielded 19 life birds (including Shearwaters, Albatross, Fulmar, Skua, etc.).

The Monterey Bay Birding Festival, Sept 22-25, featured field trips in the counties around Monterey Bay. I chose trips to Moss Landing, Rancho del Oso, and to Chualar Canyon where I saw more lifers (e.g. dozens of Anna's Hummingbirds) and had good looks at some old western favorites (e.g. Western and Clark's Grebes in the same view). The trip leaders were congenial and enthusiastic, and knew well the birds and their habitats. They made sure everyone saw the birds. Unlike at the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival where we were transported by bus, we caravanned around Monterey Bay. So the registration fees were more affordable than at the RGVBF.

After the festival, I went to bird **Yosemite National Park.** Getting there was interesting—the twisty mountain roads were daunting at first for this flatlander, but after I learned to drive like the locals, it was exhilarating. Yosemite is awesomely beautiful. If you haven't been there, you are missing a peak experience in life (pun noted). But birding Yosemite was disappointing. I saw none of the woodpeckers I was hoping for. I did find a Rufous-crowned Sparrow and had great looks at Red-breasted Nuthatches, but not much else. One reason is probably the crowds of people, even in late September: although the south rim of the valley had less vehicle and hiking traffic than the north rim, birds were few in the meadows and trails that I explored. The north rim was very crowded and had even fewer birds. Another reason for the paucity of birds is that redwoods resist insects, and are therefore unattractive to insectivorous birds. You can't find birds where they can't find edibles. But I'm not complaining: the redwoods, sequoias and mountains are spectacular.

**Pinnacles National Monument** (a rocky outcrop in the central valley) was much more birdy. I found there the California specialties as well as the always amusing Acorn Woodpeckers and Roadrunner. I also had a Prairie Falcon and Golden Eagle in the same binocular view.

#### Getting to Monterey Bay:

Southwest Airlines flies from JAX to San Jose via Las Vegas or Denver. It's harder to get there from Panama City.

The full spectrum of motels is available in Watsonville, Monterey, Pebble Beach, etc.: Motel 6, Super 8, Best Western, Hilton, Hyatt Regency and everything in between.

Restaurants, supermarkets and ATM's are abundant, of course.

Gasoline is costlier than here, by about \$.70 a gallon.

Freeways (Hwy 1, and Hwy 101 and SR 152) got me where I wanted to go, although traffic is heavy in rush hours.

#### Resources

17th Annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival, September 22-25, 2011. www.montereybaybirding.org

John Kemper's Birding Northern California (2001, Falcon Guide) is extremely helpful and accurate for birding the Monterey Bay area. Shearwater Journeys is the prominent vendor for pelagic trips. <a href="www.shearwaterjourneys.com">www.shearwaterjourneys.com</a>



## Go Green for God at the Monarch Butterfly Festival by Elizabeth Platt



It was truly a glorious morning as the Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church van and a couple of other vehicles pulled out of the church parking lot and headed for the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, sent off with prayers and best wishes by Pastor Joseph T. Wright. Parents, teenagers and several tiny 'butterfly' Go Greeners were all aboard. Arriving at the refuge the group descended on the new education center where children were 'tagged' for migration, photographed with the blue goose or with butterfly wings, and wandered to various stations to look at exhibits and make crafts. Sharon Stevens, AAS bird lover par excellence, was photographed with both the blue goose AND butterfly wings!

We regrouped at the picnic pond and had lunch provided by Leann, meeting Karen Wensing and Ann Bruce at the AAS display and Bill Phelan with his trusty telescope trained on the pond. As Ann guided a tour around the gardens she was impressed at the interest shown by the teenage girls. Some of the little ones hung around the display, charming Karen with questions and asking for stickers and activities to take home.

Bill was able to show everyone an alligator, avocets, yellowlegs, willets, and many other birds at the picnic pond, though as the viewers became smaller and smaller he had to lower his scope to a point where he could no longer kneel down far enough to adjust it! His most interested viewers were my friends, teenagers Jose and Fabian. After lunch and the garden tour we all headed down to the lighthouse for a look at the process of tagging butterflies, which greatly captured the children's interest. There was a huge crowd of cars and people in the area, and everyone appeared to be enjoying the wonderful sunshine, birds flying overhead, and the many butterflies visiting wildflowers and salt bushes.

Although the van and most of the happy IMBC members had to leave the refuge at about 3 pm, Jose, Fabian, and I stayed with Bill, who set up his scope along the trail leading to the gazebo and continued to point out ducks, waders, and shore birds in the pond. One exciting sighting was a reddish egret, who danced on cue. The boys were enchanted with the yellow warbler Bill pointed out, and learned to identify the difference between monarchs and fritillaries, as well as to spot skippers.

As we left the area we saw two mature eagles high in trees near their enormous nest that Jose said could be a tree house. We picked up Sharon at the display table after she had disembarked from a wagon tour in the refuge; she, too, was excited about all the wildlife she had seen along the way.

When we arrived at the boys' home in Gretna, we received a warm welcome from the whole big family and were served an excellent supper of 'huaraches', a Michoacán specialty. Fabian then took out the Crossley Guide and showed his parents the many birds he had seen and told them they should go with him next time. As he and I were talking after supper, he asked if he could be a volunteer at the refuge, and when told he could, Fabian said that in the summer he would help Ann in the butterfly garden!















# 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Monarch Butterfly Festival by Ann Bruce

Nearly 4,000 visitors showed up at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge for the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Monarch Butterfly Festival, held this year on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. One stop for visitors was Apalachee Audubon's Butterfly Pollinator Garden, located at Picnic Pond on Lighthouse Road. The garden was initiated in October, 2009 with the purpose of providing enjoyment for the public and an opportunity for people to learn about the importance of native plants and pollinators. For this writer the highlight of the year's festival was the delight and enthusiasm of the children who visited us from Tallahassee's Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church.

The past year of drought with an approximate rainfall deficit of 20 inches has been tough on the plants in the original section of the garden. However, in the new garden plot located at the opposite end of Picnic Pond nearest the public restroom, colorful Indian Blanket flowers were blooming abundantly; these flowers were grown from seed sowed this March. St. Marks NWR's Dallas Beckett and Mary Owens and students from Southern Methodist University on their Alternative Spring Break helped institute the newest garden plot.

We need your help. We are looking for volunteers who have an interest in the native plants of Wakulla County and are willing to help us to improve and diversify the vigor of the garden. If you are interested in volunteering with the St. Marks NWR Butterfly Pollinator Garden, please contact Ann Bruce, annbruce7@gmail.com or 850/224-4760 or 766-3061



### Apalachee Audubon P.O. Box 1237 Tallahassee, FL 32302-1237

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#### See this newsletter IN COLOR plus much more at Apalachee Audubon's website: http://apalachee.org/

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If you are interested in receiving your newsletter only by email, please send an email to apalacheeaudubon@gmail.com Thank you for your help!

For timely updates about fieldtrips and other events, please subscribe to the AAS notification email list via our website:

www.apalachee.org/List\_Serving.html or here: www.groups.google.com/group/apalachee-audubon



Audubon Memberships Make Great Holiday Gifts! Give the gift of the outdoors this holiday!

and the gift of the antitione that hatting.

See page 2 for more membership information.

# AAS Speaker Series Meeting Location Historic Amtrak Station - 918 Railroad Avenue <a href="http://tinyurl.com/3a9a775">http://tinyurl.com/3a9a775</a>

